Communication for Schools and Local Authorities

A Unified Post-16 Provider Performance Assessment Framework: Framework for Excellence School Sixth Form Pilot

_Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver_ committed to developing a clear framework for assessing performance which is common across all post-16 providers of education and training for young people and adults, based on the Framework for Excellence (FfE).

We have committed to piloting the Framework for Excellence from September 2009 in school sixth forms as a basis for the development of a unified post-16 provider performance assessment framework. We aim to have the Framework in place as early as possible although this is subject to the results of pilot and will be no earlier than 2010/11.

This framework will, for the first time, provide a standardised set of performance indicators which will give an objective and comprehensive picture of the quality of post-16 providers that are judged annually against national standards. This will complement Ofsted’s inspection activities.

The key benefits of the framework will be to:

- **Help learners, parents and IAG influencers to access the information they need to make comparisons** across different courses and settings and support all young people to make good choices about post-16 education.

- **Help providers to improve the quality of provision by setting and measuring post-16 provision against a single set of quality standards** based on measures that incentivise behaviour to achieve clear and measurable standards of excellence and deliver the best post-16 provision and outcomes for all young people.

- **Inform decisions made by local authorities (LAs) to commission post-16 education and training provision** that reflect provider quality and learner choice, and are ‘provider-neutral’.

- **Underpin a simplified performance assessment system for the FE and skills sector and support a more consistent approach to performance management across post-16 providers** both within and across local authorities and provide
information to allow effective intervention, support and challenge to secure improvements.

The framework outputs will be reported in different ways:

- **A public post-16 report card** which will use modern technology to provide learners, parents and IAG influencers with access to detailed information and ways of making comparisons across a range of providers in an exciting and interactive way to inform their choices;

- **As information and data to support Ofsted** to inform inspections and LAs to inform 16-18 commissioning and performance management;

- **As benchmarking information for schools, colleges and other providers** against which to assess their own performance and to create comparisons, for improvement purposes with other providers with similar characteristics.

**Links to School Report Card**

The post-16 public report card will complement the development of a pre-16 School Report Card and will take into account the outcomes of the current consultation. In a secondary school with a sixth form the ambition is that both report cards would be aligned so that users can consider the performance across the whole school.

**Reducing Bureaucracy**

The aim is to minimise bureaucracy by keeping the unified performance assessment framework as simple as possible, and basing it largely on existing data collections, with any new data requirements kept to a minimum. As far as possible, the Framework is based on information that providers could reasonably be expected to gather and use to manage their business and drive quality improvement.

**School Sixth Form Pilot**

We are currently developing plans for a School Sixth Form pilot with key stakeholders including Ofsted, ASCL, ADCS, LGA, SFCF, AoC and head teachers. The pilot will test the fitness for purpose, fairness and relevance to school sixth forms of the existing Framework for Excellence performance indicators as well testing some new proposed indicators. We aim to identify a sample of 100-120 schools with sixth forms in 15-20 local authorities. If your local authority or school (with post-16 provision) would like to be considered for the pilot, please complete an expression of interest form, which is available from [http://ffe.lsc.gov.uk/schoolsixthformpilot/](http://ffe.lsc.gov.uk/schoolsixthformpilot/). The expression of interest form should be submitted as early as possible and no later than 10 May 2009. Please send the form electronically to Frameworkforexcellence@lsc.gov.uk.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The final selection of pilot schools and LAs will be based on fulfilling criteria for a structured sample and not expressions of interest alone.

**Further Communications**
Information will be made available about a unified post-16 provider performance management framework in June 2009. Notification will appear on DCSF’s regular LA and school emails.

Information about the Framework for Excellence is available at: http://ffe.lsc.gov.uk – information and copies of communications relating to the School Sixth Form pilot will be posted on this site.

Detailed guidance about the School Sixth Form pilot will be produced later in the summer.

If you have any queries or would like further information please contact: Frameworkforexcellence@lsc.gov.uk