

**Skills
Funding
Agency**

Framework for Excellence Provider Guide 2010/11

October 2010

Of interest to Learning Providers

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Introduction

- 1 The prime purposes of the Framework for Excellence (FfE) are to provide information for learners and employers to make informed choices about post-16 education and training and to provide consistent management information on key performance indicators (PIs) for all post-16 providers.
- 2 Throughout 2010/11, work will continue to be undertaken with the sector to ensure that the FfE PIs are calculated and presented in the most appropriate ways to fulfil the prime purposes.
- 3 This document sets out the methodologies for collecting and collating data for the FfE PIs in 2010/11. Full details of the calculations and statistical standards used to generate FfE outcomes from this data will be published in the 2010/11 FfE Outputs Guide which will be available late in 2011.
- 4 Updates and key communications will also be published on the FfE website throughout 2010/11 and providers should check [the website](#) regularly to keep up-to-date.
- 5 The outcomes of the FfE 2010/11 will be published in January 2012.

What's changed since 2009/10?

- 6 The following changes have been made to FfE since the publication of *Framework for Excellence: Unified Post-16 Performance Assessment* (LSC, September 2009). Many of these changes were first described in the *Framework for Excellence Outputs Guide* (Skills Funding Agency, September 2010). The key changes are:
 - a) The Financial Indicators (Financial Health and Financial Management and Control) will continue to be graded and will be reported to providers directly by the relevant finance teams. As this direct reporting occurs earlier than FfE reporting, these PIs will no longer be included in the FfE Application;
 - b) The remaining four PIs (Success Rates (SR), Learner Destinations (LD), Learner Views (LV) and Employer Views (EV)) will be published as ungraded scores without correction for contextual factors. The LAT added-value measure will no longer be included within the Success Rates score. The scores for the surveys (LD, LV and EV) will be published alongside national comparison data comprising the lowest, middle (median) and highest scores achieved. School sixth forms and sixth form colleges are not required to undertake the LV and EV surveys.

For Success Rates, the comparison data will be based on the appropriate subset of FfE providers with greater than one learning aim for the relevant qualification type and level of breakdown. In this case, to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998), the comparison data will not include the minimum and maximum of the range (which can in some cases be 0-100 %)

but will, instead, comprise the 5th percentile score, the median score, and the 95th percentile score.

For all PIs the comparison data will be shown for both:

- providers of the same provider type; and
 - all providers
- c) Five categories of provider type will be used for comparison purposes in 2010/11. These categories are those used by the Data Service in the Statistical First Release:
- General FE and Tertiary Colleges
 - Sixth Form Colleges
 - Specialist Colleges (to include Art & Design/ Land-based /Special Designated Institutions)
 - Other Public Funded Institutions
 - Private Sector Public Funded Institutions.

Success Rates have been split into seven sub-categories as listed in paragraph 47. We are working with BIS and DfE to see how we can make these sub-categories more meaningful to learners in the future.

- d) Due to the removal of grades for PIs, the link between the Training Quality Standard (TQS) and an 'outstanding' grade for EV is no longer applicable. In 2010/11 providers with TQS will continue to be exempt from the EV survey, however they may choose to opt-in. TQS certificated providers who decide to undertake the EV survey, will have their EV results published. (It should be noted that this exemption is planned to be removed in future years). More information about how to opt-in can be found in the Employer Views section of this guide.
- e) School Sixth Forms and Sixth Form Colleges are not required to undertake the LV and EV surveys.

Scope

- 7 All Skills Funding Agency funded post-19 providers are in scope for the four PIs, as listed above, except:
- Organisations funded to deliver Adult and Community Learning (Informal Adult Learning) only; and
 - Organisations co-funded by the Skills Funding Agency to deliver European Social Funded (ESF) programmes only
- 8 The Department for Education has announced that Sixth Form Colleges and Schools Sixth Forms will not have to undertake the Learner Views and

Employer Views surveys in 2010/11. However, Success Rates and Learner Destination data will be produced for these providers.

- 9 The application of the PIs to provider and provision types is shown in Table 1 and Table 2. Within the broad groupings in Table 1, the extent to which PIs will apply will depend on the individual provider's characteristics (see Table 2).

Table 1: Performance indicators applying to main provider categories in scope in 2010/11

Provider grouping	Learner Views	Learner Destinations	Employer Views	Success rates
Colleges ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sixth Form Colleges	No	Yes	No	Yes
Specialist Colleges ²	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Public Funded Institutions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Private Sector Public Funded Institutions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
School Sixth Forms	No	Yes	No	Yes

NB The inclusion of School Sixth Forms in the Learner Destinations and Success Rates indicators is subject to DfE Ministers' views on Framework for Excellence.

