

How good is our community learning and development?

Self-evaluation using
quality indicators

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These are both exciting and challenging times for communities and organisations engaged in community learning and development. Following the 1998 report *Communities: Change Through Learning*, community learning was recognised as an approach to working with communities which is practised by many organisations and agencies. It is increasingly planned and delivered through partnership working based upon community learning strategies and plans. There is widespread recognition of the major contribution that community learning and development can make to social inclusion, active citizenship and lifelong learning.

This document is designed to help practitioners and managers from a wide range of interests in their self-evaluation of community learning and development activities and in exercising their responsibilities for quality assurance. It includes a set of quality indicators suitable for use by providers of community learning and development as well as in external evaluation by HM Inspectors. This set of indicators accordingly provides an opportunity to develop and continue a productive partnership to improve the quality of this important field of education.

The indicators in this document are described as 'quality' rather than the former 'performance' indicators to reflect the qualitative nature of the judgements to be made and to distinguish them from straightforward quantitative or statistical measures. They encapsulate the best practice seen by HM Inspectors in recent years and take full account of the current climate and direction for community learning and development. The focus of the indicators is on provision for community learning and development in a geographic area or in a specific aspect of provision in a larger area or across an entire agency boundary. However, they will also be relevant to community learning strategy partners and those involved in community planning.

The opportunities for community learning and development have never been greater. The approach to quality assurance suggested in this publication will help providers of community learning and development to meet these new challenges successfully.



Douglas A. Osler

HM Senior Chief Inspector

Acknowledgements

HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) developed the set of quality indicators on which this publication is based.

The examples and tools featured are based on approaches in a range of organisations that are exploring self-evaluation in community learning and development. A number of individuals, local authorities, voluntary organisations and others offered valuable insights during the consultation phase and in preparing the final draft.

The aim of this publication is to help you evaluate the quality of provision of community learning and development. It is based around a set of quality indicators to help you to:

- recognise key strengths
- identify areas where good quality needs to be maintained or where improvement is needed
- identify priorities for your community learning partnership
- report on the quality of provision of community learning and development.

It will be of interest to both the main provider of community learning and development and a range of other agencies and voluntary organisations who work in this area.

Three basic questions are at the heart of the process of evaluation.

How are we doing?

- asks us to consider how we are performing in relation to the aims and objectives we have identified
- suggests how self-evaluation can help us.

How do we know?

- describes the use of quality indicators to measure how we are doing within key areas of provision
- indicates reference points for evaluation.

What are we going to do?

- describes how to report and take forward what we know about standards and quality.

This publication is in five parts.

Part 1 provides a step-by-step approach to the self-evaluation of community learning and development drawing on the three basic questions above. It discusses the complementary roles of external and self-evaluation and describes how quality indicators can be used within quality assurance and service planning.

Part 2 provides practical guidance and case studies on using quality indicators in self-evaluation.

Part 3 contains the quality indicators.

Part 4 gives information about further sources of advice on using quality indicators.

Part 5 suggests some tools you can use in self-evaluation.



This section introduces the basics of self-evaluation. You may well be acquainted with these basic principles, but they are reproduced here as a reminder.

○ How are we doing?

Effective practitioners reflect on the quality of provision in community learning and development. HM Inspectors report regularly on the quality of provision in local areas within local authorities. Best Value and the implications of quality models such as the Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and Investors in People (IIP) have encouraged reflection and data gathering.

This publication seeks to help community learning partners, managers and practitioners answer the question *How good is our community learning and development?*

Introduction to evaluation

Self-evaluation means taking the initiative to understand and assess the work that you do. It is a way of learning from experience so that resources can be used in the most productive and effective way.

By regularly evaluating your programme of work you can:

- learn systematically from experience
- improve short-term and long-term planning
- assess how your organisation is performing
- improve your decision making in regards to the allocation of resources, the training of staff and volunteers, and the overall management of provision
- maximise both overall effectiveness and staff's capacity to improve and innovate.

To be fully effective, self-evaluation should be an ongoing process rather than an add-on activity carried out at one particular point in the year. You should build in both the criteria and the arrangements for evaluation from the earliest planning stages of an activity. Self-evaluation should always lead to quality improvement.

The *Learning Evaluation And Planning* scheme (LEAP), 1999 was developed by the Scottish Community Development Centre to assist partners in community learning and development systematically plan and evaluate their work. When embedded in the planning process, LEAP will provide evidence to support self-evaluation and external evaluation.

A good provider of community learning and development knows:

- what it is aiming to do
- whether it is meeting its aims successfully
- what needs to be maintained or improved
- whether changes are working.

If a provider then acts on this information, it is well on the way to having a good quality assurance system. Self-evaluation is at the heart of quality assurance.

The self-evaluation process

To be effective, the self-evaluation process requires staff, volunteers, managers and users of services to reflect on the quality of each aspect of provision.

It involves:

- a **broad view** of performance across what are known as Key Areas
- a **closer look** at specific areas viewed as successful or causing concern.

By reviewing all Key Areas over a number of years, providers of community learning and development are able to use clearly defined measures of success to see what needs to be improved or maintained.

How does self-evaluation link with planning?

In order to plan effectively you need to know how you are doing. Therefore, effective self-evaluation provides a strong basis for good planning.

Planning takes place at all levels within community learning and development. Priorities are identified nationally and community learning partnerships establish local priorities taking account of their own circumstances. Providers of community learning and development use this information as a basis for developing their own priority projects and targets for action. This process is informed by robust audit of need, particularly for priority groups.

Each local authority area has a community learning strategy partnership. These partnerships bring together providers of learning opportunities, voluntary organisations and representatives of communities, to deliver learning programmes and activities more effectively. The main providers of community learning and development within the local authority are charged with co-ordinating the partnership. A wide range of organisations, whose primary role is not educational, also adopt a community learning approach for part of their work.

The themes and objectives of community learning strategies are implemented through community learning plans. This publication can be used within community learning partnerships, particularly if they are using the LEAP model. Overall, self-evaluation helps you to make better planning decisions.

What are the links between self-evaluation and evaluation by HMIE?

We all need to have an external measure of how we are performing. Evaluation of performance in community learning and development is carried out nationally by HMIE, but only of local authority provision. Evaluation by HMIE covers exactly the same ground as self-evaluation, using the indicators and language covered within this publication.

The particular importance of self-evaluation lies in locating ownership of the improvement process with those participants, staff, volunteers and managers who have a direct involvement in the work. The indicators and themes in this publication have been developed in consultation with experienced practitioners and try to take account of the diversity of community learning and development. Some elements may not directly apply to the context in which you work. Equally, there may be aspects of your work which are not fully covered by the indicators. This self-evaluation framework can be modified to suit the context you are working in.

When HMIE use this framework for inspection, they are focusing on two key features. They want to be satisfied that the work contributes as well as it can to meeting the needs of learners and other participants in community activities, and that external inspection can contribute to the further improvement of community learning and development across Scotland.

What are the links with Best Value?

Best Value is concerned with both quality and cost. Building on experience over the past few years, local authorities will soon be required by legislation to pursue continuous improvement in performance in a way that maintains an appropriate balance between quality and cost. The philosophy and practice of Best Value can be extended more widely to public sector agencies, including some partners in community learning strategies.

This self-evaluation framework provides a useful foundation for Best Value reviews. Evidence gathered through both the self-evaluation process and from external HMIE inspections is likely to be of considerable use to services that are being reviewed in relation to Best Value.

What are the links with other quality development frameworks?

Many local authorities are developing approaches to quality assurance and improvement based on self-assessment and accreditation systems such as EFQM, *Investors in People* or *Charter Mark*. These systems, like the quality indicators within this publication, are based on the principles of self-evaluation and continuous improvement and are consistent with the local authority's Best Value obligations. All these models share with *How good is our community learning and development?* a belief in the importance of improving standards of provision and achievement, and a desire to provide the best possible service to the communities we serve.

HMIE intend to make materials available which show the links between the quality indicators and the criteria for EFQM, *Charter Mark* and *Investors in People*. These materials will provide support for those involved in community learning and development who are working towards assessment or recognition within these quality development frameworks.

The quality improvement model for voluntary organisations, *The Big Picture*, developed by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations is of particular interest to community learning and development. It is founded on EFQM and is a well-designed package which helps organisations review their performance in areas such as planning, financial management, governance and customer satisfaction. It enables organisations to ask questions about how they work, how they could do better, and to promote quality improvement.

What is the relevance to key policy areas?

Community learning and development is a major contributor to a wide range of policy areas across social inclusion, active citizenship and lifelong learning. It is therefore important to have clarity about the linkages between this evaluation framework and these areas, particularly in relation to evidence gathering.

Social justice is at the heart of the work of the Scottish Executive and its partners. The social justice milestones set out 29 targets for reducing poverty and injustice for children, young people, families, older people and communities. Community learning and development activities contribute directly and indirectly to achieving many of these improvements. Providers, therefore, need to be aware of how their work contributes to this. This is particularly important when partners are developing the outcomes they seek from community learning plans and how they will measure success.

