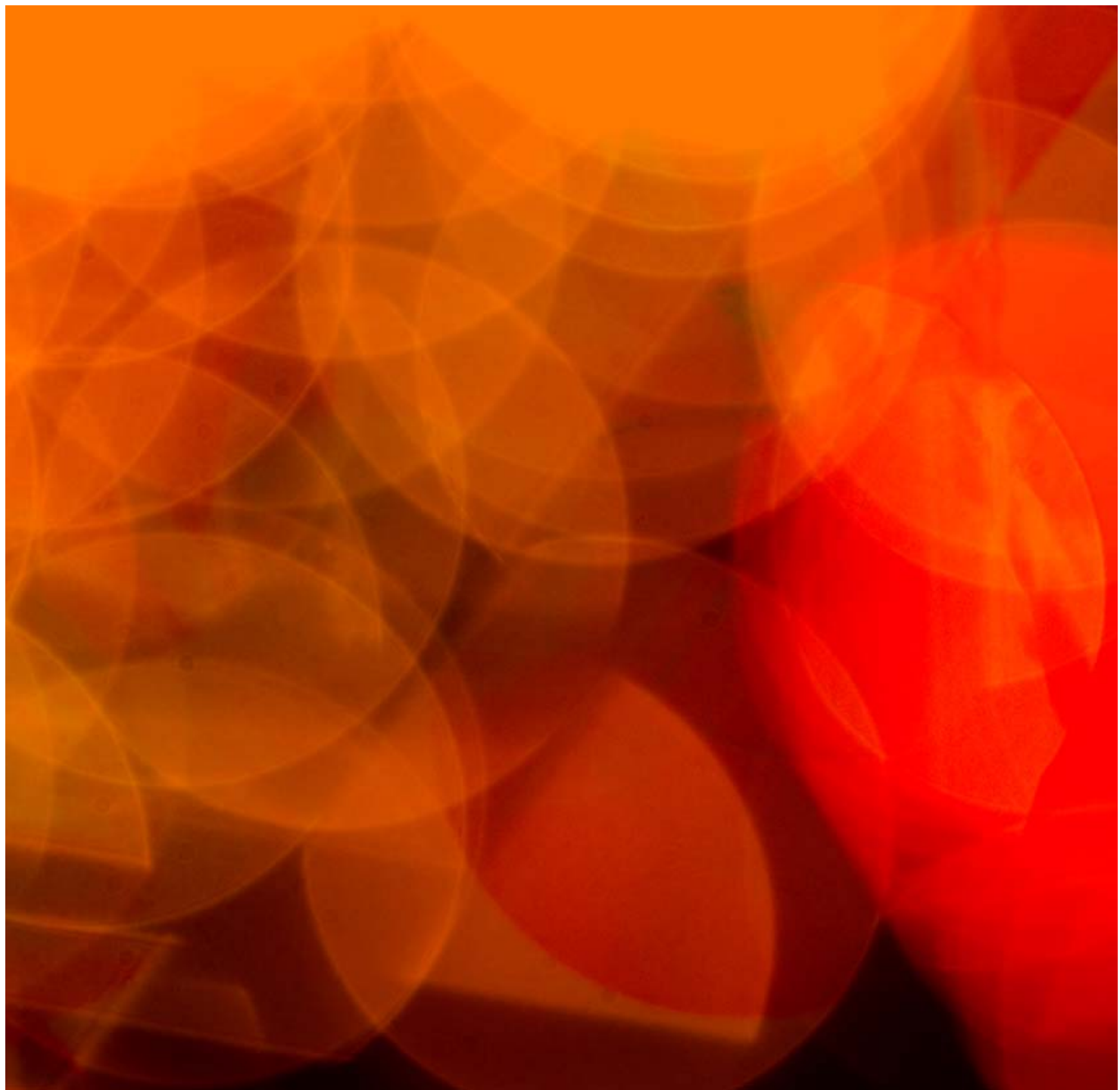


Training Quality Standard Part B

Sport and fitness sector



Pre-submission guidance for providers working with employers in the sport and fitness sector

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1. Introduction

This guide is the output of work undertaken for KPMG by the Learning and Skills Network (LSN) as part of the World Class Skills programme, funded by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) in the period November 2008 to March 2009.

It is designed to assist providers with a specialism in sport and fitness who are preparing for Part B certification of the Training Quality Standard (TQS). It has been produced with advice and guidance from SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for Active Leisure and Learning. SkillsActive reads and comments on Part B applications before they are submitted to the Certification Body. These comments are not passed back to the provider.

Note: this resource has been produced specifically for providers in the sport and fitness sector.

Patrick Knock, Development Officer for SkillsActive, comments:

TQS Part B accreditation is a crucial element in the up skilling process. SkillsActive's role is to ensure that more people are better skilled in the workplace. For this to be achieved, providers delivering training must meet sector-specific standards and demonstrate a clear strategy that reflects employer and sector awareness of training needs. SkillsActive along with the Learning and Skills Council endorse TQS accreditation as it signals a move to consistent high-standard training coupled with a sector standard that training providers can strive to achieve. During the process of applying for TQS Part B certification training providers are encouraged to work with SkillsActive for information, support and review.

This document is intended to support sport and fitness providers in reviewing and improving their readiness for Part B of the Training Quality Standard

Providers who wish to know more about how to register for the Training Quality Standard and how to submit an application should consult the TQS website, helpline or e-mail enquiry service. (See Appendix B for useful contact details.) Further information can also be found in section 4 'Next steps'.

1.1. Overview of the Training Quality Standard

The Training Quality Standard has a particular, and clearly defined, focus. It deals with how learning provider organisations develop and manage successful customer relationships with employers, and how they ensure that the content of the training solutions they deliver achieves the necessary quality to back up those relationships.

