



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

## **Supplementary guidance for inspecting Learning Pathways 14-19 in secondary schools and special schools**

**August 2008**



**BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL  
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE**



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- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ LAs;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning; and
- ▲ the education, guidance and training elements of the Department for Work and Pensions funded training programmes.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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## What is the purpose?

To provide revised guidance for inspectors on how to inspect Learning Pathways 14-19 in secondary schools and special schools in Wales. These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the Common Inspection Framework and the Guidance on the Inspection of Secondary Schools and the Guidance on the Inspection of Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units.

## For whom is it intended?

Every member of the inspection teams of secondary schools and special schools.

## From when should the guidance be used?

From September 2008.

## 1 Introduction

Learning Pathways 14-19 (LP14-19) Guidance II can be found on the Welsh Assembly Government website [www.wales.gov.uk](http://www.wales.gov.uk). All inspectors should become familiar with this document. The main features of the document are:

- the six Key Elements of LP 14-19:
  - **Individual Learning Pathways** to meet the needs of learners;
  - **Wider Choice and Flexibility** of programmes and ways of learning in a collaborative options menu;
  - **Learning Core** that sets out the common knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, values and experience;
  - **Learning Coach Support**;
  - **Access to Personal Support**; and
  - **Careers Information, Advice and Guidance**;
- a list of expectations for **14-19 Learning Networks**. It lists what they should have done by September 2008 (Annex E); and
- useful information on the **Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CFQW)** in Annex K and on the **Points Score System** in Annex L.

The document sets out an action plan that follows the publication of the Deputy Minister's report on LP 14-19 in November 2005. The summary of the plan is useful as it sets out the timetable of what is to happen over the next few years.

The Welsh Assembly Government is in the process of introducing an Assembly Measure for Learning Pathways 14-19<sup>1</sup>. The Measure will include an entitlement for learners to a wide range of general and vocational courses, and will place a duty on providers to co-operate. The Measure will influence the curriculum in schools and the way that schools work, especially how they work in partnership with other providers in their area. You will need to make yourself familiar with the content of the Measure and any associated Regulations that provide the detail of the entitlement.

Estyn has recently published five reports concerned with LP14-19:

- Choice and flexibility for 14-19 learners;
- The Welsh Baccalaureate at key stage 4;
- Welsh-medium and bilingual provision for 14-19 learners;
- Science education for 14-19 learners; and
- Supporting learning pathways.

It would be useful to become familiar with these reports. In 2008-2009, Estyn will carry out a linked survey of the delivery of key skills qualifications in key stage 4.

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<sup>1</sup> Proposals for a Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2008. Welsh Assembly Government consultation document 046/2008

## **Inspecting and reporting on LP 14-19**

This guidance is organised mainly around the way that the six Key Elements relate to different key questions. It describes where you might find evidence and suggests some questions that you might use.

You will find evidence for LP14-19 in the school's curriculum plans for key stage 4 and the sixth form. In addition, you will need to ask key stage 4 and sixth form learners about Learning Pathways (see prompts on Listening to Learners in the sections on Key Questions 3 and 4 in this paper). Finally, you will need to discuss with senior managers their plans for Learning Pathways over the next four or five years.

The main opportunities for reporting on LP14-19 will occur in Key Questions 3 and 4, but it also features in other key questions.

### **Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?**

Although it may appear that LP14-19 would not be directly evident in this key question, it should have an influence on the standards that learners achieve. It would therefore have an impact on all three of the left-hand side bullets. LP14-19 is designed to raise standards by ensuring that learners follow appropriate courses that lead to the qualifications that meet their capabilities, interests and needs.

We have provided separate guidance on how to record attainment in the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ).

You will need to come to a firm evaluation about the standards learners achieve through any off-site provision. You should follow the guidance on inspecting off-site provision that is set out in the Guidance handbooks for secondary schools or special schools. This guidance is included in the annex. You will find further information on how to obtain evidence for off-site work in the section on Key Question 3 in this guidance. You must remember only to evaluate and report on the standards achieved by the learners of the school you are inspecting. Also where there is performance information for a group of schools, you should comment on the results attained by the learners of the school you are inspecting. If the school cannot provide these results, this is likely to indicate a shortcoming in their monitoring and evaluation procedures and you should report on this in Key Question 6.

#### **Questions to consider**

In addition to the indicators listed in Annex 7 of the guidance handbook, you should also consider:

- 1 What percentage of learners gain vocational qualifications at KS4 and, if appropriate, post 16? Has this percentage increased over the period during which new Learning Pathways have been introduced?

