

Revised Evolving Quality Framework for Adult Basic Education (ABE) User Guide



NALA

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Introduction

Welcome to the Evolving Quality Framework User Guide. This manual provides practical guidance in using the **Evolving Quality Framework (EQF) for Adult Basic Education**. Here you will find all of the information and worksheets you need to use the EQF to evaluate the service in which you are working. Whether you are a manager, tutor or a student in the adult basic education (ABE) service, you can reflect on its quality by identifying what is working well and what needs to be changed. The materials contained in the following pages will help you to do this.

What is quality?

A quality service is one that responds to the needs of the people who use it. Everyone in the organisation knows what their role is and how they can play their part in making sure that the organisation achieves its aims. Each person is committed to reflecting on their own work and on the organisation generally, to see how it can be improved. Everyone knows what methods and standards are expected and, where possible, contributes to deciding what these are. To do all this, people in the organisation need clear working methods and enough resources to carry out their tasks.

Quality is an essential part of how an organisation operates and how the people in it work together.

Why evaluate quality?

The Evolving Quality Framework was designed to support people when evaluating quality in adult basic education. Everyone involved in the adult basic education service, whether a student, a tutor or a manager, is entitled to have the best possible service and the highest quality environment in which to learn and to work.

To make sure that this happens, it is important to have a clear idea of what quality in ABE actually means. Then, we need a method that helps us to reflect on this so that we can identify gaps, plan for the future and keep track of any changes recommended. When the people who work and learn in the ABE service carry out this evaluation for themselves, the process is called **self-evaluation**.

Self-evaluation has many benefits. If it becomes a regular part of the work of the service, it is a way of reaching a high standard of quality in all of the important areas, and of maintaining or improving on this. It also allows the people most affected by decisions about the service to have say in those decisions.

What is adult basic education?

Adult basic education (ABE for short) is a term used to describe learning opportunities for adults that help them to develop important skills, such as literacy and numeracy, which are important for taking part fully in society. Adult basic education includes adult literacy work but also involves a wide range of learning in many different areas, at basic or foundation level. ABE is based on the principle that education is a basic human right. The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights states:

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.¹

Adult basic education includes adult literacy work but also involves a wide range of learning in many different areas which people are trying out for the first time. experiences at a basic or foundation level.²

¹ UN Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26.

² NALA (2005) Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work, Dublin: NALA, page 12.

Literacy is much more than a set of technical skills. NALA defines literacy as follows:

Literacy involves listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and using everyday technology to communicate and handle information. It includes more than the technical skills of communication: it also has personal, social and economic dimensions. Literacy increases the opportunity for individuals and communities to reflect on their situation, explore new possibilities and initiate change.

Good practice in adult literacy work starts with the needs and interests of individuals. It is concerned with personal development and building confidence as well as technical skills.

What is the Evolving Quality Framework?

The Evolving Quality Framework (EQF) is a system for improving and monitoring the quality of adult basic education (ABE) in Ireland. It is a method of self-evaluation because the people using it are the staff, students and managers who work and learn in the ABE centres. It is evolving because it adapts to new situations and needs as circumstances in ABE change.

Important terms

As you read through this User Guide and begin evaluating your ABE service, you will come across and use a number of specific terms. It is worth taking some time to become familiar with them, as they are central to the EQF.

Because the system was specially designed for adult basic education, the EQF identifies five general areas of activity that are essential in any good ABE service. These areas of activity are called **Quality Areas**.

Each Quality Area is described in more detail by **Statements of Quality**. The EQF has nineteen Statements of Quality altogether.

The Quality Areas and Statements of Quality together allow staff, managers and students, working as a team, to examine each aspect of the service in their centre.

Quality Signs are indicators, or signs, that you can use to judge whether your centre is meeting the standards of quality for a particular statement. They are very specific, so it is easy to tell from evidence whether a certain standard is being met.

Self-evaluation with the EQF involves using a method made up of nine distinct steps, called the **9-step process**. This process, which is shown in the diagram on page 14, involves:

- deciding what aspects of the service to examine, at that time;
- identifying what is working well and where there are gaps;
- gathering information to provide evidence for their initial judgements;
- drawing up a plan to build on strengths and to remedy any weaknesses; and
- keeping track of how far this plan is put into action.

At the heart of the Evolving Quality Framework is a set of values that describe the ethos of adult basic education. These are the **Guiding Principles**. If there is any doubt about the best way to carry out an action, for what purpose or in whose interests, the Guiding Principles give direction.

These terms – Quality Areas, Statements of Quality, Quality Signs, 9-step process, Guiding Principles – are explained in more detail in Section 1. You will meet them very often in the pages of this Guide. You will also discuss them with the other members of your **EQF team**, with the help of your **EQF facilitator** at your EQF evaluation team meetings. By working through the EQF self-evaluation process, you will help to improve and monitor the quality of the service your centre provides.

Most importantly for centres that offer accreditation under the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), you will also generate evidence that you can use to support the quality assurance requirements of the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC).

Sections 2 – 6 and Information Sheet 1 will help you to cross-check the work you do for the EQF with the FETAC requirements.

The EQF User Guide

This User Guide is designed to be used with the help of a trained EQF facilitator. It is aimed at teams using the EQF, especially centre managers, facilitators and any other person who has responsibility for quality assurance. People outside the centre who have an interest in Adult Basic Education may also find it useful.

The purpose of this User Guide is to:

- help you to understand the concept of quality in adult basic education;
- introduce you to the concepts that are part of this EQF;
- give step-by-step instructions on using the EQF; and
- provide tools that will help you to reflect on different aspects of your service.

The Guide is divided into eight sections, not including this Introduction.

Section 1 explains:

- the Guiding Principles, which are values that direct the system;
- the five Quality Areas, which describe the main aspects of a quality ABE service;
- the Statements of Quality and the Quality Signs; and
- the 9-step process – the method used to reflect on the Quality Areas and Statements of Quality.

Sections 2 – 6 describe each of the Quality Areas in more detail and include the Statements of Quality that describe each Quality Area. Each of these sections also contains examples of indicators, or signs, that you can use to judge whether your centre is meeting the standards of quality for a statement and the types of material you can gather to use as evidence.

Section 7 contains guidelines for facilitators.

Section 8 contains worksheets that you can use to help you with the 9-step process (see diagram on page 14) as well as general information on important aspects of the EQF system. This includes glossaries and information sheets on evaluation, team work and quality.

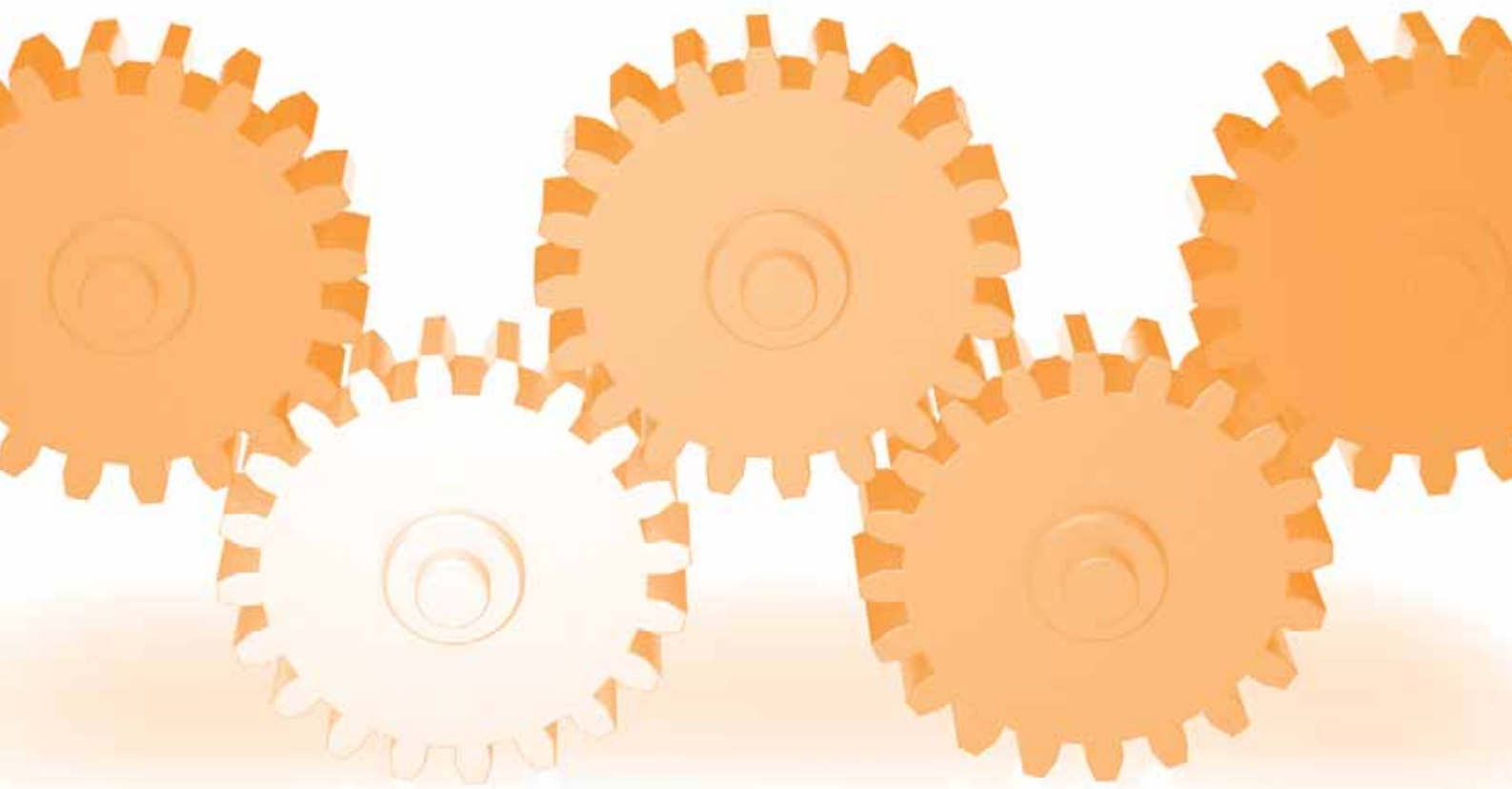
Using this guide

To begin with, you will need to read this Introduction and Section 1 closely. This will help you to become familiar with the terms, the concepts and the system. If you are a member of an EQF team, your EQF facilitator will work through much of this with your team at an early session.

This EQF User Guide is therefore an instruction manual that gives step-by-step instructions on how the Evolving Quality Framework works. It also provides general tools, including worksheets and information sheets, that are useful for carrying out quality assurance wherever adult basic education is taking place. Extracts from this guide can be photocopied and used as appropriate with students.



Section 1: The Evolving Quality Framework





The Evolving Quality Framework: Method and Structure

The EQF Team

Using the EQF to examine the quality of an adult basic education service is a team effort. Evaluation is carried out by a team of individuals who meet between four and six times each year to discuss quality issues and recommend further actions to improve or maintain quality.

Team meetings are supported by a specially-trained EQF facilitator, who, although not a member of the team, assists the EQF work by planning the meetings, getting materials ready and generally supporting the evaluation process. Important support is also provided by the EQF anchor person, or other quality assurance officer, who helps to organise the meetings and takes responsibility for administration, storing material and training new team members in how the EQF works (see the detailed description under the box below).

The work of the EQF team should draw on the views of all of the groups involved in the ABE service, so, ideally, the team should include students, tutors, the centre manager, the anchor person and where possible, senior managers. It may not always be possible for the senior managers to be present in person, so there should be a way of keeping them informed of progress.

In Vocational Education Committee (VEC) adult literacy services, the EQF team ideally has:

- **2 students;**
- **2 tutors - 1 voluntary and 1 paid;**
- **an Adult Literacy Organiser (ALO);**
- **an Adult Education Organiser (AEO);**
- **the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the VEC;**
- **1 representative of Vocational Education Committee;**
- **1 tutor trainer; and**
- **1 other.**

The anchor person is another very important support in VECs. This person, or in non-VEC centre, the person with responsibility for quality assurance, plays a crucial role in supporting the team and in making sure that there is continuity in its work over the years. In particular, the anchor person:

- supports the EQF team by liaising with the facilitator and the centre manager;
- helps the team to keep track of their work;
- takes minutes of meetings;
- organises and stores resources;
- helps to train new members and introduce them to the system; and
- liaises with centre manager and other organisations.

Some members of the EQF team, such as the centre manager, are permanent members because of their role in the ABE service. Others, such as individual students and tutors, join the team for one or two years. After an agreed period, the team rotates so that other people can take their place. This means that the EQF team, like the EQF process itself, can change over time to meet new needs and to respond to new circumstances. It can be helpful to create a panel of people interested in the EQF who can be called on when the time for change arrives.

Sometimes individual centres work with others in the same locality to create a joint EQF team and these 'clusters' can carry out their evaluation process together. If teams are formed from two or more ABE providers, each one should make sure that its EQF team includes people from all of the groups who manage, provide and use the service.

The work of the EQF team

Most of the work of the EQF team involves discussion, reflecting on experience and helping to gather evidence of judgements and opinions. People who volunteer to take part in the EQF should be willing and able to attend meetings and play a part in the discussions and activities of the group. At the same time, it is important that the centre manager organise ways of supporting team members who are new to this way of working.

An EQF team will work best if all of its members:

- have been involved in the centre or service for at least one year;
- have the time to come to meetings;
- are willing to work in a team;
- have enough literacy skills to read minutes of meetings, memos and letters or have help in doing so; and
- are interested in contributing to the ABE service by taking part in the EQF.

People who decide to volunteer for the EQF team in your centre or institution will make an important contribution to the ABE service. They will also have the chance to develop or practise the many useful skills that are a part of self-evaluation, in a stable and supportive setting.

Your team's specific work will involve evaluating the adult basic education service in your centre using a method of reflection called the **9-step process**. This is described on page 14, but to understand how it works, it is important to explore first the other elements of the EQF system in more depth. The **Guiding Principles**, the **Quality Areas**, the **Statements of Quality** and the **Signs of Quality** are the building blocks of the system.

The Guiding Principles

Often there are different ways of reaching the same goal. When this happens, people's beliefs or values can influence decisions about how to move forward. Sometimes, these values are not clearly stated. In fact, it is easy to take them for granted and imagine that everyone is working from the same set of ideas about what education should be and what purpose it should serve. This can cause problems when beliefs clash.

To prevent this from happening, the EQF system is based on a number of Guiding Principles. These are perhaps the most important part of the EQF, as they state the values and beliefs that underpin adult basic education in Ireland. Taken together, these are sometimes called the ethos of ABE.

In the EQF system, the following five principles express this ethos.

Voluntarism



The student has the right to attend on a voluntary basis and to set their own learning goals in an atmosphere of trust and respect. It is the

student's own decision to take part in ABE and the knowledge and skills they work on address their own interests and priorities.

Confidentiality



The student has the right to privacy and confidentiality. Their participation in ABE is kept private, unless they agree otherwise, and any information they supply is also kept private.

Respect for cultural difference



Cultural and social differences are respected at all levels in the organisation. Staff, students and

managers in the service welcome people from many different social and cultural backgrounds and take active steps to make sure that everyone who wants to be fully included in the life of the centre has that opportunity.



Social interaction and informality

The service creates an atmosphere that encourages social interaction, informality and enjoyment. This recognises the social aspects of learning and motivation and the importance of an adult-friendly learning environment and approach to management.



Inclusiveness

Students can take part in all aspects of the organisation, including evaluation.

Quality Areas and Statements of Quality

The Evolving Quality Framework identifies five areas of activity that are very important in a high-quality adult basic education service. These five Quality Areas are:

- Resources
- Management
- Teaching and Learning
- Progression
- Outreach and Promotion.

In order, these Quality Areas mean that:

- a high-quality adult basic education service must have enough funds, enough staff and suitable premises;
- the manager must support students and staff by planning and tracking all activities;
- teaching must be of a high standard and address the interests and needs of the students;
- students must have suitable opportunities to move on; and
- the general public and relevant people in other organisations should know about the service and what it does.

If your centre offers accreditation under the National Qualifications Framework, you will find that some of these Quality Areas, such as Resources and Teaching and Learning, are important for any educational experience. They are also very similar to the way FETAC defines quality. So by working through the EQF in those areas, you will also be helping to make sure that your centre is reaching the quality standards that FETAC requires.

Other Quality Areas, such as Outreach and Promotion and parts of Teaching and Learning, which are not directly required by FETAC, are still very important because they address elements of the service that are particularly relevant to ABE. So using the EQF helps to make sure that your centre maintains the ethos of adult basic education as well.

Each Quality Area is described in more detail by a number of Statements of Quality. These statements express exactly what the standard of quality in that particular Quality Area involves. For example, the Quality Area 'Resources' has four separate but related statements under the following headings.

- 'Resources for Teaching and Learning' refers to the materials that students and tutors use.
- 'Premises' are the room and the physical surroundings where teaching and learning take place.
- 'Staffing' is concerned with tutoring.
- 'Funding' refers to the overall budget of the centre or institution.

Taken together, all of the Statements of Quality under these titles describe the range and type of resources a high-quality adult basic education service should have.

Overleaf gives a summary of the five Quality Areas and the titles of their related Statements of Quality. It also lists the Guiding Principles on which the whole system is based.

Five Quality Areas and titles of Statements of Quality informed by the Guiding Principles



To decide whether the centre really does have enough funding, staffing or the right kind of premises, we need to have a more detailed description of what each of these titles actually involves. In Sections 2 – 6 of this User Guide, you will find a full description of the relevant Statements of Quality for each Quality Area. These set out all of the requirements that add up to quality for that particular activity of the ABE service or centre. In other words, the Statements of Quality describe the standard that a centre must reach.

Signs of Quality

A sign is an indicator of success. If we want to be sure that a centre is providing a high standard of service, we need to decide at the start how we will know when we have achieved success. This means working towards definite signposts that can tell us when we are making progress or when we have arrived. These are the indicators or **Signs of Quality** that describe what success would look like for each Statement of Quality.

Here is one Statement of Quality taken from the ‘Resources’ Quality Area. This Statement of Quality describes what a high-quality adult basic education service should accomplish in relation to staffing:

Quality Area Resources

Statement of Quality: Staffing

A quality centre employs enough suitably-trained staff to provide different forms of tuition that support students in working towards their goals.

Although this is clear enough as a general statement of quality, it still leaves room for interpretation. ‘Suitably-trained’, for example, could mean different things to different people. So could ‘enough’. We need a more specific indication of what exactly quality in staffing means in an adult basic education service.

These three **Signs of Quality** give that guidance.

Signs of Quality: Staffing

All tutors have completed all the initial training they need.

All tutors have access to a programme of in-service training to help students to reach their learning goals.

At least 80% of paid tutors have a professional, third-level qualification relevant to adult literacy and numeracy or are working towards this.

These are very clear indicators, or signs, that show whether the staffing situation in a centre is as it should be. It is also easy to verify them in different ways and using different types of evidence. Sections 2- 6 contain more guidance on verifying and gathering evidence.

A centre that can show that it has met these three signs has reached the standard needed for the ‘Staffing’ Statement of Quality.

Some of the Signs of Quality you will find in Sections 2 – 6 relate directly to the standard that FETAC has set for its quality assurance system. All of the FETAC requirements are built in to the EQF Signs of Quality. So while working through the EQF, you will also show that your centre is meeting the FETAC standards.

Other Signs of Quality relate more to the ethos of adult basic education. Some of these are included in Sections 2 – 6.

To meet the standard for a statement, you must show that your centre meets the signs that relate to the statement.

However, some EQF teams may decide that particular local circumstances need to be reflected in any discussions about quality.

These may not always be included in the signs set out here. In this case, the team can supplement the signs given here by devising extra Signs of Quality that relate to the local situation.

You can see now how the different elements of the EQF system – Quality Areas, Statements of Quality and Signs of Quality – all describe different aspects of quality, at different levels of detail. All of these are based on the five Guiding Principles. In practical terms, this means that if there is any doubt about how to move forward in any discussion about quality in adult basic education, we look to the Guiding Principles for direction.

Starting out

An EQF team examines one Statement of Quality, in detail, at a time, using the 9-step process described on the next page. This means that at an early stage in its work, the EQF team has to address these two questions:

- Which Quality Area should we evaluate first?
- Within this, which Statement of Quality should we evaluate first?