The Training Quality Standard aims to assess, and where appropriate, to certificate learning providers with reference to two broad issues:

- their responsiveness to employers' needs
- their expertise in particular industry sectors.

These concepts are set out in a practical framework of criteria and indicators that focus on two linked but ultimately very different delivery competencies:

- responding to the needs of employers as individual customers, which is covered in Part A of the Training Quality Standard
- developing and deploying products to address particular sector needs, which is covered in Part B of the Training Quality Standard.

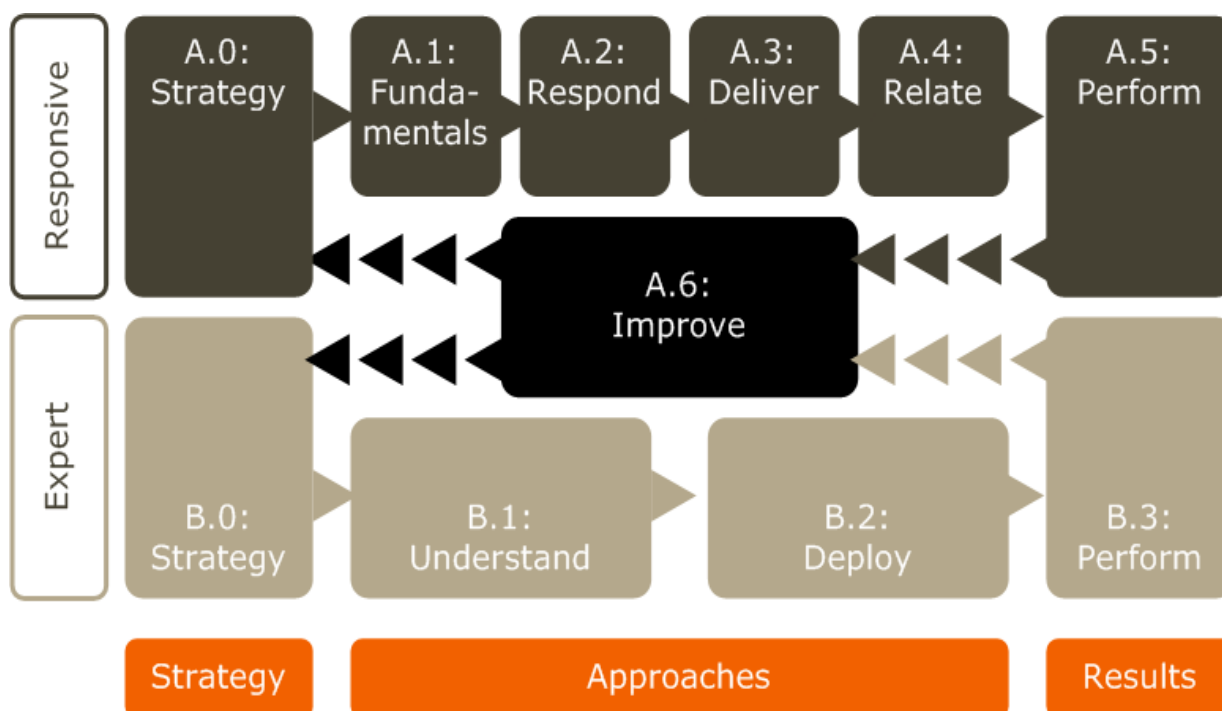
Part A is for all organisations delivering training and development solutions.

Part B focuses on areas where organisations have expertise, for example sector knowledge, Sector Skills Agreement (SSA) links and awareness of the Sector Qualifications Strategy, having already demonstrated their ability to serve employers through Part A.

The individual Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) have produced guidance on Part B customised for their sector. The guidance produced by SkillsActive can be found on page 14.

An overview of the Training Quality Standard is reproduced below. This diagram can be found in *Introducing the Training Quality Standard* (2008). This document can be downloaded from: www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk

Overview of the Training Quality Standard



The Training Quality Standard is explicitly non-prescriptive. That is, a provider organisation is not obliged to do things in a predetermined way to become certified. However, much of the assessment is 'scored' on the basis of the approaches that a provider uses. These approaches have to be 'sound' and effectively 'deployed'.

One way for a provider to present a coherent story is to base it on the way their processes are linked. This allows them to demonstrate that they have a complete range of appropriate processes, in line with the evidence requirements, and the links between the processes allow the story to 'flow' naturally.

1.2. Why the Training Quality Standard?

The process of achieving TQS accreditation is challenging. However, in an increasingly employer-led marketplace, it is important for providers to engage with the employer engagement agenda and to benchmark their abilities. You may find you need to use internal marketing to ensure buy-in across your organisation.

The following information has been provided by the Learning and Skills Council and describes how the Training Quality Standard links to providers' employer engagement strategies.

Informing employer choice in a demand-led system

In a truly demand-led system employers will be free to choose where they purchase their training and development solutions. It is, therefore, important to ensure that employers recognise what TQS represents and what they can expect from a provider with TQS. LSC is working with a range of stakeholders to ensure that providers with TQS are highlighted to employers as their preferred provider. They are also creating the *Employer guide to training providers* to ensure that employers with TQS are 'flagged' as being highly responsive.

Train to Gain

As the Train to Gain (TtG) service is enhanced for 2008/09 it is vital that the service continues to be high performing, helping employers identify and meet their skills needs. Providers with TQS will play a major role in further raising the credibility and equality of the Train to Gain service.

Train to Gain Brokers have been made aware of providers with TQS and what this represents. These providers should be prioritised over those without the standard when referring new TtG business. The Employer guide to training providers will link in with this when TQS providers will be flagged as preferred.

National Apprenticeship Service

As the Apprenticeship programme expands, TQS will play a major role in the delivery of responsive provision that meets the needs of the employer and the learner. Providers who have invested in a responsive infrastructure and excellence in vocational areas will drive the Apprenticeship programme forward.