Table 2: Applicability of PIs according to provider characteristics

If the provider is ...	Learner Views	Learner Destinations	Employer Views	Success rates
An employer only training its own staff	Yes	No	No	Yes
An employer training employees of other organisations	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other providers of Employer Responsive provision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other independent organisations ³	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

¹ General FE and Tertiary Colleges

² Including Art & Design, Land-based and Special Designated Institutions

³ Including Special Designated Institutions, other providers of adult learner responsive provision that are not local authorities and Dance and Drama Academies

Key Dates

- 10 For Success Rates and Learner Destinations there are no actions for providers to take, as the data needed is collected through the use of the ILR and, for LD, by survey contractors.
- 11 For Employer Views and Learner Views there are certain activities which providers are required to undertake in order to ensure that adequate and accurate data are collected. The key dates for these activities are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Key dates for providers

Date	Learner Views Activity	Employer Views Activity
November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st – 12th: online survey available for testing for compatibility with your firewall 15th : Learner Views survey starts 15th: deadline for applications for paper based version 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8th – 3rd Dec: download and check employer lists 15th: deadline for confirming URL for linking FfE Employer Views survey with your own.
December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness
January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer Views survey starts
February 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7th: Employer Views online and postal methodologies close
March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31st: Employer Views survey closes
April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey underway 28th: paper based survey closes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> :
May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27th: Online survey closes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Publication

- 12 In January 2012, overall scores for each PI at provider level will be published. These will be published, along with supporting information such as latest Ofsted Overall Effectiveness grade and TQS accreditation.

- 13 For each of the PIs, the publication of the overall score for each provider will be supported by access to underlying data analysed by a range of factors such as age group and level of study, as appropriate.
- 14 All data published will be done so in compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998). Consequently, where publication would otherwise enable an individual to be identified, some data cells will be suppressed.

Methodologies

Learner Destinations

Applicability and Exemptions

- 15 Subject to the exemptions listed in paragraph 16 below, this indicator includes all learners on a priority programme who had completed at least one relevant qualification in 2008/09. These learners are defined as follows:
 - learners aged 16–18 at the start of 2008/09. (Sixth Form Colleges and School Sixth Forms may also be included subject to DfE Ministers' views on Framework for Excellence)
 - all learners on Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships;
 - all learners on Train to Gain programmes;
 - all learners on target-bearing Skills for Life programmes; and
 - all adults on programmes contributing to a full Level 2 or full Level 3 qualification, as flagged on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR).
- 16 Employers who deliver training solely to their own employees are exempt from this PI.

Definition

All post-19 learners and 16-18 learners in FE Colleges and Private Training Providers

- 17 The Learner Destination PI is the percentage of learners on priority programmes completing a LSC/Skills Funding Agency programme in one academic year and progressing in the next academic year to one of the positive destinations defined as follows:
 - Enrolled in priority learning in 2009/10 with the same highest level of learning aim
 - Progressed to learning with a higher level of highest learning aim

- Remained in employment or self-employment, with improved job security or enhanced career prospects
- Entered employment or self-employment in 2009/10, having been in learning prior to 2008/09 where the 2008/09 learning had a positive impact
- Entered employment or self-employment or training in 2009/10, having previously been outside the labour market

Data source

- 18 Destinations data will be obtained through a combination of data matching and telephone interviews.
- 19 All additional data collection for this PI is undertaken by the survey contractors. There is no action required from providers. However providers should be aware that we plan to calculate measures for both 2008/09 completers and 2009/10 completers between now and the end of 2011.

16-18 learners in School Sixth forms and Sixth Form Colleges

- 20 For publication in 2012 we plan to publish an 'into further learning' indicator for all 16-18 learners in School Sixth Forms or Sixth Form Colleges using matched datasets for further education and training, higher education and Pupil Level Annual Schools Census (PLASC)/Annual Schools Census (ASC) data. For all subsequent years we expect to publish a full learner destinations indicator using National Connexions Customer Information Systems (NCCIS) data to derive the employment rate and the matched data for the learning rate.

Employment Rate and Learning Rate

- 21 The data for the Employment Rate and Learning Rate are obtained through the learner destinations activity. The Employment Rate will apply to all post-19 learners AND 16-18 learners in FE colleges and private training providers. For 2009/10 destinations, the Employment Rate will not apply to Sixth Form Colleges and School Sixth Forms

Employment Rate

The Employment Rate is the percentage of in-scope learners who progress to a positive employment destination

Learning Rate

The Learning Rate is the percentage of in-scope learners who progress to a positive learning destination

Data source

- 22 The data for the Employment Rate comes from telephone interviews.