The EQF facilitator will be able to help new teams to make these important decisions. The best approach is to choose a Quality Area and a Statement of Quality that:

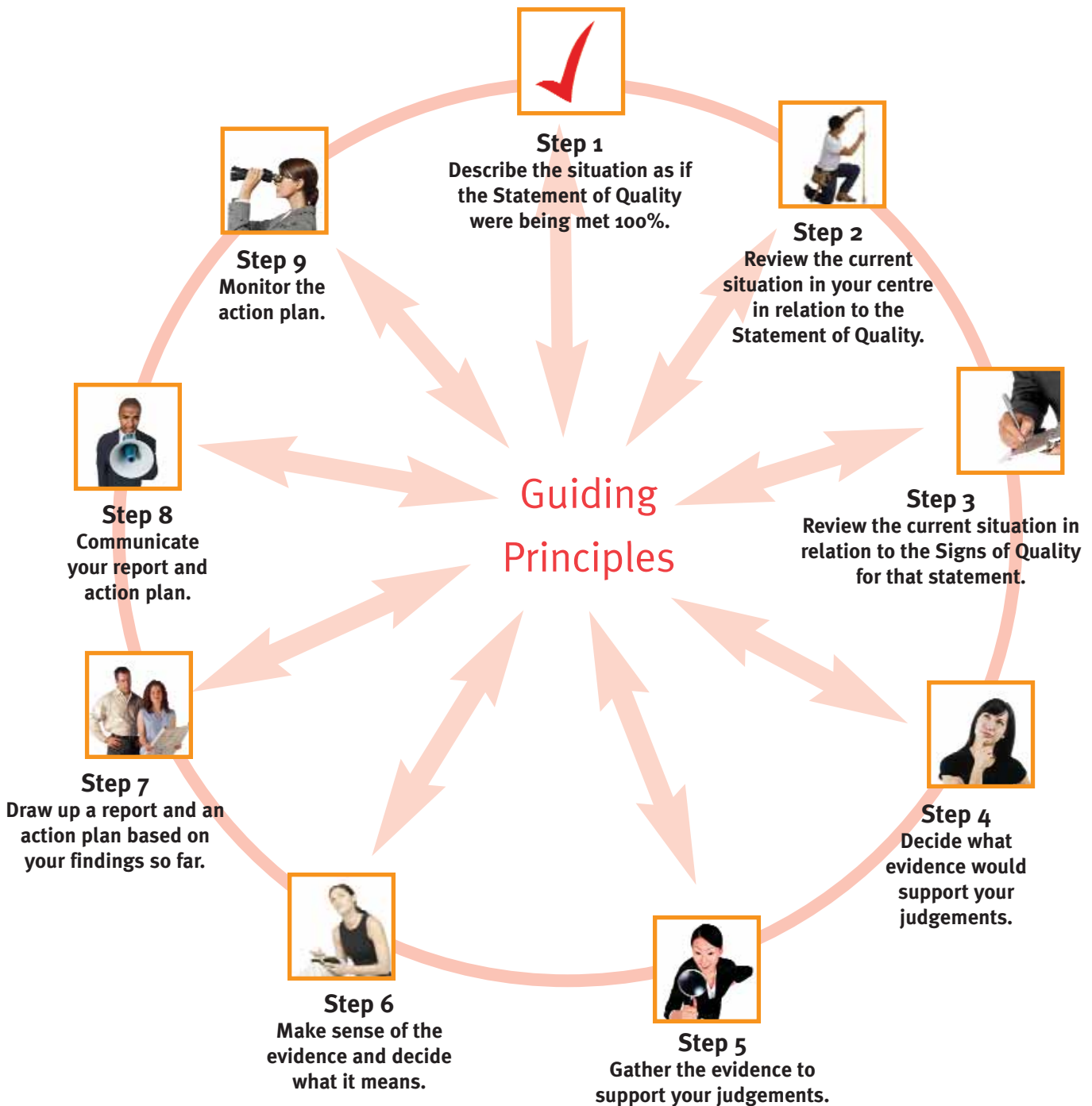
- address a high-priority issue, at the time, for the centre; and
- can be addressed usefully by self-evaluation at this time.

It is important to spend some time on this initial stage of discussion. This will help to make sure that the EQF work is relevant to the most immediate needs of the centre. Only when these decisions are made is the EQF team ready to look at quality in its centre in detail.

The 9-step process

The 9-step process below is a method of reflecting on the Quality Areas, and especially, on the Statements of Quality and the Signs of Quality. Using this system, students, tutors and managers in the EQF team evaluate the quality of the service in which they are all involved. This makes it possible to identify exactly which aspects are already going well and which parts need to be improved. The process also provides a method for gathering evidence of quality and progress made.

All of this information helps the team to draw up a report of its findings and an **action plan** that sets out what should happen next to make sure that the quality of the service is continuously improving. Centre managers and staff of the wider adult basic education service – not the EQF team – are responsible for **implementing** the plan. However, **monitoring** how far the action plan has been put into practice is a very important part of the EQF team's work.





Step 1

Describe the situation as if the Statement of Quality were being met 100%.

The first step is to describe the ideal situation in your centre in relation to that Statement of Quality.



Step 2

Review the current situation in your centre in relation to the Statement of Quality.

This step is about reality. The team tries to describe things as they really are, right now, in relation to that statement. There may be a gap between the ideal vision you identified in Step 1 and the real situation.



Step 3

Review the current situation in relation to the Signs of Quality for that statement.

Now the team looks at each of the Signs of Quality in detail. Some of these may already have been accomplished. Some may be partly accomplished but need more work. Still others may be completely new for the centre. This step involves getting an impression of how well the centre is doing on specific areas, described by the signs of quality. If you need to create more signs to reflect a local situation, this is the time to do it. Guidelines on drawing up signs of quality are given in Information Sheet 5.



Step 4

Decide what evidence would support your judgements.

The team now needs to discuss ways of clarifying the impressions identified in the last step. For example, if the team concludes that all of the staff have done their initial tutor training and also have access to in-service training, how can you be sure that this is true? What evidence can you supply that will either back up this impression or show if it is mistaken?

At this stage, the EQF team members identify the evidence they can gather that will clarify what has and has not been achieved in relation to that sign of quality. The team also agree which team members will actually find the evidence and bring it to the next meeting. More guidelines on identifying evidence is given in Information Sheet 6 in Section 8.



Step 5

Gather the evidence to support your judgements.

Now, individual members do whatever has been agreed to get the evidence of the centre's achievements in relation to the Sign of Quality. In some cases, the evidence may show that the service is already meeting the standard. In others, it may show that the centre does not yet meet the standard. This helps to clarify what needs to be done to improve the service in that area.

Unlike steps 1 – 4, gathering evidence usually needs to be done between EQF team meetings rather than during a meeting.



Step 6

Make sense of the evidence and decide what it means.

Team members look at all the evidence that has been gathered so far and discuss it. You need to use this material to decide what exactly the team can say about how close the centre is to achieving demonstrating that Sign of Quality. For example, the evidence on staff training might show that a planned in-service training fell through and needs to be rescheduled. It might also show that everything necessary has already been done. Information Sheet 8 deals with how to analyse and interpret evidence.



Step 7

Draw up a report and an action plan based on your findings so far.

Once the EQF team has agreed what the evidence means, the anchor person needs to record the findings. This could be in the form of a written report or in any of the other ways of presenting information shown in Information Sheet 10.

Now that you have decided how well the centre is meeting the standard for that Statement of Quality, the EQF team is in a position to say what should happen next to make sure that the statement is fully achieved. This involves drawing up an action plan. You can use the format given in Worksheet 6 to structure this.



Step 8

Communicate your report and action plan.

The report on your findings can be sent out to many individuals and organisations, depending on the nature of the findings. It could even be used in a centre newsletter.

The action plan is the EQF team's way of saying to senior management, "This is what we are doing well. This is what we need to do, and how we need to do it."

The EQF team does not have to put the action plan into practice. However, you must make sure that it gets to the right person or committee so that they will implement it. In the Vocational Education Committee, this is usually an Adult Education Organiser or the Chief Executive Officer. The EQF team should promote the EQF action plan to any committees or other systems, such as a FETAC monitoring committee, that are part of the management system of the overall organisation.



Step 9

Monitor the action plan.

It is very important for the team to track the progress of the actions recommended in the action plan. This is one of the tasks carried out by the anchor person or by the person with responsibility for quality assurance. This work partly involves keeping minutes and a record of all statements covered but also involves developing a system for storing and organising all the material that the team collects as evidence.

A good system for storing and recording the material will make it easier to cross-reference evidence when the team moves on to work on other statements in the future. Instead of the team gathering fresh material as evidence for further steps, cross-referencing means that members will be able to refer to evidence already collected and organised. Information Sheet 1 in Section 8 will help with this.

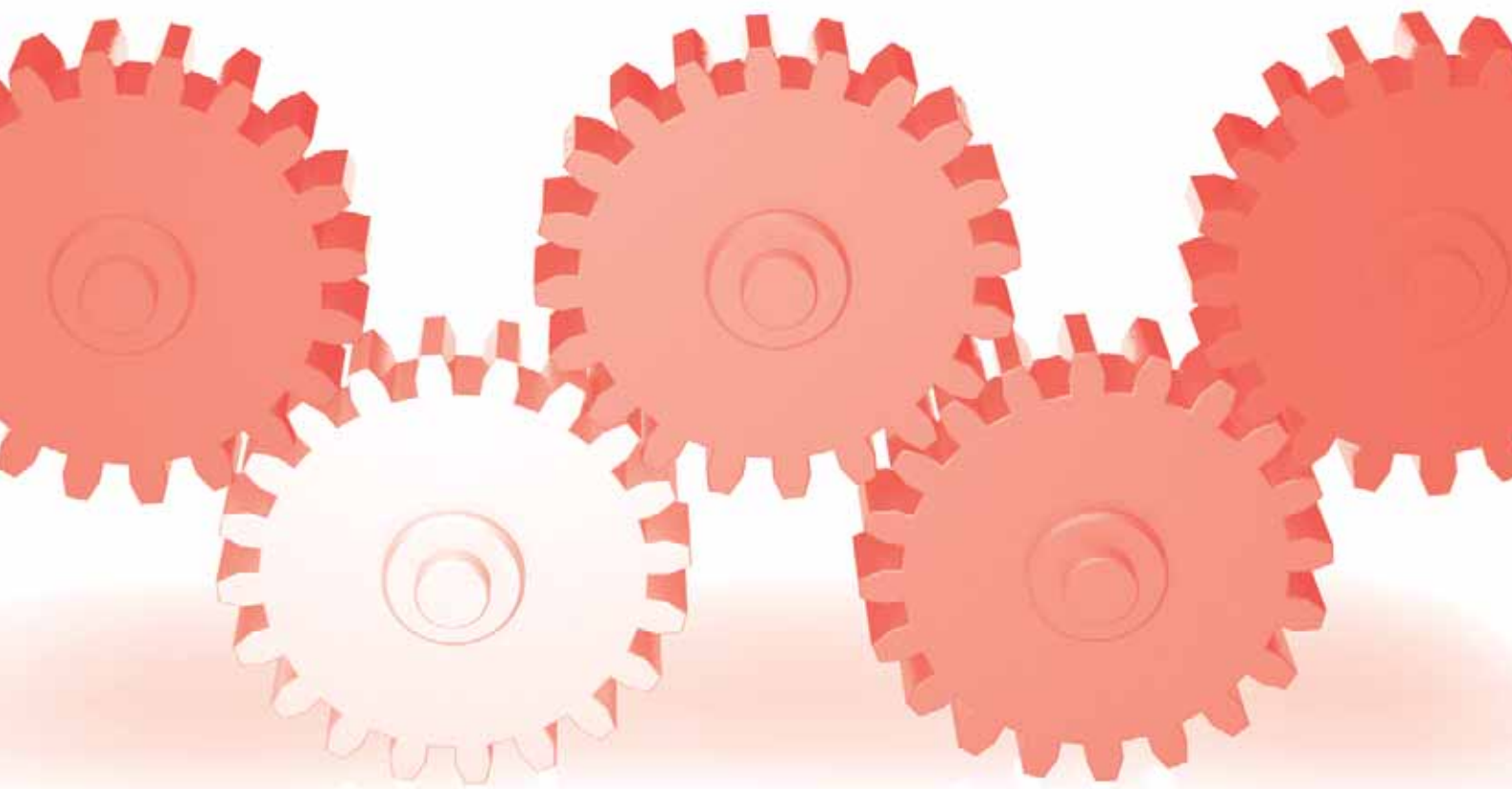
To monitor the action plan, the team should have a good idea of who is responsible for carrying out each action and a reasonable time within which to expect progress to be made. It should also agree definite ways of checking on what has happened in relation to its recommendations. This may involve giving particular tasks to individuals to be carried out after a given period, or it may involve taking part in, or even setting up, a formal monitoring committee. Whatever strategy is used needs to be agreed, documented, followed through and reported back to the EQF team.

Teams members will find that as they get used to the 9-step process, they will work through it more quickly.

Every time a team finishes work on a statement of quality they should fill out Worksheet 7, which is an evaluation sheet. If necessary, the facilitator can help with this. The team should return Worksheet 7 to NALA along with the centre's financial report at the end of each year.



Section 2: Resources





Resources

Overview

To provide a stable, high-quality adult basic education service over the long-term, centres need to have enough suitable resources for the range of courses they offer. These resources will differ from place to place, so managers and staff in each centre need to consider what resources they need for their particular situation.

The most obvious resources are those we can see, use or count, such as materials, premises, staffing or funding. Also important are the less obvious aspects of resources, for example whether the ABE service is using them in the best way. A further important element is the Guiding Principles under which the service operates.

If an adult basic education service has enough of the right kind of resources, people are likely to consider its work important and worthwhile. Paying attention to the Quality Area Resources helps to make sure that the funding, staffing, premises and materials are used in an open and efficient way.

The EQF sums up the Quality Area of Resources in four Statements of Quality, the titles of which are in the following box.

Quality Area: Resources

Resources for Teaching and Learning
Premises
Staffing
Funding

Taken together, the four Statements of Quality express the standard of resources that any centre offering adult basic education must meet to offer a high-quality service. Pages 21 – 32 below:

- describe in detail how your team goes through the 9-step process for each Statement of Quality;
- summarise some key **signs** by which your team can measure success; and
- give samples of the type of **evidence** that can support your judgements about a particular statement.

As you work through each Statement of Quality for this Quality Area, you will be using or referring to the following sheets, which are contained in Section 8 of this User Guide:

- Worksheets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- Information Sheets 5, 6, 8 and 9

You might find it useful to have photocopies of these materials to hand as you read through the description of the 9-step process.

Statement of Quality: Resources for Teaching and Learning

A quality centre provides staff and students with the necessary resources to help students take part in their programme of learning. These resources include audio, visual and information and communications technology (ICT) equipment that everyone can use.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following two Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Resources for Teaching and Learning

At least once a year, the manager decides what equipment and materials tutors and students will need for the next year.

There is an audit of equipment and materials each year to confirm that all of the resources planned for the year are in place.

These two signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example 1

Your centre has received funding to set up a small resource room. You want to make sure that the best use is being made of the room and its contents and devise these two Signs of Quality to address this.

All of the materials in the resource room are recorded on a central database that staff and students can access on request.

Students borrow and return at least one item from the resource room each term.

Example 2

Your centre is in a rural area and needs to provide transport for some of its students. You might then add the following sentence to the Signs of Quality.

At least 80% of the transport budget is spent by the end of the year.

If your centre does not have a resource room, or does not have or need a transport budget, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the Signs of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these two signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the two signs required for the statement on Resources for Teaching and Learning. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These two signs, and the suggested evidence, are relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B5.7, Provision and Maintenance of Learning Facilities/Resources.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

Resources for teaching and learning	
Signs	Evidence
<p>At least once a year, the manager decides what equipment and materials tutors and students will need for the next year.</p> <p>There is an audit of equipment and materials each year to confirm that all of the resources planned for the year are in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Record of audit - Database of materials - Catalogue of equipment and materials - Lists of materials and equipment bought during the year - Budget allocated for and spent on materials - Completed questionnaires by staff and students - Records of meetings - Equality statement - Stock books

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected.

Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Premises

A quality centre provides tuition in safe, comfortable premises that are accessible to all, including people with disabilities. The premises are suitable for a wide range of educational and social activities and obey all health and safety regulations.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following two Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Premises

Learning takes place in rooms that are safe, comfortable, adult-friendly and accessible.

The physical learning environment provides enough space for a wide range of educational and social activities.

These two signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has accessed funding to decorate the premises. You want to make sure this is done in the most cost-effective way and that people have a say in the décor chosen, so you add two Signs of Quality to address this.

A decorating committee is set up and, before the mid-term break, circulates proposals, including an itemised budget, for decorating two rooms for under €x.

Students, staff and managers express their decoration preferences through a suggestion box, a questionnaire and verbal comments to tutors, no more than 10 days after the mid-term break.

If your centre does not have or need a decorating budget, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the Signs of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these two signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence, photographs, witness statements and drawings can easily support your judgements about the two signs required for the statement on Premises. A list of the range of material relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These two signs, and the suggested evidence, are relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B2.1, Equality Training, and B 5.8, Health and Safety.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

Premises	
Signs	Evidence
<p>Learning takes place in rooms that are safe, comfortable, adult-friendly and accessible.</p> <p>The physical learning environment supports and contributes to the ethos of adult basic education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safety statement - Hazard checklist - Equality statement - Disability awareness training records - Completed questionnaires from staff and students - Notes and minutes of informal and formal feedback meetings - Photographs of doorways, stairs, hallways, rooms and other common areas

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Staffing

A quality centre employs enough suitably trained staff to provide different forms of tuition that support students in working towards their goals.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following three Signs of Quality for this statement.

Statement of Quality: Staffing

All tutors have completed all the initial training they need.

All tutors have access to a programme of in-service training to help students to reach their learning goals.

At least 80% of paid tutors have a professional, third-level qualification relevant to adult literacy and numeracy, or are working towards this.

These three signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. The team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has recently set up several more group learning classes, which means that tutors who have previously been working one-to-one are now moving to group tutoring. You want to make sure the tutors are able for this, so you add two Signs of Quality to address this activity.

All new group tutors have successfully completed the WIT³ module or equivalent in Group Facilitation within six months.

A support system for tutors is developed and implemented.

If all of your tutors are already training in Group Facilitation, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the Signs of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these three signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

³ Waterford Institute of Technology, which offers certification for people working in ABE.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the three signs required for the statement on Staffing. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These three signs, and the suggested evidence, are relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B3.1 Staff Recruitment and Allocation.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that

material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre’s performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for that statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team’s analysis

Staffing

Signs	Evidence
All tutors have completed all the initial training they need.	- Initial tutor training programme and records of staff who have completed it
All tutors have access to a programme of in-service training to help students to reach their learning goals.	- List of qualifications held by staff - Outline of disability awareness and equality training programme and records of staff who have completed these
At least 80% of paid tutors have a professional, third-level qualification relevant to adult literacy and numeracy, or are working towards this.	- Schedule of past and planned tutor in-service training - Records of planned and completed training for specific purposes, for example Mapping the Learning Journey ⁴ , FETAC - Copies of staff certificates or third level registration - Job advertisements - Evidence of self-directed strategies, for example internet searches and web pages

⁴ A method for tracking students’ progress

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members, unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Funding

A quality centre obtains enough funding to employ staff, buy and maintain materials, equipment and premises and, where appropriate, assist students with the cost of transport, childcare or specialist educational assessments and responses.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following two Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Funding

The manager plans budget allocations for the year.

The manager tracks spending at least three times a year.

These two signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has a problem with premises and decides to seek funding to convert or build an extra room. You want to make sure that you get the funding the centre needs, so devise these two Signs of Quality to address this.

A proposal for an extension to the premises, including architect's drawings and three quotations, is drawn up and submitted to the VEC by the next mid-term break.

The VEC agrees to the proposal and money is set aside for the extension by the end of the year.