Framework for Excellence

The Framework for Excellence is an annual, quantitative assessment of performance across all LSC-funded providers. It will provide an accurate, independent picture of the performance of the further education system, validated and supported by published data.

The evidence used to assess the employer views measure in the Framework will be based on a subset of the assessment criteria from TQS. Providers that achieve TQS for their whole organisation will automatically be rated outstanding across the whole Responsiveness to Employers key performance area (KPA) for the period for which TQS is awarded (three years).

In a reciprocal arrangement, from summer 2010 any provider that is in scope for the Responsiveness to Employers KPA may need to achieve a rating of good or outstanding in this particular area before it can apply for TQS. This alignment means providers do not need to do both.

Framework for Excellence evidence will be highly relevant to support an application for TQS, not least because the Framework's Employer Views survey is based on elements of TQS.

The operational relationship between TQS and Framework for Excellence was agreed by Ministers in March 2007 and published in the Framework for Excellence provider guides in July 2007 and July 2008.

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/Framework_for_Excellence-Provider_Guide.pdf

Capital skills prospectus: implementing the key priorities of building colleges for the future

The LSC Capital Strategy published in March 2008 confirmed the intention to help drive increased specialisation among FE providers, and ensure that capital investment supports provision to address identified skills needs. Providers with TQS will have priority access to specialist capital funding. The Capital skills prospectus states that: 'colleges applying for capital funding will need to demonstrate their commitment to employer engagement. In most cases, colleges will need to show that, at the point of application, they have at least applied for TQS, and they must have achieved the TQS before funding is released. This requirement will apply to other providers of employer- responsive provision as well.'

National Skills Academies

LSC is working with the new and emerging National Skills Academies so that they adopt TQS as their key quality criterion in selecting and working with provider partners. This will ensure that only the highest standard providers are part of the National Skills Academies networks.

Florence Orban, Chief Executive for the SkillsActive National Skills Academy, comments:

TQS is a key quality mark for the National Skills Academy for Sport and Active Leisure and in time we would like all our Centres of Excellence to have obtained it. It demonstrates engagement with, and responsiveness to our sector employers' needs; which are two key criteria we look for in our provider partners. Consequently we expect all Centres of Excellence to have either achieved TQS or to have applied and be working towards it, and we encourage all our larger Academy Providers to work towards it.

Providers are encouraged to visit the SkillsActive website and familiarise themselves with the SkillsActive's NSA plans, and the activity already taking place:

www.skillsactive.com/resources/academy/national-skills-academy

1.3. Who should use this guide?

This guide has been developed for use by a range of people:

- senior management as it is imperative that there is senior management buy-in to a TQS application.
- middle managers who may be involved in curriculum design, managing provision, engaging directly with employers or monitoring quality.
- delivery staff who are likely to contribute in a number of areas to a TQS submission.

You may also decide to work on a cross-organisational basis with specific input from staff with responsibility for the key aspects of the topic area, such as senior managers for strategic planning, the marketing officer, business development manager and management information system (MIS) managers, as well as vocational tutors, learner support providers and work-based assessors.

1.4. Internal communication

As it is likely that staff from various departments will play a role, whether large or small, in your TQS journey, it is important that the key messages are communicated clearly and regularly. You may consider an initial briefing to ensure a shared understanding, with regular follow-up meetings for discussion and review of findings and action plans. They would help to maintain commitment and momentum. Staff should also be clear on the steps involved in a TQS journey and should be encouraged to engage with section 4 'What next?' of this resource.

2. Sector-specific issues

When applying for the Training Quality Standard Part B It is important to demonstrate through the narrative that your organisation has an excellent understanding of the market in which it operates. One way you can do this, is to demonstrate how your strategy – which underpins everything you do – has been informed by issues that specifically affect your sector.

SkillsActive has regional information available on their website, (www.skillsactive.com/resources/research) and some of information that follows can be found there.

The health and fitness industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK economy. Not only is there rapid growth within the private sector, but the government is increasingly relying on the industry to help it deliver on public health and activity targets in the fight against illness and obesity. It is crucial that the industry's skilled workforce can keep pace with this growth. Consequently, there is an increasing demand for skilled exercise professionals to fill the growing employment vacancies, to implement new initiatives and cater for the growing number of fitness club and leisure centre users.

The ongoing success of our business is dependent upon the quality, professionalism and friendliness of our employees. SkillsActive is a vital tool in helping us harness their potential.

Harm Tegelaars, former Cannons Group Ltd,
President of European Health and Fitness Association

The sector is broadly divided into two main areas – clubs and Local Authority/private run leisure centres and gyms.

Clubs tend to be reliant on the goodwill of volunteers. Some members of staff will be full or part time (for example, bar staff), but most will either be volunteers who are retired (and could therefore be resistant to the idea of training as they consider themselves to be out of the workforce) or people who work full time and volunteer when they can (who may not wish to undertake training for something they consider a hobby).

Local Authority and privately run leisure centres and gyms tend to have a younger, more transient workforce than clubs. Some employees see working in the sector as a glamorous option, but soon lose interest because of the unsociable hours. Others may have a degree in a sports-related area and could be overqualified for initiatives such as Train to Gain. Managers in this area are often well qualified, but not necessarily with the most appropriate qualifications. Some members of staff will see their time in a leisure centre or gym as a stopgap job, rather than a career of choice.

- The sector had a gross value added (GVA) output equalling £650 million in 2004.
- It created 7.5% of total active leisure and learning output, and 0.1% of the whole UK economy output.
- Subscriptions for health and fitness in the UK totalled £1.8 billion in 2003.
- Nine in ten fitness professionals are very likely or quite likely to still be in the sector in 2008.
- More than one in five workers in the sector feel that they have not been given adequate training to do their job.