- 23 The data for the Learning Rate comes from a combination of telephone interviews and the matching of learners' completion year data into the destination year datasets for further education and training, and higher education. Matched learners all have positive destinations. The total number of learners with a positive learning destination is therefore a combination of the matched learners plus an estimate of the number of positives in the unmatched group (based on interview results).

Learner Views

Applicability and Exemptions

- 24 The 2010/11 survey applies to the following learners on programmes with in-scope providers and their sub-contractors between 15 November 2010 and 27 May 2011
- aged 16–18 taking at least one Skills Funding Agency-funded learning aim
 - adult learners (aged 19 years or over) with either:
 - (i) at least one learning aim funded through the Adult Learner Responsive funding stream (excluding programmes not subject to formula funding), or
 - (ii) at least one aim funded through the Employer Responsive funding stream
- 25 The following exemptions apply:
- Providers with fewer than 10 learners between 15 November 2010 and 27 May 2011 (for reasons of statistical reliability)
 - Learners in School Sixth Forms and Sixth Form Colleges.

Definition

- 26 The LV score is derived from the FfE Learner Views survey which asks learners about their views on:
- the information, advice and guidance they have received from their provider;
 - the quality of teaching and learning on their programme;
 - their overall satisfaction with their learning experience;
 - their satisfaction with the level of support available to them from their provider;
 - whether or not they are treated with respect; and
 - whether their provider is responsive to their views.

Data source

- 27 The data is obtained from the survey of learners' views undertaken between the 15 November 2010 and 27 May 2011. Responses will be predominantly collected through the online survey. On-line responses enable a detailed level of analysis of the responses including a trial of course level analysis which will be made available to providers undertaking the online survey. It will also be

possible to loose-link the LV survey with a provider's own learner survey, if required.

- 28 This year providers have the option of their learners answering a small number of questions at course (learning aims) level in the online survey. This is a pilot, to investigate whether this type of data would be useful for the sector-led project on the presentation of public information. Responses will not contribute to the overall score but will enable the return of aims level results to providers benchmarked against all responses by learners taking that aim. To answer aim level questions learners will require a list of the relevant qualification aim codes before they start completing the survey. More information is available on the Learner Views pages of the [Framework for Excellence website](#).
- 29 If a provider has a number of learners for whom the online survey is not possible at any point during the extended survey window, a paper survey will be available. **However, it should be noted that use of the paper survey will limit the breakdown analyses available. In particular any course level data will be unavailable.**

More information about the implementation of the 2010/11 survey, including the paper-based option, can be found on the [Framework for Excellence website](#). The questions are for information only and should not be used to produce unofficial paper surveys. Ensuring a valid score can be calculated.

- 30 Providers are encouraged to exceed the minimum sample size required as some responses may not be valid.

Provider actions required

Key dates for providers are shown in Table 3.

- 31 Providers should aim to give all learners learning in their organisation between the two dates the right to fill in the survey, particularly as we want to offer course-level feedback of results this year. (Note: this will only be possible for those providers using the online survey). Providers will need to raise awareness of the survey amongst their learners prior to and during this period and ensure that the learners have access. Learners will be able to complete the survey from any internet-connected device 24-hours a day during the extended survey window.
- 32 Providers using a sampling approach should refer to the sample size calculator on the Learner Views pages of the [Framework for Excellence website](#). It is important that providers try to exceed the sample size wherever possible to allow for duplicate or invalid responses.
- 33 Applications can be made to use paper surveys if it would be impossible for some learners to complete the survey online at any time during the six and a half month survey window. Telephone surveys and unofficial paper surveys cannot be used. Providers who think it is necessary for some learners to undertake a paper-based survey will need to complete and return the online

application form on the [Framework for Excellence Extranet](#) by **15 November**. It will not be possible to produce course level information from paper-based surveys.

- 34 Providers who have not made an application by the deadline date should use the online version of the survey for all their in-scope learners. Please note that the paper based survey window ends on **28 April 2011** which is earlier than the online survey. Paper based responses are subject to a small downward statistical adjustment to reflect the different patterns of responses for learners completing paper and online surveys.
- 35 The online survey will be available for testing between 1 November and 12 November. It is vital that each provider tests the online link for compatibility with its firewalls. More information on how to do this is available on the Learner Views pages of the [Framework for Excellence website](#).