If your centre does not need money for an extra room, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the Signs of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these two signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the two signs required for the statement on Funding. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These two signs, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B5.7, Provision and Maintenance of Learning Facilities/Resources.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

Funding	
Signs	Evidence
<p>The manager plans budget allocations for the year.</p> <p>The manager tracks spending at least three times a year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget plan - Accounts - Financial report - Completed student and tutor questionnaires - Notes and minutes of formal and informal feedback meetings

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

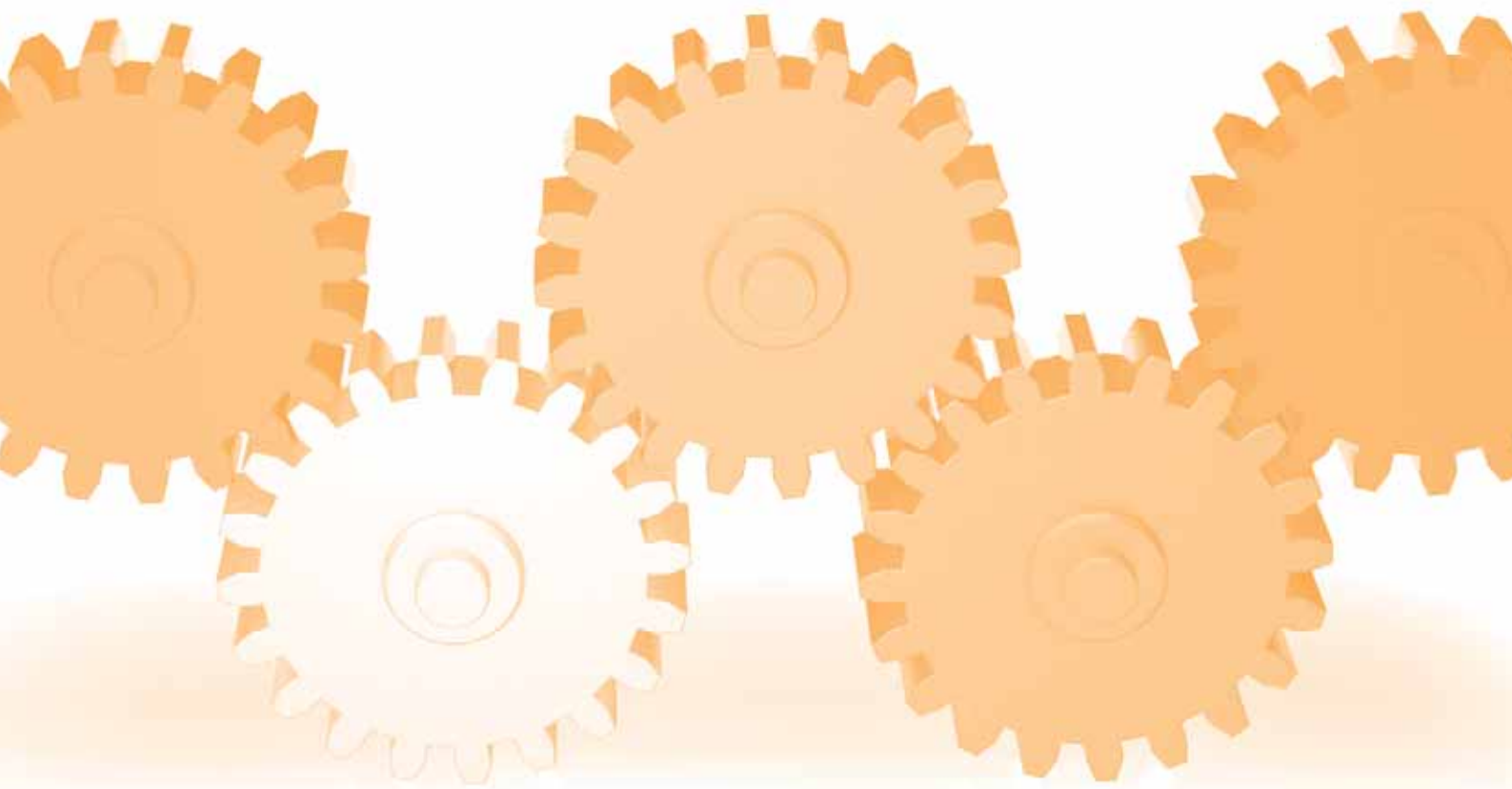
Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service. It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Section 3: Management





Management

Overview

Management in adult basic education (ABE) is carried out in the spirit of the Guiding Principles of ABE and has a number of different elements.

One of the key aspects of the manager's role is to recruit, motivate and support staff. This involves addressing staff members' training and development needs and making sure that they are supported in carrying out all of their tasks.

Managers must also make sure that students have a positive experience of learning. They are usually one of the first people a student meets, so they get an initial sense of the student's goals and match them with a suitable tutor or group.

The manager must also operate an efficient administration system so that it's clear that the centre is operating effectively to senior management and to funders such as the Department of Education and Science and, where appropriate, the Vocational Education Committee.

Added to these roles are the tasks of planning and evaluating the centre's activities, so the role of manager combines many different tasks that require a high level of practical skills and knowledge. The manager also needs to have a vision for adult basic education and the enthusiasm and commitment to motivate others in creating and achieving their vision.

Before starting work on this Quality Area, facilitators and centre managers should work together to decide how best to approach this area.

The EQF sums up the Quality Area of Management in six Statements of Quality, the titles of which are in the following box.

Quality Area: Management

Planning
Supporting and Protecting Students
Staff Recruitment
Staff Training and Development
Internal Communication
Programme Evaluation

Taken together, the six Statements of Quality express the standard of management that any centre offering adult basic education must meet to offer a high-quality service. Pages 35-52 below:

- describe in detail how your team goes through the 9-step process for each Statement of Quality;
- summarise some key **signs** by which your team can measure success; and
- give samples of the type of **evidence** that can support your judgements about a particular statement.

As you work through each Statement of Quality for this Quality Area, you will be using or referring to the following sheets, which are contained in Section 8 of this User Guide:

- Worksheets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- Information Sheets 5, 6, 8 and 9

You might find it useful to have photocopies of these materials to hand as you read through the description of the 9-step process.

Statement of Quality: Planning

The manager of a quality centre devotes time and resources every year to plan for the centre's needs and does this considering:

- **the ethos of adult basic education;**
- **the guiding principles of this Evolving Quality Framework;**
- **the principles of equality and support for people with particular needs and cultural backgrounds; and**
- **the need to promote and maintain a positive, safe and healthy learning and working environment for all students and staff.**

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or Signs of Quality (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following two Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Planning

The manager, staff and students help to develop the safety statement, equality statement and assessment plan in a way that reflects the ethos of adult basic education.

All plans are implemented and performance is tracked at least three times a year.

These two signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has several outreach sites that need to co-ordinate their activities. You want to make sure this is done properly, so you devise two signs to address this.

All plans, including safety statement, equality statement and assessment plan, are implemented fully in every outreach site.

A co-ordinating committee consisting of one student and one tutor from each site is formed and meets at least once every term, with the Adult Literacy Organiser, to ensure co-ordination of activities.

If your centre does not have an outreach network, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the Signs of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these two signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some

pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the two signs required for the statement on Planning. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These two signs, and the suggested evidence, are relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B2.2, Equality Planning, B5.8, Health and Safety, and B6.1, Coordinated Planning of Assessment.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis

Planning	
Signs	Evidence
<p>The manager, staff and students help to develop the safety statement, equality statement and assessment plan in a way that reflects the ethos of adult basic education.</p> <p>All plans are implemented and performance is tracked at least three times a year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copies of all plans and statements - Notes and minutes of formal and informal meetings with staff and students - Questionnaires from staff and students - Posters - Newsletters - Details and dates of information events - Notes on consultation - Management report - Minutes of EQF team meetings - Notes taken during audits - Assessment records - Photographs

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Supporting and Protecting Students

The manager of a quality centre makes sure the centre adopts adult-friendly support and protection systems.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following five Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Supporting and Protecting Students

There are adult-friendly initial contact and welcoming procedures.

Managers and staff use agreed student-centred processes to identify a student's goals and needs.

The manager has contact with staff in different agencies that provide services that students might need.

The manager has a plan for alternative tuition in case original arrangements fall through.

The manager and staff use an agreed system for keeping student records, including assessment materials, secure and confidential.

These five signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre is taking part in a project with another agency that offers services such as specialist assessments to your students. You want to make sure that the centre uses this service in the best way, so you devise two signs of quality to address this.

The centre manager and the external specialist service worker hold detailed planning meetings once a term.

The centre manager maintains weekly contact with the external specialist service worker.

If your centre does not have access to such specialist services, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the Signs of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these five signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much


that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the five signs required for this statement on Supporting and Protecting Students. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These five signs, and the suggested evidence, are relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B5.1, Needs Identification, B5.6, Learner Record, and B7.1, Cessation of Programmes.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

Supporting and Protecting Students	
Signs	Evidence
Managers ensure that there are adult-friendly initial contact and welcoming procedures	- Copies of all plans and statements
Managers and staff use agreed student-centred processes to identify a student's goals and needs.	- Notes and minutes of formal and informal meetings with staff and students
The manager has contact with staff in different agencies, or other VECs, that provide services that students might need.	- Questionnaires from staff and students
The manager has a plan for alternative tuition in case original arrangements fall through.	- Posters
The manager and staff use an agreed system for keeping student records, including assessment materials, secure and confidential.	- Newsletters
	- Details and dates of information events
	- Notes on consultation
	- Management report
	- Minutes of EQF team meetings
	- Notes taken during audits
	- Assessment records
	- Photographs



When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Staff Recruitment

In a quality centre, the manager identifies the knowledge skills and competencies required of staff to fill particular posts and uses these requirements consistently in the selection process. The centre uses recruitment criteria and processes in keeping with the ethos of adult basic education and employment equality law.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following three Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Staff Recruitment

The manager draws up job descriptions for all jobs in the centre, explaining the qualifications, experience and qualities needed.

The manager draws up a set of procedures for advertising and filling new posts and makes sure these procedures are followed.

The centre draws up and distributes a volunteer charter⁵ that sets out the rights and responsibilities of volunteer tutors and the supports available to them in their work.

In Vocational Education Committees, the manager should liaise with the appropriate human resources section to address the statement. These three signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

You centre suddenly has a large number of new students and funding to employ more tutors at short notice. You want to recruit the right people to meet the students' needs, so you devise two signs of quality to address this.

A special recruitment drive to employ five paid, part-time tutors is organised and implemented before the mid-term break and new tutors are appointed no more than one month after the break.

A special recruitment drive to attract about twelve volunteer tutors is organised and implemented before the mid-term break, with initial tutor training to start no more than one month after that.

If your centre does not have a sudden influx of new students, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the Signs of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these three signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

⁵ See Volunteer Protocol in the National Adult Literacy Programme 2004, www.nala.ie

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the three signs required for this statement on Staff Recruitment. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These three signs, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B3.1, Staff Recruitment and Allocation.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre’s performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team’s analysis.

Staff Recruitment	
Signs	Evidence
The manager draws up job descriptions for all jobs in the centre, explaining the qualifications, experience and qualities needed.	- Job descriptions - Written recruitment and selection procedures - Job advertisements
The manager draws up a set of procedures for advertising and filling new posts and makes sure these procedures are followed.	- Circulars and memos - Plans and summaries of recruitment carried out - Application forms, blank and completed
The centre draws up and distributes a volunteer charter, in consultation with volunteers, that sets out the rights and responsibilities of volunteer tutors and the supports available to them in their work.	- Records of recruitment processes, for example interview notes - Management reports - Volunteer charter - Copy of mailing or distribution list for volunteer charter

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service. It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Staff Training and Development

The manager of a quality centre makes sure the centre support tutors in all aspects of their role and to identify their training needs.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following three Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Staff Training and Development

Staff participate in induction and ongoing training in all aspects of their work, including health and safety practice, equality law, assessment and quality assurance, as needed.

The manager carries out a staff training needs analysis once a year.

Staff have formal and informal opportunities to communicate with and support each other in their work

These three signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has received funding for a staff member to be trained in giving specialist assessment. You want to make sure the training is worthwhile, so you devise two signs of quality to address this.

The trainee staff member reports on their progress on the training programme at least once each month.

The trainee staff member reports satisfaction with the quality and usefulness of the programme they are following.

If your staff does not have access to such training, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the Signs of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these three signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the three signs required for this statement on Staff Training and Development


A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These three signs, and the suggested evidence, are relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B3.2, Staff Induction, and B3.3, Staff Development.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it provides an opportunity for people to practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

Staff Training and Development	
Signs	Evidence
<p>Staff participate in induction and ongoing training in all aspects of their work, including health and safety practice, equality law, assessment and quality assurance, as needed.</p> <p>The manager carries out a staff training needs analysis once a year.</p> <p>Staff have formal and informal opportunities to communicate with and support each other in their work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copies of training programmes and materials - Schedules of training planned and carried out - Attendance lists at safety, equality and other training - Safety and equality statements - Evaluation questionnaire on training from tutors and training providers - Notes on planning, delivery and impact of training - Budget of expenditure on training and development - Promotional material for staff networking opportunities



The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service. It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Internal Communication

The manager of a quality centre makes sure that structures and procedures exist to help information flow between staff, management, tutors and students.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following three Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Internal Communication

There are formal and informal systems for students to give comments on their individual and group experience of programmes and services.

There is a system of communication that allows students to get the information they need to take part in planning and assessing their own learning.

There is a system of communication that allows staff to get the information they need about programmes and support services, such as assessment or quality assurance.

These three signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has up an electronic internal communication system, using email or the internet. You want to make sure that everyone is using this resource in the best way, so you devise one or two signs of quality to address this.

All staff check their account or the website at least once each week.

At least half the staff use the website or account to post or leave messages at least once a term.

If your centre does not have such a resource, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the Signs of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these three signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the three signs required for this statement on Internal Communication. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples – three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These three signs, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B1.1, Communication with Learners, B1.2, Communication with Staff, and B6.2 Information to Learners.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it provides an opportunity for people to practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

Internal Communication	
Signs	Evidence
<p>There are formal and informal systems for students to give comments on their individual and group experience of programmes and services.</p> <p>There is a system of communication that allows students to get the information they need to take part in planning and assessing their own learning.</p> <p>There is a system of communication that allows staff to get the information they need about programmes and support services, such as assessment or quality assurance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Description of structure and membership of students' council - List of student representatives on Evolving Quality Framework team - Notes from feedback meetings - Minutes of EQF meetings - Posters and handbills - Newsletter - Notes from comment box - Description or photographs of student involvement in reviews - MLJ handbook and records - Assessment schedules - Minutes of staff meetings - Notes of mentoring or support meetings - Staff handbook - Website page - Emails and memos - Student handbook

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Programme Evaluation

The manager of a quality centre makes sure that all aspects of the centre are evaluated at least once a year and that there are procedures for recording, reviewing and distributing evaluation results.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following Sign of Quality for this statement.

Sign of Quality: Programme Evaluation

Staff, students and managers have formal and informal reviews, including the EQF process, of the work of the centre and the students' programmes of work.

This sign provides a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre is involved in a special programme that will soon be evaluated at national level. You want the centre to contribute productively to the evaluation, so you devise two signs of quality to address this.

All staff and students involved in the project are aware of the criteria and methods that will be used in the national evaluation.

The Adult Literacy Organiser notes the views of all staff, managers and students involved in the project who want to comment and forwards these views to the external evaluator.

If there is no such external evaluation in your centre, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the single Sign of Quality supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to this sign, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the sign required for this statement on Programme Evaluation. A list of the range of documents relating to this sign is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

This sign, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B5.9, Evaluation.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.


The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Sign of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

Programme Evaluation	
Signs	Evidence
Staff, students and managers have formal and informal reviews, including the EQF process, of the work of the centre and the students' programmes of work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minutes of EQF meetings - Completed student and tutor questionnaires and evaluation sheets - Notes and memos of interviews and meetings - Evaluation report - Mapping the Learning Journey handbook and records - Report of feedback from external monitor



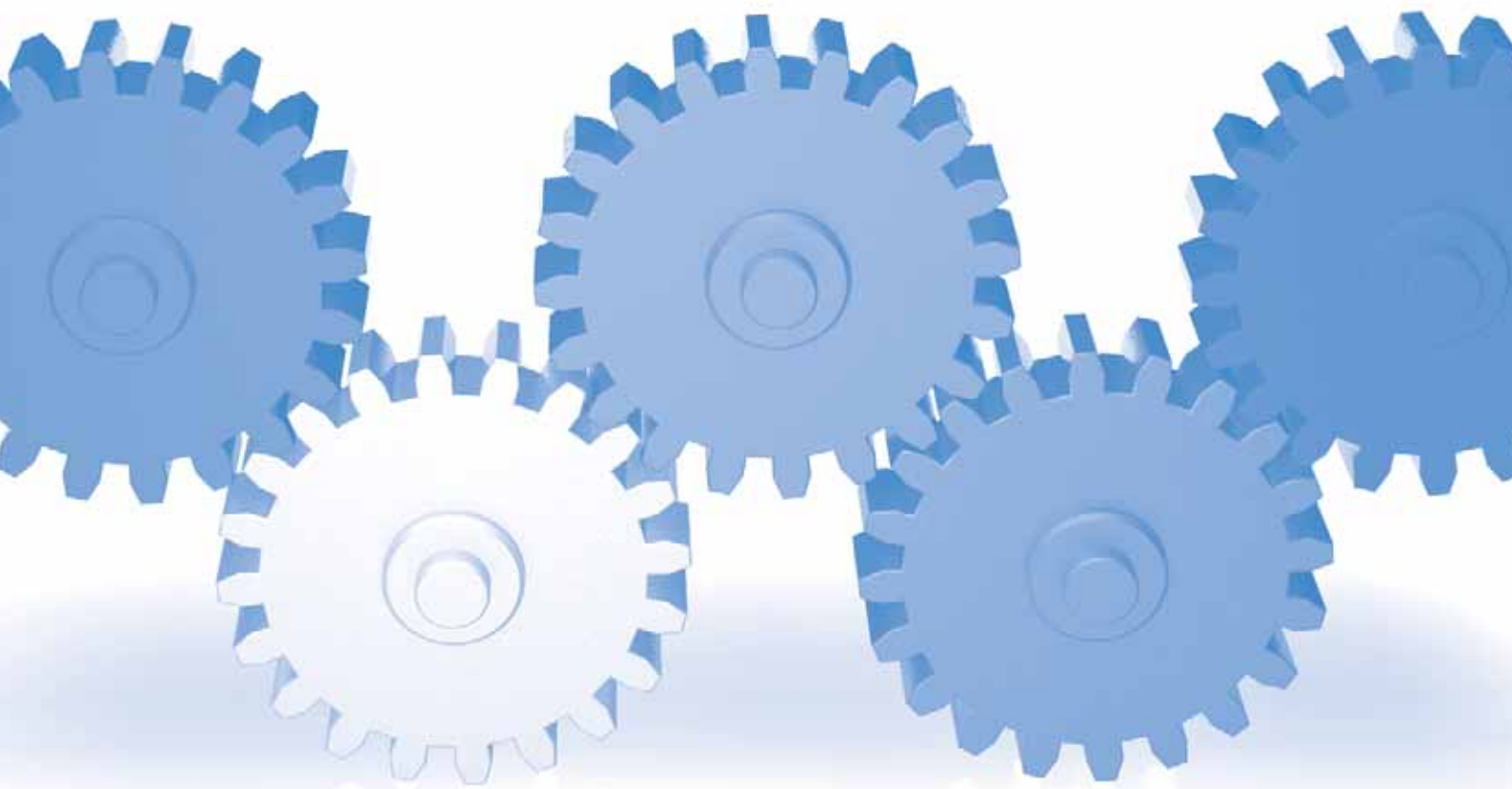
It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agrees the methods and follows through on them.

Section 4: Teaching and Learning





Teaching and Learning

Overview

Teaching and learning in adult basic education are based on the principle that the student is at the centre of the process. This affirms the student's right to engage in literacy and numeracy work that addresses their learning goals and life aspirations.

Because students come to adult basic education with many different abilities, interests and needs, the process of teaching and learning must address the uniqueness of each person. As a result, tutors and managers need to have a wide range of teaching strategies at their disposal, and the service should be flexible enough to cater for the life circumstances of different people.

One aspect of providing a high quality teaching and learning experience is making sure that the centre and its staff can meet these practical and technical requirements. However, it is just as important to make sure that teaching and learning are not just about methods and resources, but also address the fundamental issues of student participation and empowerment.

The EQF sums up the Quality Area of Teaching and Learning in five Statements of Quality, the titles of which are in the following box.

Quality Area: Teaching and Learning

Student-Tutor Relationship
Range of Tuition Options
Learning and Development
Tuition
Assessment

Taken together, the five Statements of Quality express the standard of teaching and learning that any centre offering adult basic education must meet to offer a high-quality service.

Pages 55-69 below:

- describe in detail how your team goes through the 9-step process for each Statement of Quality;
- summarise some key **signs** by which your team can measure success; and
- give samples of the type of **evidence** that can support your judgements about a particular statement.