- Currently there are around 634,000 people working across sport and active leisure.
- Research shows that employment in the sector has soared since 1999 – growing at three times the rate of the UK economy as a whole.
- There are over 36,000 organisations operating in the sector, but despite its growth in employment, 20% of all employers find it difficult to recruit people with the right skills.

3. Understanding TQS requirements

This section of the guide has been designed to enable you to:

- develop your understanding of the requirements of the Training Quality Standard
- map your organisation's current processes against the requirements
- action plan to meet any development needs.
- To facilitate this, it includes the following:
- an extended version of the SkillsActive Part B guidance
- a review template
- an action-planning template.

Advice from SkillsActive

- Be as specific as you can, don't assume the assessor has any prior knowledge of your sector.
- Link your strategy to the Sector Skills Agreement, and the use of labour market information (LMI). State where you source your LMI, how it is analysed, how often and how the results inform your approach.
- Make explicit the activities you undertake that address the needs of the sector.
- Don't write your submission in isolation – consult key employers and your delivery team.
- Use quantifiable measures – for example target percentages for future growth.
- Clearly describe your methods for undertaking employer engagement and how you manage the process from beginning to end.
- Explain how your marketing reflects employer needs (for example, the vocabulary you use, how you penetrate the market, etc).
- Ensure you clearly define your relationship with key strategic partners (including SkillsActive) and explain how you use these relationships to shape your strategy and meet employer needs.
- Include impact measures in your narrative – you've delivered courses to 20 members of staff, so what? What difference will the training have made to the organisation? How do you know you've met the employer's objectives? Consider quantifiable measures such as:
 - an increase in membership of clubs
 - an increase of use of a leisure centre
 - improved retention
 - compliance with legislation.

NB: you must be able to back up impact measure claims with facts and figures.

Read these notes before you start to engage with the sections that follow:

3.1 SkillsActive Part B guidance

This section should be read and considered by everyone who operates in the sector, with support from the senior management team.

3.2 Review template

After reading and considering the SkillsActive guidance, move onto the review template. Use it to map your current level of performance against the TQS requirements and to identify areas for development. Rate your organisation as 1 (outstanding), 2 (good) or 3 (satisfactory).

NB: Remember that the Training Quality Standard recognises 'good' provision, so if you grade yourself consistently as a 3 (Satisfactory) you may wish to delay your application while you work on development.

Allocate an appropriate amount of time to completing your review because it will help to identify processes and evidence to support your application and enable you to demonstrate your performance in relation to each of the key evidence criteria. This will enable you to write a submission that has clarity, and therefore credibility, about your current level of performance.

When you are mapping your current level of performance, your key considerations should include:

- honesty about your organisation's current position and capabilities and its capacity to move forward
- realistic use of staff expertise, drawing on strengths and acknowledging areas for development
- assigning responsibilities for ensuring action takes place
- assessing the resources required
- setting realistic timescales.

3.3 Action-planning

Finally, use the action plan template to identify a way forward on your areas of development – if there are any!

When planning to move forward where a process requires development (and therefore where your ability to describe the process may be limited) important questions to ask yourself are:

- Have I identified all the practical steps needed to address the issue?
- Will the steps lead to some identifiable, measurable outcomes?
- Are the actions clear and specific?
- Will the actions help meet agreed objectives? How?
- Will the actions help improve your organisation's ability to achieve Part B?

3.1. Tool 1: SkillsActive TQS Part B step-by-step guidance

Read through the information for each TQS Part B indicator contained in the tables below, one section at a time. You may choose to read through the document as part of a team, or individually, comparing notes with others afterwards. Do not skim read – take time while you are reading to think about your organisation and the way your processes support your work with employers. Consider what your key documents are, and how they are shaped and reviewed. There may be other documents or processes that are not noted here that you use effectively and that could be described in your narrative.

B.0: Strategy

Providers with sector expertise have a strategy for working with the sector based on the market including clearly defined objectives. They take actions to ensure that their aims and approaches are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.0.1: Define aims	The strategy for working with the sector defines aims and approaches that are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.	An organisation might describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the processes in place to develop a specific strategy to serve the needs of employers in the sport and fitness sector • how strategic objectives are resourced and delivered • how the strategic direction may be influenced by sector stakeholders including employers • where appropriate, understanding of and demonstrable use of sector-related initiatives such as Sector Skills Agreement (SSA) • Sector Qualifications Strategy (SQS) • how their strategy relates to the Qualifications Strategy. 	Sport and fitness strategy document Ensure inclusion of market segmentation and explanation/understanding of how appropriate markets were identified. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of internal marketing department • use of SSC website • liaison with local borough council • use of external marketing consultants • focus groups with employers • employer surveys • partnership work with other providers

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.0.1: Define aims	The strategy for working with the sector defines aims and approaches that are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.	<p>An organisation might describe how their strategy is communicated to employers and other stakeholders in the sector.</p> <p>Note: (1) Consider the process by which these relationships are developed, utilised and maintained; and (2) What evidence is available to support these assertions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrating how strategy meets local need (consultation with employers/focus groups/employer surveys/visit reports/ minutes from meetings). • Evidence of how the strategy links with SQS • Evidence of sustainability of strategy and projected growth based on labour market information (LMI), employer feedback. <p>Process by which strategy is reviewed and frequency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of review meetings – attendees, actions, etc • Management information system (MIS) reports – demonstrate how these influence the strategy/feed into the monitor, evaluate, review (MER) framework • Annual self-assessment documents showing honest and rigorous assessment of the strategy and action planning, including measurable outcomes, ownership and time-bound success criteria • Success rates – demonstrate how the review of success rates informs the aims of the strategy and shapes future planning

