Darlington 11 - 19 Partnership

Quality Assurance Protocol

A Darlington-wide approach to self-assessment

One of the principles which has operated in the design and development of protocols has been to respect the autonomy of individual providers and ensure that any new systems can sit alongside those already operating in schools, colleges and other places of 11 – 19 learning. The same applies to quality assurance. All providers will have systems in place which allow them to assess their own performance across a range of provision. These concentrate on similar indicators of quality but do tend to vary in style and detail from place to place. The purpose of this protocol is to produce a straight-forward, effective quality assurance system which applies to all alternative 11 – 19 provision across Darlington.

The Quality Assurance Protocol operates in such a way that, when elements of their students' programmes are being delivered elsewhere, providers will have confidence in the quality of the teaching and learning experience at the host institution; they will also be in no doubt that if there are any unsatisfactory issues, these will be recognised with alacrity and that appropriate, decisive action will be taken.

The Key Quality Indicators

The quality assurance system is based on the following key performance indicators:

1. **The initial meeting** – details of the agreed operational arrangements relating to contact details, safeguarding, attendance etc. and development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

2. **The student voice** – their own assessment of the learning experience.

3. **Attendance** – the actual % attendance rates on each course.

4. **Paired lesson observations** – external professional assessment of the learning experience.

5. **Retention** – the proportion of students completing each course.

6. **Assessment results and learner progress on the course** – pass rates, including high grades, progression, where appropriate, for each course and actual student achievement compared with expectation.

7. **Health & Safety and Safeguarding checks** – any Health & Safety or safeguarding checks carried out by the Education Services team.

1. The Initial Meeting

In order to establish good communication between the home school and provider, there will be an initial planning meeting with staff from the two organisations. This meeting will be arranged by the home school, and it will take place before the student accesses the provision. It will cover issues such as contact details of named individuals within both organisations, safeguarding, attendance and absentee chasing arrangements, and the ILP will be developed. This will include an initial assessment of the

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current levels at which the student is working plus an assessment of their current wellbeing. Providers will be given a booklet that contains the 11 – 19 protocols, including the Induction Protocol. The checklist from the Induction Protocol should be completed, and host institutions may be asked to produce evidence that a full induction has been completed.

2. The Student Voice

It is important to know what students think of their learning experience. This seems to be especially so when students from one school are taking part of their programme elsewhere. The head of the home school needs to know the extent to which their students rate that part of their experience which is being provided by a host; equally, the head of the host organisation needs to know what students might be saying about the experience when they return to their home base.

It is the home school's responsibility to ensure questionnaires are administered. The best time to do this is during a paired lesson observation, if it is timely. Where students have low literacy skills, home schools will administer the questionnaire verbally with the students.

1. All students complete a questionnaire (Appendix 1) at the end of their first half-term on any alternative course they are taking. This is intended to give an early indication of their views so if there are any issues they can be dealt with before it is too late. If there are issues arising from the students' responses, they will be addressed by the relevant line manager within the host organisation. Details of any action arising will be fed back to the home school. Appropriate feedback will be given to students by the line manager within the host organisation.

   In a two-year course, the questionnaire will be issued again in the first half-term of the second year.

   Questionnaires are administered independently and professionally; students respond anonymously. Those responsible for this activity will give clear instructions to ensure the questionnaires are completed in a mature, sensible and thoughtful manner. This is intended to ensure that students understand the importance of the activity and that they answer honestly and with integrity, without fear of the consequences.

   The course teacher / tutor **will not** be present in the classroom when students are giving their responses.

2. Host organisations will keep copies of the student voice questionnaires to ensure they can address any issues arising from the student responses. It is good practice to feed back to students.

3. Attendance

When students are travelling to different providers for part of their programme, it is particularly important to track their attendance to ensure that it is at least as good as it is at the home school. Details of how this will take place will be agreed in the initial planning meeting.

4. Lesson Observations

All schools, colleges and work-based learning providers have their own systems to ensure that lesson observations take place on a regular basis. It is important that alternative provision is included within these arrangements so there can be confidence in the quality of teaching and learning. Given that there are different arrangements across the schools, colleges and work-based learning providers within Darlington, there will be a uniform, clear and systematic approach to lesson observations related to alternative provision.