As you work through each Statement of Quality for this Quality Area, you will be using or referring to the following sheets, which are contained in Section 8 of this User Guide:

- Worksheets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5,6 and 7
- Information Sheets 5, 6, 8 and 9

You might find it useful to have photocopies of these materials to hand as you read through the description of the 9-step process.

Statement of Quality: Student-Tutor Relationship

In a quality centre, the student-tutor relationship:

- **is based on mutual respect and collaboration;**
- **is based on confidentiality and trust;**
- **supports the student's goals, needs and interests, which are considered central to learning;**
- **helps the student to express their own views;**
- **supports the student in taking responsibility for, and playing an active part in, their own learning.**

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or Signs of Quality (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following three Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Student-Tutor Relationship

Tutors and students work together to support students' individual goals, needs and interests.

The manager and tutors encourage students to express their own views, in their own voice.

The manager has a system for addressing any difficulties that may arise in the student-tutor relationship.

These three signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has a 'buddy' or mentoring system that pairs new students with an experienced student and links the pair with a particular tutor. You want to make sure this system works well for everyone, so you devise two signs to address this.

All support tutors communicate with the centre manager at least once a month on the progress of their 'buddy' pair.

Both new and experienced students express satisfaction with the system in the annual evaluation.

If your centre does not have a mentoring system, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the quality signs supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these three signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material

to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the three signs required for the statement on Student-Tutor Relationship. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

Student-Tutor Relationship

Signs	Evidence
<p>Tutors and students work together to support students' individual goals, needs and interests.</p> <p>The manager and tutors encourage students to express their own views, in their own voice.</p> <p>The manager has a system for addressing any difficulties that may arise in the student-tutor relationship.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Record of ground rules for the centre - Record of informal ground rules agreed between students and tutors - Notes of feedback meeting, formal and informal, with students and tutors - Completed student and tutor questionnaires - Records of staff training planned and undertaken - Outline of individual students' learning goals - Record of individual students' participation in centre events - Published students' writings

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Range of Tuition Options

A quality centre supports students in working towards their goals by providing a range of tuition options.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or Signs of Quality (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following three Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Range of Tuition Options

The centre offers one-to-one tuition, one-to-one support within a group and group tuition.

The centre offers a flexible choice of schedules, entry dates and locations (including outreach, where needed).

The manager and other staff maintain contact with a range of external providers that offer services students might need.

These three signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality

relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has the chance to link its with other courses, such as one in cooking or horticulture, and have literacy or numeracy work integrated into the course. You want to make sure this is offered to all students, so you devise two signs to address this.

The centre offers opportunities to study literacy and numeracy in the context of other activities of interest to students.

These other courses are reviewed for their literacy and numeracy content to make sure they continue to be relevant to students' needs.

If your centre does not offer such integrated programmes, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the quality signs supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these three signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the three signs required for the statement on Range of Tuition Options. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.


The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre’s performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team’s analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

Range of Tuition Options	
Signs	Evidence
The centre offers one-to-one tuition, one-to-one support within a group and group tuition.	- Programme brochures
The centre offers a flexible choice of schedules, entry dates and locations (including outreach, where needed).	- Notes from formal and informal meetings with students and tutors
The manager and other staff maintain contact with a range of external providers that offer services students might need.	- Time-tables
	- List of outreach venues
	- Mailing lists or database of external contacts
	- Completed student and tutor questionnaires
	- Record of information events such as open days
	- Minutes of EQF meetings



It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Learning and Development

A quality centre adopts a broad approach to learning, which considers:

- **planned and unplanned learning outcomes;**
- **the quality and quantity of learning; and**
- **the process elements of learning, which include range of application, degree of fluency and independence and depth of understanding.**

This approach also actively encourages the student to voice their opinions.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following three Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Learning and Development

Tutors and students together plan and regularly update a programme of learning that addresses the student's goals.

The programme of work includes process dimensions of learning such as range of application, fluency, independence and understanding, and allows for unanticipated outcomes of learning.

If students are working towards accreditation, the manager checks all programmes of work to make sure they meet all FETAC requirements.

These three signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre wants to include the dimension of language and power in some or all of the centre's work. You want to make sure this works well, so you devise two signs to address this.

All programmes include an element of reflection, by tutors and students, on the power relations that are embedded in different types of learning methods and practices.

Reflections on this topic are recorded in student writings or in evaluations.

If your centre does not include this dimension, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the quality signs supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these three signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find evidence to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on

this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the three signs required for the statement on Learning and Development. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These three signs, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B5.2, Programme Design, B5.3, Programme Approval, and B 5.4, Programme Planning.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

Learning and Development	
Signs	Evidence
<p>Tutors and students together plan and regularly update a programme of learning that addresses the student's goals.</p> <p>The programme of work includes dimensions of learning such as range of application, fluency, independence and understanding, and allows for unanticipated outcomes of learning.</p> <p>If students are working towards accreditation, the manager checks all programmes of work to make sure they meet all FETAC requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans of agreed learning programmes - Notes from interviews and planning meetings - Needs identification questionnaire or notes - Guidelines for programme design - MLJ⁶ materials - Completed student and tutor questionnaires - Minutes of EQF meetings - Written feedback from external monitor - Record of manager's approval of programmes for FETAC accreditation - Checklist of FETAC guidelines

⁶ Mapping the Learning Journey. This is a framework for assessing students' progress. Information about MLJ is available on the NALA web-site, www.nala.ie.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Tuition

A quality centre provides the best tuition possible by making use of all supports and resources that help students to learn.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or Signs of Quality (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following four Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Tuition

There are enough materials, methods and flexible working arrangements to allow tutors to use teaching styles appropriate to their students.

Tutors use the centre's support systems as needed when, for example, planning work, maintaining records and tracking students' progress.

Tutors give individual students regular and constructive comments on their progress to inform the student's participation in the programme.

Tutors and other staff keep to schedules and make alternative arrangements, where necessary.

These four signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has received funding to take part in an e-learning project. You want to make sure that the centre is making best use of this, so you devise two signs to address this.

All group tutors attend the e-learning training.

Students and tutors involved report that they are satisfied with the e-learning methods and resources.

If your centre is not involved in such a programme, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the quality signs supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these four signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the four signs required for this statement on Tuition. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.


These two signs, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B5.5, Programme Delivery, B5.7, Provision and Maintenance of Learning Facilities/Resources, and B6.8, Feedback to Learners.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

Tuition	
Signs	Evidence
<p>There are enough materials, methods and flexible working arrangements to allow tutors to use teaching styles appropriate to their students.</p> <p>Tutors use the centre's support systems as needed when, for example, planning work, maintaining records and tracking students' progress.</p> <p>Tutors give individual students regular and constructive comments on their progress to inform the student's participation in the programme.</p> <p>Tutors and other staff keep to schedules and make alternative arrangements, where necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback questionnaire from students and tutors - List of materials and equipment in use - Description of tuition options - List of times and venues of tuition - Minutes and notes of formal and informal meetings - Timetables and schedules. - List of training events planned and carried out - Description of secure filing and data management system - Assessment materials - MLJ forms and samples of learners' work - Quality assurance materials - Minutes of EQF meetings - Management report - Feedback from external monitor



By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Assessment

A quality centre makes sure that students are assessed regularly and constructively to support the teaching and learning process and provide useful information on students' progress in meeting their own learning goals and agreed standards of achievement.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following four Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Assessment

The centre manager or a designated member of staff carries out an initial assessment of a student's needs and literacy and numeracy skills when the student first makes contact with the centre.

Tutors continue to assess the student, to support the teaching and learning process, according to agreed signposts of progress as well as unexpected outcomes of learning.

Tutors use constructive assessment methods that are woven into the learning process and cater for students with a range of needs.

The manager develops a consistent assessment method for tutors, which may include team meetings or contributions from an in-centre monitor.

These four signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre wants to give particular support to a group of beginning students. You want to make sure that the best use is being made of the room and its contents, so you devise two signs to address this.

The centre develops assessment opportunities that reflect the life roles and stage of learning of this group of students.

Tutors working with these students communicate at least once a month on their progress.

If your centre does not adopt this strategy, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the quality signs supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these four signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on

this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the four signs required for this statement on Assessment. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These four signs, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B6.3, Security of Assessment and Related Processes and Materials, and B6.4, Reasonable Accommodation.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

Assessment	
Signs	Evidence
<p>Tutors carry out an initial assessment of a student's needs and literacy and numeracy skills when they first make contact with the centre.</p> <p>Tutors continue to assess the student, to support the teaching and learning process, according to agreed signposts of progress as well as unexpected outcomes of learning.</p> <p>Tutors use constructive assessment methods that are woven into the learning process and cater for students with a range of needs.</p> <p>The manager develops a consistent assessment method for tutors, which may include team meetings or contributions from an in-centre monitor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Materials used to assess students' work - Mapping the Learning Journey Guide, forms and notes - Samples of students' work used for assessment - Record of students' progress over time - Notes of questions and feedback between students and tutors - External monitor's report - Minutes of EQF meetings - Description of how assessment process was adapted to meet specific needs of students with special requirements - Equality statement and notes from equality training - Notes of cross-moderation meetings - Notes of formal and informal staff meetings and support.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is likely that a lot of the work your team recommends will be carried out in the context of the whole education service in which you are working. So although the EQF team drafts the report of the findings and the action plan, the actions you recommend will probably not be carried out by team members unless some individuals have another role in the service.

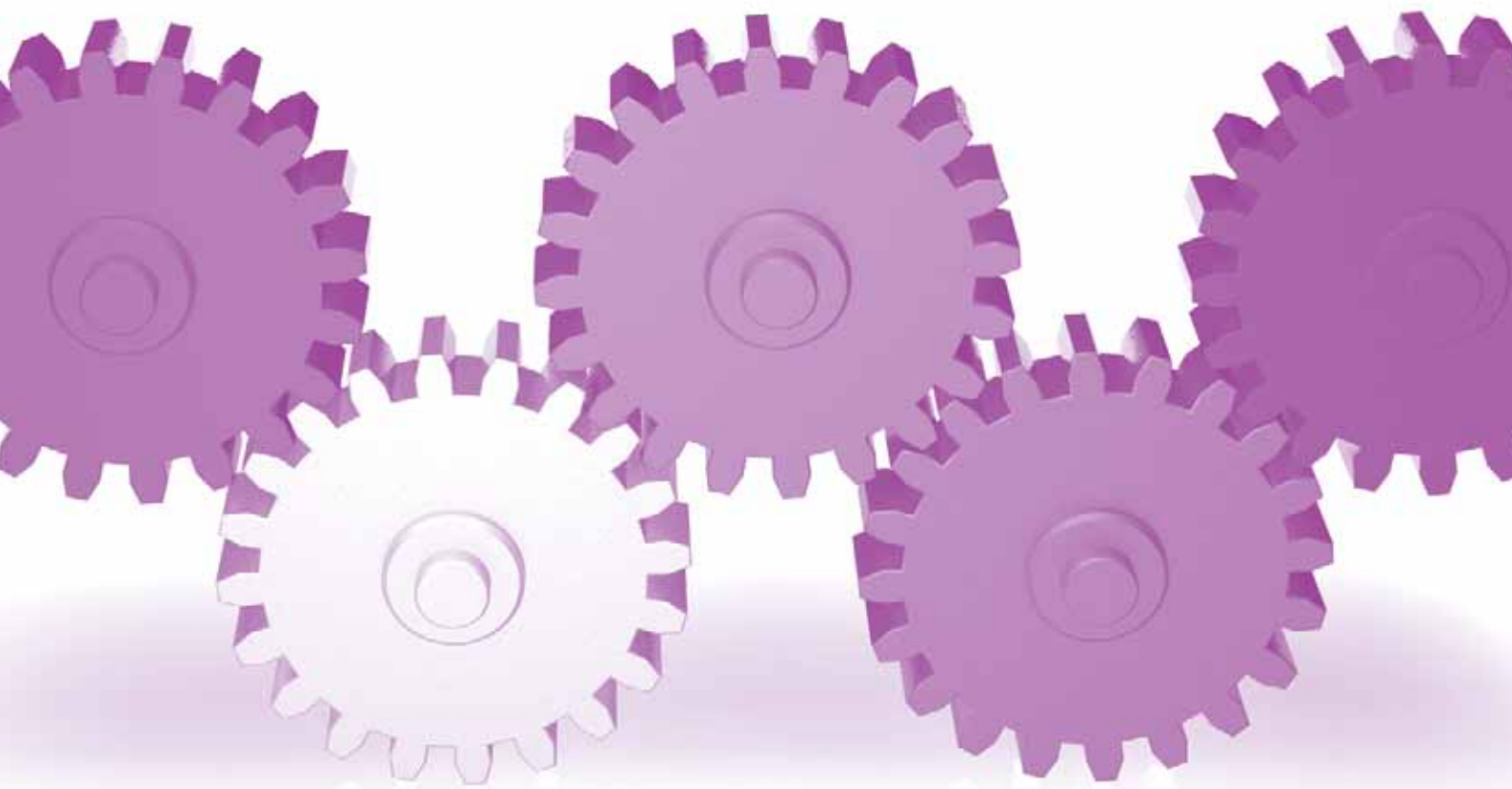
It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.



Section 5: Progression





Progression

Overview

Progression refers to the process of moving on from adult basic education to other learning experiences or life opportunities such as paid work or involvement in community or voluntary activity.

One important aspect of progression is giving students the chance to achieve qualifications that accredit their learning. Students wishing to follow this route can access Levels 1, 2 and 3 on the National Framework of Qualifications. Other students may want to work on improving their literacy and numeracy skills and have their progress tracked without necessarily going through the full process required for formal accreditation.

To make the best use of the progression opportunities that could be open to them, students need to have information about a wide range of education and training options and their various entry requirements and assessment methods. They also need to know about other possibilities such as paid work and voluntary activities through which they could contribute to their local communities.

Many students begin adult basic education with only a very general idea of where they want it to lead. Some people may have no long-term goal at all. It is useful for all students to have access to information and opportunities that can give them something to aim for and encourage them to aspire to achievements they might not previously have considered.

The EQF sums up the Quality Area of Progression in two Statements of Quality, the titles of which are in the following box.

Quality Area: Progression

Guidance

Student Accreditation

Taken together, the two Statements of Quality express the standard of progression opportunities that any centre offering adult basic education must meet to offer a high-quality service. Pages 73-78 below:

- describe in detail how your team goes through the 9-step process for each Statement of Quality;
- summarise some key **signs** by which your team can measure success; and
- give samples of the type of **evidence** that can support your judgements about a particular statement.

As you work through each Statement of Quality for this Quality Area, you will be using or referring to the following sheets, which are contained in Section 8 of this User Guide:

- Worksheets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- Information Sheets 5, 6, 8 and 9

You might find it useful to have photocopies of these materials to hand as you read through the description of the 9-step process.

Statement of Quality: Guidance

In a quality centre, current and potential students can get useful information in an accessible format that respects individual and cultural differences. This should include information about:

- a variety of courses or classes;
- assessment and feedback;
- transfer and progression routes;
- health and safety, rights and responsibilities and complaints procedures; and
- other relevant services and how to access them.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following two Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Guidance

The centre gives students information about its services in a range of formats.

Managers and tutors guide students in making decisions about their own learning in a spirit that reflects the ethos of adult basic education and respects individual students' own learning goals and life aspirations.

These two signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has created links with an external guidance project or service. You want to make sure this works well, so you devise two signs to address this.

The external guidance service has contact with at least ten students from the centre, each term.

Students report satisfaction with the process and quality of the external guidance service.

If your centre does not use an external guidance service, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the quality signs supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these two signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find evidence to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the two signs required for this statement on Guidance. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

These two signs, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B 4.1, Information Provision.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

Guidance	
Signs	Evidence
<p>The centre gives students information about the centre services in a range of formats.</p> <p>Managers and tutors guide students in making decisions about their own learning in a spirit that reflects the ethos of adult basic education and respects individual students' own learning goals and life aspirations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme brochures - Details of system for tracking progress - Mapping the Learning Journey handbook - Completed student evaluation questionnaires - Record of guidance meetings - Promotional material for open days and guidance events - Management reports - Minutes of EQF meetings - Website pages - Database or mailing list of external contacts to assist with guidance - Lists of referrals planned, made and followed up - Description of progression options and entry requirements for these - E-mail bulletins

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Student Accreditation

A quality centre makes sure that students can access a range of optional accredited courses that:

- the centre manager checks and approves before submitting to FETAC for validation; and
- the student can use to progress to other learning and develop their learning skills.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following two Signs of Quality for this statement.

Signs of Quality: Student Accreditation

The centre offers accreditation of learning under the National Framework of Qualifications and guides students who want to work towards this.

Managers and tutors take steps to clarify with students the link between accreditation and achieving their own learning goals.

These two signs provide a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Some students want to access accreditation through prior experience and learning (APEL). You want to make sure they can do this effectively, so you devise two signs to address this.

The centre provides one or two workshops for students and tutors on accreditation of prior learning before the mid-term break.

Tutors or managers work with interested students to clarify their APEL possibilities.

If your centre does not have students with this interest then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the quality signs supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to these two signs, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the two signs required for this statement on Student Accreditation. A list of the range of documents relating to these signs is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.


These two signs, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B5.3, Programme Approval Pre submission for Validation.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

Student Accreditation	
Signs	Evidence
<p>The centre offers accreditation of learning under the National Framework of Qualifications and guides students who want to work towards this.</p> <p>Managers and tutors take steps to clarify with students the link between accreditation and achieving their own learning goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme brochures - Descriptions of accredited learning opportunities - Outline of accreditation requirements - Details of system for tracking of progress - Mapping the Learning Journey handbook - Completed student evaluation questionnaires - Record of guidance meetings - Statistics on students aiming for and achieving accreditation - Promotional material for open days and guidance events - Management reports - Minutes of EQF meetings - Website pages - Database or mailing list of external contacts to assist with guidance - Lists of referrals planned, made and followed up - Description of progression options and entry requirements for these - Description or video of awards ceremonies - Descriptions or video of in-service



By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Signs of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

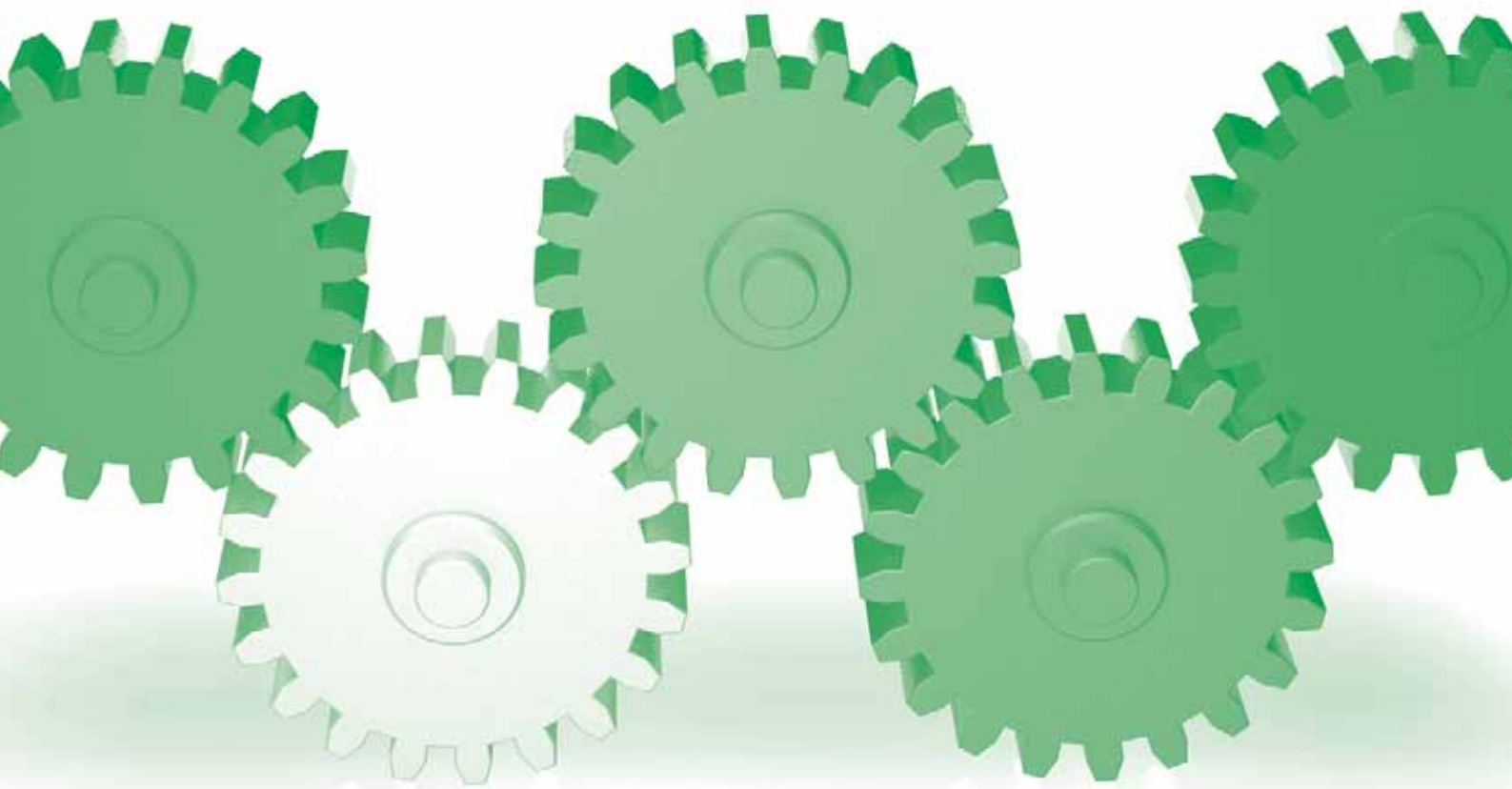
Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Section 6: Outreach and Promotion





Outreach and promotion

Overview

Outreach and promotion are very important in adult basic education, both for people who might become students and for the general public.