The recent investment by the Scottish Executive aimed at improving levels of adult literacy and numeracy links social justice and lifelong learning priorities. Community learning partnerships are central to delivering outcomes for learners in respect of individual, family, work and community life through outcome agreements with the Scottish Executive. The good practice framework in *Literacies in the Community* provides a specific quality improvement focus for this work, based on indicators and levels which are consistent with the self-evaluation framework.

The national priorities in education set out the Scottish Executive's key objectives for school education. Community learning and development activities with young people seek many of the same learning outcomes as the national priorities and the self-evaluation framework should assist in evaluating how well this is being achieved.

Community learning and development has a key role in promoting active citizenship and in community regeneration. Emerging legislation in respect of community planning places considerable emphasis on community involvement and empowerment in improving public services and the quality of community life. The self-evaluation framework provides a basis for establishing how well we are doing in building community capacity.

○ How do we know?

We can see how we are doing by comparing our achievements with the expectations expressed nationally, within our service plan and the community learning strategy. This can be done using the quality indicators in Part 3, supported by other evidence such as the results of needs assessment exercises and satisfaction surveys.

Quality indicators help us make judgements on the quality of community learning and development provision. They relate to a range of factors which influence the effectiveness of participants' learning and over which the provider has some control. The quality indicators help us to:

- judge the quality of performance against a set of criteria
- identify areas which require detailed investigation
- highlight best practice for further dissemination
- enable service managers to come to decisions about the overall pattern of strengths and weaknesses in the service's performance.

When coming to a judgement about performance using these indicators, we may refer to a number of sources of evidence.

The quality indicators in Part 3

The set of quality indicators in Part 3 provides comprehensive coverage of the key aspects of community learning and development. These indicators can be used:

- within a whole provider audit to identify areas for action
- within partnership working, particularly community learning partnerships
- to ensure a clear focus on the achievement of outputs and outcomes
- to take a broad view of the performance of a team as part of the planning process
- to take a closer look at a specific area within a regular cycle of self-evaluation
- to follow up issues arising from participant views and formal evaluations
- to monitor progression, and evaluate the implementation of, priority projects within the service or team plan
- to evaluate quality in relation to a single issue of concern which may be specific to the area or relate to a national or local priority.

We can use the indicators to answer the following questions, which also underlie the HMIE inspection process:

- how effective is the provision of personal development programmes for adults and young people?
- how effective is the support available to build community capacity in communities?
- how well is community learning and development managed and resourced?
- how effective is progress with partnership planning?

Using national criteria, based on a broad consensus, encourages consistency and provides a common language for discussing the quality of community learning and development.

How do we use quality indicators in self-evaluation?

These quality indicators can be used to evaluate at four levels of performance. These levels, which are used by HM Inspectors in external evaluation, are:

Level

4	<i>very good</i>	– major strengths
3	<i>good</i>	– strengths outweigh weaknesses
2	<i>fair</i>	– some important weaknesses
1	<i>unsatisfactory</i>	– major weaknesses

In the complex context of community learning and development there are many ways in which provision can merit a particular evaluation. It will always be necessary to use professional judgement in arriving at an overall evaluation. The *illustrations* in the quality indicators are there to help to create a shared insight into the balance of strengths and weaknesses which would correspond to each of the four levels. They assist users to find examples of best practice to inform planning for quality improvement.

- An evaluation of **very good** applies to provision characterised, overall, by strengths. There are very few weaknesses and any that do exist do not diminish the learner experience. The illustrations in the quality indicators are based on HMIE experience of best practice across the sector. They reflect a high standard of provision that should be achievable by all community learning partnerships. An evaluation of *very good* will imply that it is fully appropriate for a provider and its partners to continue its provision without significant adjustment. However, it would always be expected to continue to take advantage of opportunities to improve.
- An evaluation of **good** applies to provision characterised by a number of strengths. There are weaknesses, but neither singly nor collectively, do they have a significantly adverse impact on the learning experience. An evaluation of *good* may be arrived at in a number of circumstances. For example, provision may make for a productive learning experience but it may not provide fully consistent challenge. Typically provision will be characterised by strengths, but one or more weaknesses reduce the overall quality of the learning experience and will require to be addressed. In most cases it is likely that the partnership's existing processes of planning for improvement will be able to encompass the necessary changes.
- An evaluation of **fair** applies to provision which may have a number of strengths but also important weaknesses which are sufficient either individually or collectively to diminish the learning experience in significant ways. In general, an evaluation of *fair* will imply the need for specific and planned action on the part of the authority and its partners.
- An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** applies when there are major weaknesses in provision, requiring urgent remedial action on the part of the provider. The learner experience is inadequate in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for provision evaluated as *unsatisfactory* will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This may involve working alongside effective peers from within or outwith the provider's staff.

Using quality indicators in self-evaluation simply enables staff and volunteers to ask the right questions. They do *not* represent a set of answers. It can also be very useful to look at patterns of evaluations across particular indicators, as these can help to identify whether a particular strength or weakness is localised or replicated across an area. This can help staff to focus on the underlying causes of weaknesses, and identify appropriate staff development priorities, or resource allocations. Over time, trends can indicate whether a particular action has brought about the improvement sought.

When to use the quality indicators

The broad view

You might scan across all the quality indicators each year, assigning one of the four levels to each indicator on the basis of professional judgement. This process of shared reflection could be carried out within a community learning partnership or in particular geographic areas, themes or teams. It should be based on readily available evidence and will give immediate feedback on areas of major strengths or concern.

Taking a closer look

The broad view will give you the overall picture. However, you might also take a closer look at specific areas, referring to a wider range of evidence:

- provision by all partners in a community learning plan area
- the quality of literacy and numeracy provision
- monitoring and evaluation leading to quality improvement.

Whether you are taking a broad view or a closer look, it is essential that you come to an overall evaluation using the four levels: very good, good, fair and unsatisfactory. This is where external evaluation by HMIE can help. Their assessment, based on evaluation of provision across a large number of community learning partnerships, provides the important process of moderation. This moderation assures you that your judgements are accurate and that your expectations are appropriate and sufficiently challenging.

You can find reports of community learning and development inspections from across Scotland on the HMIE website. The website also publishes information about further sources of advice on using quality indicators.

○ What are we going to do next?

Drawing on the answers to the questions *How are we doing?* and *How do we know?* you should be on the way to planning for improvement and producing your own report on standards and quality.

In your standards and quality report, you will be providing more detail about the results of self-evaluation. You should find the four levels of performance useful in giving your report rigour and in helping you to go beyond providing description to providing real evaluation. These four levels should enable you to make qualitative statements like:

Most learners made good progress and recognised their achievements ... or ... almost all classes showed important weaknesses in assessment procedures ... or ... although there was good practice in project work, the quality of staff input was fair overall.

A good self-evaluation report should:

- recognise key strengths
- identify levels of service to be maintained
- identify development needs and priorities, and set targets.

Reporting on standards and quality is integral to the process of planning and self-evaluation. You should report according to the cycle set down by your community learning partnership and share your report with all interested parties. The report also provides an agenda for discussion with senior officials and elected members. HMIE will use it as a starting point for their own external evaluation. Finally, it can be used when planning appropriate support from partner agencies.

Once strengths and weaknesses have been identified, providers need to agree:

- how to capitalise on strengths, for example by sharing good practice across the partnership, or replicating good practice more widely
- the order of priority in which weaknesses will be addressed
- the responsibilities, tasks and timescales for action to improve quality
- a systematic monitoring process to ensure that improvement is taking place.

The focus should be on identifying the action that will successfully address each weakness. Providers should review and reflect on all evidence and agree the specific causes of weaknesses. The agreed action points should be expressed as SMART targets, describing the action in terms that are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timed

This will lead naturally to consideration of resource requirements and responsibility for co-ordinating and leading the action. In most cases, these considerations will also be relevant to prioritising and sequencing action.

It is important that you adopt a wide-ranging and open-minded approach to planning for improvement. Some issues will only be fully resolvable at a senior level. However, you should also consider whether partial improvements can be achieved meantime, through action that is within your capacity.

Finally, you should reflect honestly on the following points.

- Have we addressed all weaknesses which require urgent action?
- Have we planned for longer-term improvement in other areas which require action?
- Are the actions proposed likely to lead to quality improvement?
- Do all relevant partners have ownership of the changes being proposed?

The aim should be to secure commitment to achieving significant and realistic improvements, the need for which has been identified through a process of self-evaluation involving all key players.



○ How to use Part 2

Part 2 is in five sections. It provides both general and specific advice on how you might use the quality indicators printed within Part 3.

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○ Quality Indicators

The quality indicators are organised into an overall framework of *Key Areas*.

Key Areas

There are 5 *Key Areas* relating to the main aspects of the work of a community learning and development provider.

1. Personal development (applied separately to provision for young people and adults)
2. Building community capacity
3. Ethos and values
4. Resources
5. Management, planning and quality assurance

Quality Indicators

Each *Key Area* contains a number of quality indicators.

e.g. Ethos and values

- 3.1 Climate and relationships
- 3.2 Expectations and purpose
- 3.3 Values

Themes

Each quality indicator has a number of themes relating to observable areas of activity.

e.g. Values

- empowerment of participants
- focus on inclusion and equal opportunity
- working with others

Illustrations

Each theme is illustrated at two levels (Level 4 very good and Level 2 fair) indicating specific features to look for.

e.g. focus on inclusion

- The promotion of inclusion and equality of opportunity are strongly evident in the work of the service. Staff always consider measures to promote participation by excluded groups. This is evident in marketing, in when and where activities are planned and in offers of support. Activity programmes are designed to ensure equality of access.

