

Foundation Learning and the learner journey

A guide for colleges and learning providers

Foundation Learning Support

LSIS LEARNING
AND SKILLS
IMPROVEMENT
SERVICE



Foundation Learning and the learner journey

A guide for colleges and learning providers

**Foundation Learning Support is delivered
by LSN on behalf of the Learning and Skills
Improvement Service (formerly QIA).**

Published by the Learning and Skills Network
on behalf of LSIS

www.lsnlearning.org.uk

Registered with the Charity Commissioners

LSN is committed to providing publications
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ISBN 9781845728953

CIMS 090210GR

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All information in this book is correct at October 2009

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Contents

Introduction	1
Referral and recruitment	3
Induction	7
Initial assessment	12
Planning personalised learning programmes	18
Teaching and learning	24
Progress reviews	34
Assessment	38
Achievement	41
Progression	45
Useful resources	50

Introduction

Who will be interested in this guide?

This guide will be of interest to post-16 providers who are implementing Foundation Learning programmes for 16-19 year olds. Foundation Learning has replaced a range of programmes, including Entry to Employment (E2E) and entry level and level 1 courses in further education (FE).

What is Foundation Learning?

Foundation Learning is the name given to provision for learners aged 14-19 (as well as 19-24-year-olds with high level special needs) working predominantly at entry level or level 1. It is intended to help raise participation, attainment and progression for this learner group. Foundation Learning programmes are designed to support progression to Apprenticeships, level 2 vocational qualifications, GCSE/A levels or, for some learners, to employment with training, supported employment or independent living.

Foundation Learning programmes support individual progression through the achievement of an appropriate combination of qualifications mainly from entry level and level 1 of the QCF and functional skills. Qualifications from the QCF that are confirmed as eligible and appropriate for inclusion within Foundation Learning programmes are identified in the *Foundation Learning qualifications catalogue*.¹

Foundation Learning programmes encompass three components:

- vocational knowledge, skills and understanding
- personal and social development learning
- functional skills in English, mathematics and ICT.

The components are supported by a 'wrap-around' of information, advice and guidance (IAG), effective initial assessment, comprehensive ongoing review and provider collaboration. The expectations of this wrap-around are detailed in the section 'Foundation Learning: characteristics of effective delivery' in *Foundation Learning Tier: 14-19 delivery guidance for 2009/10*.²

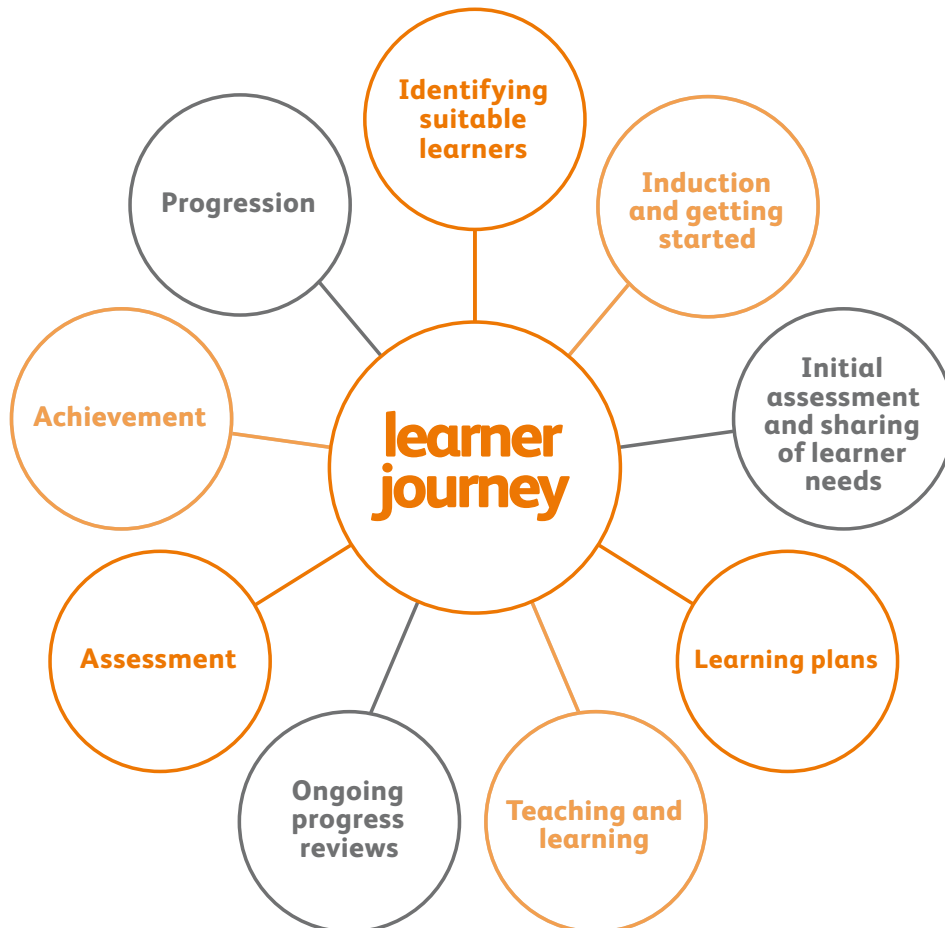
1
QCDA (2009)
Foundation Learning qualifications catalogue,
www.qcda.gov.uk/resources

2
QCDA/LSC (2009)
Foundation Learning Tier: 14-19 delivery guidance for 2009/10, August,
http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/provider/delivery_guidance_august_2009_final_version.pdf

The learner journey

During any learning programme learners travel through a series of recognised stages from entry to exit in what is known as the learner journey (figure 1).

Figure 1. The learner journey



Learners following Foundation Learning programmes using entry level and level 1 qualifications from the QCF will follow the same recognised stages of the learner journey. It will be important for providers to consider what each stage of this journey will look like for these learners and how they can be personalised to meet their needs. If learners' needs are met effectively they will be able to progress through their programme and achieve a positive outcome. It is appropriate that providers draw on and use their current established good practice in each area but it is also very likely that they will want to refine and/or add to existing practice. This guide helps providers to think about each stage of the learner journey in the context of delivering Foundation Learning programmes and identifying areas for improvement.

Referral and recruitment

The purpose of the referral and recruitment stage is to ensure that the learners attracted onto Foundation Learning programmes are suitable and eligible.

The identification of learners who may benefit from a personalised Foundation Learning programme using the QCF is a key part of the information, advice and guidance (IAG) process.

You will need to consider the characteristics of the priority groups, working at entry level and level 1. You may wish to consider:

- the number of learners not achieving GCSEs at A*-C
- learners with special educational needs and those with learning difficulties and disabilities
- rates of those not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
- learners who are struggling to develop their English, mathematics and IT skills
- learners who would benefit from an entry level programme in FE
- learners who would benefit from a level 1 vocational programme in FE.

The IAG process and the initial assessment process are essential in determining learner suitability. You will need to consider how existing arrangements can be developed to ensure that they enable a learner's starting point and aspirations to be considered alongside local progression opportunities. As a provider, you will need to:

- determine that the learner genuinely needs a personalised programme at entry level or level 1 before progressing to higher level learning
- identify potential progression routes (including other providers who may be offering Apprenticeships, level 2 vocational qualifications or GCSE learning, or in some cases, offering provision for Supported Employment or Independent Living or further entry level or level 1 provision)
- plan personalised programmes based on the entry requirements for local level 2 learning programmes and other appropriate progression opportunities.

Learners are likely to seek advice as they consider an entry level or level 1 programme, informal advice from parents, carers, colleagues and friends as well as formal advice from IAG services and providers of learning programmes. As a provider you will need to consider how you can provide information to potential learners, their parents/carers and local organisations providing IAG.

Providers can support referral agencies in the recruitment process by:

- providing information about Foundation Learning programmes, including the range of qualifications offered
- providing information on possible destinations for learners and how their programme can support them in achieving a chosen destination
- describing the types of environments in which learning takes place, for example in the workplace, community, workshop or classroom settings
- producing information leaflets for prospective learners about Foundation Learning programmes
- providing open days for prospective learners
- offering short tasters to prospective learners
- providing familiarisation sessions for staff from referral organisations.

Increasing the knowledge and understanding of staff from referral agencies will help them provide appropriate IAG to prospective learners. Providers may find it useful to put in place formal working arrangements with referral organisations that support the recruitment process.

Promotional literature for Foundation Learning programmes should be regularly monitored to ensure that appropriate and accurate information is provided, equality and diversity are promoted and stereotypical images are avoided. Providers of Foundation Learning programmes should monitor the applications they receive by age, sex and ethnicity to ensure that they reflect the mix of the local community. Those groups that are under-represented may need to be targeted through additional marketing activities.