- 2 If appropriate, what proportion of learners gain the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification at each level and what proportion attain key skills qualifications compared with national data?
- 3 What proportion of 14 to 16 year old learners leave full-time education without a qualification?
- 4 What proportion of learners gain non-formal qualifications and participate in informal experiences?

**Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?**

As with Key Question 1, you may not find direct evidence for LP14-19, but it should have an influence on teaching and assessment. In particular, you will need to evaluate the extent to which teaching meets learners' needs and gains their active engagement. You should consider whether teachers show good subject knowledge and familiarity with recent developments in their field. You should also consider whether teachers involved in the delivery of vocational courses demonstrate good knowledge of and familiarity with the vocational setting.

Assessment also plays a role by ensuring that learners understand their achievements and progress, and that they use this understanding in planning and improving their learning.

If you observe any off-site provision, you must follow the guidance on inspecting the quality of teaching in off-site provision that is set out in the Guidance handbooks for secondary schools or special schools. This states that you should not report on the quality of teaching or assessment of teachers in the other setting. This guidance is included in the annex.

**Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?**

In this key question there is a **reporting requirement** about LP14-19. It says that you will need to report on '*the use of Learning Pathways (14-19) option menus for learners, Elements 1-3*'.

Key Question 3 is where you should, where appropriate, inspect and report on the first three Key Elements of LP14-19. The elements are:

- Key Element 1: an Individual Learning Pathway;
- Key Element 2: Wider Choice and Flexibility; and
- Key Element 3: The Learning Core.

Both the left-hand side bullets are concerned with the intentions of LP14-19:

- the extent to which learning experiences meet learners' needs and interests; and

- the extent to which learning experiences respond to the needs of employers and the wider community.

You should comment on the quality of the option menu and the extent to which learners are able to gain access to their entitlement as set out in the Assembly Measure. This should provide you with evidence on the first two Key Elements. You will need to see if learners have access to courses that cover the domains and are available at appropriate levels from entry level to level three.

You will need to consider the impact of the local 14-19 Network and the school's involvement with it. In doing this you should consider how well the school is working with partners in order to provide the full range of courses that are capable of meeting learners' interests and needs.

If the school is not developing LP14-19 and, in particular, it is not developing an option menu that enables learners to follow appropriate choices, then you should consider this to be a significant shortcoming and it could influence the overall grade you award for Key Question 3.

You will also need to evaluate the school's provision for Key Element 3: The Learning Core. You will need to consider the school's provision for the 'minimum requirements' and 'enhancements' of the different aspects of the Learning Core:

- skills;
- knowledge and understanding;
- attitudes and value; and
- common experiences.

Increasingly as LP14-19 develops, you are likely to come across more instances of learners who are taught off-site at another provider or are involved in a work placement. The guidance handbooks set out the rights of inspectors in relation to off-site provision and this is included in the annex to this supplementary guidance. You should always follow this guidance.

You will need to decide on whether to make a visit to off-site provision. This will largely depend on whether the number of learners involved warrant a visit. If the school has significant numbers attending off-site provision, then you should consider making a visit. However, if this provision is located in a number of places, this may not be practicable. You will need to decide whether the time taken to visit and observe the off-site provision is time well spent. You will need to treat each case on its own merits before coming to any decision.

If you are unable to visit the off-site provision, then you should:

- interview the learners about their experiences and the quality of provision;
- examine any work produced by the learners and any performance information;

- evaluate the standards being achieved on these courses;
- interview the managers responsible for organising, overseeing and evaluating the courses;
- evaluate how well the off-site provision meets individual learning pathways; and
- consider to what extent the provision gives value for money.

**Questions to consider:**

**A Individual Learning Pathways and Wider Choice and Flexibility**

- 1 What is the quality of the option menu and courses available to 14-16 year old learners, including access to domains, levels, general and applied options, and progression routes?
- 2 What is the quality of the option menu and courses available to 16-19 year old learners, including access to domains, levels, general and applied options, and progression routes?
- 3 What are the quality and effectiveness of the collaborative and co-operative provision?
- 4 How good is the provision for non-formal and informal learning activities?
- 5 Where appropriate, how wide-ranging and effective is the provision for learners working through the medium of Welsh?

**B Learning Core provision:**

- 6 How good is the provision for the skills aspect of the Learning Core (key skills, Welsh-language skills and other work-related skills)?
- 7 How good is the provision for the knowledge and understanding aspect of the Learning Core (Wales, Europe and the World, personal, social, sustainability and health education, and careers education and guidance)?
- 8 How good is the provision for the attitudes and values aspect of the Learning Core (respect for self, others and for diversity, and responsibility for personal and social development, sustainability and health)?
- 9 How good is the provision for common experiences aspect of the Learning Core (work-focused experience, community participation, and cultural, sporting, aesthetic and creative activities)?
- 10 How good is the engagement with employers, especially in relation to providing work-focused experience?