Many individuals who could benefit from improving their literacy and numeracy do not access the service, either because they do not know about it or because they are reluctant to go back into education after earlier unhappy experiences. Sensitive and targeted promotional activities can reassure people that the adult basic education service respects their status as adults, assures confidentiality and addresses their needs. Promotion can also raise awareness of adult literacy and the centre among the general population, encourage volunteers and help to erase the stigma that has been associated with literacy difficulties.

Outreach involves linking with other agencies and groups and is an important strategy that helps adult basic education providers to encourage those who are otherwise hard to reach to take part in adult learning. The agencies can also sometimes provide support and information that can greatly enhance the service provided by the centre.

Outreach and promotion is a continuous process that must adapt to changing circumstances. The provider offering adult basic education must respond to changes by adjusting their outreach and promotional activities to maximise the benefits of the whole service.

The EQF sums up the Quality Area of Outreach and Promotion in two Statements of Quality, the titles of which are in the following box.

Quality Area: Outreach and Promotion

Networking and Partnership

Sensitive and Creative Promotional Strategies

Taken together, these two Statements of Quality express the standard of outreach and promotion that any centre offering adult basic education must meet to offer a high-quality service. Pages 81-86 below:

- describe in detail how your team goes through the 9-step process for each Statement of Quality;
- summarise some key **signs** by which your team can measure success; and
- give samples of the type of **evidence** that can support your judgements about a particular statement.

As you work through each Statement of Quality for this Quality Area, you will be using or referring to the following sheets, which are contained in Section 8 of this User Guide:

- Worksheets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- Information Sheets 5, 6, 8 and 9

You might find it useful to have photocopies of these materials to hand as you read through the description of the 9-step process.

Statement of Quality: Networking and Partnership

A quality centre develops links with a range of local, regional and national organisations, individuals and agencies, such as employers, other literacy providers, community groups and funding agencies. It works with them to make sure that the centre meets the diverse needs of students, under the Guiding Principles of this Evolving Quality Framework.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or Signs of Quality (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following Sign of Quality for this statement.

Sign of Quality: Networking and Partnership

The manager and staff stay in contact with local agencies and individuals who provide services that students might need.

This sign provides a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

Your centre has a number of outreach locations. You want to make sure that the tutors and students in all of them are fully represented in all external contact, so you devise two signs to address this.

The centre regularly informs all staff and students in all outreach locations of developments arising from contact with external agencies and groups.

The centre invites all staff and students in all outreach centres to comment at least once a year on networking activities of the service and developments arising from these.

If your centre does not have any outreach locations, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the quality sign supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to this sign, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find evidence to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the sign required for this statement on Networking and Partnership. A list of the range of documents relating to the sign is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

This sign, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B 1.3, Communication with Other Stakeholders.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.

When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this. The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

Networking and Partnership	
Signs	Evidence
The manager and staff stay in contact with local agencies and individuals who provide services that students might need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Database or list of contacts - Brochure of information events - Correspondence with local agencies and individuals - Representative of external agency on EQF team - Website updated with information - Record of newsletters distributed - Record of e-mails and e-newsletters distributed - Reports of surveys including those with local stakeholders - Management reports - Minutes of EQF meetings - Mailing lists

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Sign of Quality for the statement. These are the **findings** that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Statement of Quality: Sensitive and Creative Promotional Strategies

A quality centre uses positive and sensitive methods to attract potential students and tutors and to promote the adult basic education service to the general public.

When your EQF team has discussed the ideal situation in your centre if the standard expressed in this statement were being met fully (Step 1) and the situation as it is now (Step 2), you should use Worksheets 1 and 2 to record your ideas.

Next, you will need to discuss the indicators of success or **Signs of Quality** (Step 3). There are many ways in which to judge success in this statement and your team may decide to draw up other indicators that relate specifically to your centre. To start with, however, you should address the following Sign of Quality for this statement.

Sign of Quality: Sensitive and Creative Promotional Strategies

The manager and staff draw up and implement a plan that is sensitive to the needs of potential students to promote the services that the centre provides.

This sign provides a good indication of whether or not your centre has achieved the standard set by the statement.

The EQF team may also want to highlight and monitor special local circumstances. To do this, the team may decide to draw up another one or two signs specific to your centre. This is an opportunity to make the Statement of Quality relevant to your centre's particular needs.

Example

A local radio station is interested in having a regular education slot. You want to make sure that this slot works well for your centre, so you devise two signs to address this.

The work of the centre is profiled at least once a term on the radio slot.

There is one in-depth radio feature on literacy at the start of September each year.

If your centre does not have access to such a local radio slot, then of course these particular signs will not apply. In that case, you work on the quality sign supplied above. By discussing your centre's performance in relation to this sign, you will arrive at an initial impression of your centre's progress in meeting this standard. Worksheet 3 will help to structure your discussion and provide a format for making notes.

If your EQF team decides to draw up additional Signs of Quality, it should do this with the EQF facilitator, using Information Sheet 5 as a reference.

You now need to find **evidence** to back up your judgements. The first thing your team has to do here is discuss and decide what material would provide useful evidence of the views you have reached so far (Step 4). This is an important decision, as you need to find enough material to support a robust judgement but not so much that you spend a lot longer than you need to on this step. You should also remember that some pieces of evidence are easier to find than others. Give some thought then to the type of evidence that might be suitable and how long it will take to find it. Guidelines on this are given in Information Sheet 6.

Documentary evidence can easily support your judgements about the sign required for this statement on Sensitive and Creative Promotional Strategies. A list of the range of documents relating to the sign is shown below in the column on the right. Remember that you do not have to supply all of these samples; three or four will be enough, as long as they are relevant to your judgements.

This sign, and the suggested evidence, are also relevant to the FETAC quality assurance requirements set out under B1.3, Communication with other Stakeholders.

Use Worksheet 4 to make a note of the material the team has decided to look for.


When you have decided what evidence you need, the EQF team members now take some time, between team meetings, to collect that material (Step 5). This work often falls to the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager, mainly because they probably have most access to reports, minutes of meetings, budgets and so on. However, it is best if most or all of the team can be involved in this step, as it lets people practise gathering information. Be sure to keep a record of the material as it is collected. Worksheets 4 and 5 will help with this.

The next step (Step 6) is to analyse the evidence and decide what it all means. Keep a note of your opinions using Worksheet 5. You can refer to Information Sheet 8 for more detailed guidance on analysing evidence.

By the end of this discussion, your team should be able to say what the evidence suggests about your centre's performance in relation to the Sign of Quality for the statement. These are the findings that sum up your team's analysis.

Now you need to use your findings in a practical way (Step 7). This step has two parts. First, you need to let people know what you have discovered. To do this, you will have to find a way of reporting the results of the self-evaluation process so far. Information Sheet 9 will help with this.

Sensitive and Creative Promotional Strategies	
Sign	Evidence
The manager and staff draw up and implement a plan that is sensitive to the needs of potential students to promote the services that the centre provides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audio tapes of local radio adverts - Newspaper advertisements - Text of messages given orally at different events - Brochures left in libraries, social welfare offices and so on and record of distribution - Database or list of contacts - Brochure of information events - Correspondence with local agencies and individuals - Representative of external agency on EQF team - Website updated with information - Record of newsletters distributed - Record of e-mails and e-newsletters distributed - Reports of surveys, including those with local stakeholders - Management reports - Minutes of EQF meetings



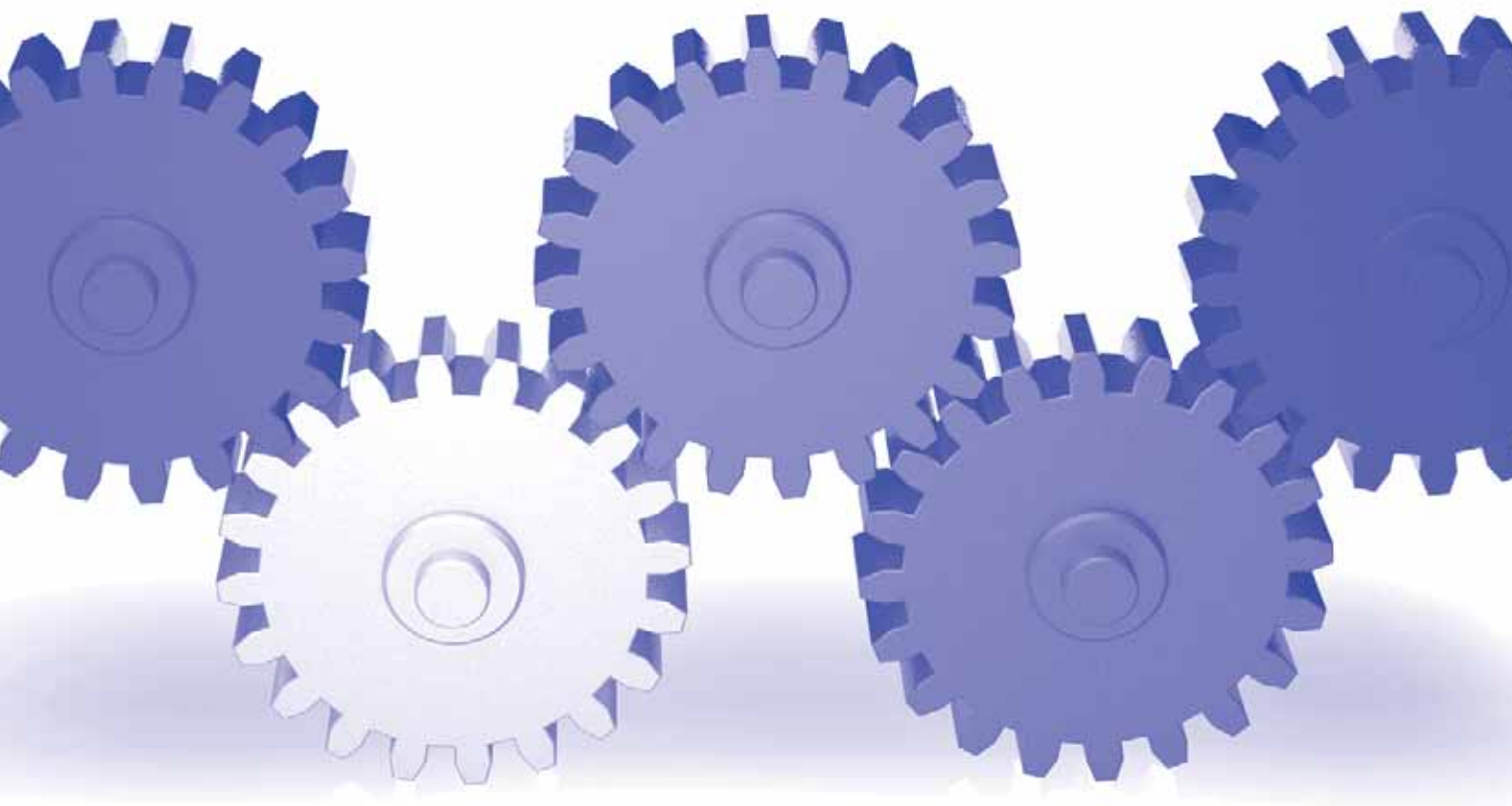
Second, if the self-evaluation shows that there is room for improvement, the EQF team must draw up an action plan, using Worksheet 6 as a guide. The action plan is a document that identifies exactly what needs to be done, who should do it and when it should be done.

It is important that centre managers and other staff within the service see and discuss the action plan and implement it as part of a wider programme for the education service in which your adult basic education centre is operating. To make this happen, the EQF team distributes its report and the action plan through suitable channels (Step 8). These channels could include the following: newsletters; email alerts; notices at conferences, meetings or other events; and items in more general reports or on the agendas of important meetings. The EQF team should also know of any special committees that can put the plan into action or give permission to do so and promote the plan to them.

Once the team has distributed its report and action plan, all that remains is to keep track of how and when the actions proposed are put into practice (Step 9). This is a crucial stage in the process, but it can often be forgotten as teams move on to analyse new statements and other work.

The best way to monitor progress is to agree and include a monitoring method when writing the plan. A formal method is best if you want to make sure that your views on the service really have an impact. One formal method is to put the action plan on the agenda of every EQF team meeting. Another is to ask individuals to be responsible for monitoring certain recommendations and reporting back to the team. You will be able to think of other methods, but the important thing is that the whole team agree the methods and follow through on them.

Section 7: Notes for Facilitators





Notes for Facilitators

Overview

This section is aimed at facilitators working with one or more EQF teams. It contains:

- an overview of the facilitator's role and the range of tasks you will carry out;
- a list of the criteria for becoming a facilitator and the support available to you; and
- step-by-step guidelines, including suggested activities, on supporting teams through each of the nine steps. You may decide to design your own activities and materials, but those described here can provide a starting point.

Some of the EQF team discussions are supported by the Worksheets and Information Sheets contained in Section 8.

Role of facilitator

As a facilitator of the Evolving Quality Framework for adult basic education, you have an important role in helping teams to work through the 9-step process that centres use to improve and monitor the quality of their service. The EQF process is a team effort and the EQF team is made up of individuals with very different experiences. The support you provide in building an effective team will enable every individual to contribute to the quality assurance process.

Your role in the EQF process is to:

- help to build the team and make it easier for the group to achieve its goals;
- help the team to understand the concepts and practice of the EQF;
- work with the anchor person, or whoever is responsible for quality assurance, to co-ordinate planning, reporting and administration of the team's work; and
- support the group in becoming familiar with and using all relevant EQF materials.

Criteria for facilitators

To fulfil your role as facilitator, you will draw on a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience, including:

- wide experience of group facilitation and excellent group facilitation skills;
- knowledge and understanding of group dynamics;
- familiarity with research methods and design;
- good organisational and administrative skills;
- an understanding of quality assurance processes;
- knowledge of evaluation and self-evaluation processes;
- a general understanding of the Irish education;
- sensitivity to the needs of adult students.

As an EQF facilitator, you are an external 'critical friend' to the EQF team. You will get training and support to carry out your role from:

- a course on facilitating the EQF;
- information, including frequently asked questions, on the NALA website, www.nala.ie; and
- NALA EQF co-ordinator who are available to answer your day-to-day questions.

Summary of tasks

Facilitators carry out specific tasks at different stages in the EQF process, which centres around between four and six meetings each year. Here is an overview of the range of functions you will perform throughout the process.

Before the first EQF team meeting, you will:

- liaise with the Adult Literacy Organiser or centre manager or director, along with senior managers and the anchor person, to orientate them in the concept and practice of the EQF;
- become familiar with all materials, concepts and practices relating to the EQF;
- get a general overview of the FETAC quality assurance requirements, from www.fetac.ie;
- get a general overview of the centre whose EQF team you will be facilitating;
- get a list of team participants and, if possible, some brief details of their role and experience in ABE; and
- prepare for the first session, in consultation with the centre manager and anchor person, or the individual with responsibility for quality assurance.

During EQF team meetings, you will:

- facilitate the team-building process;
- make sure the team sets and obeys ground rules;
- outline the aims of the current meeting;
- help teams to work through each step of the 9-step process;
- guide the progress of each meeting;
- help all team members to get involved;
- make sure all worksheets are filled in and filed;
- identify a suitable working pace for the team;
- sum up at the end of each meeting; and
- suggest themes for the next meeting.

Between EQF team meetings, you will:

- keep a record of progress of the last meeting;
- stay in contact with the centre manager and anchor person to finalise agendas for meetings, clarify issues from past meetings and identify material such as worksheets, and any other items you or the team will need for the next meeting;
- contact the NALA EQF co-ordinator and other facilitators to give and receive suggestions for facilitating EQF process; and
- prepare for the next meeting.

Suggested format for 6 EQF team meetings (in services or centres new to the Evolving Quality Framework)

When you are working with a team whose centre or service has not yet worked with the EQF, it will probably take between four and six meetings over a year to work through the first Statement of Quality the team chooses. After that, the process usually speeds up and teams can cover two or three statements in one year.

Here is a general outline of how you and the team in a newly participating centre could spread the work during six meetings. You can adapt this if the team needs less or more time.

Aim for the year

To work through at least one Statement of Quality with the EQF team

For a newly participating team, encourage participants to select a statement that is most interesting and relevant to all members of the team and that is important at that time in the centre.

Meeting 1

- Introductions and orientation
- Team building
- Profile of service or centre
- Overview of Evolving Quality Framework
- Introduction to Guiding Principles and 9-step process
- Selection of one Statement of Quality on which to work for the year

Meeting 2

- Step 1: Discuss if standard expressed in Statement of Quality is being met fully.
- Step 2: Discuss the current situation.
- Step 3: Give overview of signs to work on and draft additional, local signs, if appropriate.

Meeting 3

- Step 3 continued: Finish discussion on how far centre has already met the signs.
- Step 4: Discuss and record the range of evidence needed to support views, who will find this and where they will find it. Agree that the evidence will be presented at the next meeting.
- Step 5 – collecting the evidence – is then carried out before the next meeting.

Meeting 4

- Step 6: Review all evidence gathered, analyse it and suggest what needs to happen next.

Meeting 5

- Step 7: Report the findings from the previous meeting and use all of the insights to make recommendations in an action plan. In the plan, indicate how these actions should be carried out, by whom, by when and how the actions will be monitored.

Meeting 6

- Step 7 continued: Agree how the action plan will be monitored.
- Step 8: Decide how to publicise and communicate the findings and action plan.
- Step 9: Agree a system for team members to monitor and report back on how each action is implemented.

Previous experience has indicated that the contribution of facilitators is especially important when team members are:

- getting to know each other and the system and how to work together;
- working on the Signs of Quality (Step 3); and
- drawing up the report and action plan (Step 7).

Activities to support the EQF process

This section presents a range of activities you can use in covering the work of the team at different stages. Activities include: ice-breakers; small group discussion; brainstorming; large group discussion; filling in forms and questionnaires; reading; and individual reflection.

These are only suggestions to help you to structure your sessions with the EQF team. If you have other ways of addressing the same material, feel free to use your own activities, as long as you work with the team to fully address the 9 steps and related processes. You will probably not have time to work through the full process if you use all the suggested activities, so only choose the most relevant activities for the group.

Meeting 1

At this first meeting, participants may be uncertain of their role and anxious about their ability to carry out the work. By the end of this meeting, people should be acquainted with each other and have a general idea of the main building blocks of the EQF system. Some team members may not know very much about the service in which they are learning or working, so this is an important topic to cover. In centres where the EQF team has been working for more than one year, there will almost certainly be new members to replace people who have stepped down, so it is important to set about building a team from the very start. Also, be sure to check that someone is going to write up the minutes of the meeting and send them to all team members before the next session.

Orientation

Activity: An ice-breaker that helps people to get to know each other's names

- Each person says their name followed by a food that begins with the same letter. The next person introduces the first person and their food name and then adds their own name and food. This continues around the whole group.