One procedure for selecting suitable applicants for Foundation Learning programmes will probably be by interview. Staff involved in these activities should be properly trained and it may be useful to prepare checklists to ensure a consistent approach is adopted with all learners.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Worcester College of Technology

At Worcester College of Technology, thorough IAG is provided for learners during the recruitment and referral stage through a rigorous interview process, which if appropriate includes collaborative working with external support organisations such as Connexions, housing associations and medical intervention teams. Learners are fully assessed and informed of the structure of the Foundation Learning programme and given clear guidance on learning outcomes and progression routes.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Total People

Total People has produced information leaflets for prospective learners. These provide information on:

- occupational sectors
- progression routes
- the qualifications learners will undertake.

Referral and recruitment

self check

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the box for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

- A** I know that this is in place in my organisation
- B** I know that this is not in place in my organisation
- C** I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
----------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

A process is in place for the recruitment and referral of learners to Foundation Learning programmes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A written procedure is available for staff that defines the recruitment and referral process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff are clear about their roles in the referral and recruitment process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruitment staff have the knowledge and skills to provide IAG to prospective learners in relation to Foundation Learning programmes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promotional information is available on Foundation Learning programmes for prospective learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agreements are in place with referral agencies that define roles, responsibilities and working arrangements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Referral agencies have been briefed about Foundation Learning programmes, including eligibility and suitability criteria, programme content and qualifications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arrangements exist for referral agency staff to visit the provider to learn more about Foundation Learning programmes and talk to learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information from referral agencies is passed to the provider to support the recruitment process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Equality and diversity monitoring of applicants for Foundation Learning programmes is undertaken to ensure that the learner cohort reflects the local community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Actions you might consider taking after completing this section:

- Identify eligibility and suitability criteria for learners.
- Produce promotional literature for learners regarding Foundation Learning programmes.
- Agree working arrangements with referral agencies.
- Discuss with referral agencies what information they would find useful regarding Foundation Learning programmes and agree the best ways to present this to them.

Induction

The purpose of induction is to welcome learners to the provider's organisation, and to help them understand what their Foundation Learning programme is about and to settle in quickly. Effective induction will help retain learners as their first impressions will shape their attitudes and motivation and affect their attendance, retention and commitment.

What should a learner's induction include?

Induction should provide accurate information about the provider and the content of learners' Foundation Learning programmes so that the learner knows what to expect. It should include:

- information about the provider:
 - where to go, including layout of building and facilities, recreational and eating areas
 - who's who - an introduction to key staff including tutors, support staff and IAG staff
 - the provider's policies and practices, including disciplinary and complaints procedures, rights and responsibilities, health and safety and equality and diversity policies
- information about the Foundation Learning programme, for example:
 - how destination-led programmes are designed with the involvement of the learner, taking account of their interests, aims and ambitions to support them in progressing to a suitable progression route
 - the three curriculum strands, developing vocational skills, knowledge and understanding; personal and social development; and functional skills
 - qualifications and units available within Foundation Learning programmes, including selection of unit options
 - credit and credit accumulation, including how learners will be able to gain access to their Personal Learning Record which records their achievements by using their unique learner number
 - the learner's timetable
 - how and when assessment will take place
 - the practical learning activities available, including work placements
 - initial assessment arrangements - what this is and what the benefits are for the learner

- progress review arrangements, including how often these will take place, who will carry them out and what they will cover
- conditions of training, including attendance hours, and arrangements for holidays and for reporting absence and sickness
- enrichment activities and opportunities, including what will be available through their programme and the provider's broader offer
- where the learner can access ongoing IAG and support.

Induction should also provide the opportunity to develop learners' understanding of equality and diversity; there should be regular discussions about this with the learner.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Yeovil College

Yeovil College provides a one-week induction for learners, which includes:

- information about the college and college orientation
- learners' rights and responsibilities
- information on the three curriculum strands
- information on enrichment activities
- information on the qualifications that learners will undertake
- information on the different sizes of QCF qualifications - Awards, Certificates and Diplomas
- an explanation of how credit is accumulated and can be transferred.

Learners may want to access information provided during induction and at a later stage during their Foundation Learning programme. This might be provided in the form of handouts, checklists or handbooks, or contained on data sticks. Suitably displayed posters might help reinforce key information.

Accrediting learning using QCF units and qualifications

It may be possible within the induction process to begin to use units from QCF qualifications to accredit learners' experiences. There are examples below of two QCF units which might support the induction process.

These units are included in many qualifications including ASDAN's entry level Certificate in Personal and Social Development. You can search on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ; <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>) to identify all the qualifications that include these units. The first unit is worth two credits and the second one is worth one credit.

M/500/8905 Equality/Diversity (E3)	
Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1 Understand some aspects of equality and diversity	1.1 Identify key features of equality (e.g. employment, housing, education etc) 1.2 Identify key features of diversity (e.g. ethnicity, gender, etc)
2 Understand fair and unfair treatment	2.1 Identify examples of fair treatment 2.2 Identify examples of unfair treatment 2.3 Identify examples of discrimination 2.4 Identify examples of prejudice 2.5 Identify examples of stereotyping 2.6 Give examples of ways to challenge unfair treatment
3 Be able to recognise diversity within communities	3.1 Identify diverse groups in local communities 3.2 Identify common needs of diverse groups

A502/0458 Individual Rights and Responsibilities (E3)	
Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1 Understand that they have individual rights and responsibilities	1.1 Describe an individual right which is relevant to them 1.2 Identify sources of support or information about rights and responsibilities 1.3 Describe a responsibility that they have for themselves 1.4 Describe a responsibility that they have to others

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Worcester College of Technology

Learners at Worcester College of Technology undertake a two-week induction process during which learners complete two QCF units: Planning for Progression (F/501/6878) and Contributing to a Team (T/501/6943) from the City & Guilds Award and Certificate in Employability and Personal Development. Both units are worth three credits and learners only need to gain an additional three credits to achieve an Award, or nine credits for a Certificate. These units relate to the personal and social development element of learners' Foundation Learning programmes and support them in integrating into their learning environment and identifying short- and long-term learning aims and goals.

How should induction be delivered?

Induction should be delivered in ways that will interest and engage learners and help ensure that they are memorable. Suitable methods include:

- ice breakers
- team building exercises
- trips or visits
- group work sessions
- practical hands-on activities
- computer-based activities
- group projects
- quizzes.

Learners' understanding should be checked during the course of induction and again at the end. This checking might be undertaken through quizzes, checklists or questionnaires. The learner's first review may offer a further opportunity to identify any areas that the learner still feels unclear about.

Timing of induction

Induction will begin at the point of entry and continue during the first few weeks of a learner's programme. Some providers see it as a longer continuum extending from when learners first receive advice and guidance before they start their programme through to their first review. The induction stage therefore becomes interlinked with the recruitment and initial assessment stages. It is important during induction that learners are given information in manageable chunks to help them learn and retain what they need to know.

Induction

self check

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the box for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

- A** I know that this is in place in my organisation
- B** I know that this is not in place in my organisation
- C** I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
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A clear process is in place for inducting new learners and all staff follow it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information is provided for learners about all aspects of their Foundation Learning programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information about the provider is given to learners during induction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity is developed during their induction programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Induction is delivered in ways that interest and engage learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning during induction is accredited using QCF qualifications and units wherever possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners are able to access information provided in induction throughout their Foundation Learning programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The understanding of learners is checked at the end of the induction process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners receive an additional induction in the workplace when they undertake work tasters or work experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feedback from learners is gathered about their induction experience and used to improve the quality of induction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Actions you might consider taking after completing this section:

- Plan an induction process for learners that is engaging and motivating.
- Consider how you can make induction personalised and individual to particular learners.
- Produce information and induction materials in suitable formats that learners can refer to throughout their programme.
- Identify QCF qualifications and units that can accredit learning during the induction process.

Initial assessment

Effective initial assessment is a learner-centred process to establish a skills profile of the learner and the destination that is most appropriate for them. This process is especially important for learning at entry level and level 1 as without it, it is not possible to understand learners and their needs fully, or to plan learning and support to help them succeed.

What does initial assessment involve?