1. For each course there will be two paired lesson observations during an academic year. The first will take place during the first term and the second will take place in the fourth half term.

Observers will use the documentation in Appendix 2. Where an existing in-house lesson observation is taking place within the first term, the 11-19 Partnership lesson observation can take place at the same time as the in-house observation.

2. Paired lesson observations will be carried out by suitably qualified and experienced staff who are not employed by the host organisation, in conjunction with a senior member of staff from the host organisation.   Ideally, a senior member of staff from the home school will be the external lesson observer. In the event that the lesson is being delivered by a work-based learning provider with no appropriate senior manager, the lesson observation will be carried out by a senior member of staff from within the Partnership.

3. A lesson observation recording form will be completed for each lesson, and copies will go to the teacher / tutor, the appropriate line manager in the teacher / tutor's place of employment and the Education Partnerships Quality Manager. The form can be used, at the request of the teacher / tutor, to inform their own performance management.

4. Completed lesson observation recording forms will be shared with the home school(s), and it is the school's responsibility to work with the alternative education provider on the Areas for Development to improve provision. Completed forms will also be shared with the Leadership Group.

Where good practice is identified as a result of the lesson observation, in agreement with the teacher / tutor, it will be shared with the 11-19 Partnership.

5. Retention

One of the indicators that the learning experience is good is the extent to which students remain on a course. It can be particularly problematic for a school if a young person in Year 10 or 11 is, for whatever reason, taken off a course once it has started.

(i)   Termly and cumulative retention data is produced for each course by the Course Leader in the host organisation.

(ii)   If a retention issue appears to be arising during the course, it is investigated by the Course Leader, and a report is produced for the Education Partnerships Quality Manager.

6. Assessment results and learner progress on the course

All schools analyse and report on external examination results. It is important that the same applies to alternative provision so that retrospective judgements can be made on performance. This may be helpful in determining future provision, delivery arrangements and action planning. Whilst there can be no doubting the importance of 'raw' examination results, they do not necessarily reflect the distance travelled by students during the course. Learner progress on the course is also important.

(i)   At the end of the course, examination results are analysed by the Course Leader in the host organisation, indicating the numbers and percentages passing the course and achieving the different grades.

(ii)   The analysis includes reference to benchmark data, particularly national averages where they are available. It also includes progression data, where appropriate.

(iii)   Any interim results from individual units/modules will be analysed by the Course Leader to ensure that performance is in line with expectation. If issues are evident, an appropriate action plan will be developed and implemented by the Course Leader.

(iv)   Each student will have a target grade for the course. The target grade will be provided by the home school.

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(v)   This target is used to compare with the eventual result.

(vi)   Whilst students will be aware of this target information, they should, as part of the monitoring and tracking system, be set targets which stretch them rather than allow them to coast.

7. Health & Safety and Safeguarding checks

Where the alternative education provider is part of, or has requested inclusion on, the 11 – 19 Alternative Education Framework, the Education Services team will carry out an annual Health & Safety and safeguarding site visit, an employer and public liability insurance check, a check of the Single Central Record and a check of the details of the Designated Safeguarding Officer and Health & Safety Officer. Details of these checks will be shared with the Leadership Group.

Quality Assurance Reports

It will be important for all concerned that there is openness and transparency in quality assurance reporting. Schools and colleges other than the host may have an investment and a significant interest in the well-being of a particular course; it is essential that they are made fully aware, by the host provider, of the strengths and weaknesses of that course.

(i)   Quality Assurance reports and related action plans are produced in the autumn term each year by the Course Leader with professional support from the Education Partnerships Quality Manager.

(ii)   The reports include coverage of the key quality indicators outlined above for the course delivered this year.

(iii)   The reports will be accepted by the Leadership Group during the autumn term following the completion of the academic year to which the report relates. The reports will then be made available to members of the 11 – 19 Partnership.