Illustrations are intended to help create a shared understanding of the balance of strengths and weaknesses which correspond to each of the four levels. They are based on HMIE experience of best practice in the particular aspect of provision concerned and should make it easier for users to find examples of best practice to inform planning for improvement.

○ How to use quality indicators

The three basic questions can guide you through the process of evaluation.

How are we doing?

- Agree what you are going to focus on, referring to the expectations within the community learning strategy, community learning plan or service plan.
- Define the area of activity, focusing on a particular theme, activity, approach or geographic area.

How do we know?

- Select appropriate quality indicators.
- Use the illustrations to develop questions to be answered during the evaluation process.
- Identify features to look for, referring to relevant national or local guidance or adapting other examples.
- Decide what evidence you need to show that these features are present and effective.
- Collect the evidence and judge the quality of what you have observed, referring to the illustrations at both Level 2 and Level 4 to come to a balanced overall judgement.

What are we going to do now?

- Identify key strengths and areas which require improvement.
- Provide feedback to staff and partners, and offer them the opportunity for further comment.
- Report on the standards and quality of what you have observed.
- Identify priorities to be included in your improvement plan.

What are you going to look for?

Quality indicators may be applied at the level of:

A whole service or partnership	e.g. Values (QI 3.3)
A team or CLP area	e.g. Engagement and support (QI 1.1)
A specific piece of provision	e.g. Delivery (QI 1.3)
A theme or context	e.g. Developing skills and confidence (QI 2.2)

As they are designed for use in a range of contexts, indicators use general terms which are applicable in each.

How are you going to find the evidence?

There are a number of ways of collecting evidence.

Ask people what they think

- Individual interviews
- Group discussions
- Working parties
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Written responses and detailed comments
- Team meetings
- Public meetings
- Taking time at the beginning or end of an activity

Look at documentation and resources

- Learners' work
- Staff reports
- Diaries or records of work
- Minutes of meetings
- Programmes of activities or schemes of work
- Forward plans
- Progress reports on the community learning plan
- Materials used
- Policies and guidelines
- Evaluation and monitoring reports

Observe directly

- Shadow individual learners
- Attend a class or group
- Observe direct delivery by staff and volunteers
- Work alongside colleagues
- Attend community-run events

Analyse data

- Attendance statistics
- Certification levels
- Progression rates to other learning
- Value-added measures of performance
- Contextual information, both local and national
- Audit of need
- Evaluation/monitoring returns
- Financial information

○ Taking a broad view

Self-evaluation across all key areas

Every so often it can be helpful to stand back and consider the question with which this publication began: *How good is our community learning and development?* All those involved in the provision of services may have a role to play:

- the community learning partnership as a whole
- the lead officer responsible for community learning and development
- senior managers
- individual teams, departments or sections
- the community served by the provision
- partner agencies involved in community learning and development.

How are we doing?

Every year you might scan across all the Key Areas and assign one of the four levels to each quality indicator. Use your professional judgement and refer to evidence that has been gathered in the normal course of your work. You do not need to look in detail at everything that is going on. Concentrate on the main areas of activity. You can then record the evidence alongside the relevant quality indicator. Remember that you are not just recording possible sources of evidence, you are recording evidence you have actually examined during the course of the year.

How do we know?

However you decide to work, the aim should be to promote objective and open discussion founded on evidence. Hence our key question, *How do we know?* Set out one of the four levels of performance against each indicator, perhaps using a grid similar to the one in the example shown below.

No.	QI and Themes	Level	Evidence to support assigned level

When you have finished, you can see at once which quality indicators have been evaluated at level 4. These indicate your key strengths and should be recognised as such.

You can also immediately identify those assigned a level 2 or 1. These are, or should be, priorities for improvement within your community learning plan. You can take a closer look at these areas using the method described later in Part 2, in order to identify the contributing factors. If there are several areas for improvement, you will need to select the most pressing when agreeing priorities with partners.

An example of how you might take a broad view

This example illustrates one way of taking a broad view. There are, of course, other ways of managing the process. The example is based on practice within a community learning partnership. The partnership:

- set aside part of a staff development day or time within community learning partnership meetings
- gave each person, provider or team a different Key Area
- aimed for all of the Key Areas to be covered during the course of the year by more than one group
- asked each group to assign a level of performance to each QI within the chosen Key Area
- asked them to support their judgement by noting, for example, three pieces of evidence.

The partnership used this approach when noting evidence to support the following assigned levels:

- When awarding level 4, staff noted three examples of good practice.
- When awarding level 3, staff noted two examples of good practice and one area for improvement.
- When awarding level 2, staff noted one example of good practice and two areas for improvement.
- When awarding level 1, staff noted three areas for improvement.

There is nothing particularly significant about the number three and no implication for the balance between number of weaknesses and strengths in any particular evaluation. However, using an approach similar to this when taking a broad view encourages you to be selective and to focus on the major factors contributing to success or weakness.

This method of working:

- can save time by giving you enough firm evidence for you to be able to act without having to take a closer look at the area in question
- allows all the partners in a small geographic area to look at one Key Area in each evaluation session and cover all Key Areas over an agreed period of time
- collates evidence under each quality indicator or theme
- assists the community learning partnership to agree which quality indicators or aspects still need a closer look to ensure that the evidence is firm and that the methods of collection of evidence are appropriate and rigorous.

○ Taking a closer look

Self-evaluation of a specific area

Choosing an area of focus

There may be a number of reasons for you to take a closer look at some aspects of a provider's work. Specific issues might have arisen while taking the broad view, when carrying out routine monitoring, or as the result of an HMIE inspection. Taking a closer look is also an integral part of community learning and organisational planning. You will probably wish to look at some area of provision every year. Similarly, the progress and achievement of participants is likely to remain an area of focus, the emphasis on different aspects changing from year to year. Other Key Areas or quality indicators may only be reviewed every three years or so, if the quality of provision has been evaluated as good or very good.

Carrying out the evaluation

The evidence on which you base your judgements must be reliable and withstand external scrutiny. When you take a closer look, you will be moving beyond staff views and other easily accessible evidence and focusing on a wider range of sources. Some of this evidence you may need to search for or set out to find. Although scrutiny of documentation may form one stage in the process, it is what happens in practice which really matters. Evaluation often involves assessing the perceptions of participants, community groups and the wider community. The approach must be manageable.

- Limit the area of focus and select key features in advance.
- Do not expect to see everything or try to evaluate too much.
- Decide who is to manage and co-ordinate the evaluation and who is to be involved.

When you summarise the results, try to reflect both quality and quantity. It is common for some aspects to be delivered well across the partnership whilst others are not. This information will be essential when planning for improvement.

Some common factors in good practice include

- Tracking the use of quality indicators over a three-year cycle.
- Evaluating any area judged level 2 or lower each year until performance improves.
- Identifying the strategies which may have contributed to areas becoming strengths.
- Using a team approach to evaluation where possible.
- Involving staff from other partners in supporting and moderating evaluation.
- Recording meetings where evaluation took place or was discussed.
- Surveying participants in activities where appropriate.
- Taking partner agencies' views and organising discussions with partners, community groups and others.
- Discussing the results of evaluation and identifying action to bring about improvement.

○ Taking a closer look: examples

The following examples are based on good practice identified by HMIE over recent years. They do not represent the practice of any particular agency, rather a compilation of approaches. Neither are they the only good examples. You should use these as a guide but ensure that any approach you decide to adopt is suitable to your local circumstances.

○ Taking a closer look at assessment as part of activities

Context: The community education team decided to review the effectiveness of the procedures to assess and record progress by participants in CBAL (community-based adult learning) groups.

How are we doing?

Focus: the team wanted to know how effective their procedures were for assessment and recording of progress in community-based adult learning.

How do we know?

The CEW chose one of three themes in QI 1.5 Assessment as part of activities: Assessment methods and arrangements for recording.

The team reviewed the procedures used for recording achievement in terms of:

- the consistency with which they were used
- their appropriateness to the learning activities
- their relevance to the participants
- their effectiveness in stimulating reflection by the participants.

What are we going to do now?

- Staff used the assessment and recording procedures as a focus for monthly reviews of progress.
- Tutors included feedback sessions as an integral element of the learning activity and recorded learners' suggestions and comments.
- Staff conducted individual and focus group discussions with participants to discuss the relevance of assessment activities.
- An individual record of achievement was piloted in two classes.

Next steps

- ✓ Confirm with staff that they need to use the existing assessment and recording procedures.
- ✓ Review the processes used to assess progress in activities involving a degree of risk.
- ✓ Review the way in which staff introduce the assessment procedures to participants in non-formal learning programmes.
- ✓ Investigate the practicability of introducing a portable record of achievement for participants in non-formal learning activities.

