Value Added and Distance Travelled

1. This briefing document provides an overview of the development of the measures of Value Added (VA) and Distance Travelled (DT).

The aim of the VA and DT measures

2. VA and DT aim to show the progress of individual learners based on their prior attainment compared with the national average performance. VA measures attainment in Level 3 graded qualifications, while DT measures achievement in other approved qualifications at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

The importance of the measures for local LSCs and learning providers

3. The measures are intended for use by:
   - providers, to help them assess and improve their performance
   - the LSC, to help contribute to development plans
   - the Inspectorates, to provide information on the progress of learners in planning inspections and to support judgements about institutional performance
   - the DfES and other stakeholders, to help policy-making and monitoring.

4. ALI and Ofsted, will pilot the use of VA and DT in planning inspections and during inspections over the pilot period which ends in autumn 2007. In the later part of the pilot, inspectors will review the progress being made by providers in using the measures for self assessment and evaluation.

5. The Inspectorates will not use the VA and DT outputs as definitive inspection tools during the piloting and evaluation period. They will use the measures to help inform judgements about learners' progress only where there is other supporting evidence available. The pilot will help the LSC, providers and inspectors ensure the validity and integrity of the measures, and assess how far the measures can help identify strengths and areas for improvement.

6. The LSC has been developing resources which can be used to improve the quality of learning provision, and to help motivate learners to achieve more. In particular, the LSC has developed the Learner Achievement Tracker (LAT), which enables providers to use VA and DT data to assess and improve their own performance.

7. The use of the LAT for reflection and quality improvement purposes has also been piloted from March 2006. During the pilot period, all LSC-funded providers, local LSCs, local authorities (LA's) and the Inspectorates can access and use the LAT. This will ensure that the LAT released in autumn 2007 is fit for purpose.

8. The LAT is accessed via the Provider Gateway. This is a secure online data portal accessed with a user name and password. Providers can only see their own organisation's data.
Further information on VA, DT and the LAT can be found on the Framework for Excellence webpage on the LSC website at http://www.lsc.gov.uk/ffe

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