A well-planned initial assessment process for a learner will:

- explore different progression destinations and agree the most appropriate for them
- explore future learning goals and aspirations
- identify prior achievements, qualifications and experience
- explore vocational preferences, aspiration and suitability
- identify the learner's personal and social development skills and needs
- identify the learner's current levels of mathematics, English and ICT
- identify the learner's preferred learning styles
- identify any additional support needs including any learning difficulties or disabilities, health or personal circumstances where the learner might require support
- identify any potential barriers to learning and achievement that need to be addressed.

How is initial assessment carried out?

Initial assessment will use a range of different methods including:

- one-to-one discussions
- self-assessment
- observed activities
- assessed activities or tests
- vocational tasters or projects.

Effective practice in initial assessment will use a combination of these methods. Referral agencies are likely to have gathered information from a potential learner before referral and with the person's agreement might be willing to share this information. Effective practice in initial assessment will involve building on what has gone before and not simply repeating the process.

Screening, initial and diagnostic assessment

Determining a learner's literacy and numeracy needs is commonly undertaken through a three-stage process:

- **Stage 1 Screening** - this is the initial process to determine learners who have literacy or numeracy needs and to identify those who would benefit from further assessments. Initial screening may take place at the interview stage for learners wishing to access a new programme.
- **Stage 2 Initial assessment** - once a learner has been identified with a literacy or numeracy need, an initial assessment should take place to determine their starting point and ascertain the general level that they are working towards. An initial assessment will identify a learner's skill against a level or levels within the national standards for literacy and numeracy.
- **Stage 3 Diagnostic assessment** - this provides a detailed assessment of a learner's skills and abilities against national standards and identifies strengths and weaknesses and highlights skills gaps. A diagnostic assessment indicates not only which level a learner needs to be placed within but also specific areas of work in which a learner needs to improve.

3
Since this example was written, bksb has developed initial assessment tools specifically for functional skills.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Yeovil College

Following recruitment, learners at Yeovil College take part in initial assessment activities, which includes assessment of:

- basic skills, using Basic & Key Skills Builder (bksb; www.bksblive.co.uk),³ plus additional assessments in writing skills as the functional skill in English qualification requires more writing than adult basic skills qualifications
- social skills, which are assessed initially through the interview process and reports from schools, where certain needs may be identified, e.g. attendance, drug or alcohol misuse, stress awareness, anger management and parenting skills; assessment of social skills continues throughout the first term through observation of behaviours and one-to-one tutorials
- vocational skills, when learners are assessed in their chosen vocational areas to ascertain skills levels and health and safety awareness.

A learner-centred approach

Initial assessment should be an engaging and positive experience for a learner. A truly learner-centred process will ensure that the learner understands what the process is about and the benefits for them, why they are being asked to undertake various activities and that the results of these activities are discussed with them.

Timing of initial assessment

Initial assessment activities will take place during the early part of the learner's Foundation Learning programme. The length of this stage will be determined by the needs of individual learners and how much information is received from referral organisations. Initial assessment activities are often combined with induction activities in order to make this an engaging process.

Accrediting the process

It may be possible within the initial assessment process to begin to use units from QCF qualifications to accredit a learner's experiences. Shown below are two examples of QCF units which might be used within the initial assessment process.

The unit below, owned by EDEXCEL, forms part of EDEXCEL's entry level BTEC Award in Workskills. It is worth one credit and could be undertaken during the initial assessment process. This unit features in eight different EDEXCEL qualifications. Search on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ; <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>) to identify all the qualifications that feature these units.

Unit F/501/6329 Self Assessment (E3)	
Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1 Know their personal strengths and weaknesses	P1 List their personal strengths and weaknesses
2 Know that they have useful skills and qualities	P2 Identify different skills and qualities they have P3 Identify some ways in which their skills and qualities can be used beneficially
3 Know about setting both short and long term goals	P4 Identify a long term goal P5 Identify some short term goals P6 With support, identify methods by which the short term goals may be achieved

The unit below, owned by ASDAN, forms part of ASDAN's entry level award (entry 3) in personal and social development. It is worth two credits and might be begun during the initial assessment process. The unit features in 16 different qualifications including those of other awarding organisations. Search on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ; <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>) to identify all the qualifications that feature these units.

Unit K/502/0469 Developing Self (E3)	
Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1 Take an active role in their self development	1.1 Describe personal strengths or abilities 1.2 Select an area for self development 1.3 Explain why this area is important for their self development
2 Be able to plan for their self development	2.1 Prepare a plan for their identified area of self development 2.2 List activities, targets and timelines for their self development 2.3 Plan how to review progress towards achieving their targets 2.4 Work through the agreed plan
3 Review their self development and plan for the future	3.1 Review their self development plan 3.2 Suggest improvements and amendments to the plan 3.3 Explain how they will continue with their self development in the future

Capturing the outcomes of the initial assessment process

Capturing the outcomes of the initial assessment process for each learner will be important, as this will provide the starting point to their learning programme and enable distance travelled at any point to be measured during the learner journey. This should include information about:

- the learner's planned progression route
- the learner's future learning goals and aspirations
- the learner's prior achievements, qualifications and experience
- the learner's vocational preferences, aspirations and suitability
- the learner's personal and social skills and development needs
- the learner's current levels of mathematics, English and ICT
- the learner's preferred learning styles
- the learner's additional support needs including any learning difficulties or disabilities, health or personal circumstances
- other barriers to learning and achievement that need to be addressed.

There should be sufficient information gathered to enable a comprehensive learning programme to be designed to meet the learner's needs.

Initial assessment

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the box for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

- A I know that this is in place in my organisation**
- B I know that this is not in place in my organisation**
- C I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.**

A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
----------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

A comprehensive initial assessment process is in place that establishes learners' starting points and progression destinations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A range of initial assessment methods are used to build a comprehensive picture of each learner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information is gathered from referral agencies to assist the planning of the initial assessment process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initial assessment is planned to take account of each learner's needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners understand the purpose and benefits of initial assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initial assessment is carried out in a positive way, which takes account of learners' strengths and areas for development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners receive feedback on the activities they carry out during initial assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experiences during the initial assessment period are accredited using QCF qualifications and units wherever possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The outcomes of initial assessment are captured within a suitable document for each learner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The outcomes of initial assessment are used to plan each learner's individual learning programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Actions you might consider taking after completing this section:

- Plan an initial assessment process for learners that captures their starting points and progression destinations.
- Consider how you can make initial assessment an engaging process.
- Explore how you would allow learners to join on a roll-on roll-off basis.
- Identify the methods you will use to identify learners' vocational preferences, aspirations and suitability.
- Identify the methods you will use to identify learners' personal and social development skills.
- Identify the methods you will use to identify learners' functional skill levels.
- Produce a simple document to summarise the main outcomes of the initial assessment for each learner.

Planning personalised learning programmes

4
QCDA/LSC (2009)
Foundation Learning Tier: 14–19 delivery guidance for 2009/10, August, http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/provider_delivery_guidance_august_2009_final_version.pdf

The design of a personalised learning programme, including size and level of qualifications expected to capture achievements, should reflect both the learner's intended destination and their starting point in terms of prior learning, achievement and qualifications identified through good quality initial assessment.⁴

Providers need to design personalised Foundation Learning programmes which will equip learners with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to allow them to progress from their starting point to their planned progression destination. The outcomes of the initial assessment process should be used to plan each individual learner's programme. Lack of a thorough initial assessment may result in learning programmes that do not meet individual learners' needs.

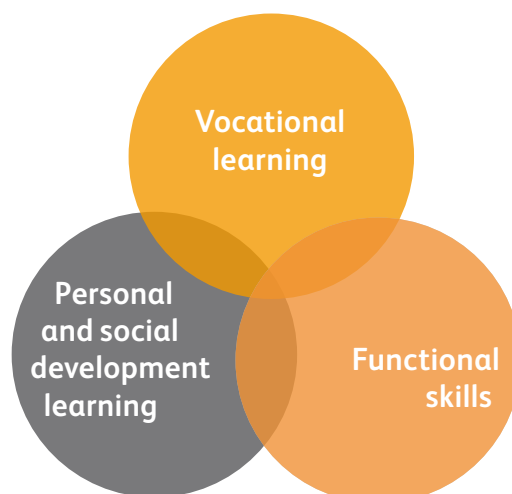
Programmes for individual learners are likely to differ in:

- length
- content
- context or setting
- weighting of the different Foundation Learning programme components
- QCF units and qualifications which recognise learners' achievements
- credit size.

Foundation Learning programme components

Learners will have the opportunity to undertake elements of vocational learning, functional skills and personal and social development (figure 2). The unique mix of these three areas will depend on the needs of individual learners. Where learners have already achieved the necessary threshold of achievement in one of the components, it is not expected that the individual will repeat that learning; however, they might seek achievement at a higher level.