Employer Views

Applicability and Exemptions

- 36 The Employer Views PI is applicable to providers which are contracted to deliver any volume of Train to Gain or Apprenticeship training, and/or receive at least £30,000 per annum of employer-responsiveness funding, subject to the following exemptions:
- Sixth Form Colleges
 - providers in receipt of less than £30,000 Employer Responsive funding in 2010/11
 - providers who train solely their own staff
 - providers which gained TQS prior to **31 August 2010** unless they choose to opt into the survey.

Definition

- 37 This PI captures employers' perceptions on the quality of the training provided and the responsiveness of the provider to the employer's needs. The scores calculated for each provider will enable them to make comparisons about their performance against other providers of the same type and against all providers who completed the survey and passed the necessary quality thresholds.

Data source

- 38 Data for assessment comes from the collation of employers' responses to the Skills Funding Agency Employer Views survey. Options for responding to the survey will include:
- paper-based questionnaires
 - online survey
 - telephone top-up survey only for providers close to achieving target numbers.

- 39 The survey will be primarily an online survey to increase employer responses and to enable us to provide you with more detailed and useful feedback. This year, for the first time, employers will also be asked to give feedback at subject sector level. This is a pilot, to investigate whether this type of data would be useful for the sector-led project on the presentation of public information. The responses will not contribute towards the score but will allow us to provide results, benchmarked against the responses of all employers who commented on that subject area. The additional questions will only apply to employers who respond to the on-line survey.

Ensuring a valid score can be calculated

Number of responses required

- 40 Providers will have access to an on-line calculator to calculate the minimum number of valid responses they need to achieve to ensure a statistically valid overall score. (A valid response is defined as a response to the scoring questions.) This calculator will be available on the Employer Views pages of the [Framework for Excellence website](#).

Provider actions required

- 41 The FfE Employer Views survey will begin in January 2011. Prior to that, there are actions which can be undertaken by providers to greatly increase their chances of obtaining enough valid responses to produce a valid score for this PI.
- 42 We will prepare lists of 2009/10 employers based on ILR data. Providers should check and, where necessary update, the employer details between 8 November and 3 December 2010. It is essential that providers take this opportunity to ensure that their employer contact details are accurate and complete on this list as the chances of obtaining a valid score and useful feedback are greatly increased. To prepare for this process, providers may wish to ensure that they have a central record of the name and email address of the employer representatives' best placed to comment on training undertaken in 2009/10.
- 43 Prior to, and during, the Employer Views survey, providers should make their employers aware of the Employers Views survey and the benefits of participating. Namely, that it will generate nationally comparable information on employer's views of the training they receive.
- 44 Providers will also have the opportunity to link the Employer Views survey with their own internal survey to enable employers to complete both surveys at the same time. To do this, providers need to confirm the URL for their internal survey by 15 November 2010. More information is available on the Employer Views pages of the [Framework for Excellence website](#).

Success Rates

Applicability and Exemptions

- 45 The Success Rate (SR) performance indicator is applicable to all YPLA and Skills Funding Agency funded providers delivering learning aims that contribute to qualification success rates (QSRs).
- 46 There are no exemptions to this PI.

Definition

- 47 The SR performance indicator is composed of QSRs for seven qualification types:
- FE long qualifications (excluding A,AS,A2)
 - FE very short qualifications (<5 weeks)
 - FE short qualifications (5-24 weeks)
 - A, AS, A2 qualifications
 - Apprenticeships (framework completions, overall success rates)
 - Advanced Apprenticeships (framework completions, overall success rates)
 - Train to Gain (Full Level 2, Full Level 3 qualifications);
- 48 The seven QSRs are aggregated from base qualification success rates using a method that is identical to the Skills Funding Agency process that is used by the Data Service to produce Success Rate tables, and excludes Key Skills and Functional Skills.
- 49 These QSRs are further broken down according to Tier 1 subject sector areas (SSAs) and age-band. Train to Gain provision is categorised by full Level 2/3 rather than by age-band.
- 50 **NB It is possible that some qualification type categories may be revised in the event that School Sixth Forms are deemed in scope (see para 9 Table 1)**

Data source

- 51 The data sources for this PI are Skills Funding Agency success rates (provided by the Data Service) derived from 2008/09 ILR data. The qualification success rates, together with a facility for accessing the constituent data, are available through the Provider Gateway. The methodology for calculating QSRs can be found on the [Data Service's website](#).

Data-submission requirements

- 52 There are no new data submission requirements.

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