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.0.1: Define aims	The strategy for working with the sector defines aims and approaches that are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular reviews/monthly quality reviews – attendees, actions, minutes • Business and forward-planning documents <p>Process for keeping abreast of sport and fitness skills demands and understanding sector behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at specialist provider group meetings • Evidence and examples of how attendance at the above informs strategy and communication with stakeholders.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.0.2 Define market	The strategy for working with the sector is based on an analysis of the market and key customer groups.	<p>An organisation could detail how sector needs have been: (1) established (2) used to inform the strategy for working with the sector and key customer groups (3) responded to.</p> <p>Following this, they could explain their process for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying the needs of the sector • maintaining this knowledge about the needs of the sector • responding to this intelligence. <p>An organisation could describe how they gather and analyse information from the sector to inform the development of their strategy.</p>	<p>Evidence of engagement with SSC and use of labour market information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of SSC website (all LMI held centrally on the website) – demonstrate familiarity with content and confidence in navigating site. Discuss who uses the site, and frequency, and the purposes for which LMI information is gathered/used/disseminated • In the longer term, evidence links with the National Skills Academy. <p>Robust processes for consulting with employers and SSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of identification of appropriate stakeholders (networking/referrals/long-term relationships/attendance at local or regional events and meetings) • Minutes of meetings, visit reports, details of events demonstrating how relationships are maintained • Communication methods with stakeholders (newsletters, e-bulletins, meetings, events, focus groups) • Attendance at SSC events • Evidence of consulting with employers at local and national level (visit reports, minutes of meetings, details of events, emails, letters)

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.0.2 Define market	The strategy for working with the sector is based on an analysis of the market and key customer groups.	<p>An organisation could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their strategy and methodology for acquiring LMI about their sector and key customer groups • how it is applied to drive strategic and operational direction, particularly for the provision of learning and assessment programmes • how and when the market information is updated: <p>What contact do you have with key sector groups e.g. County Sport Partnerships; Fitness Industry Association; Children’s Workforce partnerships?</p> <p>Note:</p> <p>(1) Consider the process by which these relationships are developed, utilised and maintained</p> <p>(2) What evidence is available to support these assertions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of customer relationship management (CRM) or other databases used to keep employer information updated and relevant, details of who accesses this information and for what purpose • Documents detailing work with skills brokers and outcomes. <p>Market assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing strategy • Market assessment information, including evidence of local consultation (events, focus groups, employer meetings, broker feedback, SSC information, interaction with local LSC and borough council) to identify key customer groups. • Evidence of time-bound planning, resource implications and an awareness of macro factors and emerging trends • Use of SSC website (refer to B.0.1 above) • Use of information from local LSC and borough councils – evidence of key relationships, attendance at events and meetings. Demonstrate what sort of information is gathered, how it is used and its impact on market decisions.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.0.2 Define market	The strategy for working with the sector is based on an analysis of the market and key customer groups.		Market analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility studies detailing market analysis • Process documentation • Evidence of maintaining market information (use of internal marketing department/external consultants, use of SSC website/local LSC and borough council intelligence). Demonstrate an awareness of relevant research findings that are used to develop the marketing strategy.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.0.3 Define results	The strategy for working with the sector defines specific and measurable performance objectives.	<p>An organisation could describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their performance objectives for the sector • how these objectives are communicated internally within their organisation • how and when are these objectives monitored and reviewed. <p>How is their strategy reviewed and evaluated? For example:</p> <p>(1) What process is there to monitor progress against milestones?</p> <p>(2) What evidence is available to support these assertions?</p>	<p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that targets are linked to market size, organisational capacity and planned penetration of market (from market analysis) – commentary on targets taking into account these factors • Demonstrate how results are aligned with strategy, including details of meetings/ discussions with SSC and local LSC to evidence how targets were reached and agreed. <p>Strategy document</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate how SMART objectives were identified (meetings documentation, including details of key staff involved in making decisions, correspondence with SSC and local LSC, links to market analysis, employer feedback) • Confidence with and use of LMI information to address skills shortages, increased employer buy-in/engagement date with projected growth/barriers understood and clear action plans in place • Details of potential market, historical performance data from the MIS department and market penetration to date with projected growth/barriers understood and clear action plans in place

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.0.3 Define results	The strategy for working with the sector defines specific and measurable performance objectives.	<p>An organisation could show the overall strategic framework for setting key performance targets such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employer engagement rates (Note: this could be engagement with employers as: (1) a percentage of the total available market, or (2) the projected increase against the percentage of employers already engaged). • retention rates • achievement rates • success rates • satisfaction rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear links to wider sector objectives (i.e. Sector Skills Agreement), and an understanding of available national and local sector benchmarks • Clear rationale for each performance target, including ownership, resource, cost and time implications. <p>Process documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of self-assessment where objectives are developed and agreed – could include meeting documentation • MER (monitor, evaluate and review) documents • Quality improvement plans • School (for those working in a college)/team reviews • Data from MIS department including performance management reports. <p>Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer surveys and feedback provided by SSC (evidence from one-to-one meetings and emails) • Evidence of attendance at strategic forums • Action plans from regional meetings • Evidence of monitoring progress to identified milestones.