Figure 2. Foundation Learning programme components



Selecting the appropriate size of qualification

There are three sizes of qualifications in the QCF:

- Awards (1 to 12 credits)
- Certificates (13 to 36 credits)
- Diplomas (37 credits or more).

The nesting of units within some qualifications allows for different sizes of programmes, as well as flexible delivery over different time periods according to the needs of learners.

Gaining units towards a City & Guilds Award

Within one provider, all learners undertake the City & Guilds Level 1 Award in Employability and Personal Development as part of their induction and initial assessment programme. To gain the Award learners undertake three units to gain the necessary nine credits.

To then gain the Level 1 Certificate in Employability and Personal Development, learners need to undertake two more units to achieve the necessary 15 credits. By undertaking a further two units at a later stage in their programme and 'cashing in' the credits that they have already gained, learners are able to achieve the next size of qualification – the Level 1 Certificate in Employability and Personal Development.

Selecting appropriate units

Each QCF qualification is made up of a range of units that learners will select from. In choosing which units to select, learners should be given information about:

- which units will help them address their individual needs
- how units can be combined to make up a qualification
- which units will help them progress to their chosen destination.

The wider the range of units that a provider can offer, the greater the personalisation of learners' programmes.

LEARNER CASE STUDY

Starting Point, St Helens

At Starting Point, St Helens, Anna's initial assessors determined that she needed help and support in developing a regular attendance pattern, time management, and improving her motivation, confidence and interpersonal skills. She also needed to gain some qualifications and work experience in order that she could gain full-time employment. Anna's programme was planned to take account of her individual needs and involved her undertaking the National Open College Network (NOCN) Level 1 Certificate in Progression and Level 1 Functional Skills in English, Mathematics and ICT. To achieve the NOCN qualification candidates are required to gain 21 credits and Anna has undertaken the following units, each of which is worth three credits:

- Developing Own Interpersonal Skills
- Preparation for Work
- Personal Career Planning
- Preparing for a Recruitment Interview
- Understanding Welfare at Work
- Work Experience
- Developing Customer Service Skills.

Determining the level of units within a qualification

Some QCF qualifications are made up of a range of units at different levels. The rules of combination specify how much learning needs to be undertaken at the level of the qualification. This allows learners' 'spiky profiles' to be addressed and can support progression to the next qualification level.

A learner scenario

Sarah needed 19 credits to achieve her City & Guilds Level 1 Certificate in Retail Skills of which a minimum of 12 credits needed to be at level 1. As part of her qualification she undertook a six-credit level 2 unit. She subsequently went on to undertake her City & Guilds Level 2 Award in Retail Skills, which required her to gain nine credits at level 2. As she had already gained six credits at level 2 she only needed to gain a further three credits to achieve the level 2 Award.

Recording the learner's Foundation Learning Programme

Learners should have a written individual learning plan (ILP) that identifies:

- their chosen progression destination
- the QCF qualifications which the learner will undertake and the selected units
- the planned total credit value of the qualifications and units being undertaken
- any additional learning and support objectives that cannot be met through accredited learning
- how and when learning will be undertaken and who will provide it
- arrangements for reviewing their progress.

5
LSC (2006) *E2E: a passport for E2E learners*, Learning and Skills Council, <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/LSC/2006/quality/goodpractice/nat-entrytoemploymetnpassport-gn-july2006.pdf>

Some providers preparing to switch from E2E have created a Foundation Learning 'programme agreement' document based on the 'E2E Programme Agreement', which was part of the E2E Passport⁵. They are using this agreement as an ILP. This is shown in figure 3.

Figure 3. Example of programme agreement for a Foundation Learning learner produced by Skillcom Consultants

FOUNDATION LEARNING PROGRAMME AGREEMENT – TO SKILLED WORK OR APPRENTICESHIP

SECTION 1 – YOUNG PERSON'S PERSONAL DETAILS

Young person's name		Date of birth	
Address		Emergency contact	
National insurance number		EMA ref number	
Unique Learner Number		Learning Start date	
Telephone number		Email	

SECTION 2 – YOUNG PERSON'S CHOSEN DESTINATION (tick one)

Apprenticeship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Skilled work	<input type="checkbox"/>
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SECTION 3 – YOUNG PERSON'S QUALIFICATION OBJECTIVES

A. VOCATIONAL LEARNING

Vocational Qualification Title and Number		Credit Value	Start Date	Date achieved
Unit number	Unit Title			

B. PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Vocational Qualification Title and Number	
Unit number	Unit Title

C. FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Qualification no.	Qualification Title	Credit Value	Start Date	Date achieved

D. TOTAL PLANNED CREDIT VALUE FOR ALL QUALIFICATIONS AND UNITS

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SECTION 4 – YOUNG PERSON'S ADDITIONAL PERSONAL OBJECTIVES (NON-QUALIFICATION)

Objective	Date achieved

SECTION 5 – LENGTH OF PROGRAMME, ATTENDANCE HOURS AND BONUS DETAILS

Expected length of time required to complete qualification and personal objectives:	
Hours of attendance per week:	
Bonus payment details:	

SECTION 6 – AGREEMENT

A. Young Person's Agreement
I confirm agreement of the objectives and anticipated achievement outcomes identified above and that I will attend my programme for the hours agreed.

Young person's signature		Date	
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B. Provider Agreement
I confirm agreement to provide the necessary training and support to meet the objectives and achievement outcomes identified above.

Provider staff member signature		Date	
---------------------------------	--	------	--

Planning personalised learning programmes

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the box for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

- A** I know that this is in place in my organisation
- B** I know that this is not in place in my organisation
- C** I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

	A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
--	---------------	-------------------	-------------------

Each learner has a clearly identified progression destination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Progression destination requirements have been identified to support the planning of each individual learner's programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Qualifications and appropriate units from within them are selected from the <i>Foundation Learning qualifications catalogue</i> ⁶ to plan each individual learner's programme and help them progress to their chosen destination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The qualifications that the learner plans to undertake are recorded on their individual learning record (ILR)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Each learner undertakes an appropriate amount of learning in each of the three curriculum areas to meet their individual needs and support their progression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Each learner has their own written ILP that identifies the qualification and units that they are undertaking, planned credit values and planned length of programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Each learner's starting point is taken account of when planning the length of their programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Where necessary, learners' additional learning objectives, which cannot be met by accredited QCF qualifications, are identified on their ILP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Actions you might consider taking after completing this section:

- Identify suitable qualifications from the *Foundation Learning qualifications catalogue*⁶ that can be used to plan individual learners' programmes.
- Identify progression destination requirements and take these into account when planning individual learners' programmes.
- Produce exemplar ILR and records to ensure that staff record accurately learners' chosen qualifications on their ILR and ILP.

⁶
QCDA (2009)
Foundation Learning qualifications catalogue, September,
www.qcda.gov.uk/resources

Teaching and learning

A positive learning experience for learners needs to take account of the context in which learning takes place; what needs to be learned – skills, knowledge and understanding; and the teaching and learning approaches that are to be used. Personalising the delivery of the learner’s programme is also necessary to offer a tailored programme in consultation with the learner, which will encourage motivation and bite-sized achievement.

Contexts for learning

Contexts for learning will vary according to learners’ interests and aspirations. Selecting an appropriate context can be a key factor in motivating learners. For example, many learners will need to develop employability skills. For some learners it will be appropriate to deliver these largely through the experiences and environment of a work placement; for others a classroom setting might be far more appropriate.

In the design of learners’ programmes it should be recognised that the same skills could be developed through different sectors. For learners who know the area of employment they want to enter, it might be appropriate for the programme to focus on a single sector. For those who are less certain about their destination, an option is to offer an employability qualification rather than a vocational qualification that will explore a range of sectors. Many QCF qualifications contain a variety of units, which can be used for learning in different contexts, including the workplace, the classroom and the community. Examples of units that can be used within work placement and community settings are shown below.

Understanding a Work Experience Placement – E3 (Y/500/5367)

This is a two-credit unit, which is owned by NOCN and features in a number of QCF qualifications. Search on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ; <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>) to identify all the qualifications that feature these units.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1 Demonstrate awareness of the organisation. (SLc/E; SLlr/E)	1.1 State the main activity of the organisation. 1.2 Give an example of one of the main jobs done within the organisation.
2 Understand own role within organisation. (SLc/E)	2.1 Name his/her role and identify the main task s/he will undertake. 2.2 Name own supervisor and their job title.
3 Maintain acceptable conventions for personal presentation and behaviour in the workplace.	3.1 Keep to agreed dress code. 3.2 Attend placement at agreed times. 3.3 Ensure own behaviour is appropriate.
4 Comply with safe working practices in the work environment. (SLc/E; SLlr/E)	4.1 Identify two major safety hazards. 4.2 Follow safety procedures and use given safety equipment as instructed. 4.3 Locate the First Aid Box. 4.4 Identify and locate the assembly point to be used during emergency procedures. 4.5 Name the person(s) to tell if there is an emergency or accident.
5 Carry out tasks as requested using appropriate work related skills. (SLc/E; SLlr/E)	5.1 Follow instructions to complete a given task. 5.2 Name one skill used to complete the task.