○ Taking a closer look at targeting socially excluded groups

Context: A higher than average number of young parents live in this area. The community learning partnership and childcare partnership have carried out a variety of needs assessments which have identified a gap in provision for these young parents. Targeting this group has been identified as a priority in the community learning plan for the area.

How are we doing?

Focus: the community learning partnership wanted to know if the existing provision for young parents was meeting the needs of this group.

How do we know?

The following quality indicators were used:

- QI 1.1 Engagement and support
- QI 1.2 Learning opportunities
- QI 1.4 Learning experience
- QI 1.6 Participant achievement
- The worker attended the parent and baby clinic in collaboration with the health visitor and accompanied him on a series of home visits to the more vulnerable young parents.
- These young parents were invited to attend an open morning in the health clinic.
- The worker and health visitor worked together to organise a crèche and programme for the day. The worker arranged to pick up some of the young parents by minibus.
- An in-depth review was carried out with interested agencies and people, in order to identify the next steps.

What are we going to do now?

- The worker discussed the results of the review with partners involved.
- Partners agreed to compile information and advice about other learning opportunities.
- Staff encouraged participants to establish a network of support to reduce feelings of isolation.

Next steps

The review identified the following next steps:

- ✓ The young parents wanted to establish a support group, which would meet in the local community centre once a week. The worker agreed to identify funding to provide a crèche.
- ✓ Further learning needs were identified which included development of computing skills, child development, first aid and confidence building. It was agreed to negotiate a programme to cover these topics.
- ✓ Six young parents signed up for a computing course being run by the local college.
- ✓ The young parents were concerned about road safety and a lack of safe play facilities in their local area. The worker has agreed to work with an interested group on these issues.

○ Taking a closer look at needs assessment

Context: Local staff decided to evaluate the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of recent needs assessment activity in a geographic area. This was done as preparation for a community learning plan.

How are we doing?

Focus: the service wanted to know if their approach to needs assessment was producing results that fully reflected the diversity of the community. In particular they wanted to ensure that disadvantaged and excluded groups were engaged with the process.

How do we know?

- Staff selected the following indicator: QI 2.1 Work with communities to identify their needs.
- Staff gathered up-to-date demographic data on the community in question and interviewed key agencies working with disadvantaged groups. These agencies included the careers company, voluntary care organisations and the community council.
- The team leader analysed contact data from the needs assessment exercise to determine which sections of the community had participated.
- The team leader prepared a grid in which illustrations of appropriate themes from the quality indicators were turned into questions. She adapted columns for 'features to look for' and 'evidence', together with space for comment and self-evaluation. This was discussed with staff.
- Staff from another team were used to interview staff involved and a selection of partners using this grid. They also interviewed key community representatives to discuss their involvement.

What are we going to do now?

- The team leader discussed the evaluation of performance with the staff directly involved.
- Staff discussed the findings and prepared an action plan to improve performance.
- The team leader presented the findings at a senior management team meeting to ensure the wider lessons were learnt, and cross-authority training needs were identified. The information was also presented at a full staff meeting.

Next steps

- ✓ Training on needs assessment methods was delivered to all staff.
- ✓ Accurate demographic profiling was used in future to develop sample frames for needs assessment and consultation exercises.



No.	Quality indicator	Themes	4	3	2	1
	Personal development					
1.1	Engagement and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reaching excluded groups and individuals ● promotion of learning opportunities ● information and guidance for learners 				
1.2	Learning opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● range and relevance ● articulation ● design 				
1.3	Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● staff planning and preparation ● facilitation of learning ● support for learners 				
1.4	Learning experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● extent to which the learning environment stimulates and motivates learners ● negotiation of learning activities and outcomes ● responsibility for learning ● variety, challenge and creativity 				
1.5	Assessment as part of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● assessment methods ● arrangements for recording ● use of assessment information 				
1.6	Participant achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● achievement of specific learning outcomes ● achievement of core and life skills ● application of learning in other contexts ● participants' awareness and understanding of their learning 				
Building community capacity						
2.1	Work with communities to identify their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● needs assessment ● focus on excluded groups 				
2.2	Developing skills and confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● training and development for community leaders ● support for active community members 				
2.3	Promoting participation in community affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● support for volunteering ● support for community self-help ● openness and accountability of organisations 				
2.4	Assisting communities to exercise power and influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● support for community organisations ● community influence and representation ● assisting communities to provide and manage services 				
2.5	Monitoring and evaluation as part of building community capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● monitoring and evaluation methods ● arrangements for recording ● use of monitoring information 				
2.6	Community achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● strength and vitality of community organisations ● impact on the development of social capital ● contribution to achieving social justice 				

Note:

The quality indicators for personal development will be used twice by HM Inspectors during external evaluation, once for work with young people and once for adult provision. When looking at personal development activities you should also consider their contribution to building community capacity.

No.	Quality indicator	Themes	4	3	2	1
	Ethos and values					
3.1	Climate and relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sense of identity and pride ● reception and atmosphere ● staff morale ● participant/staff relationships 				
3.2	Expectations and promoting achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● participant and staff expectations ● strategies to promote an ethos of achievement 				
3.3	Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● empowerment of participants ● focus on inclusion and equal opportunity ● working with others 				
Resources						
4.1	Accommodation and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sufficiency, range and appropriateness ● arrangements to ensure health and safety 				
4.2	Provision of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sufficiency of available finance ● sufficiency, range and suitability of resources 				
4.3	Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● provision of staff ● experience, qualifications and expertise of staff 				
4.4	Effectiveness and deployment of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● effectiveness of staff and teamwork ● deployment against priorities ● deployment of support staff 				
4.5	Staff review and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● links between staff review and development and self-evaluation and planning ● staff review procedures ● staff development 				
4.6	Organisation and use of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● use of resources ● arrangements for managing finance ● attracting external investment 				
Management, planning and quality assurance						
5.1	Community learning planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● context for planning ● scope of plans ● planning process ● the impact of planning 				
5.2	Self-evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● processes of self-evaluation ● reporting on standards and quality 				
5.3	Planning for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the team plan ● planning improvement 				
5.4	Partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● range of partners ● staff role in partnerships ● impact of partnership working ● external communications 				
5.5	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● leadership qualities ● professional competence and commitment ● relationships with people and development of teamwork 				

1.1 Engagement and support

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *reaching excluded groups and individuals*
- *promotion of learning opportunities*
- *information and guidance for learners*

Level 4 Illustration

- Staff and volunteers have very productive contact with excluded groups and individuals. Particular effort is made to make contact with these groups and encourage them to participate in learning and development opportunities.
- The community is fully aware of the available learning and development opportunities. Marketing strategies adopted by staff are appropriate to the intended audience.
- Potential participants are provided with effective and high quality information. Staff provide direct guidance support and have very effective systems of referral to and from other appropriate agencies.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Staff and volunteers have some contact with excluded groups and individuals but have limited success in encouraging them to participate in learning and development activities. Staff do not consistently make a particular effort to attract these groups.
- Some sections of the community are aware of the range of learning and development opportunities. Marketing strategies are not consistently effective at reaching the intended audience.
- Potential participants have access to information but it is not always relevant and up to date. Staff provide only basic guidance and there is limited referral to and from appropriate agencies.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

1.2 Learning opportunities

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *range and relevance*
- *articulation*
- *design*

It refers to the extent to which the range of learning activities respond to the assessed needs of the community; the relationships between learning activities; and the relevance of the content and organisation of the programme to learners.

Level 4 Illustration

- The range of learning activities responds to almost all priority needs. The diversity of opportunities on offer is very well matched to local circumstances.
- Links between learning activities provide participants with good opportunities for progression.
- The programme as a whole and all learning activities are relevant to the needs of the participants. They are well designed to match the interests and experience of participants.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- The range of learning opportunities responds to a majority of priority needs but there are important gaps.
- There is insufficient linkage between learning opportunities for participants to progress to other learning opportunities.
- In general, elements of the programme as a whole, and a majority of learning activities, are relevant to the needs of the participants. They are not sufficiently well designed to match the interests and experience of participants.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated would normally be evaluated at Level 2

Notes:

When considering the range of opportunities available you should balance the types of experience listed here with the local circumstances. For example, it would be inappropriate to expect a full range of youth work or adult learning to be present in each rural community. However, access to specialist services and other activities could be offered on a rotational or centralised basis. Types of youth work and adult learning could include:

Youth work: youth provision, youth issues work, detached and outreach, youth involvement, youth information, guidance and counselling and international education.

Adult learning: core skills, literacy and numeracy, ICT, issue-based adult learning, classes and courses.

1.3 Delivery of learning opportunities

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *staff planning and preparation*
- *facilitation of learning*
- *support for learners*

It refers to the preparation made by staff prior to engaging with learners, staff inputs to the learning process, and support for learners to participate fully in learning experiences.