## Listening to learners

For Key Question 3, you will gain a great deal from talking to learners. Some possible questions to ask them include:

- When you made your choices, did you get full information about courses in your own school and in other places?
- Were you able to take the courses that you wanted?
- How satisfied are you with the choices you have made?
- What is your overall satisfaction with the quality of the courses you are taking? What is good about them?
- Overall what are you less satisfied with in terms of the range and quality of courses in your school?

### **Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?**

In this key question, there is a **reporting requirement** about LP14-19. It says that you will need to report on the '*use of Learning Pathways (14-19) option menus for learners, Elements 4-6*'.

You should, where appropriate, inspect and report on the second three elements of LP14-19 in this key question:

- Key Element 4: Learning Coach Support;
- Key Element 5: Access to Personal Support; and
- Key Element 6: Careers Information, Advice and Guidance.

### **Questions to consider:**

#### **A Learning Coaches**

- 1 How effective are the arrangements to ensure that all learners receive their entitlement to learning coach support?
- 2 Is the learning coach support impartial? How do staff makes sure that the learning coach support is impartial?

#### **B Access to Personal Support**

- 3 How effective is the support and/or access to support in order to meet the needs of individuals, especially in helping them to develop solutions to personal, social, emotional and physical problems?

## **C Careers Information, Advice and Guidance**

4 Is there high quality impartial information, advice and guidance?

### **Listening to learners**

For Key Question 4, you will gain a great deal from talking to learners. Some possible questions to ask them:

- What was the quality of guidance you received before starting your courses? Did it cover everything you needed to know? Was it clear and fair, giving you good information about all the choices on offer in the locality?
- How useful was the careers advice and guidance you received?
- What is the quality of guidance and support you are getting during your courses?
- Do you know who the learning coach is? If you have worked with a learning coach, how successful has it been?
- While you have been in school, have you had any problems, and, if so, have you had help to deal with them?
- Overall, what is good and not good about the support and guidance in your provider?

<b>Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?</b>
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In this key question, you should comment on how well the school includes LP14-19 in setting out its priorities and strategic direction. In particular, you will need to consider how well the school looks at LP14-19 from the learners' point of view rather than simply looking at how it affects the school itself. This means that the school should look at how it can contribute to expanding learners' choice, whether this is through their own provision or provision from elsewhere. You will want to consider how well the school works in partnership with others, especially as part of the 14-19 Network. You should be able to evaluate the impact of the local 14-19 Network on the school and how well the school contributes to it.

It is likely that reports will comment on collaboration, partnerships and the 14-19 Network.

### **Questions to consider**

- 1 How well do leaders and managers work to offer the advantages of LP14-19 to learners?
- 2 Does the school have a clear vision for LP14-19? Are there clear strategic priorities?

- 3 Is the school aware of the Annual Network Development Plan and associated plans? Has it signed up to developments?
- 4 How well in practice does the school work with other providers across the network? Is there real collaboration to reduce duplication of provision, to combine non-viable classes and to specialise?
- 5 How well in practice do partnerships work?

**Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?**

In this key question, you should look at how the school is evaluating its current provision in the light of the LP14-19 requirements and how well it is planning for these over both the short and the long term. Where there is some off-site provision, you should find out how well the school monitors and evaluates it. Where there is performance information on a group or consortium of schools, you will need to look at what use the school makes of that information. You should also consider whether the school evaluates the breadth of their provision, including the extent to which it offers the entitlement outlined in the Assembly Measure.

**Questions to consider**

- 1 How is collaborative provision monitored and evaluated?
- 2 How do schools evaluate the quality of courses for their learners that are being delivered elsewhere?
- 3 How well does the school contribute to the network's self-evaluation?
- 4 Does the school use performance indicators in common with other network providers?

**Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?**

In this key question, you should consider how well the school uses all available resources to meet the requirements of LP14-19. In doing this you should consider whether the provision is as efficient, economic and effective as it could be. You will need to consider the extent to which the school works with partners in order to increase its cost effectiveness. You will need to take account of class sizes and the availability of cost-effective and successful provision elsewhere. You will also need to consider whether the school has explored alternative delivery arrangements in order to increase the cost-effectiveness of provision 14-19. The main question is whether the school is getting as much value for money as it should from what it provides.