Community Project – E3 (M/501/6942)

This is a three-credit unit, which is owned by City & Guilds and features in a number of QCF qualifications. Search on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ; <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>) to identify all the qualifications that feature these units.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1 Be able to agree a suitable community project	1.1 List options for a community project 1.2 Agree a suitable community project
2 Be able to plan a suitable community project	2.1 List who will do what 2.2 Agree a suitable time frame 2.3 List any equipment and materials needed 2.4 Identify any help needed 2.5 Agree a suitable plan (with team members if working in a team)
3 Be able to contribute to a risk assessment for the project	3.1 List possible risks and hazards 3.2 Plan how to reduce any risks or hazards
4 Be able to follow the project plan	4.1 Carry out the tasks identified in the plan 4.2 Review progress with tutor (and team members if working in a team) 4.3 Revise plan as necessary 4.4 Work safely
5 Be able to review the project	5.1 List what went well 5.2 List what could have been improved

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Whatever the context for their learning, learners need structured opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding relating to each of the three curriculum areas, and to achieve the learning outcomes for the units that make up their individual programme. The balance between the three curriculum areas will depend on the individual needs and planned destination of each learner.

Many of the opportunities to develop functional skills and skills associated with personal and social development can be embedded in other aspects of the programme. Embedding functional skills can result in greater motivation and achievement. Embedding is most likely to be successful where vocational and functional skills and other teachers work together, through joint planning or team teaching, or both. Where 'free-standing sessions' are provided, the skills should be contextualised to make them relevant to learners' vocational or other interests.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

East Durham College

Houghall Campus of East Durham College has extensive grounds, a small animal care unit, stables and a working farm with large animals. These facilities provide learners with hands-on experience of working with animals, which is supported with visits to land-based employers.

Learners develop functional skills in engaging ways. For example, learners studying mathematics and IT have weighed animals, then monitored their food intake and weight gains and programmed their growth curves into a PC. As part of functional English they write letters to organise industrial visits.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Adult Community Learning, Essex

Learners at Adult Community Learning in Essex develop their functional skills by taking part in activities such as stocktaking and producing menus for the canteen.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Peterborough Regional College

At Peterborough Regional College, functional skills are delivered in two ways: through classroom teaching and by being embedded into vocational contexts. For example, maths skills are practised when learners weigh ingredients and work out recipes.

‘Expert’ learners

For learners to continue to progress and become lifelong learners, they need to develop not only their skills and knowledge, but also certain behaviours and attitudes. The following characteristics are associated with the ‘expert learner’ and learners will need opportunities to develop them.

Expert learners:

- believe they can learn
- have good study and learning skills
- are able to reflect and evaluate
- know where they want to get to
- know how to get there
- know when to ask for help
- are self-motivating and prepared to have a go
- are able to work independently
- are adaptable and flexible
- are persistent and don’t give up.

Being an expert learner is not associated with level or ‘academic’ ability – all learners can begin to develop these characteristics and skills. The teaching and learning approaches you use can help them to do this.

Approaches to teaching and learning

For learners to achieve their learning goals they need to be motivated and involved in their learning. It is critical to select and deploy the ‘right’ teaching and learning strategies in order to engage learners. This is true for all learners, especially those who have had a poor experience, encountered failure or become disengaged.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

East Durham College

East Durham College is delivering its Foundation Learning programme to 25 16–18 year olds through land-based contexts. This aspect of the course is seen as a ‘motivational tool’ and variety in the curriculum has led to increased learner motivation. The opportunity to attend overnight lambing sessions has proved highly motivating for many learners.

Personalised learning

Personalised learning is at the heart of Foundation Learning and is one of eight identified characteristics for effective delivery⁸. It encompasses:

- tailoring learning to meet the needs and aspirations of individuals
- engaging learners in the learning process in order to promote ownership of their learning experience
- enabling learners to start their programmes at any point in the year
- catering for young people in work who will participate in some kind of accredited learning as the school leaving age increases.

All learners have an ILP with learning goals based on their particular interests, needs, achievements and abilities. Some learners need additional support in certain areas. Their need may arise from a learning difficulty or disability, from another disability, or from literacy, numeracy or language support requirements. Other learners already have well-developed skills and need more challenge to enable them to progress further.

When planning teaching and learning you can support learners in meeting their personal goals in a number of different ways, through:

- planning whole group teaching to take account of learners' different strengths, needs, interests and learning preferences
- identifying differentiated learning outcomes that allow some learners to achieve a skill (or a unit) at a higher level or to achieve additional skills
- devising activities that allow learners to move forward at their own pace, with extra resources for those who need support and extension activities for those who work more quickly
- planning activities that release the teacher to work individually with learners and provide support or extra challenge where needed
- using learning support assistants to provide additional support for learners with particular learning or personal needs.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

East Durham College

Personalisation is key to East Durham College's Foundation Learning programme. The timetable includes one-to-one tutorials and an additional tutor has been drafted in to ensure ILPs have a focus towards learners' aspirations in relation to their work experience and employment. The college is currently identifying each learner's preferred type of work experience. Learners are building up the profiles of the work they want to do and what they have to accomplish to make this possible.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Peterborough Regional College

At Peterborough Regional College, personalised learning has been built in to the delivery of the EDEXCEL Award and Certificate in Workskills; the sequence of units has been chosen around individual learners and their needs.

Active learning approaches

Active learning approaches are learner centred. They involve and motivate learners by getting them to make discoveries and experiment with knowledge first hand, instead of hearing or reading about the experiences of others. Research shows that active learning approaches bring about better recall, understanding and enjoyment. Learners are also better able to transfer their learning to new situations enabling them to develop new skills and insights. By developing these skills and attributes, learners will be better equipped to meet new challenges in their progression to employment or further learning.

All those involved in delivering the Foundation Learning programme, not just classroom-based teachers, can use active learning approaches by devising meaningful, relevant tasks that actively involve learners.

Active learning approaches include:

- trying experiments, case studies and role-play
- using authentic data and primary sources of information
- planning work experience, work-based projects and job shadowing
- including visits and visiting speakers
- using technology to facilitate and support learning
- encouraging learners to develop their reasoning through discussion, using open questions and prompts to support, challenge or move them on in their thinking
- encouraging learners to ask each other questions.

Reflective learners

Active learning is not simply about getting learners to do things. Reflection is an essential feature of active learning and needs to be built in to activities. Through reflection, learners develop a deeper understanding of how they learn, as well as what they learn, and are better able to transfer learning to new situations.

Learners need to reflect on:

- what they have learned
- how they have learned
- how they can apply or extend that learning
- what they need to do to overcome any barriers to their learning.

Here are some questions you might ask learners to think about to encourage reflection after completing an activity:

- What was new to you during that activity?
- What do you feel more confident about after doing that activity?
- Which skills do you think you have developed as a result?
- What did you find most challenging about that activity?
- What do you want to know more about?
- How will you use what you have learned to approach opportunities, challenges or tasks in the future?

Assessment for learning

Assessment for learning is about checking learning and giving feedback. It is an active learning approach that has been proved to be one of the most effective methods of improving learners' performance. Constructive feedback has also been shown to have a profound influence on learners' motivation and self-esteem. Effective feedback tells learners:

- what they are doing well
- where they can improve
- what steps they can take to make those improvements.

Assessment for learning should involve teacher and learners in review and reflection, and actions that lead to improved performance. One-to-one reviews are an obvious opportunity to do this but assessment and feedback should be built in to all teaching and learning activities.

The process does not always have to be teacher-led; learning activities can include self or peer-assessment. Computer-based tasks, if carefully designed, can also build in feedback that encourages learner reflection and improvement.

Assessment for learning is a two-way process. Teachers can use what they learn from feedback to adapt their approaches to support learning better.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Provider A

Provider A's numeracy tutor delivered a session on using graphs. She included a card activity where the learners had to match different types of graph. The learners responded well and appeared to have a good grasp of how to use pie and bar charts. The tutor finished the session with a short quiz to check their learning.