Level 4 Illustration

- Planning and preparation are methodical and thorough. They take full account of the characteristics of the participants, the available learning resources and the organisation of the learning situation.
- Staff inputs to learning activities facilitate learning well. They are well-judged, focused and appropriate to the learning needs and styles of the participants. Staff use a variety of methods and alter their approach to suit participants.
- Staff actively plan and organise support to participants of all abilities and prior attainment. They identify and deploy specialist support material or equipment when required.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Planning and preparation are insufficiently methodical and thorough. They take some account of the characteristics of the participants and resources available to foster learning. Staff take some but insufficient account of the characteristics of the participants in organising the learning situation.
- Some inputs are well judged and appropriate to the learning needs and styles of the participants. Staff use a narrow range of similar approaches with the majority of participants.
- Staff provide some support to the majority of participants. However, they may be unaware of the full range of available specialist support material or equipment and make only limited use of it.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

1.4 The learning experience

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *extent to which the learning environment stimulates and motivates learners*
- *negotiation of learning activities and outcomes*
- *responsibility for learning*
- *variety, challenge and creativity*

It refers to the environment in which learning takes place including its fitness for purpose and the processes which contribute to successful learning outcomes.

Level 4 Illustration

- The learning environment is stimulating and challenging. Contexts reflect participants' interests, previous experiences and future development. Participants are motivated to work enthusiastically.
- Staff negotiate the content and organisational details of the learning activity with participants at the outset and through continuing dialogue.
- Staff progressively transfer responsibility for management of their learning to participants. Participants identify strongly with the content and organisation of the learning experience.
- Activities contain a very effective level of challenge and variety. The learning experience provides participants with very good opportunities for creativity.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- The environment offers limited stimulation and challenge. Contexts generally reflect participants' interests, previous experiences and future development, but one or more of these aspects may be neglected or over-emphasised. Participants are often distracted and lack enthusiasm.
- Staff negotiate the content and organisational details of learning activities on some occasions. They only renegotiate this in a limited way.
- Staff do not transfer responsibility for management of their learning to participants at an early enough stage. Participants have limited ownership of the content and organisation of the learning experience.
- Some activities offer limited challenge and variety. The learning experience provides participants with limited opportunities for creativity.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

1.5 Assessment as part of learning

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *assessment methods*
- *arrangements for recording*
- *use of assessment information*

It refers to the methods of assessment, and recording arrangements, which demonstrate success in achieving learning outcomes. It refers to how staff use assessment information to promote achievement, and progression onto further learning.

Level 4 Illustration

- Methods of assessment are well matched to participants' goals. An appropriate range of approaches to assessment is employed in making judgements about progress towards individual goals.
- There is an effective means of recording and summarising assessment information. A portable record of achievement is provided to participants in appropriate learning activities.
- Information as to progress and achievement is regularly transmitted to participants. Participants are fully involved in dialogue about their progress. A strong emphasis is placed on valuing achievement and identifying next steps in learning. The assessment process is used to encourage participants to reflect on their learning and to think about next steps.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- A limited range of assessment procedures is employed. Some of these are inappropriate for assessing progress towards participants' goals.
- Assessment information is recorded but procedures are inadequate in some important respects or unhelpful. A portable record of achievement is awarded to participants in some learning activities but not systematically.
- Participants occasionally discuss their progress with staff but feedback is irregular. Such feedback as is provided takes insufficient account of the need to acknowledge achievement or to identify next steps in learning. The assessment process is not used fully to encourage participants to reflect on their learning and to think about their next steps.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

1.6 Participant achievement

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *achievement of specific learning outcomes*
- *achievement of core and life skills*
- *application of learning in other contexts*
- *participants' awareness and understanding of their learning*

It refers to the effectiveness of the learning process in achieving participants' learning outcomes, including personal development and core skills.

Level 4 Illustration

- Almost all participants achieve their intended learning outcomes.
- Participants demonstrate and report substantive developments in their personal and interpersonal skills, their self-confidence and self-esteem, and their core skills such as working together and problem solving.
- Participants can apply their learning in other contexts. They fully understand the potential for their learning beyond their initial learning environment.
- Participants are aware of, and understand the aspects of, the learning process which have supported them in their achievement, including staff input, content, pace and coherence of the learning activity.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- A majority of participants have achieved their intended learning outcomes.
- Participants demonstrate and report some developments in their personal and inter-personal skills.
- Participants apply some aspects of their learning in specific other contexts. They do not fully understand how they can apply their learning beyond their initial learning environment.
- Participants are aware of some aspects of their learning process but are unclear about their impact in supporting their achievement.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

2.1 Work with communities to identify their needs

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *needs assessment*
- *focus on excluded groups*

It refers to the ways in which community capacity building needs are identified and prioritised, with particular reference to the needs of excluded individuals and groups.

Level 4 Illustration

- Very good baseline information is held about the range and impact of community and voluntary groups in the area. This is supplemented by systematic, periodic and collaborative assessments of community needs, and identification of the gaps in service provision. These needs are prioritised by staff in genuine partnership with communities and provide the basis for planning and evaluating community capacity building.
- Needs assessment pays particular attention to excluded individuals and groups. Networks are used very effectively to elicit the views of excluded individuals and groups on the changes that are necessary to improve services.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Some baseline information is held about the range and impact of community and voluntary groups in the area. There are periodic assessments of community needs and identification of gaps in service provision but these are not always systematic and collaborative. Planning and evaluation for capacity building is not firmly based on identified needs.
- Needs assessment pays some but inconsistent attention to the needs of excluded individuals and groups. There is some networking with partners who are in contact with excluded individuals but this is insufficiently developed. The views of excluded individuals and groups do not sufficiently inform priorities for community capacity building.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

2.2 Developing skills and confidence

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *training and development for community leaders*
- *support for active community members*

It refers to the quality and extent of training and support for active community members and those wishing to become more active.

Level 4 Illustration

- Community leaders have access to training opportunities at a broad range of Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels which are appropriate to their needs. These opportunities are of a high quality and provide effective development.
- Active community members are consistently well supported by staff to carry out their roles within groups and in the wider community. They are consistently well supported to apply their knowledge and skills for community benefit.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Community leaders have access to some training opportunities at a limited range of SCQF levels appropriate to their needs. Opportunities are of mixed quality and provide limited development.
- Active community members are given limited support by staff to carry out aspects of their roles within groups and in the wider community. Some attention is given to supporting active community members to apply their knowledge and skills for community benefit.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

2.3 Promoting participation in community affairs

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *support for volunteering*
- *support for community self-help*
- *openness and accountability of organisations*

It refers to the extent to which volunteers are recruited, trained and supported to manage community and voluntary groups and to assist with delivering services. It also refers to the support given to community groups to ensure that they are open and accountable.

Level 4 Illustration

- There are systematic and effective processes in place to recruit, train and support volunteers for appropriate community learning and development activities. Volunteers are valued for their contribution.
- Effective and consistent procedures and resources are in place to support the development and maintenance of self-help groups.
- Community groups are consistently very well supported to be inclusive, open and representative of their communities. They are consistently supported to adopt procedures which ensure accountability to the communities they serve.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- There are periodic efforts to recruit, train and support volunteers for appropriate community learning and development activities. Volunteers are credited limited value for their contribution.
- Self-help groups have periodic access to limited support and resources.
- A majority of community groups are supported in aspects of being inclusive, open and representative of their communities. They are sometimes supported to adopt procedures which ensure accountability to the communities they serve.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

Notes:

The term *volunteer* is used to refer to the large numbers of people who give of their free time to deliver activities in groups such as youth clubs and mother and toddlers groups. This is distinct from an *active community member* or *leader* who is more heavily involved through a position of responsibility or as a representative of their community.

2.4 Assisting communities to exercise power and influence

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *support for community organisations*
- *community influence and representation*
- *assisting communities to provide and manage services*

It refers to the support given to community organisations and the extent to which community organisations are empowered to influence and shape public policy and practice, to control assets and to deliver local services.

Level 4 Illustration

- High quality information and advice is available for community organisations to assist in meeting their objectives. They are enabled to plan and evaluate their work very effectively. They are supported and encouraged to engage positively with other groups and agencies concerned with community learning and development. They contribute fully to achieving the outcomes of community learning strategies and plans.
- Community organisations are informed very effectively about local and wider policy issues. They are very well supported to engage positively with public agencies on issues of local concern and on wider policy issues. They see themselves and are seen by public agencies as important partners in policy and practice development.
- Community organisations are very well supported to provide and manage local services. They have access to high quality information and advice in relation to funding sources and technical advice in relation to planning, evaluation and project management. They control and manage local assets.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Some information and advice is available to assist community organisations in meeting their objectives. They are enabled to carry out some planning and evaluation of their work. They are sometimes encouraged to engage with other groups and agencies concerned with community learning and development. They are peripherally engaged in achieving the outcomes of community learning strategies and plans.
- Community organisations are informed about local and wider policy issues. They are supported to engage with public agencies on particular issues of local concern, and occasionally, wider policy issues. They see themselves and are seen by public agencies as junior partners in policy and practice development.
- Community organisations receive basic or minimal support to provide and manage local services. They have access to some information and advice in relation to funding sources and technical advice in relation to planning, evaluation and project management. They have limited control of local assets.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

2.5 Monitoring and evaluation as part of building community capacity

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *monitoring and evaluation methods*
- *arrangements for recording*
- *use of monitoring information*

It refers to the approaches used to monitor and evaluate the progress of community organisations towards their objectives, arrangements for recording, and how the process is used to assist groups to make further progress.