B.1: Understand

Providers with sector expertise engage in dialogue with employers and stakeholders in their sectors and look to lead in the adoption and sharing of good practice.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.1.1 Understand employers	Input is sought from sector employers on their expectations for training solutions and common business needs	<p>An organisation could describe a clear employer engagement strategy that shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • methods employed to engage with employers in the sport and fitness sector • how they measure the effectiveness of these methods • regularity of contact and two-way communication with a range of employers – size, location and type of business • what arrangements in place for collaborative working with employers to test out new ideas and emerging requirements for the sector • two-way dialogue regarding the training and skill needs of the sector 	<p>Record of consultation events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event details • Notes/information taken from events • Details of internal use of information/intelligence from events – who it was disseminated to and how it was used including sector-specific research information available on local employers. • Evidence of how provision takes account of employers' needs • Evidence demonstrating a two-way dialogue, documents evidencing partnership-working, including visit reports, minutes of meetings, newsletters, press releases (issued by provider and/or employer) and testimonials

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.1.1 Understand employers	Input is sought from sector employers on their expectations for training solutions and common business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how levels of satisfaction from employers are obtained and acted upon. <p>An organisation could explain the processes they have in place and/or what evidence they have of their engagement with sector based employer forums.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of a structured approach to consultation, for example employer advisory groups, focus groups, attendance or hosting of other employer-focused events • Evidence of employer input into programmes – involvement in programme or delivery, assessment or as a work-based recorder, mentor or assessor. <p>Staff development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents evidencing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CPD schedule of development (for example annual appraisal cycle, lesson observations) and work placement - records of industry placements - evidence of evaluation of CPD activity and feedback to SSC on future needs. • Staff development strategy document • Process documentation to support sharing of best practice • Evidence of processes in place, or evidence of participation in boards, forums or groups that discuss and address training for the sector

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.1.1 Understand employers	Input is sought from sector employers on their expectations for training solutions and common business needs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation and/or proactive approach to developing training solutions prior to mandatory legislation • Employer participation in the development and design of the curriculum <p>Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant and disseminated documents including minutes of meetings, briefings, summarising outcomes of consultations/events/networking • Action-planning to take this work forward, with clear ownership, anticipated outcomes and review dates shown.

B.2: Deploy

Providers with sector expertise deploy products and services to meet employer needs, supported by the content, people and resources able to meet industry expectations.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.2.1: Deploy products and services	Products and services are developed and delivered to industry expectations and employers' business needs	<p>An organisation could consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they address the SQS requirements • what the key sector vocational skills priorities are and how these are determined and incorporated. For instance, what evidence exists that these priorities have been used to develop products and services that meet industry expectations? <p>What processes are in place to undertake training needs analysis and draw up plans to meet the general and specific workforce development needs of the sector?</p>	<p>Process documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of consultation meetings/feedback from employers and other stakeholders/LMI that evidences where gaps in provision have been met with the development of bespoke provision • Documents outlining the design process of the new provision. <p>Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for selecting programmes and evidence of take up (for example MIS data, registers, employer and learner feedback) • Documents showing how employers and stakeholders receive information about provision, and effective communication is maintained (emails, visit reports, minutes of meetings)

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
<p>B.2.1: Deploy products and services</p>	<p>Products and services are developed and delivered to industry expectations and employers' business needs</p>	<p>An organisation may explain the process by which their 'toolkit' of solutions (e.g. Apprenticeships, endorsed training and qualifications) deals with employer needs, issues and expectations.</p> <p>An organisation may describe an annual curriculum audit</p> <p>An organisation may detail the flexible delivery arrangements for employers</p>	<p>Employer feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that employers' feedback is sought and acted on – for example, minutes of meetings, summaries of consultation events or focus groups, copies of employer surveys <p>Evidence that programmes are 'fit for purpose'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from employers and employees • Link LMI to the new provision and show how it meets need, and aligns to the SQS, or if this is not appropriate demonstrate awarding body accreditation. • Evidence, where appropriate, that industry quality marks have been awarded. <p>Analysing feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a clear process for assessing customer and learner satisfaction and evidence of how this is taken forward • Evidence of informing SSC of common themes or issues enabling continuous improvement (for example emails, meetings of meetings, summary documents) <p>Demonstrate the process for assessing the industry relevance of products and services – how changes are taken into account</p>

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.2.1: Deploy products and services	Products and services are developed and delivered to industry expectations and employers' business needs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence links to market assessment and sector needs (use of LMI from SSC website, link to strategy documents, employer feedback and local LSC intelligence) <p>Support 'no wrong door' policy.</p>

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.2.2: Deploy people	People arranging and delivering products and services have the knowledge and skills to meet sector expectations	<p>An organisation could describe how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD is managed for people delivering programmes to the sector • staff qualifications, experience and training are identified, stipulated and verified. For example, what are the minimum levels of experience specified and how are they determined? What are the essential qualifications for people delivering programmes and courses, and are these at, or above, the level being taught? <p>Where necessary, an organisation could provide details of the current membership of relevant professional bodies.</p>	<p>Staff development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to section B.1.1 – evidence of industry competence among delivery staff and assessment teams • Include details of qualifications, experience and training – how these are reviewed and maintained • Documents detailing membership of appropriate bodies and evidence that staff have direct links with industry to ensure best practice – what the links are and how they work <p>Staff feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents showing how staff feedback is gathered and used to support continuous improvement, for example specific training activities and developmental work. Include programmes from events, minutes of meetings, briefing notes or reports following specific activity and emails.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.2.2: Deploy people	People arranging and delivering products and services have the knowledge and skills to meet sector expectations		<p>Schedule of staff development and evidence of evaluation and review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal documentation showing planned activities and their links with emerging trends, needs of employers, feedback from the SSC • Evaluation documents and action-planning records. <p>Staff development records and evaluation of work placement activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal documents showing the relevance and validity of staff development • Feedback from employers on any work placements • Comments from staff. <p>Staff development strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail of who owns responsibility for the strategy and how it is reviewed and monitored – may form two strands; overarching organisational strategy, and one tailored for the Fitness and Sport team. <p>Staff development programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above and including details of how the impact of development is measured.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.2.2: Deploy people	People arranging and delivering products and services have the knowledge and skills to meet sector expectations		Staff development records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May form two strands – overarching organisational records and local/departmental documents.