The teacher was surprised to find that 8 out of the 11 learners were clearly confused about how to read a pie chart. When planning for the next session she started with a practical activity to practise reading pie charts. She divided the learners into groups with the three who had a good understanding of pie charts supporting the other learners.

Support for teachers in developing their teaching and learning

9

The LSIS Excellence Gateway has a range of CPD activities at www.excellencegateway.org.uk/search.aspx?o=search&ss=CPD+active+learning+approaches&lb=10&ub=19

Teachers who are new to Foundation Learning need support in developing or adapting their approaches and resources to meet the needs of learners. Foundation Learning providers can give support by:

- organising training sessions or identifying web-based CPD activities that introduce active learning approaches⁹
- providing opportunities for team members to share ideas and experiences and learn from each other
- using observation schemes to identify good practice and areas for development.

Teaching and learning

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the box for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

- A I know that this is in place in my organisation**
- B I know that this is not in place in my organisation**
- C I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.**

A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
----------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Learning opportunities are provided in a range of contexts, for example in a workplace, college or community, to meet learners' needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
QCF units have been mapped to identify which can be achieved through each context	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Where units are available at different levels, learners are able to achieve the unit at the level that is appropriate for them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Embedded and contextualised opportunities exist for learners to develop functional skills, personal and social skills, and other skills that will support their progression and help them to become lifelong learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Approaches to teaching and learning that focus on personalised and active learning have been agreed by the delivery team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessment for learning is a central feature of our teaching and learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When planning group sessions, the needs and abilities of different learners are taken into account	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners have access to additional support where appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are CPD opportunities for team members to develop their skills, including opportunities to share practice on their teaching and learning approaches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners are invited to give both formal and informal feedback on teaching and learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Actions you might consider taking after completing this section:

- Identify different contexts in which learning will take place.
- Identify appropriate QCF units you can use to accredit learning, which may include achievement at different levels.
- Investigate different approaches to teaching and learning, and CPD and learner resources at <http://t1p.excellencegateway.org.uk/teachingandlearning>
- Find out more about embedding functional skills at <http://sflip.excellencegateway.org.uk/woa.aspx>
- As a team, plan the teaching and learning approaches you will use and consider how you will work together to deliver the three curriculum areas.

Progress reviews

The purpose of carrying out reviews with learners following Foundation Learning programmes is to monitor and measure the progress they are making, including their progress towards their qualification aims in each of the three curriculum components: vocational learning, functional skills and personal and social development.

A progress review is an opportunity for learners with their tutors to:

- take stock and reflect
- give and receive feedback
- celebrate and record successes, whether formally accredited or not
- reshape their Foundation Learning programme if necessary
- identify and address areas where action is needed
- put in place extra help and support if necessary.

Accrediting learning

It may be appropriate for some learners to seek to accredit the skills they develop as part of the review process using QCF units. The example below shows an ASDAN QCF unit, which is available at entry level 2, entry level 3 and level 1, allowing the needs of different learners to be met.

Action Planning and Reviewing – E2 (R/500/8851)

This is a two-credit unit, which is owned by ASDAN and features in seven QCF qualifications. Search on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ; <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>) to identify all the qualifications that feature these units.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
1 Be able to set goals and related targets.	1.1 Identify two targets to achieve your goal. 1.2 Identify who will support you.
2 Be able to make an action plan.	2.1 Identify actions to achieve targets. 2.2 Identify resources needed to achieve the outcome.
3 Be able to follow an action plan.	3.1 Take action to follow the plan.
4 Be able to review an action plan.	4.1 Identify if actions are meeting targets at the end of each task. 4.2 Identify achievements.

Frequency of reviews

Learners often present learning needs that require their progress to be reviewed frequently. The frequency of reviews depends on the particular needs of individual learners, although every learner should have a review at least every four weeks.

Who to involve

Partnership is at the heart of Foundation Learning programmes and different staff, employers and agencies are likely to contribute in some way to a learner's programme. It is important that all relevant parties also contribute to the learner's review even if they cannot be physically present. The learner's tutor needs to ensure that there are detailed, up-to-date records, which they can draw on during a review.

Preparing for the review

Thorough preparation is the key to a successful review. This means not only preparing the necessary paperwork and gathering any additional information that might be needed, but also making sure the learner is prepared. If learners are to be active partners in the process they need to understand the purpose of the review and the process that is involved. They should know what they want out of the review and come prepared with any questions they need answering. If they have agreed targets and actions at their previous review they need to check how far they have got with them. Where learners are seeking accreditation for their action planning and reviewing skills, they need to identify evidence and bring it to the review.

It is likely that learners will be introduced to the review process and its purpose as part of their induction programme. However, they will probably need further practice and support to help them develop the skills to make the most of their review. The ability to listen and respond to feedback, ask questions, reflect and self-evaluate are among the skills they will need. Some learners may feel awkward or challenged in one-to-one settings and may need to start by simply relaxing or practising maintaining eye contact. Whatever the skills a particular learner needs to develop, there should be opportunities to practise and reinforce them before and after reviews.

The physical environment is important. There needs to be a quiet, private space where you will not be interrupted. Key sources of information should be readily available.

During the review

It can be helpful to start the review by setting an agenda. This might include reminding the learner of the purpose of a review, negotiating with the learner topics and issues that need to be covered in the course of the review and allocating time for action planning. There may be specific items the tutor wants to introduce or reinforce, for example health and safety issues or aspects of equality and diversity.

An important part of the tutor's job is to involve the learner fully in the review. Asking open-ended questions will help the learner to reflect on their learning and identify the progress they have made. Each learner will have their own accreditation goals, with targets and actions to enable them to make progress towards them. Targets should be reviewed and revised, or new targets set, relating to their achievement of their goals. Where learners are seeking accreditation for their action planning and reviewing skills this part of the review process can produce first-hand evidence that they have met the required assessment criteria.

Although it is important to refer to the learner's specific targets and accreditation goals, this should not be restrictive or prevent wider discussions, particularly where the learner has identified questions they want to ask.

There may be specific matters the review needs to address, including issues of behaviour or motivation. Specific techniques like the use of motivational dialogue can help learners confront and address these.

At the end of the review

It is effective practice to end with a reminder of the outcomes of the review. The learner should be encouraged to summarise, or to help summarise, what they think they have achieved and any actions that they and the tutor have agreed to carry out. The learner should have a copy of the review record as their personal record and reminder.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Worcester College of Technology

At Worcester College of Technology, progress reviews take place at least every four weeks and include Connexions personal advisers and other key support workers as well as the Foundation Learning supervisor. Reviews aim to monitor learners' progress, encourage and support discussion around barriers to learning or other issues relating to support needs, recognise and celebrate success, focus on IAG on vocational routes and set SMART targets for achievements to be met before the next review. Learners are also encouraged to review and discuss health and safety and equal opportunity issues.

Progress reviews

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the box for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

- A** I know that this is in place in my organisation
- B** I know that this is not in place in my organisation
- C** I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

	A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
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Reviews are underpinned by clear processes and recording mechanisms, which all contributors are aware of	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relevant QCF units have been identified to accredit the skills and knowledge learners acquire as part of the review process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The frequency of learner reviews is set to meet individual learners' needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Review preparation includes bringing together all the relevant information needed to provide a full picture of the learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Where appropriate and possible, other contributors are invited to be present at the review	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners are encouraged to reflect on their progress and their goals and take an active part in their review	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners receive accurate, constructive and personalised feedback during their review; successes are celebrated, and areas for improvement and any support needs are identified	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feedback is a two-way process and learners are encouraged to identify aspects of the programme that are going well and those that we could improve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners' targets and actions are reviewed against progress and achievements; targets are adjusted if necessary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The outcomes of the review are clearly recorded and the learner receives a copy to remind them of the progress they have made and actions they have to take towards new targets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a focus on the bigger picture and the contribution each review makes to the learner's overall learning journey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Actions you might consider taking after completing this section:

- Identify learning resources that you could use to help learners develop the interpersonal and communication skills they need to make the most of a review.
- Identify units that you could use to accredit the skills and knowledge learners acquire through the review process.
- Identify any development needs members of your team have in relation to learner reviews.
- Find out more about how to use motivational dialogue as an approach to learner reviews at <http://tlp.excellencegateway.org.uk/tlp/personalisation/md/resource/>
- Visit the Ofsted Good Practice Database at <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/goodpractice> and search for examples of good practice in learner reviews.
- As a team, plan how you will record, store and share information relating to your learners' reviews.