Level 4 Illustration

- There are robust and consistently applied arrangements in place for monitoring and evaluating the work of community organisations. They give appropriate attention to the experience of both participants and non-participants. Where appropriate, the monitoring and evaluation processes are based on well-developed service level agreements or other forms of contract.
- Clear and concise records are kept of the process of monitoring and the results and implications of evaluations.
- Monitoring and evaluation contributes very effectively to organisational development. Reviews provide very useful information to inform changes in management plans and opportunities for increased collaboration between groups and agencies.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Arrangements are in place for monitoring and evaluating the work of community organisations but they are inconsistently applied and are insufficiently robust. The emphasis in monitoring and evaluation is focused to a limited extent on the experience of participants and non-participants. Service level agreements or other forms of contract ensure only limited monitoring and evaluation.
- Records are kept of the process of monitoring but they are not clear enough about the scope of evaluation or its results and their implications.
- Monitoring and evaluation contributes little to organisational development. Reviews provide information that results in piecemeal changes in management plans and some increased opportunities for collaboration between groups and agencies.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

2.6 Community achievement

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *strength and vitality of community organisations*
- *impact on the development of social capital*
- *contribution to achieving social justice*

It refers to the overall strength and vitality of community groups and the extent to which community capacity building contributes over time to increasing social capital and achieving social justice.

Level 4 Illustration

- Community organisations are active and vibrant and exert considerable influence on public policy and the delivery of services. They are creative and imaginative in securing resources that benefit their community. They work well in collaboration with other organisations and public agencies to ensure that priority needs are being met, particularly those of socially excluded groups.
- Community capacity building results in significant and measurable increases in the social capital in the community. This is clearly evidenced through growth in the skills, resources, networks and opportunities in communities as well as the confidence and motivation in the community to contribute to improving the quality of community life.
- Community capacity building results in significant and measurable improvements over time in the extent to which social justice is achieved. This can be evidenced through, for example, the creation of jobs in the social economy and reductions in the fear of crime.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Community organisations make a demonstrable local contribution to capacity building but are not particularly active or vibrant and have limited influence on public policy and the delivery of services. They are successful in securing limited new resources that benefit their community. There is some collaboration with other organisations and public agencies to ensure that priority needs are being met, including those of socially excluded groups.
- Community capacity building results in some measurable increases in social capital in the community. There is some evidence of growth in the skills, resources, networks and opportunities in the community and limited confidence and motivation to contribute to improving the quality of community life.
- Community capacity building results in some measurable improvements over time in the extent to which aspects of social justice are achieved. There is limited evidence of impact on, for example, the creation of jobs in the social economy and reductions in the fear of crime.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

Notes:

Social Capital is understood to mean the skills, resources, networks, opportunities, confidence and motivation which characterise empowered communities.

In considering the achievement of social justice, reference should be made to the Social Justice Milestones.

3.1 Climate and relationships

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *sense of identity and pride*
- *reception and atmosphere*
- *staff morale*
- *participant/staff relationships*

This indicator refers to the climate and relationships for both staff and participants.

Level 4 Illustration

- Participants identify strongly with the activity they are involved in and staff are proud to be associated with the service.
- The reception of current and potential participants is well organised and welcoming. All staff consistently play a very significant part in fostering a good atmosphere throughout the service and this is evident in their dealings with participants, the community and staff.
- Morale is high amongst almost all staff.
- Relationships among and between staff and participants are very positive, relaxed, purposeful and sympathetic.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Participants do not fully identify with the activity they are involved in and staff do not fully share a sense of pride in, or loyalty to the service.
- The reception of current and potential participants is not given sufficient attention. Staff are inconsistent in their approach to promoting a good atmosphere throughout the service.
- Morale is low amongst a significant minority of staff.
- Relationships among staff are not always positive. The atmosphere is satisfactory in a number of respects but not always relaxed or purposeful. Staff-participant and inter-participant relationships lack consistency and are occasionally strained or unsympathetic.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

3.2 Expectations and promoting achievement

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *participant and staff expectations*
- *strategies to promote an ethos of achievement*

Level 4 Illustration

- Staff expectations of participant attendance, engagement and achievement are high. Participants have high expectations of what they can achieve.
- Staff successfully promote an ethos of achievement in their activities. They successfully establish an effective learning environment. They make regular and effective use of praise, recognition, delegation of responsibility and participant contribution. The service values and recognises these achievements and shares them with peers and the wider community.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Staff expectations of participant attendance, engagement and achievement are variable. Participants' expectations of themselves are limited.
- Steps taken by staff to promote a sense of achievement are limited. High quality achievement is valued in some areas but this is not extended across all aspects of service provision. Staff only occasionally use praise, recognition, delegation of responsibility and participant contribution or do not manage these strategies effectively to promote achievement. Opportunities for recognition and sharing success with peers and the wider community are infrequent.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

3.3 Values

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *empowerment of participants*
- *focus on inclusion and equal opportunity*
- *working with others*

It refers to the values and attitudes adopted by staff which have significant impact upon their effectiveness. It is not intended to represent the full range of values which underpin community learning and development.

Level 4 Illustration

- The active empowerment of participants is strongly evident in the attitudes of staff at all levels. Participants feel consulted about the nature of the activity they are participating in, and are actively involved in designing and delivering it. At all times, staff contributions are designed to empower participants and the community. They promote exploration and encourage participants to solve their own problems.
- The promotion of inclusion and equality of opportunity are strongly evident in the work of the service. Staff always consider measures to promote participation by excluded groups. This is evident in marketing, in when and where activities are planned and in offers of support. Activity programmes are designed to ensure equality of access.
- Staff at all levels are committed to partnership working. They have positive attitudes towards the voluntary sector, other public agencies and the private sector. These relationships are open, honest and based on a commitment to providing the best service to the community. Staff regard the community as equal partners and as a resource for learning.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- The active empowerment of participants does not feature strongly in the work of the service. Participants do not always feel consulted about the nature of the activity they are participating in and are rarely involved in delivering aspects of it. The service promotes exploration and encourages participants to solve their own problems but there are variations in consistency and commitment to do this.
- The service adopts the principle of promoting inclusion and equality of opportunity, but takes few positive steps to ensure that this happens. Staff do not consistently consider measures to promote participation by excluded groups. Excluded groups are not consistently assisted to participate through appropriate marketing, sensitive consideration of when and where activities are held, and offers of particular support.
- A majority of staff are committed to partnership working. Staff attitudes towards the voluntary sector, other public agencies and the private sector are generally positive but not consistent. These relationships are generally open, honest and based on a commitment to provide the best service to the community. However, occasionally staff are not open and attempt to safeguard traditional roles rather than seek effectiveness. Staff do not regard the community as a full partner and rarely use it, or its members, as a resource for learning.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

4.1 Accommodation and facilities

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *sufficiency, range and appropriateness*
- *arrangements to ensure health and safety*

It refers to the accommodation and facilities allocated to the service by the local authority or otherwise used by it to provide activities and programmes.

Level 4 Illustration

- The accommodation and facilities provide a safe, pleasant and stimulating environment, well suited to supporting the activities of participants and the work of staff. Appropriate space is available for the size of groups involved. Storage provision and facilities for display are plentiful and convenient. Accommodation is very well maintained. Fixtures, fittings and furniture match the needs of user groups, are of high quality and are in very good condition. Access is suitable to the needs of users. Signposting is sited appropriately and clear, and foyer and other entrance areas are welcoming.
- The service has very effective arrangements for ensuring the security of buildings and for ensuring that health and safety aspects of accommodation and facilities are identified and addressed.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- The accommodation and facilities provide a safe environment but some adaptations are needed to support fully effective learning activities. The majority of learning areas are of an appropriate size but restricted or inappropriate space in some areas limits the range of learning strategies. Storage and display facilities need improvement in quantity or quality. Accommodation is in need of decoration in some places. Fixtures, fittings and furniture are functional but they do not fully match participant needs or are in only fair condition. A number of aspects of maintenance require review. Access may be difficult for some users. Sign-posting is not always clear and entrance areas require to be improved.
- Arrangements for the security of buildings are not sufficiently rigorous. Some health and safety issues relating to accommodation have been identified but not all have been addressed effectively.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

4.2 Provision of resources

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *sufficiency of available finance*
- *sufficiency, range and suitability of resources*

It refers to the resources allocated to community learning and development or available for use in programmes and activities.

Level 4 Illustration

- Available finance provides a very good basis for supporting the work of the team.
- A plentiful stock of up-to-date resources, including books, practical materials, audio-visual resources, photocopying and information and communications technology equipment is available. Resources match the local context, are in very good condition and provide suitable support for the work of the team.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- While available finance is sufficient to provide the minimum necessary support for the work of the team, in several respects the level of available finance adversely affects the quality of learning, restricts decision making or delays necessary developments.
- The stock of resources available to the team is in reasonable condition but some resources are outdated and/or there are deficiencies in quantity, range or suitability. This limits several aspects of the work of the team.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

4.3 Staffing

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *provision of staff*
- *experience, qualifications and expertise of staff*

It refers to all staff, for example, full-time professional staff, sessional staff, administrative staff and part-time staff.