B.3: Perform

Providers with sector expertise cause improving results or sustained good performance in the areas defined in their strategic objectives

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.3.0 Achieve results	Indicators of performance against strategic objectives show an improving trend or a sustained level of high performance	An organisation should have developed the appropriate SMART targets to cover the following objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• employer engagement rates (number of employers engaged, quality of response)• achievement rates (comparison against national statistics, previous academic year, etc)• retention/success rates, e.g. are there positive retention rates and repeat business from employers in the sector?• other indicators (repeat custom indicators, increased employer contributions).	Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly, termly, annual performance reports on trends, performance to target and to objectives outlined in B.0.3• Documents (whether reports, minutes from meetings, summary/briefing documents) clearly illustrating in quantifiable terms market penetration, number of employers engaged with, details of repeat business, details of employer contributions and how these have risen• Details of progression to Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) targets.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.3.0 Achieve results	Indicators of performance against strategic objectives show an improving trend or a sustained level of high performance	An organisation may collect, collate and disseminate appropriate information against their contribution towards objectives and targets as established in B.0.	<p>Data capture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports (possibly from MIS department) showing progression information, evidence that employers are using the programmes. Clear link to how these map to strategy and targets. • Demonstration on how this information informs evaluation and future planning. <p>Quantitative results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer surveys • Self-assessment report • Quality improvement plan. <p>Monitoring performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of how information is collected against employer and sector objectives, targets and strategy <p>Clearly demonstrate that information illustrates performance and trends and identifies action planning</p>

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.3.1 Achieve impact	Impact on the sector shows an improving trend or sustained high level of performance	<p>An organisation may consider whether there are positive trends in enrolment and success rates and, where available, how they match the sector average and national trends</p> <p>Are there quantitative results that demonstrate that the delivery of training solutions has resulted in successful skills development for employees, and has met employer needs?</p> <p>Providers must develop appropriate SMART targets These could be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employer surveys (note: these could be analysed, measured and compared against national employer satisfaction results). • feedback/confirmation from employers of successful training (e.g. references, case studies) and its impact (e.g. improved productivity, etc). 	<p>Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIS information showing year-on-year reporting and comparisons – evidence that employers’ take-up of courses is increasing • Clear links to SSC objectives. <p>Evidence that SSC LMI has been used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meetings with SSC, agreed actions and evidence of achieving or working towards actions • Participation in regional action planning, documents that can support this activity. <p>Impact assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the influence of activity, driven by the strategy and implementation plan, has been reviewed – for example self-assessment report, details of monitoring, evaluation and review (MER) activities, internal focus groups and minutes of meetings. • Documents detailing feedback from SSC objectives – the impact on these • Employer surveys.

Indicator	Statement	Points to consider	Processes/key documents and evidence
B.3.1 Achieve impact	Impact on the sector shows an improving trend or sustained high level of performance	Satisfaction data from employers of individuals who have undertaken training independently and progressed into relevant employment.	<p>Internal planning documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIS reports showing retention, completion, achievement and success rates • Annual business plans detailing growth and sustainability strategies and evidence of meeting sector expectations through provision • 3–5 year development plan • Cross-organisational work (reports, minutes of meetings, emails) <p>Feedback from SSC and LSC showing how delivery has contributed to the development of the sector's skills base.</p>

3.2. Tool 2: Review template

The review template that follows has been designed to enable you to map the way you operate against the TQS requirements. You will probably need to refer back to the tables of information in Tool 1 to help you decide how far your organisation already meets TQS requirements. As stated previously, it is imperative that you consider your organisation's operations honestly. Grade your current operations as 1 (Outstanding), 2 (Good) or 3 (Satisfactory). Use the blank rows to note any other procedure or document not already mentioned that could help your case. Space has been left for you to include your own processes or key documents.

Process, key documents and evidence	Do we have this?	How well do we do this? Rate your current level of performance as follows: 1 = outstanding 2 = good 3 = satisfactory	Notes
B.0: Strategy			
Sport and fitness strategy document			
Evidence of use of labour market information			
Robust process for consulting employers and SSC			
Market assessment			
Market analysis			

Process, key documents and evidence	Do we have this?	How well do we do this? Rate your current level of performance as follows: 1 = outstanding 2 = good 3 = satisfactory	Notes
Process documentation			
Targets linked to market size/organisational capacity			
How are results aligned with the strategy?			

Process, key documents and evidence	Do we have this?	How well do we do this? Rate your current level of performance as follows: 1 = outstanding 2 = good 3 = satisfactory	Notes
B.1 Understand			
Records of consultation events			
Details of staff development evidencing CPD/records of industry placements			
Reporting, including minutes of meetings/briefings/consultations/events/networking			
Details of collaborative working			

Process, key documents and evidence	Do we have this?	How well do we do this? Rate your current level of performance as follows: 1 = outstanding 2 = good 3 = satisfactory	Notes
Process for maintaining dialogue with relevant sectoral and regional partners			
Train to Gain working			
Quality improvement systems			
Feedback from brokers and employers			

Process, key documents and evidence	Do we have this?	How well do we do this? Rate your current level of performance as follows: 1 = outstanding 2 = good 3 = satisfactory	Notes
B.2 Deploy			
Process documentation – details of consultation meetings/feedback			
Documents outlining the design process of new provision			
Employer feedback/evidence that provision is ‘fit for purpose’			
Analysis of feedback and how this is linked to strategy			

Process, key documents and evidence	Do we have this?	How well do we do this? Rate your current level of performance as follows: 1 = outstanding 2 = good 3 = satisfactory	Notes
Staff feedback on their continuing professional development			
Details of staff development programme/strategy			
Resources plan showing an evaluation of resources			
Feedback from employers on resources			

Process, key documents and evidence	Do we have this?	How well do we do this? Rate your current level of performance as follows: 1 = outstanding 2 = good 3 = satisfactory	Notes
B.3 Perform			
Monthly, termly, annual performance reports on trends and performance			
Data capture processes			
Quantitative results – employer surveys, self-assessment report or quality improvement strategy			
Evidence SSC labour market information is used			
Impact assessment			
Internal future planning processes			
Feedback from SSC showing how delivery has contributed to development of sector skills base			

3.3. Tool 3: Action-planning template

The Training Quality Standard has been designed not only to benchmark a provider's ability to meet the training needs of employers, but also as a tool for business improvement. This template enables you to pick up on any key issues you may have highlighted as a result either of reading the requirements or of conducting the review analysis. Remember that the Training Quality Standard is looking to recognise the work of 'good' providers. If you score your levels of operation consistently as a 3 (Satisfactory), you may wish to consider extra development work before you submit an application.