Activity: Hopes or expectations and concerns about being here

- People discuss these in pairs and each person then reports back to the main group on their partner's views.
- Record hopes or expectations on one flipchart sheet and concerns on another.

Team building

Activities: Team work, setting ground rules and decision making

- Working in pairs, team members:
 - name three teams or groups in which they have been involved during their life; and
 - describe the purpose of each team or group.

- The group discusses characteristics of teams and groups, their benefits and the way groups work.

See Information Sheet 1.

- Team members brainstorm or work in pairs to discuss ground rules, rights and responsibilities.
- Record these on a flipchart sheet and display.
- Team members work individually or in pairs to discuss what style of decision-making is most suitable for the work of this team.

See Information Sheet 3.

Activity: Profile the service

- Each person contributes what they know about their ABE service and centre.
- Record comments on flipchart sheet and draw attention to different perspectives. For example, a volunteer tutor's knowledge and experience of the service could be very different from that of the ALO or a student.
- At the end, give everyone a 1-page bullet point summary of main facts and figures about the centre, including number of students, range of courses, premises, special programmes and so on.

Overview of EQF

Activity: Help team members to understand key words in the EQF

- Using Section 1 (pages 2 and 3) and Information Sheet 2 of the Guide, introduce the key words evaluation, self-evaluation, research, quality, adult basic education, guiding principles and analysis.

Other possible activities

- Discuss quality using real-life experiences, for example, eating in a restaurant.
- Discuss what tutors, students and funders can gain from evaluation.
- Discuss the possible consequences of a report on a training programme for management, the trainer and students.

Guiding Principles

Activity: Discuss how principles can guide actions

- In pairs, team members recall a situation in their ABE experience where people had different ideas on how to handle a difficult situation.
- Now, team members look through the Guiding Principles (Section 1, pages 9-10) and decide if any of these principles offer direction in dealing with the difficult situation.
- The whole group then discusses the Guiding Principles in the EQF, under the following questions.
 - What practical application could this principle have to our service?
 - In what ways could it be threatened?
 - Are there any uncertainties about the relevance of this Guiding Principle?

The 9-step process

Activity: Help people become familiar with the steps in the process

- Use diagram on page 14 and summary on pages 9 – 17 to support overview of 9-step process.

Choosing Quality Areas and Statements of Quality

Activity: Help people to understand the Quality Areas and Statements of Quality

- Discuss each of the five Quality Areas, with the help of the questions below, and make sure that everyone knows what they and the Statements of Quality mean. The centre profile will be useful at this stage.

Questions to guide the discussion

- Is this interesting to team members?
- Do people understand what it means?
- Is this area or statement relevant to the centre at this time?
- Must the centre demonstrate quality in this area to meet FETAC requirements?
- Will it be possible to make progress on this area or statement?
- Will it be possible to get evidence related to this statement?
- Will all team members be able to make a contribution to the discussions on this statement?
- Based on the comments in the discussion, ask the team to choose one Statement of Quality on which the team will work for the next five or six meetings.

Important: If the team opts to work on a statement within the Quality Area of Management, make sure that you liaise closely with the ALO or centre manager, and any other managers involved, at all stages in your preparation for meetings.

Activity: Review and record meeting

- Ask group to review meeting, using the following questions to focus discussion:
 - What went well?
 - How much did I participate?
 - Will I do things differently at the next meeting?
 - Could I benefit from support of any kind?
 - What decisions did we make today?
 - What do I have to do before the next meeting?
 - When and where is the next meeting?

Meeting 2: Statements and Signs of Quality

At this stage, team members need to take part in discussions to make sure their views are heard. Some people may be less confident than others about expressing themselves. You can support new members who are unsure by actively seeking their views. You can also organise paired and group work so that inexperienced team members are paired with people who can help them to express themselves.

Step 1: Describe the situation as if the Statement of Quality were being met fully.

Activity: Discuss ideal situation

- Structure discussion using relevant parts of service profile and Worksheet 1.
- Team members discuss situation in pairs or small groups and group records comments in Worksheet 1.

Step 2: Review the current situation in your centre in relation to the Statement of Quality.

Activity: Discuss current situation

- Structure discussion using Worksheet 2.
- Team members discuss current situation in pairs or small groups and group records comments in Worksheet 2.

Step 3: Review the current situation in relation to the Signs of Quality for that statement.

Activity: Discuss the standard described by the supplied Signs of Quality

- Use Worksheet 3 and Information Sheet 4 to structure and record discussion.
- In pairs or in large group, team members discuss the supplied signs of quality as they apply to their centre or service and record their comments in Worksheet 3.

Developing Signs of Quality

Teams also need to decide also whether to write one or two signs specific to their centre to reflect particular local circumstances. If so, use Information Sheet 4 as a resource. Encourage the team to develop signs that are SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

Specific means that the sign should be short and concise. Look at the supplied signs for samples.

Measurable means that words such as ‘regular’, ‘most’ or ‘soon’ need to be more clearly defined: for example ‘once a term’; ‘all’ or ‘80%’.

Achievable means that the standard expressed by the sign has a reasonable chance of being achieved. Even if it is not fully achieved, you can develop signs that show some progress towards a long-term goal.

Realistic highlights the importance of creating signs that are practical, given the current circumstances. For example, the centre may need better premises, but if this has been addressed already and you know that it will not be accomplished in the next year, you do not need to spend any more time deciding what needs to be done.

Time-bound means that you should suggest a deadline for achieving the standard set by the sign, for example ‘before the next mid-term break’.

If circumstances change, or if the team becomes aware of a problem with a sign while working on it, you can change it to reflect new needs.

Activity: Devise and review additional signs

- In pairs, team members examine the Statement of Quality on which the team is working and devise one relevant sign specific to your centre that is not already in the User Guide. Encourage the pairs to make their signs SMART.
- Ask each pair to swap their sign with another pair and then work with that pair to discuss the sign under the following headings: relevance of the sign; clarity and 'smartness'.

Activity: Review of meeting

Ask each person to say one thing they liked about the meeting, one thing they learned and one thing they would change;

Check decisions made and make sure that everyone has a note of what they said they would do, and also the date of the next meeting.

Meeting 3

During this meeting, make sure you support team members in planning what evidence will be collected, how it will be collected and who will do this. The team must record these decisions clearly (in Worksheet 4) to keep track of who is responsible for the different items of evidence. It is important not to leave all the work to the ALO, so try to encourage as many team members as possible to take responsibility for even a small part of this step. This is an opportunity for individuals to work independently.

Step 3 continued: Finish discussion on how far centre has already met the signs.

Activity: Finish group discussion on Signs of Quality

- Use Worksheet 3 to structure and record discussion.

Step 4: Decide what evidence would support your judgements.

Activity: Discuss useful material for evidence

- Use Worksheet 4 and Information Sheets 5 and 6 to structure and record discussion on selecting evidence.
- Team members discuss relevant materials to use as evidence to support their judgements about the Signs of Quality based on the following questions:
 - Which pieces of evidence will we collect? (Info Sheet 5)
 - Where will we find these? (Info Sheet 6)
 - Who will collect the material?
 - If it needs to be organised or summarised, who will do that?
 - Where will we store it?
 - How will we keep a record of where it is?

Activity: Agree who will find which evidence

- Team members take 5 minutes on their own to reflect on their areas of knowledge and interest, and how these could assist in gathering evidence.
- Team members discuss their ideas with a neighbour and report back to the full team.
- From general group discussion, decide who will find what evidence.
- Team members record decisions on Worksheet 4 and in the minutes of the meeting.

Step 5: Gather the evidence to support your judgements.

Team members work on this step before the next meeting. Ask the ALO and anchor person to keep in touch with individuals to see how they are getting on with this task. Check in with the ALO or centre manager before the next meeting to make sure that the evidence is on its way. If it is not, there will be no material to use at Meeting 4.

Meeting 4

The team should analyse the evidence during this meeting. You need to make sure that all of the material gathered will be brought to the meeting and organised in a way that is easy for people to see and think about. The anchor person and the centre manager should be able to help with this.

Step 6: Make sense of the evidence and decide what it means.

Activity: Analyse the evidence

- The team discusses the evidence that has been presented, with the help of the following questions:
 - Does the evidence confirm or deny my original impressions?
 - Does all of the evidence tell the same story or are there differences?
 - Does the evidence suggest patterns or trends? If so, what?

The team should also use this meeting to prepare to draw up a report of the findings. The report won't be written under after this meeting, but team members can decide to share sections or tasks to draft the report. For example, one person could agree to make tables or charts while another might summarise findings in bullet points. The draft report of the findings should be presented at the next meeting.

Activity: Prepare team to draft the report

- Help the team to decide how to present the findings, using Information Sheet 8 as a guide.
- The team discusses options such as written format, charts, graphs, photographs and so on.

Meeting 5

The success of this meeting depends on team members' drafting their sections of the report in advance and having it ready to present to the group. You may want to send out copies of sections in advance. If some people need help with reading long documents, you can liaise with the anchor person and the centre manager to make sure they are properly prepared.

Step 7: Draw up a report and an action plan, based on your findings so far.

Activity: Discuss draft report

- Team members present their work on the draft of the evaluation report one part at a time.
- When one part has been presented, team members reflect and comment on it before the group sees the next part of the draft. If necessary, this reflection takes place in pairs and comments are then shared with the group.
- One team member agrees to finalise the report and circulate it before the meeting 6.

Activity: Plan content of action plan

- Use Worksheet 6 and Information Sheet 9 to structure and record a discussion on how to write up the conclusions and recommendations in an action plan.
- Make sure the team addresses all sections of this plan, including deadlines and initial suggestions for monitoring.
- Offer suggestions for monitoring action plans on Information Sheet 10.

Meeting 6

Step 7 continued: Agree how the action plan will be monitored.

Activity

- Team members finalise the way they will monitor how the action plan is being implemented.
- Use Information Sheet 10 to clarify exactly how each action in the plan will be monitored in the short-, medium- and long-term, who will do it, how they will do it and how the EQF team will keep track.

Step 8: Communicate your report and action plan.

Activity: Agree how and where to communicate report and action plan

- The team brainstorms:
 - all the individuals and institutions that could help put the plan into action;
 - the channels through which the report and action plan can be shared; and
 - the committees, meetings and strategic planning processes to which the action plan should contribute.

Step 9: Monitor the action plan.

This step is an ongoing process. You have already helped the team to decide how the monitoring will be carried out, so you now need to make sure that this is done. This means reviewing the progress of the action plan at later meetings, when the team is now working on a different Statement of Quality.

Creating a ‘team memory’

Over time, the team will change its membership, so some of the individuals who went through the EQF process will no longer be present to remember what decisions and recommendation their team made. This is why it’s important to record and store carefully all the decisions the team has made and the evidence it has gathered while working on the first Statement of Quality.

The importance of having a good system for storing and accessing this information cannot be over-estimated. It is not enough for committed individuals to recollect what happened; there needs to be a collective memory, or ‘team memory’, that can be accessed when the team changes, if the ALO or centre manager moves or if a different facilitator works with the team next time.

This team memory is also important to prevent teams from duplicating work they or past team members have already carried out. A well-organised system for storing and indexing evidence is essential to enable teams to find material that they have already collected and could find useful in new work. Suggestions for cross-referencing material are given in Information Sheet 12.

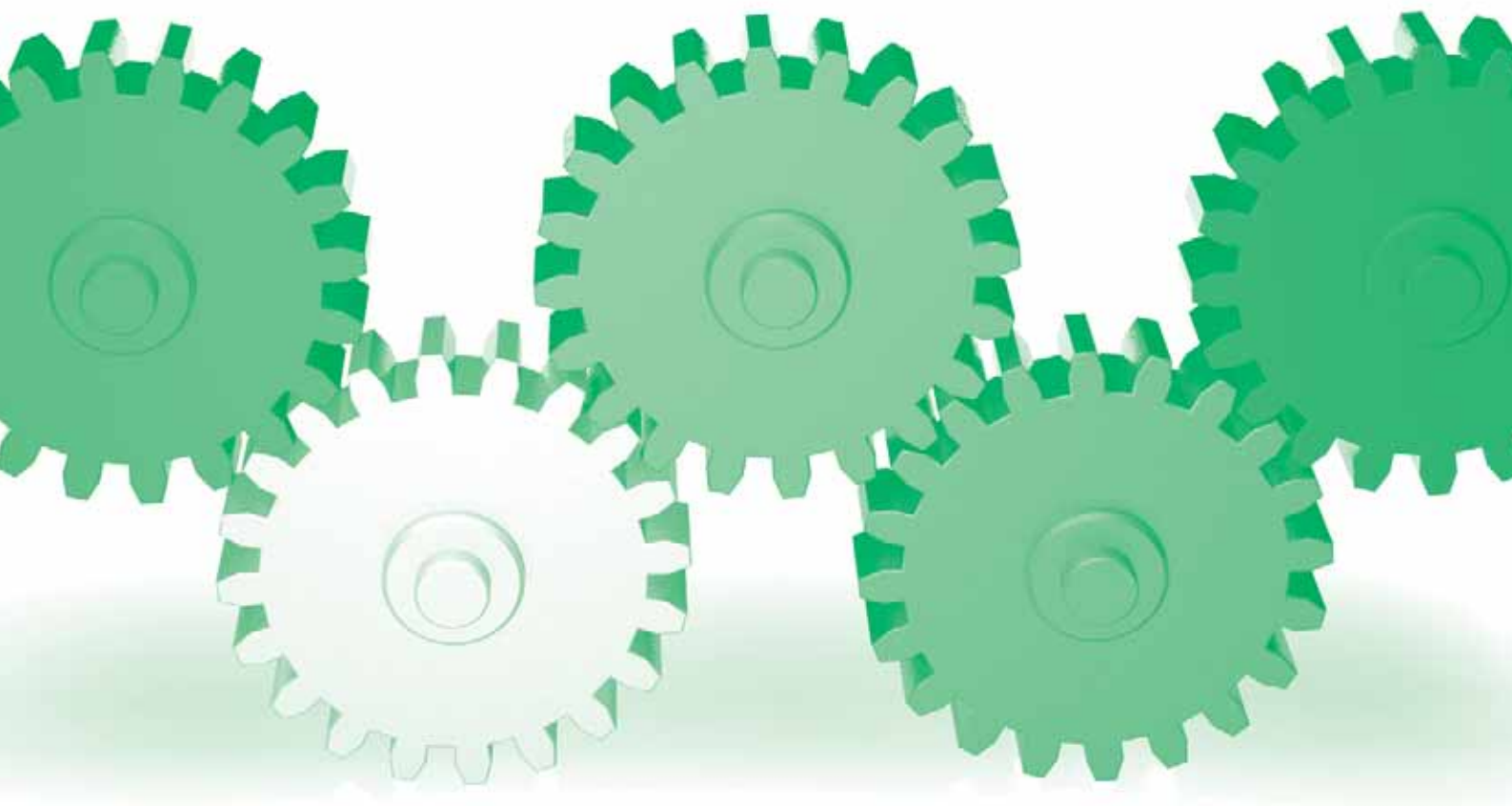
Facilitator support

Facilitating a self-evaluation team is a complex and demanding process. If you are uncertain about how to deal with a situation or a question, you can:

- refer to the ground rules;
- refer back to the Guiding Principles;
- ask the team for clarification;
- acknowledge uncertainty and offer to research answers;
- visit the ‘frequently asked questions’ section on the NALA website, www.nala.ie;
- discuss issues with centre manager and, or the anchor person; or
- liaise with NALA Regional Office and EQF co-ordinator.

If you need help, do not hesitate to ask for it.

Section 8: Worksheets and information sheets



Worksheet 1: The Ideal Situation

Statement of Quality

Date

You will find the full text of this Statement of Quality on page x. When you have read it carefully, think of the different ways in which this statement relates to your centre. Then, imagine what the situation would be if your centre had already fully achieved the standard expressed in this statement.

The Ideal Situation

Worksheet 2:

The Present Situation

Statement of Quality _____

Date _____

- Consider all the ways in which this statement relates to your centre and your image of the ideal situation. Now, think about the actual situation as it is now. Does the present reality...:
- perfectly match your image of the ideal situation?
 - have some of the features of the ideal situation, but with room for some improvement?
 - have little in common with the ideal situation?

The Present Situation

Worksheet 3: Signs of Quality

Statement of Quality

Date

Signs of Quality for this statement are supplied on page x. Write these in the 'Sign' column below. Now, decide whether your centre has already fully or partly achieved the standard expressed in each sign or if the sign has not yet been addressed, and tick the appropriate box in the table. Then, ask what would need to happen, in relation to this sign, to progress to 'fully achieved'. Make a note of this in the 'Issues and actions' column.

When you have discussed the supplied Signs of Quality, decide whether you need to draw up any others that relate to your own centre. If so, use Information Sheet 5 to help with this. When you have agreed on the exact wording for the new sign(s), write it (them) in the 'Sign' column below. Then discuss it (them) in the same way as you explored the supplied signs.

	Sign	Fully achieved	Partly achieved	Not yet addressed	Issues and actions
100	1.				
	2.				
	3.				
	4.				
	5.				
	6.				

Worksheet 4: Identifying and Gathering Evidence

Statement of Quality

Date _____

First, decide what range of material your team **could** use as evidence of how well your centre is performing in relation to each of the signs of quality. Make a note of this in the 'Possible material for evidence' column.

Next, decide what material your team will actually gather and note this in the 'Definite material for evidence' column. Base your decision on the guidelines provided in Information Sheet 6. When you find out where this material can be located, note this in the 'To be found' column. Then agree who will actually gather the evidence and give the name in the 'To be collected by' column.

Sign	Possible material for evidence	Definite material for evidence	To be found in (location)	To be collected by (name of person)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

Worksheet 5: Making Sense of Evidence

Statement of Quality

Date

In the 'Evidence' column, list the material you have gathered as evidence of your opinions about how well the centre is performing in relation to this sign. Then reflect on what the evidence tells you and add your comments in the 'Reflections on evidence' column. Here are some questions you can ask at this stage:

- Does the evidence confirm or deny my original impressions?
- Does all of the evidence tell the same story or are there differences?
- Does the evidence suggest patterns or trends? If so, what?

Evidence	Reflections on evidence
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Worksheet 6:

Action Plan

Statement of Quality _____

Date _____

What actions do you need to take to make sure that your centre fully achieves this Statement of Quality?

Action needed	Method	Organisation or individual	Time scale	Method of monitoring
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

Worksheet 7

Feedback Sheet

This worksheet must be filled in when your team finishes work on a Statement or Statements of Quality. This should be completed each year and a copy returned to :

Quality Framework Co-ordinator, NALA, 76 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin 1.

Date:

Statement/s completed to which this worksheet refers:

Evaluation team name / name of centre or service:

Facilitator's Name:

In the table below please fill in the number of each of the listed team members on your evaluation team.

Team make up	Number
Students	
Management	
Group tutors	
One-to-one tutors	
Other (please specify)	

How long did it take your team to work on this Statement?

Worksheet 7 continued

List in order of importance what you found to be the most useful for the team following work on this statement of quality

Describe any difficulties you had with the EQF process.

How did the guiding principles influence the team's progress on this occasion?

Any other comments?

What other statements of quality, if any, have you completed?

Have you any suggestions to improve the EQF process?

Thank you for completing this sheet.

Information Sheet 1: Cross Referencing FETAC and EQF



The dots on this table [•] show where the EQF statements overlap with the FETAC quality assurance requirements. The names of the EQF Quality Areas are given across the top, followed underneath by the titles of the Statements of Quality related to each area. The FETAC policies and procedures are listed on the left according to the way they are numbered in the FETAC document “Quality Assurance in Further Education and Training”, from pages 20 – 38. The next page has the full list of the numbers and titles of these FETAC policy areas. A few EQF statements, for example, ‘Student-Tutor Relationship’ have no overlap with the FETAC requirements. This means that these areas are important for adult basic education but are not emphasised as much for accreditation. Also, a few of the FETAC policies, such as B4.2 Learner Entry Arrangements, do not apply to ABE and so have no overlap with the EQF.