Level 4 Illustration

- There are sufficient professional staff to provide a fully appropriate programme of community learning and development for the community. Professional staff are complemented in their work by sufficient administrative staff, specialist staff and sessional staff, as appropriate.
- Individual members of staff are well qualified and, taken as a whole, they have a range of appropriate qualifications, skills and training relevant to their responsibilities and the needs of the community. There is a very good balance of experience among staff. Professional staff are very knowledgeable about current developments in community learning and development.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- There are sufficient professional staff to provide for the majority of the community learning and development needs in the community. However, there are insufficient staff to provide adequate support for excluded and disadvantaged groups. Professional staff are complemented in their work by administrative staff, specialist and sessional staff. Some aspects of the level of provision are insufficient.
- Individual members of staff are adequately qualified but the range or distribution of their qualifications, skills, experience and training cause difficulties in meeting the needs of the community. Professional staff have only a general knowledge of current developments in community learning and development.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

4.4 Effectiveness and deployment of staff

This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *effectiveness of staff and teamwork*
- *deployment against priorities*
- *deployment of support staff*

It refers to the deployment of all staff.

Level 4 Illustration

- Professional staff make very effective individual contributions to the work of the team. They work together very well as a team.
- In deploying staff, account is taken of their qualities, experience and expertise. Staff are deployed against team priorities. Staff deployment is carefully planned and regularly reviewed to good effect.
- Where applicable, support staff duties have been carefully defined and are clearly understood by all staff. They undertake a range of appropriate administrative and other tasks which release professional staff and managers' time from routine administration.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- The quality or effectiveness of individual staff contributions to the work of the team is inconsistent. They do not always work together well as a team.
- The deployment of staff does not always make best use of their experience and qualifications. Some staff time is not clearly deployed against team priorities. The planning of staff deployment is unsystematic, and reviews are too infrequent or insufficiently thorough.
- The duties of support staff are not sufficiently well defined and are not clearly understood by all staff. Support is not fully comprehensive. Professional staff and managers sometimes spend time on routine administrative and other tasks which would be more appropriately and efficiently undertaken by support staff.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

4.5 Staff review and development

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *links between staff review and development and self-evaluation and planning*
- *staff review procedures*
- *staff development*

It refers to arrangements for staff review and development for all staff, including administrative staff and sessional staff.

Level 4 Illustration

- All members of staff have a clear and well-focused remit. Information from staff review and other sources is used to inform the team's self-evaluation and planning process. Managers have clear responsibilities for, and commitment to, staff review and development. The development needs of all staff are identified effectively. The provision of support for staff development takes full account of, and carefully balances, service, team and individual needs. The system for identifying and acknowledging successes and needs is applied at all levels. Staff are fully aware of the aims and priorities for staff development.
- Well-designed procedures for review are being implemented for all staff. Support and supervision are thorough and systematic. At appropriate intervals, the team reviews its practice and identifies opportunities for improvement.
- Staff development is well planned and matched to the identified needs of individuals and of the service and team. The continuing professional development programme makes effective use of staff, local, national and international opportunities and expertise as appropriate to the service. Activities are followed up and evaluated and findings are used to influence future planning. New staff, including newly appointed managers, experience an effective induction process.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Remits are sometimes confused or lack focus. Information from staff review and other sources is linked only generally to the planning process. Responsibility of managers lacks clarity. The development needs of staff are recognised in part. Support for staff development does not fully balance the needs of the individual members of staff and those of the service. The system for identifying and acknowledging successes and needs is applied at some levels. Staff have only general awareness of the aims and priorities for staff development.
- Procedures for staff review are in place, but reviews are carried out unsystematically and/or are not applied consistently.
- There is a system to plan staff development but it does not always meet needs effectively. The continuing professional development programme for staff neglects some opportunities to draw on areas of expertise. Evaluation and follow-up activities are uncommon. New staff receive only basic support.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

4.6 Organisation and use of resources

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *use of resources*
- *arrangements for managing finance*
- *attracting external investment*

Level 4 Illustration

- Resources, including space and resources from outwith the team, are efficiently and effectively organised. Staff know what resources are available and have easy access to them. Very good use is made of ICT and the local environment to provide enriching experiences. ICT is used well to provide effective administrative support for staff.
- Budget managers have a sound understanding of authority funding mechanisms. Arrangements for managing the team's budget are open, fair and are successful in practice. Key staff discuss resource information to ensure economy, efficiency and equity through budget decisions. All staff have an appropriate involvement in consultation at a suitable level of detail. Administrative systems provide helpful information on budget management.
- Community learning partnerships have deployed resources and services effectively to ensure provision by the most appropriate agency. Where necessary, resources have been redeployed to improve efficiency and effectiveness. A very good level of new resources is being secured through partnership funding bids.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Staff and participants are not fully aware of what resources, including space and resources from outwith the team, are available. Access to resources is unnecessarily difficult or restricted. The use made of resources supports the delivery of the programme at a basic level but is at times not well matched to the purpose intended. ICT is used but for a limited range of purposes. The potential of ICT to provide administrative support for staff is not realised in a number of areas.
- Budget managers have only a limited understanding of overall authority funding mechanisms. Arrangements for managing the team's budget are only partly successful in practice or lack openness or fairness. A number of staff are not consulted appropriately about financial arrangements. This includes key staff whose discussion of resource information is necessary to ensure economy, efficiency and equity of budget decisions. Staff often have to deal with unnecessary budget detail. Administrative systems offer limited information to assist budget management.
- Resource deployment amongst partners is not fully specified. Services are not always provided by the most appropriate agency. Some resources have been re-deployed to improve efficiency and/or effectiveness. A moderate level of new resources is being secured through partnership funding bids.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

5.1 Community learning planning

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *context for planning*
- *scope of plans*
- *planning process*
- *the impact of planning*

This refers to the planning for community learning and development within community learning partnerships. It is concerned with the context and scope of the plans, the process being used, and the impact this planning is having on the quality of participants' experiences.

Level 4 Illustration

- The community learning partnership takes very good account of both the local and strategic context. Accurate community profiles ensure that priority issues are defined. Partners share their priorities and targets in an open manner. All involved are clear about the links to Scottish Executive priorities, policies and circulars. The Community Plan is the key local context, and within this the community learning strategy.
- All relevant community needs have been considered in the planning process. Outcomes are well designed to improve the quality of personal and community life.
- Use is made of a suitably structured planning framework. There is very effective integration between the community learning plan and locality planning, as a part of community planning.
- Priorities set in previous plans have been implemented very effectively. Very good progress is being made towards meeting or exceeding current objectives. The implementation of the plan has improved the quality of participant experiences and has had a positive impact on maximising achievement. Progress towards implementation is consistent across the partnership. Partners are fully engaged at each stage of the planning process and are fully committed to the plan. Partners and participants are well aware of the plan's contents.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- The community learning partnership takes limited account of the local and strategic context. Some community profiles exist but they are incomplete or out of date. Partners do not share their targets and priorities effectively. Links to Scottish Executive priorities, policies and Circulars are selective or vague and not understood by all. The Community Plan and community learning strategy have a limited impact of planning for community learning.
- Some community needs have been considered in the planning process but priority groups have not been sufficiently targeted. Where outcome targets exist they are not always effectively designed to improve the quality of personal and community life.
- Some use has been made of a suitably structured planning framework but this is not consistent. Links are poorly developed between the community learning plan and locality planning, as a part of community planning.
- Some important priorities set in earlier plans have been addressed to a limited extent. In a number of respects, progress towards implementing the current plan is behind schedule. There is limited evidence that the implementation of plans has improved the quality of participants' experiences and maximised standards of achievement. Progress towards implementing priorities at partnership and team level is inconsistent. Although many partners are involved in the planning process, a number lack commitment to implementation. There is limited consultation with partners and participants and they are not fully aware of the plan's contents.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

5.2 Self-evaluation

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *processes of self-evaluation*
- *reporting on standards and quality*

Level 4 Illustration

- Staff are fully involved in reflective and systematic self-evaluation which has the explicit purpose of improving the quality of learners' experiences and levels of achievement. Self-evaluation is rigorous and generates valid and reliable evidence which contributes significantly to procedures for assuring quality. Its results are used effectively to identify priority areas for action. Positive steps are taken to gather the views of participants and the wider community about the quality of the service provided. Effective action is taken in response to these and to other comments. Participants, the community and others help the team to identify strengths, development needs and planning priorities.
- Self-evaluation provides valid, comprehensive and reliable evidence for reporting on standards and quality. Arrangements for reporting on standards and quality are based on concise and accurate evaluations of performance across key areas, and clearly convey strengths and areas for improvement. Reports are disseminated to staff, senior managers, elected members, participants and the community as appropriate.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Self-evaluation is regarded largely as the responsibility of senior managers and does not significantly involve the majority of staff. Approaches to self-evaluation lack rigour and are not sufficiently systematic. Weaknesses may include insufficient focus on the quality of learner's experiences and levels of achievement. Evidence gathered is incomplete or is insufficiently reliable to contribute effectively to procedures for assuring quality. The team receives some feedback but it does not take formal steps to find out what participants and the wider community feel about the quality of service or to engage them in consultation. There is no direct link between the feedback received and subsequent action.
- The team uses the results of self-evaluation to report on standards and quality but the evidence base is insecure. Some key areas receive frequent attention while others are neglected. Reports on standards and quality do not accurately identify strengths and areas for improvement. They are largely descriptive rather than evaluative. Reports are not always disseminated to staff, senior managers, elected members, participants and the community as appropriate.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

5.3 Planning for improvement

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *the team plan*
- *planning improvement*

It refers to the planning documents used by an agency or local team to implement partnership and agency objectives.