(This protocol is one within a series of protocols and should not be considered in isolation. Protocols may be reviewed and subject to change)

Appendix 1: Student Voice – Teaching and Learning Questionnaire

Subject / Course Name: **Teacher / Tutor:**   **Provider:**   **Date:**

Please use black or blue ink and put an X (cross) inside the relevant box

		Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1.	I enjoy being at this provider				
2.	Teachers here help me to do my best				
3.	Teachers here give me work that challenges me				
4.	I enjoy learning at this provider				
5.	Teachers here listen to what I have to say in lessons				
6.	There is an adult at this provider I can talk to if something is worrying me				
7.	The behaviour of other pupils in my lessons is good				
8.	The behaviour of other pupils around this provider is good				
9.	Bullying is not a problem at this provider				
10.	I feel safe here				
11.	This provider encourages me to look after my physical health				
12.	This provider encourages me to look after my emotional and mental health				
13.	I take part in school activities outside of lessons, like clubs, sports, music and art				
14.	This provider encourages me to be independent and to take on responsibilities				
15.	This provider encourages me to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally				
16.	This provider gives me information about my next steps				
17.	I would recommend this provider to a friend moving to the area				

What, if anything, makes you feel unsafe at the provider?

What information would you like to have received about your next steps?

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Appendix 2

Quality Visit

Observers should request to see the Individual Learning Plan and Induction Checklist to ensure that they are complete and that home school visits to the provider are recorded.

Any concerns about safeguarding procedures should be raised immediately with the Education Partnerships Quality Manager.

Lesson Observation

1. The observers should arrive on time and stay for an appropriate length of time.

2. At the start of the lesson, the teacher / tutor provides the observers with planning records or a lesson plan, including contextual information, and any materials to be used.

3. During any group or individual work, the observers may talk quietly with students about what they are doing and move around the classroom – as long as it is not disruptive to do so. If there is no opportunity to talk to the students during the lesson, please talk to them afterwards.

4. The observers should take the opportunity to look through any students' files.

5. The observers should ask teachers / tutors the questions shown in the 11 – 19 Partnership Quality Assurance Lesson Observation Recording Form and record the answers.

6. At the end of the lesson the external or internal observer will arrange a feedback meeting which should take place as soon as possible, preferably the same day. The feedback session should not be rushed and should allow the opportunity for analysis and discussion.

7. One lesson observation recording form is completed by the external observer and agreed by the internal observer.

8. The external observer will return the lesson observation form to the teacher / tutor and provide a copy for the appropriate line manager in the teacher / tutor place of employment and the 11-19 Partnership Quality Manager.

9. If any problems or issues arise as a result of a lesson observation, reference should be made to the appropriate line manager in the teacher / tutor's place of work.

10. It is the school's responsibility to work with the alternative education provider on the Areas for Development to improve provision.

11 – 19 Partnership Quality Assurance Lesson Observation Recording Form

Alternative Education Provider and Venue:		
Teacher / Tutor:	Subject:	Date and Time:
External Observer:	Internal Observer:	
Were there any safeguarding concerns? (Y/N):	If Yes, please describe:	

The space below should be used to record key evidence of the practice seen during the observation. Particular consideration should be given to the way in which the different lesson elements listed contributed to learning:

Progress	Student Engagement	Student Independence	Interventions
Learning Sequence	Resources	Expectations	Planning
Assessment	Questioning	Differentiation	Literacy and Numeracy
Knowledge Building	Interleaving	Subject Knowledge	Delivery Style

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Please use the space below to summarise the key strengths and areas for development within the lesson:

Strengths:	Areas for development:

Please use the space below to record answers to the questions (observer to ask teacher / tutor):

What was your starting point for the lesson, why did you pick that connection / starter task?

How did the lesson build on prior knowledge?

Where does this lesson fit into your curriculum, SOW and Learning Journey?

How well were the learning objectives and success criteria understood by students?

Why did you choose to organise the sequencing of this topic in this way?

How did you ensure that students' learning was moved on at appropriate times?

What misconceptions did you anticipate and how did you plan to address them?

How will you adapt your next lesson in light of what happened this lesson?

What is your curriculum intent and how was this developed in your lesson?