Assessment

It is important to identify all relevant assessment opportunities so that learners have the best possible chance of achieving the units and qualifications they need for progression. That said, assessment is not an end in itself and should not be seen as something that is 'done to' learners. Assessment should involve the learners and motivate them. The assessment process can also serve as a vehicle for helping learners to develop personal skills such as self-evaluation and reflection.

Planning for flexible assessment

As we have seen in the earlier section 'Teaching and learning', contexts for learning vary according to learners' interests and aspirations and might include the workplace, the classroom and the community. Whatever the context or contexts for learning, it is likely there will be opportunities to assess learning relating to all three curriculum areas.

A learner's work placement might provide assessment opportunities to assess not only the vocational skills identified in their programme but also aspects of functional skills. It is likely that the work placement will require learners to demonstrate a range of personal and social skills, which could be accredited formally through units such as the QCF unit identified on page 25 (Understanding a Work Experience Placement – E3 (Y/500/5367)).

Learners will typically have 'spiky profiles'. They may:

- have relatively low levels of skill in one area and relatively advanced skills in another
- make rapid progress in one area and need to be assessed at a higher level
- take longer to learn in another area and need more frequent assessment opportunities
- already have relevant knowledge, skills and understanding that have not been formally accredited.

Assessment will need to be flexible to respond to these different needs. It may be possible to identify assessment opportunities that span different levels and relate to different units of achievement so that learners who make rapid progress can be presented with more challenging targets and be assessed at a higher level if appropriate. There should be opportunities for learners with appropriate prior knowledge and skills to take the relevant assessments and gain unit credit for their learning.

Developing recording and tracking systems

It is likely that a number of different agencies and partners will be involved in delivering Foundation Learning programmes. It will be important, therefore, to devise recording and tracking systems that are transparent and workable for all parties.

All those involved need to be familiar with the assessment procedures and relevant assessment criteria for units they deliver. They will need to identify opportunities to generate evidence, plan assessment activities and be clear how to record learners' progress and achievement.

Involving the learners

It is important that learners know what they are going to be assessed on and the methods of assessment that will be used.

The way in which learning outcomes and assessment criteria are expressed can sometimes appear complex and may need simplifying for learners.

Providers need to ensure that learners are familiar with, and confident in, the use of different assessment methods. For example, in the case of functional skills where learners take external tests, they will need opportunities to practise the tests, both informally and under exam conditions. Where online assessment is used, learners will need opportunities to familiarise themselves with and practise using the relevant software.

Providers will need to identify which methods of presenting evidence are most appropriate for their learners so that this aspect of assessment does not pose as a barrier. For some, audio or video recordings or photographs will be more appropriate than written evidence.

It is important to remember that assessment is a process not an end product and that ways of involving learners should be identified. This might include asking learners to take part in self- or peer-assessment activities, which will help them to become familiar with the assessment criteria. It will also provide an opportunity for learners to develop skills of self-evaluation and reflection, or communication skills such as giving constructive feedback.

Assessment for learning should be used as part of a provider's teaching and learning approaches so that learners receive regular feedback on their progress and have the opportunity to give their own feedback to teachers.

Assessment

self check

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the box for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

- A I know that this is in place in my organisation**
- B I know that this is not in place in my organisation**
- C I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.**

A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
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Opportunities have been mapped across Foundation Learning programmes to gather evidence and assess learners in relation to their QCF units	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All available learning opportunities are used to identify and record a learner's achievements and progress towards their goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Frequent opportunities are provided for assessment to allow for learners' different rates of progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clear systems are in place for recording learner assessments and achievements, and all members of the team are aware of them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners are familiar with and understand what they will be assessed on and how they will be assessed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learner reviews are used as an opportunity to monitor learners' progress and assess their performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A variety of methods are used to assess learners and collect evidence in a range of ways appropriate to their particular needs, for example observation records, videos or photographs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessment for learning is part of our teaching and learning strategy so that learners get regular feedback to help them improve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self- and peer-assessment are encouraged as a valuable learning process, which can help learners develop important skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Actions you might consider taking after completing this section:

- Identify assessment mapping and evidence gathering opportunities relating to learners' units and qualifications across all aspects of their programme.
- Identify key roles relating to assessment within your team.
- Visit your awarding organisation's website to check specific details of the assessment approach used with their QCF qualifications and to find out what support and training they provide.
- Explore the Quick Start guide at http://tlp.excellencegateway.org.uk/tlp/pedagogy/assets/documents/qs_assessment_learning.pdf to find out more about assessment for learning and how this can be used to motivate and involve learners.
- Devise clear systems for planning and recording learner assessments so that their achievements and progress can be tracked and evidenced.
- Brief and train, where appropriate, all those involved in delivering the Foundation Learning programme so that they understand their role in undertaking assessments and are familiar with the recording systems.
- Ensure there are opportunities for standardising assessment and for sound internal verification systems, with training for staff where needed.

Achievement

The LSC measures the achievements of learners in relation to whether or not they achieve the qualifications which have been registered on the learner's ILR in field A09 as their learning aims.

Measuring achievement

The achievement of qualifications should be a key aim for learners on Foundation Learning programmes.

Gaining qualifications can increase learner confidence and enable them to demonstrate that they meet entry requirements for higher level courses or have the necessary skills for particular job.

The achievement of qualifications by learners is also a key factor in evidencing the effectiveness of providers. Data on qualifications achieved is used by both the YPLA and Ofsted and it is therefore essential that providers make it a key aim that learners achieve their qualifications. They should also ensure that they collect and return accurate data on qualification completion.

Although progression destination data is not currently a YPLA performance measure for Foundation Learning programmes, achieving positive progression is a key aim for learners on Foundation Learning programmes. At some point in the future, it may be used for performance or funding decisions. Providers are therefore advised to record destinations accurately on ILRs and the reasons that learning ended.

Credit success rates may also be used for funding and performance measures in the future. Providers are now required to record on learners' ILRs the total planned credit for all the units and qualifications that they are undertaking and the actual credit achieved.

In order to track learners' achievement during learners' programmes and at the end of them, and to ensure accurate completion of ILRs, providers need to collect and record unit and qualification data.

Tracking Learner Progress

To track the progress of learners, one provider has developed a simple one-page tracking sheet that records all the QCF units that the learner is undertaking and marks off those achieved. This enables learners and providers to see quickly how much of their Foundation Learning programme they have completed to date and how much is left.

Learner	Anne Wilson
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VOCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING

BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Business Administration

Units selected	Credit value	Date started	Date achieved
Working in Business Administration	3	2/2/09	28/2/09
Preparing and Storing Business Documents	4	8/2/09	5/3/09
Working in Reception	4	2/3/09	
Recording Business Transactions	4		

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT LEARNING

NOCN Level 1 Award in Progression

Units selected	Credit value	Date started	Date achieved
Managing Your Own Learning	3	5/1/09	22/1/09
Using Team Work Skills	3	5/1/09	22/1/09

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

	Credit value	Date started	Date achieved
Functional Mathematics (entry 3)	5	28/1/09	
Functional English (level1)	5	28/1/09	18/3/09
Functional ICT (level 1)	5	28/1/09	

Providers will also find it useful to produce regular management reports that show:

- the achievement of units and qualifications
- the achievement of component parts of Foundation Learning programmes
- the destinations that learners progress to
- how the achievement of qualifications supports progression destinations
- the achievement of actual credit against planned credit.

These reports will support management decision making, and in ongoing monitoring and review, inform the provider self-assessment process and form part of the provider's quality improvement arrangements.

Achievements other than QCF qualifications

Although the focus on accredited qualifications is fundamental to Foundation Learning programmes, in order to ensure that learners' programmes have currency and that they have real progression opportunities, it is important to recognise that learners will have also acquired skills and attributes that will help them in their future progression. For example, learners will have developed:

- organisational and time management skills
- learning and study skills
- the ability to reflect and self-evaluate
- self-motivation and persistence.

There may have been opportunities to accredit these, but whether or not they are accredited it is important that learners are aware of and value these skills and attributes. Knowing that they can organise themselves and plan their work will give them confidence at the next stage of their learning or employment. To be able to articulate this will stand them in good stead when applying for jobs or voluntary work.