	Resources			Management				Teaching and Learning				Progression		O’teach+Promotion.					
	Resources Teaching,	Premises	Staffing	Funding	Planning	Support+ Protect	Staff R’mment	Staff Training	Internal Comm.	Programme Eval.	Student -Tutor Relation.	Range Tuition	Learning + Develop.	Tuition	Assessment	Guidance	Student. Accred	Networking + Partner	Promotion
B1.1									•										
B1.2									•										
B1.3									•									•	
B2.1		•																	•
B2.2					•														
B3.1			•				•												
B3.2								•											
B3.3								•											
B4.1																•			
B4.2																			
B4.3																			
B4.4						•													
B5.1																			
B5.2												•						•	
B5.3												•							
B5.4												•							
B5.5																			
B5.6														•					
B5.7	•																		•
B5.8		•																	
B5.9																			•

Information Sheet 1: Continued

	Resources				Management				Teaching and Learning				Progression		O'reach+Promotion.				
	Resources Teaching, Learning	Premises	Staffing	Funding	Planning	Support+ Protect Students	Staff Rment	Staff Training	Internal Comm.	Prgm Eval.	Student -Tutor Relation.	Range Tuition Options.	Learning + Develop.	Tuition		Assessment	Grance	Student. Accred	Nwrling + Partner
B6.1									●										
B6.2															●				
B6.3															●				
B6.4																			
B6.5																			
B6.6																			
B6.7																			
B6.8														●					
B6.9																			
B7.1						●													
B8.1																			
B8.2																			
B8.3																			
B8.4																			

<p>B1.1 Communication with Learners</p> <p>B1.2 Communication with Staff</p> <p>B1.3 Communication with other Stakeholders</p> <p>B2.1 Equality Training</p> <p>B2.2 Equality Planning</p> <p>B3.1 Staff Recruitment and Allocation</p> <p>B3.2 Staff Induction</p> <p>B3.3 Staff Development</p> <p>B4.1 Information Provision</p> <p>B4.2 Learner Entry Arrangements</p> <p>B4.3 Recognition of Prior Learning</p> <p>B4.4 Facilitating Diversity</p>	<p>B5.1 Needs Identification</p> <p>B5.2 Programme Design</p> <p>B5.3 Programme Approval</p> <p>B5.4 Programme Planning</p> <p>B5.5 Programme Delivery</p> <p>B5.6 Learner Records</p> <p>B5.7 Provision and maintenance of learning facilities/resources</p> <p>B5.8 Health & Safety</p> <p>B5.9 Programme Review</p>	<p>B6.1 Coordinated Planning of Assessment</p> <p>B6.2 Information to Learners</p> <p>B6.3 Security of assessment-related processes and materials</p> <p>B6.4 Reasonable Accommodation</p> <p>B6.5 Consistency of Marking</p> <p>B6.6 Assessment performed by external parties</p> <p>B6.7 Consistency of marking with national standards</p> <p>B6.8 Feedback to Learners</p> <p>B6.9 Learner Appeals</p>	<p>B7.1 Cessation of Programmes</p> <p>B8.1 Selection of a Second Provider</p> <p>B8.2 Contract Arrangements</p> <p>B8.3 Reporting Arrangements</p> <p>B8.4 Monitoring Arrangements</p>
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Information Sheet 2: Evaluation

Evaluation is a process of finding and interpreting information that tells us how well a project or a service is working.

Evaluation can help to:

- investigate and record the current situation;
- identify strengths and weaknesses;
- assess the impact and effectiveness of particular actions;
- judge progress made and pin-point obstacles to progress; and
- use information to make the service better.

Evaluation can mean different things in different situations. It can be carried out at all stages in a project, using various methods, depending on its purpose and emphasis.

Formative evaluation takes place at important stages while the project is in progress. Its purpose is to provide information about different aspects of the project, which managers and staff can use to improve their work along the way.

Terminal evaluation takes place during, and especially at the end, of a project. It is designed to make a judgement about the overall impact or effectiveness. This can provide useful information for managers and staff and can assist in developing other projects. Information from a terminal evaluation also helps funders to make decisions about extending budgets or providing funds for similar projects.

Internal evaluation is carried out by a member or members of the team or organisation that is running the project. Sometimes, but not always, an internal evaluation is designed to provide a confidential assessment for the team and managers about how well particular aspects of the project are working. An advantage of internal evaluation is the researcher's familiarity with the issues. However, this

familiarity can also be a disadvantage, as it may make it difficult to make useful judgements from a neutral position.

External evaluation is carried out by a researcher (or several researchers) who is not involved in the project. External evaluations are often, but not always, commissioned by funders who want the impact and effectiveness of a project to be assessed.

External evaluators can bring a useful outsider perspective and see things that people who are more closely involved might miss. However, as they do not know the context as well as the project team, they have to be careful to avoid imposing judgements or interpretations that are based on misunderstanding the situation.

Self-evaluation involves a lot of participation because the people taking part in the project carry it out. In the case of the EQF, the participants are members of the EQF team. These participants use this form of evaluation to reflect on their own practice and identify the positive and negative aspects for themselves.

This has the benefit of making sure that the people whose centre is being evaluated take responsibility for judging their own environment and their own work. However, it can sometimes be difficult to question things that everyone takes for granted. To help with this, self-evaluations often use an outside facilitator, who gives guidance and makes constructive criticism. This person is sometimes called a 'critical friend'. In terms of the EQF, the 'critical friend' is the EQF facilitator.

Although evaluations differ in their purpose and focus, ultimately each one is a research process that follows a number of stages. These are described below.

Stages in the evaluation process

1. Design

Certain decisions have to be made at the design phase about the:

- purpose of the evaluation, what the process is trying to find out and what questions will be answered by the end;
- intended audience, such as project staff, managers, funders, other stakeholders and the general public;
- scope of the evaluation, what aspects of the project and how much of the literature to examine and what wider context of the project;
- stakeholders, in other words who will be involved and who has an interest in knowing how well the project is working.

The design phase corresponds to Steps 1 and 2 of the 9-step process in the EQF.

Another important part of the design stage is deciding on indicators of success, which in the EQF are called Signs of Quality. This is Step 3 of the 9-step process.

2. Gathering Information

At this stage, decisions have to be made about the type of information, or data, that will be needed to answer the questions set at the design stage. This is Step 4 of the 9-step process. Information Sheet 5 explores this stage.

Then the researchers must collect this information. There are many different ways of gathering data, depending on the type of questions being asked and the nature of the project.

Research data can be **quantitative** or **qualitative**.

Quantitative data:

- can be expressed numerically and can be counted, analysed and interpreted using numbers and statistics; and
- are useful for providing an overview of patterns or trends.

Example: The International Adult Literacy Survey found that 25% of adults in Ireland read at Level 1, the lowest on a five-level scale of difficulty.⁷

Qualitative data:

- describe experiences, reasons, attitudes and values; and
- are useful for explaining how and why things happen.

Example: Participants in an Adult Basic Education programme said that their self-confidence had improved after taking part in the class.

Both of these types of data are important for different purposes and are sometimes used together to provide an all-round view of a project.

Here are some examples of quantitative and qualitative data relating to adult basic education.

Quantitative	Qualitative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students attending ABE centre • Percentage of men and women • Number of students referred by other agencies • Attendance figures • Financial records • Accreditation results • Questionnaire results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal or written accounts of events, anecdotes • Scrapbooks with visual or written evidence of students' views and achievements • Journals • Photographs • Audio or video tapes • Interview notes

Collecting data corresponds to Step 5 of the 9-step process. Information Sheets 6 and 7 give more details on the process of selecting, gathering and generating information.

⁷ Morgan, M. Hicke, B., Kellaghan, T. et al (1997) Report to the Minister for Education on the International Adult Literacy Survey: Results for Ireland, Dublin: Educational Research Centre/Stationery Office, page 6.

3. Analysing and interpreting data

This is about deciding what all the information means. In the EQF, this is Step 6 of the 9-step process. At this point, the researcher(s) arrive(s) at conclusions about how well the different aspects of the project are working according to the aims, objectives and indicators (signs) set for it. These conclusions form the basis of suggested actions for the future, actions that would improve the project or service. These are recommendations that, in the 9-step process, form part of the action plans, the writing of which is the seventh of the 9 EQF steps.

4. Presenting and reporting findings

All of the information, analysis and interpretation that emerge from the evaluation process are usually presented in the form of a report, which also includes the conclusions and recommendations. This full report is often published, but at the very least, the evaluation report or a summary is always circulated to those who have an interest in the project and who can influence how it develops in the future. This is Step 8 in the 9-step process.

An additional step that is sometimes included, especially in internal or participatory evaluation, is to check up on whether the recommendations are being put into practice. This monitoring phase is included in the EQF as Step 9.

Ethical considerations

All researchers need to be aware of the potential impact of their work, especially on the people who take part in an evaluation. Evaluators should assure people that their views as individuals will be treated in confidence unless there is a good reason not to keep it private. Researchers should be honest with those who are affected by the evaluation. For example, they should make it clear if certain findings could have a particular effect on the project which they may not like.



Information Sheet 3: Teams and Team Building

What is a team?

A team is a group of people that come together for an agreed, shared purpose. Many of our life experiences, such as sporting events, community activities and work, happen in teams. Some teams come together to accomplish a task, for example to raise funds for a new sports centre. Others, such as a book club, sports team, personal development group, are for leisure or personal enrichment. Some, such as trade unions, political parties and lobbying groups, contribute to civic and community life. What all teams have in common is that they operate on the principle that people working together can accomplish more than individuals can on their own .

Individual group members, as well as facilitators, can do certain things to help to build up the clarity and trust that are needed for an effective team. So it is useful to know something about the stages of development that **groups** go through and also the ways in which **individuals in groups** often act.

Development stages of groups and teams

There are several theories about the different stages that groups go through from their birth, when the individuals first meet, to their ending when the group finally breaks up. All agree that groups pass through identifiable stages and that different challenges face the group at each point along the way. Knowing those challenges can help us to understand and manage them. Here is one useful five-stage model of group development that is often used in community and learning groups:

Forming

The team comes together. This is a collection of individuals who have a common purpose but who are all trying to decide what the group is like and how they fit into it. People are often polite, impersonal, watchful and guarded at this stage. They do not yet know how things work or what is and is not acceptable. They are testing the water.

Norming

The individuals are beginning to work out what kind of behaviour is expected and are finding a way of being in the group. They are carving out a role for themselves and are gaining confidence in addressing the work of the group. They are also working out how they relate to other team members and are becoming used to giving and receiving help and feedback.

Storming

People are no longer on their best behaviour. Frustrations with the task, and with each other, can surface. There may be conflicts about how to do things or about how different people are acting. People may express dissatisfaction in different ways. Some may become annoyed; others may withdraw. This is the stage when people really get to know each other and work through conflicts.

Performing

Having clarified their own role and place in the team, and having worked through the conflicts, people are now able to focus their attention on the task in a mutually supportive way. Individuals are now fully dedicated to achieving the common goals. This is the team at its most effective.

Adjourning

All teams come to an end. Perhaps when the task is accomplished, there is no longer a need for it. Some people may leave and others join, which makes it a different group. External circumstances may change which make the team no longer relevant or needed. The adjourning, or terminating, stage can be accompanied by a sense of loss.

Facilitators, and team members can help each other at the different stages if they know what to expect and how to assist. Ice-breakers and group exercises that help people get to know each other can help with the forming stage.

Developing a group contract or ground rules is an important part of the norming stage and allows people to express their idea of the way in which the team should operate.

Storming is a normal part of group behaviour and a good facilitator will help people to express their frustrations in a constructive way so they can clear the air and move on.

And from the very beginning, team members should look ahead to the time when their group no longer exists. It can be useful for every team member to think of themselves as a facilitator, that is, as someone who supports other people in being in the group.

Individuals in the group

When people join a team, they are members of the group and they are also individuals. The overall purpose of the team is to accomplish its goal or task. Individuals want to achieve this too, but they also bring other needs with them, such as the need to belong, to achieve, to control, to be liked, to entertain and so on. Needs vary, depending on the individual and on the nature of the task, and they greatly influence the way individuals act in groups. A useful way of thinking about how individuals act in groups is to think of behaviour as:

- task-directed;
- maintenance-directed; or
- self-directed.

Task-directed means the person acts in ways that relate directly to the work of the group, for example by giving or seeking information, proposing ideas or summarising conclusions.

Maintenance-directed means the person acts in ways that helps the group run smoothly and supports other team members, for example by encouraging, asking for feedback, giving constructive feedback or expressing appreciation.

Self-directed means the person acts in ways designed to meet their own individual needs, often at the expense of the team's task or of other people in the group. Examples of this include withdrawing, point –scoring or destructive criticism.

Everyone who has ever been part of a team moves in and out of these three different types of behaviour. Obviously, self-directed behaviour is unhelpful to the team and to other individuals. Task-directed and maintenance-directed behaviour are very helpful, both to the team effort and to the people in the team. Sometimes, maintenance activity, such as having a joke or engaging in a trust-building activity, which have nothing to do with the task in hand, can equip people with the confidence and desire to return to the task with new enthusiasm. We can learn to develop or improve this kind of behaviour and, in this way, become more effective team members.



Information Sheet 4: Leadership and Decision Making

The purpose of examining different approaches to leadership is to help you consider which approach you work best with and in what circumstances.

There are many different systems for analysing leadership and management styles. A useful, three-pronged framework describes styles of leadership as

- participatory;
- directive; and
- free-rein.

Participatory leadership involves motivating and encouraging people to take part in the work of the service and to contribute their knowledge, skills and opinions to that work, and also to making decisions about the services. As a result, this type of leadership involves a lot of consultation. Participatory leadership is a common management style in ABE and community education. It means that, when making decisions, the manager actively seeks out the opinions of students, tutors, Adult Literacy Organisers and other managers.

Directive leadership is when the manager or leader makes the decisions and directs the activities of other participants. The leader regards participants' views as a resource that may be used but doesn't see consulting participants as a necessary step before taking action. Directive leadership is common in some workplaces and in certain highly-structured settings where there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability.

Free-rein leadership means that the manager tends to delegate work to team members, who then work largely on their own and report back to the team at different stages in the work. The role of the leader is to be a resource for team members if they need specific support or clarity. Free-rein leadership can be important on projects that demand team members to be creative.

Each of these leadership styles is appropriate in certain situations. Directive leadership is generally not greatly favoured in ABE and community education. However, in a crisis situation or when an individual will be held personally responsible for the consequences of an action, a directive approach may be essential. Free-rein leadership may not be suitable to accomplish a clearly-defined task within a tight deadline, but it may be a useful approach when there is a lot of ambiguity and room for interpretation in the work.

Decision Making

The way in which decisions are made, and who makes them, is a very good guide to the management or leadership style. In the same way, there is a place for various decision-making processes in different situations.

Consensus means most, if not all, people take part and give their views. Everyone has a say and the final decision is reached only when all competing viewpoints have been aired fully, and, crucially, when everyone agrees with the final decision. The consensus-building approach has a number of advantages:

- all aspects of the question are explored in depth, and
- everyone is satisfied with the final outcome, eventually.

The big disadvantage, however, is that reaching consensus can take a very long time. It helps if the decision-making is supported by a good facilitator.

Directive decision-making means that one person, or a small group of people, decides what to do and the other members act on their decision. This can be viewed as an autocratic approach and indeed people often use it as a way of controlling and getting rid of disagreement. When this happens, people who have not been able to contribute to the decision, or who disagree, can feel left out and completely switch off from the decision-making process. However, there are times when one person must make the decision.

Democratic decision means 'one person, one vote' and the great advantages are that everyone can have their say and that everyone's vote carries the same weight. However, it does have disadvantages. Even if most people agree with a decision, some will disagree and, if they feel very strongly, the majority rule will not always encourage them to agree. Another disadvantage is that the majority opinion is not always the right one. If the minority is unhappy, you may sometimes need to take the time to work towards consensus.



Information Sheet 5: Developing Signs of Quality

A sign of quality is an indicator of success. It is a way of expressing part of the standard your centre needs to reach in relation to the Statements of Quality. When your centre has fully achieved the standards expressed in all of the signs for a Statement of Quality, you can be sure that your centre is providing a high-quality service in that particular area.

All of the Statements of Quality and Signs of Quality in this User Guide came from broad research with people working and learning in adult basic education or working on the FETAC quality assurance guidelines for centres offering accreditation.

However, the EQF team may think that the supplied signs do not cover a particular set of circumstances in your own centre that needs to be addressed in the quality assurance process. If so, your team is free to draw up one or more signs within a Statement of Quality to address that situation. Remember that your centre will look at these local signs and the Signs of Quality that are already supplied.

How to write signs

When you are writing your own signs, here are some guidelines to remember:
the sign must be specific and expressed in one short sentence, in the present tense.

Example 1

- People who take part in the EQF team have a positive experience and learn new skills that they can use in other areas of life.

This is a qualitative or sign because it probes people's feelings, opinions and aspirations. It is likely to draw on evidence such as people's responses, what these mean and why these responses occurred.

Example 2

- 50% of all new students agree to take part in six-hour programmes each week for the full year.

This is a quantitative sign and it would be suitable for a centre that has received funding to provide intensive courses. Of course, if your centre only has funding to offer two hours' tuition each week, then this sign is not relevant. However, if there is an option for more intensive training, the EQF team should keep track of the how many people take it up. Other signs for other Statements of Quality might address the results or effect of the six-hour option, for example referring to the amount and speed of progress that people make and their level of satisfaction.

If it seemed useful, you could express the first, qualitative sign in a numerical way. To do this, you could interview people using a checklist or give them a questionnaire, then count the replies and then show the results on a table or graph. See Information Sheets 6 and 7 for more information.

Types of signs

Sometimes, we need to examine what is in place or what is available to a centre such as funding, premises, other materials and resources, the number of staff and their level of expertise, the range of programmes on offer and the time available for them.

These all relate to signs that tell us what is being put in to the centre – the inputs. These are very important, as it is not possible to offer a quality service without enough input.

To record these inputs (what is in place or available), you use **input signs**.



For example:

By the next mid-term break, the centre has a panel of at least twenty volunteer tutors.

However, we also need to know what is actually happening in the centre. This might cover, for example, the number of students who take part, the rate of drop-out and the range of tuition options being used. These all relate to what is going on in the scheme –the process. Signs that probe these are called **process signs**.



For example:

Tutors and students work with different methods, including discussion, group work and role play.

We also need to know if the inputs and processes are actually having an impact. For example, have people’s skills improved after following a literacy class for a certain length of time? The literacy class represents both inputs (the number of hours and weeks, the teaching time and staff and the materials used) and process (how the teaching was carried out).

We would expect that the result – or ‘output’ – of all of these resources and activities would be some improvement in the student’s skills, confidence and satisfaction. The signs that reflect results are called **output signs**.



For example:

At least 60% of students carry out one new literacy task on their own, within the first two months of starting in the centre.

Eventually, people who make enough progress may go on to further education or training or get work that they could not have done without the improvements in their literacy or numeracy. Some people may start taking part in their local community groups or make changes in their lives in other ways.. These long-term effects indicate the overall impact, or the outcome, of the whole learning experience. The signs that record these longer-term results are **outcome signs**.



For example

All students who complete two years’ regular attendance in the centre move on to one or more of these: take regular part in local community events; start on more advanced education or training; get a new or a better job.

When devising signs for your scheme, ask yourself whether it is an input, a process, an output or an outcome sign. Make sure you have a good mixture because all of these indicators of success are connected to each other and to quality in adult basic education. Remember too to create signs that are SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

Specific means that the sign should be short and concise. Look at the supplied signs for samples.

Measurable means that words such as ‘regular’, ‘most’ or ‘soon’ need to be more clearly defined: for example ‘once a term’; ‘all’ or ‘80%’.

Achievable means that the standard expressed by the sign has a reasonable chance of being achieved. Even if it is not fully achieved, you can develop signs that show some progress towards a long-term goal.

Realistic highlights the importance of creating signs that are practical, given the current circumstances. For example, the centre may need better premises, but if this has been addressed already and you know that it will not be accomplished in the next year, you do not need to spend any more time deciding what needs to be done.

Time-bound means that you should suggest a deadline for achieving the standard set by the sign, for example ‘before the next mid-term break’.

If circumstances change, or if the team becomes aware of a problem with a sign while working on it, you can change it to reflect new needs.



Information Sheet 6: Selecting Evidence

When you are discussing your centre's performance on the signs of quality, you will be able to identify different types of material, or evidence, which will clarify your views. For example, all kinds of documents, newspaper cuttings, newsletters, handbooks, extracts from research reports, questionnaires and survey results, photographs, audio and video tapes, could provide evidence that your initial impressions are accurate or else, need to be modified.

You will find suggestions on the type of material which could be used as evidence, for each Statement of Quality, in Sections 2 – 6 above. If you are working on one of the supplied signs, the evidence suggested alongside the signs of quality form part of the FETAC quality assurance guidelines. You should therefore take direction from this document to decide which of these to select as evidence. However, if you are working on a sign which your EQF team developed for your centre, you will need to decide, as a team, what kind of material would provide evidence of the centre's performance on that sign, at this time. Three or four pieces for each sign should be enough.

