

LOtC Resource Provider Award Application Guidance Notes

Pre-Experience Indicators

1. The provider has education and learning outside the classroom as a core part of its organisational ethos and assists users as much as possible to plan the learning experience effectively. Therefore:

a) captures or agrees learning objectives;

The provider needs to make clear the products and services being offered and the learning that they are intended to facilitate. The applicant should provide some evidence that intended learning outcomes are clear from the ordering stage onwards – recorded for example on order forms or through correspondence with the user. These might be those offered by the provider, requested by the user or developed through collaboration between both. Where there is no opportunity for negotiating or tailoring the learning products and services to suit what a user may want, the scope of the experiences offered and the main purpose of the learning intended should be made clear, in publicity materials, teacher guidance notes, etc.

NB. Learning objectives and learning outcomes are phrases used to describe what it is that learners are intended to have learnt during or following an activity. They are an essential part of planning and guide the nature of learning experiences and the places where they should occur. Learning outcomes can be expressed as knowledge, skills, understanding and/or as personal development. Teachers use these as the starting point to plan how they will deliver the curriculum.

b) offers a menu or plans a tailored product, with a purpose linked to learning objectives;

There needs to be evidence that the provider has made clear the range of learning products and services being offered. Where appropriate, they should demonstrate how these might be adapted to suit user needs. Evidence should be available that shows a clear purpose(s) for each learning product and/or service that enables users to make informed choices. There should be an obvious link to intended learning outcomes. Where appropriate, providers need to make clear how activities can build on learning through repeat use of learning products and services, and how learning can be guided.

c) takes into account any equality, diversity and inclusion issues and needs;

Providers should make their policy/ies clear to users. They should be able to provide examples of how considerations of equality, diversity and inclusion have impacted on the design of learning products and services. It should be clear how providers ask users what their requirements are in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion. Examples of where providers are unable to be fully inclusive should be clearly communicated to users. The obligation of the applicant is to provide

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information and ask questions, but it is the user's responsibility to ensure activities are suitable for children's specific needs.

- d) offers guidance/information on assessing learner progress during the overall learning outside the classroom experience and how the product or service will be evaluated;**

The methods used by a provider for evaluation should be shared with users in advance of delivery. Evidence should be available that shows how the provider is able to offer advice and guidance on assessing learner progress. For example, that the provider has a way of understanding the prior level of young people's experience, knowledge, skills, etc. Providers should be able to evidence that they take note of and are responsive to evaluation.

- e) offers guidance and/or resources to assist with preparation and follow-up activities or discusses with the user preparation and follow-up.**

Information provided to users (e.g. website, teacher notes, etc.) should make clear any opportunities to extend learning during the preparation and follow up to the use of the learning product and/or service. Providers should offer evidence that they have offered helpful suggestions about how to plan for the experience and support users in follow-up work; for example, through information provided, extension work, collections and materials.

2. The provider has a process in place to communicate its offer to users and provides accurate information. Therefore:

- a) ensures that any promotional / written materials provide an accurate description of products, amenities, facilities or services provided and contact details;**

There needs to be sufficient information made available to the user, in order to allow for a full understanding of the learning products and services offered and enable planning accordingly. Any information that impacts on the user experience should be detailed and contact details to enable the user to make relevant enquiries, should be supplied. The information could be presented in a variety of formats such as an up-to-date website, hard copy brochure, set of guidance notes or leaflet or direct correspondence with the user.

- b) has charging policies that state honestly the total cost of the product.**

The provider should be explicit about its charging policies so that the user can plan financially for the specific learning product and/or service they require. Information about charging policies should include the cost of the product and/or service, any variable costs (e.g. discounts available, etc.) and any additional costs (e.g. additional features, etc.). This information might be provided on a website or in a leaflet or through direct correspondence with the user.

During the experience indicators

3. The provider provides resources or services which meet learner needs. Therefore:

- a) ensures that equipment / materials provided are suitable for tasks/activities; the age and ability of the learners; are current and in good working order;**

Providers should have evidence which shows that learning products and services supplied are suitable for the needs of users. This means any equality, diversity and inclusion issues and needs are taken into account at the planning stage.

b) ensures that any written materials are regularly reviewed and kept up to date;

The provider should have a process in place to regularly review all written materials that form part of the learning products and services provided. This should include ensuring that the materials are updated in line with new developments or theories in the appropriate field and in education generally.

c) makes good use of their location (where appropriate).