In schools with sixth forms, you should consider whether the school is gaining value for money from its sixth form. You will need to judge whether the provision is cost-effective, particularly where teaching groups are small. You should investigate

whether the provision of the sixth form, especially where there are small teaching groups, is taking resources away from key stages 3 and 4. In schools with sixth forms, you should provide a clear statement about whether the school is getting value for money from it.

You should also consider whether teachers are suitably qualified and deployed effectively for the courses they are delivering, particularly in vocational subjects, and whether the facilities are adequate in industry-related study.

### **Questions to consider**

- 1 Have the school deployed resources to ensure that every learner has access to their entitlement to the full range of general and vocational options?
- 2 Are there gaps in provision? If so, have they been filled appropriately?
- 3 Where there are small groups at post-16, has the school:
  - created larger teaching groups in key stages 3 and 4 to support this;
  - reduced the range of general and vocational options in key stage 4; or
  - restricted the availability of specialist teachers in key stage 3 or 4?
- 4 To what extent does the school review the curriculum it offers to ensure the best value for money?
- 5 To what extent has the school reviewed delivery models to improve the cost effectiveness of provision for 14 to 19 year olds?
- 6 To what extent does the school share in-service training and good practice with other institutions?
- 7 To what extent does the school share resources and/or funding with other institutions and what impact does this have?

## Annex

### Extract from Guidance handbooks on rights of entry and inspecting off-site provision

#### Inspecting off-site provision for pupils up to age 16

Inspectors have the **right of entry** to any institution or any establishment other than the school under inspection where:

- it provides part of the education for pupils registered at the school under inspection; or
- inspectors are satisfied that they cannot properly discharge their duties under Section 28 of the Education Act 2005 in relation to the school under inspection without inspecting provision made for those pupils at the other school or establishment.

You also have the right to inspect any records that relate to the provision of education for these pupils.

You must be sensitive when exercising your right to observe sessions in other premises and you should arrange your observations in colleges and workplaces through negotiation. If you experience difficulties in arranging such visits, you should contact Estyn's Managing Inspector for secondary schools/special schools before formally exercising your right of entry.

Where possible, you should provide feedback in the premises in which the learning is taking place to those directly providing it. In the case of a college of further education, this would usually be to the teacher or instructor who leads the session and, in a work-place environment, the person directly supervising the education or training provided.

You do not need to give overall feedback to the institution or workplace provider, as this is given to the school whose pupils are involved in the off-site learning. You should, however, encourage the school to discuss the findings of the inspection with such providers. Where there are particular issues about the education of pupils in another institution or establishment, the headteacher should take up these matters with the provider, on the basis of the inspection findings. You should not take part in such discussions as the inspection is of the school and not the off-site provider.

You should encourage the headteacher to check the accuracy of the draft report with the principal, headteacher or other person in charge of the institution or establishment in which off-site learning takes place.

## **Inspecting off-site provision for pupils over the age of 16**

In schools with sixth forms, some courses may be shared with other institutions. If you feel you cannot make a fair judgement of the standards students are achieving without inspecting lessons in another institution or establishment, you may seek permission from the head of that institution or establishment to inspect those lessons. **However, you do not have right of entry.**

Where a course is taught by a teacher from the school being inspected, you should inspect lessons in the normal way, judging the quality of teaching and the standards that students from the school achieve.

Where a course is taught by a teacher from another institution, you should judge the standards achieved by students from the school being inspected, inspect their written work and talk with them to assess their level of understanding. As with sessions for pupils in Years 10 and 11, you should provide feedback on students' progress in the premises in which learning is taking place to those directly providing it. You should not offer any judgement about the course or quality of teaching.

Where a course is taught remotely, using a video-link or any other electronic media, you should inspect lessons in the normal way and ensure that the teacher knows you are present. You should judge the standards students achieve but not the quality of teaching. If circumstances permit, you may use the video link to discuss students' progress with the teacher, but should not offer any judgement about the course or the quality of teaching.

If you do need to visit another provider, then you should find out whether that provider is being inspected or has been inspected recently. If it has been inspected recently, then you should consider using a report of that inspection as part of your evidence base for the inspection.

## **Inspecting subjects taught in another setting through consortium or other arrangements**

When a course is taught in another setting, your report on Key Question 1 should only relate to students of the school you are inspecting. You should not report on the quality of teaching or assessment of teachers in the other setting. However, you should evaluate, and report on, arrangements that the school makes for these students under Key Questions 3-7, as appropriate.

When published results are for a consortium, you should comment on the results attained by the students of the school you are inspecting. If the school cannot provide these results, this is likely to indicate a weakness in its monitoring and tracking arrangements.