Key issue:					
Objective(s):					
Current position	Actions proposed/ evidence to be collected	Staff responsible	Timescale	Resources (to include costs)	Training requirements (including costing)

4. What next?

Providers considering making a TQS application should ensure they take the following steps.

1. Visit the CFE website

www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk

This website contains a wealth of information on the Training Quality Standard, including details of applicant training courses and the Certification Bodies who are approved to assess your application.

There is also a link to the World Class Skills Website (<http://wcs.excellence.qia.org.uk/>) which provides information on accessing support and guidance throughout the application process.

You are encouraged to get to grips in detail with the information provided on these websites. Information is available on how to register an application on the CFE website.

2. Complete a readiness check

The readiness check is a resource that has been produced to help providers ascertain their readiness, or otherwise, for submitting a TQS Part B application. This resource is available as a downloadable document from the SkillsActive website – (www.skillsactive.com)

It is recommended that the Readiness Check be completed by more than one person, and that responses are compared to ensure a thorough appraisal of an organisation's ability to meet the requirements of the Training Quality Standard.

3. Allocate key roles and plan internal communication

As detailed in section 1.4, it is imperative that all staff are made aware of an organisation's TQS journey. A member of the senior management team should be identified to drive forward the application process. He or she may chair a steering group, organise cross-organisational briefings and nominate members of the middle management team to attend applicant training sessions and liaise with the World Class Skills team. It is also important to consider the following:

The author of the application

This may not be the curriculum manager for the area. If this is the case, then the author and manager will need to work very closely together to ensure the area is represented accurately.

Timescales and key milestones

There should be adequate time and resources given over to the production of a TQS Part B application. However, this should not be an indefinite period of time and key milestones should be agreed and adhered to. Progress may be checked by the Senior Manager chairing the Steering Group.

Preparing employer information

As part of the assessment process, providers are required to submit details of the employers they are actively engaged with. Time should be allocated to the preparation of this data, as there are implications to submitting inadequate or out-of-date information. Further details will be provided during the applicant training course.

Reviewing the submission

A TQS Part B submission will contain unique information that relates solely to the operations undertaken within a specific sector by that provider. It is highly recommended that the manager of the area is either the author of the submission, or is closely involved to the writing process. However, such closeness to the subject area can sometimes lead to assumptions being made in the text and processes and procedures not being described as clearly as they might be.

The Senior Manager responsible for leading the application process should therefore review the narrative before its submission, as someone who is a step removed from the day-to-day operations of the area. It is recommended that the submission is also reviewed by a second member of staff with no connection to the area. This process may result in clarification being sought and further detail added to the submission, and also acts as a valuable proof-reading opportunity.

Advice and guidance on writing a submission are provided during the applicant training course.

4. Prepare for the validation visit

The size of your organisation, the number of sites that serve employers and the number of employers you are engaged with will determine the number of assessors who conduct the validation visit and how many days they spend with you.

Prior to their visit, the assessors will advise which pieces of evidence that are detailed in your submission they would like to see. In addition to these, you may wish to allocate time to compiling an evidence grid that lists every piece of evidence cited in your submission, its location and whether it cross references to any other part of your narrative. In the event that the assessors require access to additional evidence during the course of their visit, this will then be easy to track.

Further internal briefings should be carried out prior to the validation visit, and every member of staff should be familiar and comfortable with the content of your submission. A timetable will be agreed with your assessors for the people and locations they wish to see.

Appendix A: Guidance notes on application narrative

Guidance notes

When writing the narrative for your application form, bear in mind the guidance from the Training Quality Standard (TQS) team – they are looking for demonstration of the RADAR methodology:

Results:	What do you want to achieve? What are appropriate targets? How are these met or exceeded? What evidence do you have of benchmarking? Can you show sustained results?
Approach:	What do you plan to do and why? Can you evidence a clear approach that is well defined and developed? Who is involved in shaping your approach? Is it linked to policy/legislation? Can you demonstrate a sound means of achieving results through your approach?
Deployment:	Can you demonstrate systematic roll-out of your approach throughout the organisation? Are staff supported through on-going and appropriate continuing professional development?
Assessment and Review:	Can you evidence assessment and review of your approach and deployment methods? Do you regularly seek to improve?

Ensure that your narrative signposts the assessor to appropriate evidence; you do not need to include it all with your application. Your narrative needs to describe why you do things, as well as how and how your strategy meets the needs of employers in your sector. Highlight the relevance of your work and the impact you have had on employers.

Appendix B: Useful contacts

Training Quality Standard Team

Enquiry line: 0845 225 1310

info@trainingqualitystandard.co.uk

Website: www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk

Information about support for the Training Quality Standard is also available from the new LSIS programme, World Class Skills- developing employer responsiveness

Email: wcsenquiries@kpmg.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 3286075

Booking information at: <http://excellence.qia.org.uk/programmesandservices/wcs/booking>

SkillsActive – www.skillsactive.com

**Patrick Knock
Development Officer**

<mailto:patrick.knock@skillsactive.com>

Tel: 020 7632 2000

DDI: 020 7632 2919

Mobile: 07982920095

**Rob Williams
National Network Manager**

<mailto:rob.williams@skillactive.com>

Mobile: 07841743198