All locations have rich opportunities for learning. However, many locations have special merit and where this is applicable to the provider evidence of how these are exploited for educational purposes should be available.

Post-experience indicators

4. The provider reviews the experience and acts upon feedback. Therefore:

a) evaluates their own services;

The provider must ensure that learning products and services are appropriate to the nature of the recipient organisation and the needs of users. In order to do so, the provider needs to instigate self or third party evaluation of its products and services. For example the organisation might participate in an external/third party accreditation scheme which reviews and evaluates the overall quality of learning products and services (e.g. external awards scheme, funding application, etc.) Alternatively there might be in place an internal quality assurance system or review process which requires those responsible for delivering learning products and services to review and evaluate every aspect of those products and services on a regular basis. This could be a formal process or could take the form of regular, noted staff meetings. The evaluation should be regular, all-encompassing and the results should be recorded and acted upon as appropriate.

b) gathers feedback on the product and learning experience from users (teachers and learners), including whether what was agreed at the planning stage was delivered, whether learning objectives have been met and value for money has been achieved;

The learning products and services offered by a provider should be current and relevant to the needs of the majority of users. There should be a mechanism which allows teachers and learners to comment on the stated content of the learning products and services, whether the stated learning objectives were met and whether the experience was worth the money spent (e.g. feedback form, comments book, comments board, video diary, web discussions, etc.). Alternatively, the provider should initiate follow up contact with the user (telephone, letter, email, etc.).

In order that user feedback is as considered as possible, the provider should, where possible, discuss (or share information about) the feedback process with the user prior to delivering the learning products and/or services.

c) has a process in place to change practices as a result of review, evaluation and feedback.

Review, evaluation and feedback must be acted on in order to develop learning products and services which more closely meet the needs of the user. Anecdotal and statistical evidence should be recorded and analysed. Where there are clear trends in the feedback, action should be taken in response to that feedback and that action should be evidenced in updated versions of the learning products and services. Regular reviews should be held to establish what, if any, changes need to be made in terms of planning, staffing, programme content and delivery in relation to learning products and services based on feedback and evaluation.

Organisational Indicators

5. The provider meets the needs of users. Therefore:

a) communicates effectively with users;

Information and guidance on the learning products and services offered by a provider should be easily available to the user. There should be clear and accessible channels of communication for the user. As long as the provider has made all relevant information and guidance available to the user, it has communicated to the best of its ability.

b) essential written policies and procedures are reviewed, maintained and updated. This should be undertaken on a regular basis and cover all venues, all resources and all services;

It is important that all parts of the organisation are aware of and prepared to meet the needs of users. This means that all practice, whether directly related to learning products and services or not, should be regularly reviewed, maintained and updated. Essential written policies and procedures in relation to all aspects of the organisation should be dated, reviewed/updated regularly and made available to all paid and unpaid staff.

c) shows an understanding of sustainability issues and the impact of its products or services and shares this with users.

Learning outside the classroom should enable the learner to place themselves and their knowledge and skills in a wider context. Therefore the provider should attempt to ensure that the user is aware of the wider environmental context of the learning products and services offered. There might be a website or leaflet providing information on sustainability issues and practices associated with the organisation and/or the learning products and services (e.g. impact on the local community, impact on natural environment, recycling practices, energy/water conservation, etc.) There might be a written environmental policy for the organisation which is made available to users.

6. The provider has processes in place to manage risk effectively. Therefore:

- a) considers health and safety and risk/benefit analysis in the development of all products/services;**

The provider must have a process in place to ensure that all reasonable risk associated with the learning product or service is considered during development.

- b) offers risk/benefit management advice to users in relation to all products/services, emphasising the use of risk benefit analysis;**

As part of the delivery of the learning products and services the provider must offer guidance on risk/benefit analysis associated with usage. This should take into account the importance of considering the potential benefits of an activity to the same extent as the potential risks.

- c) has appropriate insurance cover in place.**

In order to meet this indicator, the provider will need to sign and submit a declaration form i.e. a signed statement which confirms the organisation has appropriate insurance cover in place.