Achievement

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the box for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

- A** I know that this is in place in my organisation
- B** I know that this is not in place in my organisation
- C** I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

	A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
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Recording systems are in place that track learners' unit, qualification and credit achievements during the Foundation Learning programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff are aware of how the YPLA measures the success of Foundation Learning programmes and how this contributes to the provider factor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ILRs accurately record data on the qualifications learners are undertaking and what they have achieved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The total planned credit value of a learner's individual Foundation Learning programme is recorded on their ILR	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Training opportunities are available to help staff complete ILRs accurately	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management reports detailing learner achievement are produced regularly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foundation Learning managers use management reports to support decision making, and in ongoing monitoring and review, and inform the provider self-assessment process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners are encouraged to reflect on and value their achievements during their Foundation Learning programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learners' achievements are celebrated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Actions you might consider taking after completing this section:

- Establish systems to track learners' achievements.
- Read Information Authority guidance regarding completion of ILRs.¹⁰
- Read YPLA guidance on Foundation Learning programme success measures.¹¹
- Establish systems to produce monthly management reports which show learners' achievements.

¹⁰
See www.theia.org.uk

¹¹
See www.ypla.gov.uk/aboutus/ourwork/funding/funding-foundation-learning

Progression

Foundation Learning aims to support improved engagement, participation, achievement and progression through entry level and level 1 towards level 2.

For learners aged 14–19, progression is usually expected to be:

- Apprenticeships or skilled work
- Vocational qualifications
- GCSEs/A-levels.

For learners with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities, progression to supported employment or independent living might be a more appropriate route.

Learners' destinations should normally be defined within the first six weeks of their programme.

Ensuring that learners can progress positively depends on many factors, including effective practice during each stage of the learner journey, as outlined in each section of this guide, and effective leadership and management. It is particularly important that organisations that can offer progression opportunities have effective working arrangements.

One of the key benefits of Foundation Learning programmes is that they focus on progression right at the start of a programme and do not wait until learners reach the end of their programme before considering what happens next. Learners' programmes are specifically designed to support learner progression and take account of what learners need to progress positively.

These are some examples of different ways to support a learner to progress during the course of a programme and then move on to an appropriate destination:

- introducing joint curriculum development with colleagues delivering level 2 programmes
- engaging employers in the design of learners' programmes
- using structured vocational tasters to support learners to make informed choices about their future learning
- introducing 'buddying' and mentoring systems
- providing opportunities for learners to achieve higher level learning units within their programme
- developing partnership arrangements to build progression routes
- providing job search training.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Total People

Total People in Middlewich, Cheshire, has designed a Foundation Learning programme that supports learners who want to progress to an Apprenticeship in Business Administration. Foundation Learning staff worked closely with colleagues in their organisation who delivered training to Business Administration Apprenticeships to identify what qualifications might usefully support those learners who wanted to go on to an Apprenticeship. They also asked employers what qualifications they felt would assist learners in gaining employment in business administration.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Knowsley College

Knowsley College has found the following to be effective in supporting learners in progressing from entry level and level 1 programmes to higher level programmes including apprenticeships:

- providing opportunities for tutors on other programmes to become more aware of the learning needs of learners at entry level and level 1
- developing clear progression routes for learners in each of the vocational areas to give each learner a clear goal
- enabling learners to make an informed choice about their destinations having accessed structured vocational taster programmes.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

City of Wolverhampton College

City of Wolverhampton College has introduced the following initiatives to support learners in progressing to level 2 programmes:

- a 'buddying' system, whereby learners can attend level 2 learning sessions in their chosen area with the support of a 'buddy' – an existing learner who has volunteered to support and mentor a level 1 learner
- a 'readiness' agenda, to determine whether learners are 'classroom ready', 'learning ready', 'role ready', 'work ready' or 'success ready'. College staff felt that this approach would prepare learners for the reality of level 2 provision and increase the success rates of transition from level 1 learning to level 2 and beyond.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Highbury College

To support adults to continue and progress in learning, Highbury College in Portsmouth has given adults the opportunity to achieve higher level learning outcomes in their existing course. This has helped build learners' confidence by showing them that they are capable of achieving at a higher level.

As a result of this approach, learners are able to demonstrate an understanding of the challenges of level 2 provision. Tutors also have more opportunities to personalise learners' experience and enable them to fulfil their potential in each area of the course at a pace that suits them.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Oakmere Community College

Oakmere Community College has created effective progression routes for learners through its innovative approach to partnerships. By working closely with a number of Apprenticeship providers, it has tailored its provision to ensure that young people are suitably prepared to cope with the demands of Apprenticeship programmes. This has involved extending partnerships with employers and providers to determine what learners need to be able to do to succeed.

Through a range of partnerships and service-level agreements with other providers in the area, Oakmere has significantly expanded the scope of its provision to include plastering, tiling, landscaping, brickwork, painting and decorating, ICT, catering, dance, drama and sport. Oakmere also offers personal and social development and enrichment activities.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

PETA Ltd

PETA Ltd, a training provider in Portsmouth, has produced a comprehensive job search pack to support the progression of learners to further study or employment. The pack is interactive and includes sections on presentation skills, questions that are likely to be asked at interviews, useful checklists for learners and a glossary of terms that might be used to describe skills on a CV.

The pack exemplified good practice in each area with, for example, exemplar letters of application and a template for learners to develop their own applications.

PROVIDER EXAMPLE

Tameside College

Tameside College has adopted a successful mentoring model used with E2E learners to support learning and progression within Foundation Learning programmes.

Each learner is assigned a mentor and a one-hour contact slot on their timetable when they meet each week. This allows the mentor to check progress with the learner, discuss evaluations of their performance in sessions and address any personal issues or practical problems such as finances or absences. This is supported by a more formal progress review once every four weeks.

The benefits of the mentoring system are that it:

- allows any issues that might have an impact on retention to be dealt with quickly
- provides an essential point of coordination for all aspects of the learner journey
- allows a holistic approach to the learner's experience it is not just about the qualifications.

To help ensure that learners maintain their progression route, providers might want to consider what arrangements they need to put in place to support transition to the next destination. Effective methods identified from programmes such as E2E, where achievement is measured in relation to learner progression, include:

- programmes planned and documented with learners to support them for eight weeks after they have left their programme
- access to a range of methods to support transition, including telephone, text, e-mail, face-to-face meetings in and outside the new learning environment, and training centre drop-in sessions
- risk-banding learners who may be more vulnerable during the transition period and providing additional support.

Progression

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the box for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

- A** I know that this is in place in my organisation
- B** I know that this is not in place in my organisation
- C** I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

	A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
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Staff understand the range of possible progression routes for 14-19-year-old learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local organisations that can offer appropriate progression opportunities have been identified	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We have effective and agreed working arrangements with organisations that offer progression routes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entry criteria for level 2 learning opportunities have been used to inform the design and delivery of Foundation Learning programmes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entry criteria for level 2 learning have been specified to reflect QCF and functional skills achievements within Foundation Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff are aware of those factors that contribute to learners progressing positively at the end of their Foundation Learning programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transition support is available to support learners as they move to their agreed destination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arrangements are in place so that learners' progression routes are normally identified within the first six weeks of their Foundation Learning programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Actions you might consider taking after completing this section:

- Review the range of local organisations you are working with to identify those who can offer progression opportunities.
- Run a staff workshop to explore barriers and enablers to learner progression.
- Consider approaches to curriculum development which support learner progression across qualification levels.
- Review your prospectus and entry criteria to ensure that they are consistent with Foundation Learning using the QCF.

Useful resources

Latest funding information from YPLA at

www.ypla.gov.uk/aboutus/ourwork/funding/funding-foundation-learning

LSC/QCDA (2009) Foundation Learning Tier: 14-19 Delivery

Guidance for 2009/10, Learning and Skills Council and

Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/provider_delivery_guidance_august_2009_final_version.pdf

LSC/QCDA (2009) Foundation Learning Tier: Interim Guidance,

Learning and Skills Council and Qualifications and Curriculum

Development Agency

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/Foundation_Learning_Tier_Interim_Guidance_Document.pdf

QIA (2008) Managing delivery of functional skills,

Quality Improvement Agency,

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/126267>

A wide range of resources, information and publications on the Foundation Learning is also available at

www.excellencegateway.org.uk/foundationlearning including:

- *LSIS (2008) Getting started: a guide for colleges and providers preparing for implementation*, Learning and Skills Improvement Service,
www.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=256564
- *LSIS (2009) Functional skills in the Foundation Learning Tier*, Learning and Skills Improvement Service,
www.excellencegateway.org.uk/pdf/Functional_Skills_in_the_FLT.pdf
- *LSIS (2009) Getting started: the Foundation Learning Tier at Key Stage 4*, Learning and Skills Improvement Service,
<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=264791>
- *LSIS (2009) What is the Foundation Learning Tier?, Quick guide*, Learning and Skills Improvement Service, May,
<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=256567>

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