At this point, it is worth spending some time discussing which material provides the best evidence of how far the centre has achieved the sign so far. Consider

- The relevance of the material;
- How easy it is to find.

Here are other questions which the team can ask, to clarify what kind of evidence will suit best:

- Is there already material available which we could use as evidence for this sign?
- If so, is it enough in itself or do we need to add to it?

- Have we already gathered evidence for another sign, which could also be relevant for this one?

If you decide that existing material would provide useful evidence for a sign, you then need to discuss where you can find it, and which member(s) of the team will get it. You can use Worksheet x to record these decisions. Make sure that they are noted in the minutes of the team meeting as well.

If there is no existing material you can use as evidence, the team will need to generate it. This can be time-consuming, so only take this option if there is no other evidence available, or if there is a good reason for doing so.

Another issue you should consider is the amount of material you need to obtain, or produce, to provide evidence of how far the centre is achieving the sign, at present. There needs to be enough evidence to provide a robust support for the views the team has reached about how well the centre is performing on the sign of quality, but not so much that the team becomes swamped in paperwork. Here are some guidelines on how much and what kind of evidence to collect.

- Identify no more than three or four pieces of evidence for each sign;
- You may be able to use the same material as evidence for different signs;
- Try to vary the type of evidence, eg combine statistics with written information, photographs, charts etc;
- Include both quantitative and qualitative information, where this is appropriate.

Remember that the purpose of the evidence is to show how well the centre is doing on the sign of quality at this time. This means that the evidence may show that the sign has been partly achieved, or even that not much work has been done on it yet. This is useful information which the evidence should reflect. When you are deciding what evidence to look for, therefore, you want material which shows the situation and not as it should be in the future as it really is, in the present.

The final decision to make in relation to selecting evidence, is to agree a method for filing and storing the material when it comes in. It will also be important to have an index which you or future EQF teams can consult in the future.



Information Sheet 7: Gathering and Generating Evidence

Here are some of the ways in which you can collect information.

Desk research

Desk research includes looking for information from minutes of meetings, project handbooks, Internet searches and any other documents that provide potentially useful information.

You can find quantitative and qualitative information through desk research. For example, the International Adult Literacy Survey gives statistics about international levels of literacy and numeracy, but other types of documents can give descriptive material.

Interviews

You can carry these out face-to-face or over the phone, with individuals or groups. Some interviews are highly structured. For example, the International Adult Literacy Survey collected the information in one-hour interviews according to a set format of questions and tasks. Others are more open-ended. This means the interviewer has a general list of topics or questions called an interview schedule, summarising the areas which they want to cover in a discussion.

Focus groups

Focus groups are small discussion groups, usually of between five to eight people who come together to explore particular issues in detail. A facilitator is usually there to guide the discussion and record the views people express.

Observation

This form of research takes place when the researcher is present for certain activities of the project, such as meetings, classes or other events, and makes a note of their eyewitness impressions. Before observing what is happening, the researcher usually prepares a checklist that sets out the main areas of interest

and can be used during the activity to record ideas quickly. Sometimes a researcher will use a tape-recorder, as long as participants agree to this. One example of a person carrying out observation is an evaluator who attends a meeting as an observer, without actually taking part. Another example is a supervisor of tutor training who is present but does not interfere.

Participant observation

This differs slightly from other observation in that the observer also takes part in the activity. Usually the people involved in the activity know who the researcher is. If they don't know and they think the researcher is just another project worker, the participant-observer research can provide interesting insights. However, there are serious ethical objections to 'planting' a researcher without the knowledge of the people whose activities are providing information for the study.

Surveys

These are often questionnaires that researchers design to get information on particular topics. The following pages give guidelines on developing questionnaires.

Tips on developing questionnaires

1. Discuss the purpose of the questionnaire with all team members and write down your ideas.
2. Now make a note of the main headings or areas you need to know.
3. Write the specific questions you want to ask under these headings. Keep these in line with the purpose. Keep your questions short and easy to understand. Study the types of questions you might ask and decide which are the most useful for this purpose. Do not look for unnecessary information.

4. Check and test your questionnaire for clarity with some of the people to whom the survey is directed. If there are difficulties with any of the questions, change these before using them.

Tips on types of questions: Open and closed questions

All questions are either open or closed.

Closed questions give the person a selection of possible answers to choose from..

Open questions give the person a chance to answer in a more expanded way. They do not limit the person to a set answer.

Examples of closed and open questions

Closed questions

1. Are you?
 Male
 Female
(tick to indicate)
2. Was your initial impression of the centre:
 positive
 negative
 can't remember
(tick to indicate)

Open questions

1. What do you think of the way students and tutors are matched in the centre?
2. What do you think are the characteristics of a good tutor?

Factual questions

These are often introduced by 'who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?'

What is your name?

Who is your tutor?

Where is your centre located?

Meaning / interest questions

What are your experiences of group tuition?
What do you feel about the matching process?
What is your view about the tuition you get?
What do you get out of coming to the centre?

Values and attitudes

These are questions which probe values and attitudes. They take considerable planning.

1. Are you contented working in this centre?
Yes / No. Please explain your answer.
2. What values underpin the following sets of relationships?
 - (a) tutors and tutors
 - (b) tutors and students
 - (c) tutors and the centre manager / Adult Literacy Organiser.

Tips on writing questions

1. Think about the information that you want and how you will analyse it.
2. Make sure your questions are clear.
3. Ask one question at a time.
4. Think about the people who will be answering the questions, the kind of language they will respond to.
5. Do not ask too many open-ended questions. These can take a long time to answer properly and can be difficult to analyse.
6. Begin with simple, factual questions (for example, length of time in the centre, favourite subject) and ask more detailed, sensitive or searching questions further into the questionnaire.
7. Remember that something that looks easy may be difficult for an individual.

Tips for presentation of questionnaire

1. Print questionnaires on different coloured paper for different groups (for example, tutors questionnaire could be blue and the students green and so on). This prevents mix-ups in administering and at the analysing stage.
2. Including graphics on your questionnaire may help it look and be more user friendly.
3. Leave enough space for answers!

Sampling

Sampling is a process of getting a suitable pool of people to take part in the survey. Researchers usually try to make sure that the sample is a good reflection of the group of people being surveyed, in other words, that it is representative. This makes it possible to draw general conclusions from the findings.

Example

If you were conducting a study amongst adult basic education students in Ireland using a survey questionnaire, it would not be practical to survey all the students in the country. You would have to create a sample and to do this, you would select from a number of methods.

Two commonly used sampling methods are:

1. Random sampling
This type of sampling is where a group of people for study are selected at random from a larger group. Each individual is chosen entirely by chance and all have a chance of being included in the study.

Example

Put the names of all the students in the country in a hat and draw out 100, 200, 500.

2. Stratified random sample
In this case, the number of people chosen for the sample is weighted according to particular characteristics. For example, if the male/female ratio of students in the country is 60:40, you would try to have a similar proportion of women and men in your sample.
3. Purposive sampling

Hand-picking typical or interesting people to contact for the study.

Example

In a study of tutor training needs likely people to ask to be part of the study include: tutor trainers, the centre manager or adult literacy organiser, training coordinators and a number of tutors, some who have done little or no prior training and some who have done a considerable amount.

Tips on analysing questionnaires

Questionnaires may be analysed by questions and or by headings.

Example

Tutors are asked to indicate if they use a selection of facilities at their disposal: their answers could be collated and analysed as follows:

Facilities	Yes
Telephone	80%
Noticeboard	10%
Library	20%

When analysing answers to questionnaires given to different groups (for example tutors and students) on the same topic, it can be useful to examine them using a table which compares answers from the different perspectives, for example:

Areas	Tutors % satisfied	Students % satisfied
Premises	50%	60%
Materials	45%	85%
Childcare	65%	34%

Example of analysing and comparing by questions

What facilities were tutors happy with?
 What facilities were tutors not satisfied with?
 What facilities were students happy with?
 What facilities were students not happy with?

Be alert!

Always bear in mind where your data come from and how reliable it is. Do not assume that quantitative (numeric) data is more reliable than other forms. Record keeping can be random, counting can have mistakes and what the numbers mean might be only part of the story. A common technique which makes analysis more widely applicable, or generalisable, is called 'triangulation'. This is when researchers try to get data on a similar issue in different ways. For example, if you want to investigate an aspect of 'How positive or negative is students' experience of being in the centre' you could use these three methods:

- Ask the students (interview, either individual or group).
- Watch the students interacting with each other and with tutors (observation).
- Study records such as attendance registers, evaluation sheets and correspondence.

Whatever form your collected data takes you will need to consider how you will make sense of the information (see Information Sheet 8: Making sense of evidence).

Ethical issues

When collecting information, you need to consider the important issue of how your research might affect the people or organisations providing the information. Here are some general principles on the ethics of evaluation and research in general:

- The researcher should tell those taking part in the research why and how they are carrying out the research and how the results will be used.
- The researcher should assure those taking part that they will treat the information or opinions they provide in total confidence and honour this. If it isn't possible to keep contributions private, the researcher should make this clear to participants and they should agree to this.

If the researcher comes to conclusions that may reflect poorly on the project or on particular people, they must set out the reasons clearly and give the people concerned an opportunity to reply. Doing so does not mean the researcher changes their opinion, but it may mean that the facts are put in a different light.



Information Sheet 8: Making Sense of Evidence

Once the information has been collected, the next important stage is to decide what it all means. This is making sense of evidence, Step 6 of the 9-step process. Analysis allows us to use the answers we got to the questions, to decide what those answers mean.

Analysing data

This often involves looking for patterns or trends. You may decide to look at similarities in clusters or groups or compare and contrast data.

Cluster or group analysis is when you notice trends under similar categories. It helps you present your data later if you create headings and group your information according to those categories. For example, focus group discussions or individual interviews might yield a lot of comments about: why people drop out factors that help them continue with their study; and supports they can get from their family or the centre or may need to contribute themselves. Once you have identified categories, you can look at all the data again and examine the most important.

When you **compare and contrast**, you identify similarities or differences that are worth highlighting for the reader. This could refer to different groups of students, different times (before and after) or to events or processes.

Interpreting data

This involves not just saying what happened and how things were, but also interpreting why it happened that way and what this could mean. It takes the analysis process a step further. This is very important because the same facts can suggest different meanings, depending on the broader situation and how well you understand it.

For example, a study of how students progress within a centre could show that the percentage of students accessing FETAC accreditation fell dramatically in one year. If you consider that ‘accessing FETAC accreditation’ is an important sign of success, you might initially conclude that the centre is working less effectively. However, if we know that in the past year a large percentage of new students are ESOL students or that the centre took in more beginning readers than usual, this puts the figures in a new light.

Here are some questions you can ask at this stage.

- Does the evidence confirm or deny my original impressions?
- Does all of the evidence tell the same story, or are there differences?
- Does the evidence suggest patterns or trends? If so, what?

The important point here is to recognise that simply reporting information – facts, figures, events – is not enough. We have to decide what it means or interpret it.

Conclusions

Most evaluation works towards a final report that includes conclusions summing up the strengths and weaknesses of the project and recommendations that set out what should happen next. A good way to strengthen the conclusions and recommendations is to gather different types of information—that probe the same questions. If the different information suggests similar conclusions, this will make your conclusions more robust than if you use only one method.



Information Sheet 9: Presenting Findings

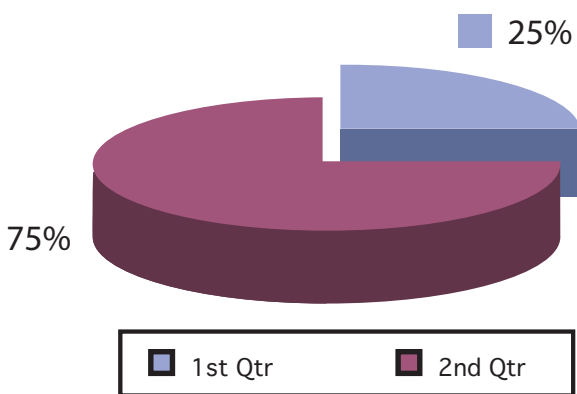
How you present your findings depends partly on the kind of information you want to get across and partly by the audience you have in mind.

Some data, especially quantitative data, can be very effective when presented visually. Indeed, it may be easier to take in when it's presented this way rather than in tables.

Pie charts

A pie chart is a good way of showing proportions or percentages. This pie chart is to illustrate the percentage of students who have been registered with the centre for two years or more. You can see clearly that three quarters of them fall into this group.

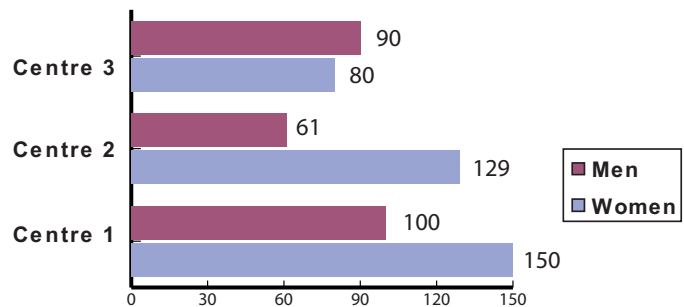
Participation: Duration



Bar charts

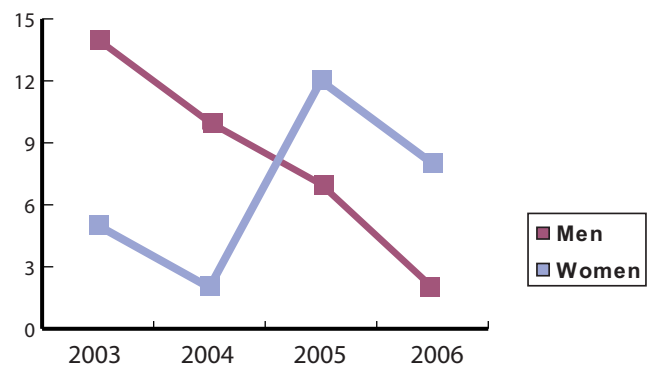
Bar charts show comparisons very clearly. For example, the chart below illustrates the statement that female students greatly outnumber male students in two out of three outreach centres.

Participation by Centre: Men, Women



Graphs

Graphs are good for showing trends over a period of time.





Information Sheet 10: Action Planning

Use alongside Worksheet 6: Action Plan

Action plans are a way of communicating what your EQF team has learned from working through the 9-step process. It is likely that when you are doing this, members of the team will make suggestions both about the needs of the service and how to meet them.

Be sure to keep a record of all of comments at this stage. You should use Worksheets 1 – 7 for this. You should also record any ideas or decisions in the minutes of EQF meetings. By the time you have completed all the steps, and noted the main points of your discussions, you should be in a good position to identify the areas of your service that need to be improved. You should also be able to say what needs to happen to do this, and suggest ways in which this could be done.

Here is one method you can use to make an action plan.

1. Review all of the paperwork you have used, or produced, while working through the nine steps. This should include completed worksheets, samples of evidence or descriptions of evidence and minutes of EQF meetings.
2. Ask “What specific issues, needs or gaps in the service have we identified during the 9-step process?” The needs you identify may fall neatly into categories defined by the Signs of Quality. Or, they may overlap between two or more signs.
3. Consider each issue separately. Ask “What exactly needs to be done to make sure that the centre achieves this Statement of Quality?” List your recommendations in the “Action needed” column in Worksheet 6.
4. Consider each recommended action separately. Think about the different ways in which the centre could carry out the action. When you have decided on the most effective and realistic approach, note this in the ‘Method’ column.
5. Now decide what institution (the centre or a group outside the centre) and, if possible, what individual, is responsible for the action you have recommended. This will help when you come to communicate your findings and when you want to monitor the progress of your recommendation.
6. Now, estimate how long it should take to complete the action and set a deadline based on this estimate. You may also want to set an interim deadline, one that states when you would expect the action to be partly accomplished.
7. Now decide how you will keep track of how your recommendation is progressing. More details on monitoring are given on Information Sheet 10.



Information Sheet 11: Monitoring Action Plans

Remember, your team will produce an action plan for each Statement of Quality. Keeping track of the things you recommended, and how far these have been put into practice, becomes more complicated and takes more time as you work through several statements as time goes on. For this reason, it is important to work out a system for monitoring whether the suggestions you made in your action plans are carried out. Consider the suggestions below to help make the system as effective as possible.

Options for monitoring action plans

- One EQF team member monitors one **recommendation** from an action plan, over an agreed time, and reports on this at each EQF team meeting.
- One EQF team member monitors one full action plan, over an agreed time, and reports on this at each EQF team meeting.
- The EQF team forms a sub-group to monitor one full action plan, over an agreed. This sub-group reports on this at each EQF team meeting.
- All EQF team members monitor one full action plan, over an agreed time, and discuss this fully at each EQF team meeting.

Your team may think of other systems for monitoring action plans. However you decide to do this, the most important thing is to make sure that:

- someone checks on the progress of the recommendations in your action plans;
- everyone knows who is responsible for monitoring which action plans or parts of action plans;
- everyone agrees and sticks to a system of monitoring;

- monitoring takes place over the long-term, and not just for a few weeks or months after the team has submitted the action plan to the centre;
- the EQF team continues to monitor each recommendation until it is fully implemented or found to be no longer relevant or possible;
- the team keeps a record of all progress on file. A good way to do this is to report to each EQF team meeting and recording the report in the minutes.

Monitoring means that your EQF team knows about new developments, in the ABE service and the wider education community, that are relevant to your work in the centre.

Keeping track means finding ways of keeping in touch with the people who are able to advance the action plan and can tell you what is happening. You must first communicate the plans to them, so consider relevant meetings at which to discuss the action plans or suitable places, such as newsletters or e-mail bulletins, where you can publicise them.

When you have distributed and promoted the plans to the right people, your team should decide who is responsible for keeping in touch with individuals to check how things are progressing. These people should make sure that any such contact is agreed with the Adult Literacy Organiser or Centre Manager and that two people are not contacting the same individual about the same plan or recommendation.



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Information Sheet 12: Cross-Referencing Evidence

As centres work through the EQF, teams will notice some overlap between different statements. This means your team might be able to use material you collect for another statement later on. To do this, you need to cross-reference material, which involves organising and storing evidence to make it easily available for future use.

The anchor person, the centre manager and the individual team members will no doubt have good ideas about ways to store and cross-reference material. Whatever you decide, make sure the material is stored in a safe place.

Here are some methods that other teams have found useful.

- Keep all evidence for one statement in a single folder or box file, with a list on the outside giving details of the material it contains.
- Attach to each piece of evidence a list of other statements for which that material might be used in the future and put a summary on the front of the folder.
- Draw up a table summarising the statement or sign, mark in the evidence and add in other statements that the same evidence could support.

The entries in italics are suggestions from the team about other areas or statements where those items might be useful in the future. For example, the written questionnaire collected from students, concerning their opinions about the premises, is also evidence that internal communication has been happening. Those same forms could be used later, when the team is working on that statement. In the same way, the plans for wheelchair accessible ramps tell us about the planning processes, as well as about the accessibility of the premises. Photographs of new facilities prove the work has gone on in the premises area, but these could also be used as evidence when the team moves on to work on the Outreach and Promotion statement.

Remember that the centre needs to organise a secure system for storing students' records and any other confidential information. This table is one example of how you might cross-refer evidence your team has collected for premises under the 'Resources' area. The first row summarises the material the team actually collected relating to the 'Premises' statement.

Statement	Evidence 1	Evidence 2	Evidence 3	Evidence 4
Premises	Photos of rooms	Written questionnaire responses from learners	Drawings and budget for new wheelchair accessible ramps	Pictures of new signs
Management		<i>Internal communication</i>	<i>Planning</i>	
Teaching and Learning				
Progression				
Outreach and Promotion	<i>Promotional strategies</i>	<i>Promotional strategies</i>	<i>Promotional strategies</i>	<i>Promotional strategies</i>

The Evolving Quality Framework

The Evolving Quality Framework is a strategy to guide and monitor quality standards in adult basic education (ABE). The Quality Framework User Guide is a practical step-by-step approach to support this strategy.

What is NALA?

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is a non-profit membership organisation, concerned with national co-ordination, training and policy development in adult literacy work in Ireland. The Agency was established in 1980 and from that time has campaigned for recognition and response to the adult literacy issue in Ireland.



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