Level 4 Illustration

- The team plan is well organised and provides a clear and easy summary of aims, priorities and action. It links accurately to local and national contexts such as the community plan and community learning plan. Targets within the plan, tasks and timescales are clearly defined and success criteria are specific, measurable and achievable. The targets provide sufficient detail to enable staff to understand their roles. Priorities are clearly linked to national and local priorities for community learning and development.
- Team plans clearly identify how priorities for improvement will be implemented whilst other objectives are met. Resource and staff development requirements are carefully costed. Where improvement planning has been conducted with partners, their contributions are clearly stated and targets are clearly linked to community learning planning.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- While the team plan contains useful information, insufficient consideration has been given to presentation, particularly with respect to summarising information about aims, priorities and action. The links to local and national contexts within it are not always well-judged. Targets within the plans, tasks and timescales lack clear definition. Success criteria tend to be very general and it is unclear how successful implementation can be judged. Targets are not always sufficiently developed to enable staff to understand their roles. Priorities are not consistently linked to national and local priorities for community learning and development.
- Team plans are not fully effective in enabling the team to implement its priorities for improvement whilst maintaining existing work. Resources and staff development requirements have not been fully costed. Where improvement planning has been conducted with partners, their contributions lack clarity and there are insufficient links to community learning planning.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

5.4 Partnership working

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *range of partners*
- *staff role in partnerships*
- *impact of partnership working*
- *external communications*

It refers to the role of staff in promoting and encouraging effective partnership working.

Level 4 Illustration

- Staff are engaged in a good range of partnerships. All relevant sectors are represented on the community learning partnership. Productive partnerships exist with key local authority services, voluntary and community organisations and other public and private sector bodies.
- Staff are prominent and very effective in partnerships. They demonstrate or support leadership within the community learning partnership. They consistently seek opportunities for improvement and development in all partnerships. Staff plan their engagement with partners to ensure the active participation of all relevant people and agencies.
- Partnerships entered into by staff are effective and productive. They contribute to improved efficiency and effectiveness and improve the quality of provision. Partnerships are active and share ownership of developments to date. All are characterised by trust, even where there are differences of opinion.
- Individual staff, the team and the service or agency maintain active communications with a range of interested agencies and people. Methods are chosen to best suit the circumstances. Style and tone convey approachability, and encourage access to the team and its services.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- Staff are engaged in a limited range of partnerships. Some sectors are represented on the community learning partnership but with some important omissions. Partnerships with key local authority services, voluntary and community organisations and other public and private sector agencies produce limited results.
- Staff are not key members of partnerships. Their leadership, or support to leadership, of the community learning partnership is indecisive and lacks focus. They are inconsistent in seeking opportunities for involvement and development in all partnerships. Staff undertake limited planning for engaging with partners to ensure the active participation of all relevant people and agencies.
- Partnerships entered into by staff are of limited effectiveness and productivity. They make a limited contribution to improved efficiency and effectiveness and result in some improvement to the quality of provision. Only some partnerships are active and share ownership of developments to date. Not all partnerships are characterised by trust and differences of opinion sometimes remain unresolved.
- Individual staff, the team and the service or agency maintain effective communication with a limited range of interested people and agencies. Methods chosen are not always appropriate to the circumstances. The style and tone generally conveys approachability, but offer limited encouragement to access the team and its services.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2

5.5 Leadership

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *leadership qualities*
- *professional competence and commitment*
- *relationships with people and development of teamwork*

It refers to the person or partner with lead responsibility for a particular activity. In HMIE inspection it can apply to the principal officer responsible for community learning and development or a local team leader. In evaluating the effectiveness of leadership, consideration should also be given to evaluations across a range of relevant QIs.

Level 4 Illustration

- She/he provides a clear strategic direction based on a vision which takes into account the views and needs of all those with a stake in the provision of community learning and development in the area. She/he has a wide range of personal qualities and interpersonal skills, including the ability to create confidence and motivate and inspire others. She/he has a positive influence on his or her area of responsibility. She/he has the ability to evaluate objectively the qualities of staff and their contributions to teamwork and promotes the best practice identified in the service. She/he can take difficult decisions effectively when necessary.
- She/he has personal credibility and demonstrates a high level of professional competence and commitment based on wide-ranging up-to-date knowledge and skills, including the ability to direct, communicate and manage staff and their development effectively. She/he initiates and manages change very well. She/he identifies and focuses on clear priorities identified through effective self-evaluation and puts participant learning and achievement at the centre of management and improvement activities.
- She/he seeks out and develops productive partnerships in the wider community and has very good relationships with participants and appropriate agencies. She/he communicates effectively about the team's work, is responsive and actively seeks feedback. She/he delegates and shares leadership effectively. She/he has a planned approach to the development of teamwork and ensures staff are involved in policy development, quality assurance and planning. His or her dissemination of information is clear and prompt.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 4

Level 2 Illustration

- She/he has a general idea of what is best for the team but is not focused enough to provide a clear strategic direction to the team. She/he demonstrates leadership but is not wholly successful in inspiring confidence in others and a number of staff do not respond to his or her management style, either because she/he is not wholly successful in inspiring confidence or does not provide a clear sense of direction. She/he tends to avoid difficult situations.
- She/he demonstrates a degree of professional competence based on relevant knowledge, although this is not always successfully applied in practical contexts. She/he has some difficulty in managing the process of change smoothly and encouraging staff to accept and embrace change. She/he has difficulty communicating and is only partially effective at initiating and directing. Priorities identified for management and improvement activities are not always the most appropriate and have limited impact on the quality of participants learning experience and achievement.
- She/he tends to manage the team in isolation from its immediate context. Difficulties arise at times in his or her relationship with participants, staff or other agencies. She/he does not always communicate well about the team's work. She/he tends to be defensive when faced with criticisms or concerns. She/he has difficulties at times in creating a team approach, delegating effectively and sharing leadership. There are only occasional instances of effective teamwork and there is limited involvement of staff in policy development, quality assurance and planning. His/her dissemination of information is not always clear or prompt.

Quality of provision broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would be evaluated at Level 2



Once you have decided to take a closer look at an aspect of provision in your service, you will need to ask the following questions:

- What features of best practice should we be looking for?
- What evidence will help us to decide how well we are doing?

There are a number of sources of information which can help you answer these questions. Examples of relevant sources of information include:

Publications

Communities: Change Through Learning, SOEID, 1998

SOEID Circular 4/99: Community Education

SEELLD Circular 1/01 (Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland)

Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland, Scottish Executive, 2001

Literacies in the Community – resources for practitioners and managers, City of Edinburgh Council, 2000

Towards Community Learning Plans, HMIE, 2002

Learning Evaluation And Planning (LEAP), SCDC, 1999

The Big Picture, SCVO, 1999

Quality Management In Education, HMIE, 2000

The EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) Excellence Model, EFQM Publications, 1999

On-line resources

Communities Scotland

www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk

YouthLink Scotland

www.youthlink.co.uk

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)

www.scvo.org.uk

HM Inspectorate of Education

www.scotland.gov.uk/hmie

(provides access to recent published reports on community learning and development)

Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC)

www.scdc.org.uk

Working Together Learning Together

www.wtlnet.org.uk

Connecting Communities

www.ngflscotland.gov.uk



The tools discussed in this section are available to use and adapt on the accompanying CD-ROM. They are intended solely as a starting point, and you should give careful consideration to what tools and mechanisms best suit your local circumstances. In particular, the level of paperwork involved is directly related to the enthusiasm of staff at all levels to take the exercise seriously.

Explaining quality assurance and self-evaluation

Related CDROM document: [HGIOCLD.ppt](#)

This is a standard PowerPoint presentation which you can use to explain this quality framework. Local colour can be easily added but the fundamental message will be the same. This is a presentation which HM Inspectors have used when explaining the framework.

The entire text of *How good is our community learning and development?* is also reproduced on the CD. This allows you to use important sections relevant to your own area.

Gathering evidence

Related CDROM document: [gather.doc](#)

This form is a simple means of gathering evidence about strengths and weaknesses for each quality indicator. It can be circulated to a section of staff, or used by a quality assurance “team” for a particular piece of work. It can be used in full or a selection of relevant QIs can be used. It can also be used as a summary of all evidence gathered; your self-evaluation of that evidence and the start of an improvement plan.

It is important in gathering information to be clear about what constitutes proper evidence.

Using the information: an example from West Lothian Council

Related CDROM document: [QApolicy.doc](#)

A quality assurance policy can be a good starting point for planning for improvement. West Lothian Council has kindly given permission for reproduction of an example of what one local authority has done in this regard. No master policy can be adopted in all situations, but you may find pointers here about what issues could be considered in such a policy.