

Approaches to the delivery of E2E

**Developing
effective
partnerships**

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Introduction

This document is intended to support managers and practitioners in Entry to Employment (E2E) providers as they develop E2E multi-agency partnerships including local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) and Connexions. Such development of partnerships includes the need to:

- define the E2E cohort of young people
- place E2E within the context of 14–19 learning
- implement action plans from area-wide inspections and take into account the outcomes from Strategic Area Reviews.

This document offers advice and practical suggestions on how partners might develop and sustain E2E partnerships and shape the partnership to allow for the needs of their learners and the local labour market to be met. It suggests to partners how they might:

- recognise the importance of partnerships in developing and delivering E2E
- establish aims and objectives of partnerships
- establish roles and responsibilities
- establish clear routes for communication
- put the learner at the centre of the delivery
- manage the allocation of resources
- support the professional development of staff
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership.

The document acknowledges, through the above aims, the experience of the E2E Pathfinder phase and the first year of national establishment. Each aim is addressed as a 'critical success factor' for partnership working, with appropriate 'steps to achieve' success.

What are the challenges of E2E?

E2E has presented a number of challenges for local LSCs, Connexions, providers and other key stakeholders involved in designing and delivering learning programmes seeking to engage and raise achievement and progression of those young people not directly accessing formal education and training. However, partnership approaches that address the challenges and deliver a fit-for-purpose curriculum offer that engages and sustains NEET (not in education, employment or training) learners in meaningful and beneficial learning experiences have been identified.

Steps to meet the challenges

- Ensure an appropriate membership of partnership groups.
- Decide the responsibility for leading and managing the partnership.
- Engage the membership at an appropriate level for the 'steering group', 'operational group' and 'partnership forum'.
- Establish partnership forums with participation and agreement from all local providers involved in delivering learning.
- Define and agree functions of operational groups that are clear and impact on the local offer.
- Ensure that provider mission statements and Strategic Area Reviews inform the local E2E offer.
- Ensure that local employers engage meaningfully in the planning, design and delivery of the E2E curriculum offer.
- Establish a culture of trust between partnership members.

Partnerships have tackled these key aims and objectives in a variety of ways and with varying degrees of success.

Tip This document should be read and used in conjunction with E2E policy and guidance documents produced by the LSC, particularly the *E2E prospectus* (LSC 2003), the *E2E entitlement curriculum* (LSC 2004a), the *E2E passport* (LSC 2004b), the *E2E pre-apprenticeship offer* (LSC 2004c), and the document on operations guidance and funding requirements for work-based learning (LSC 2004d).

Recognise the importance of partnerships in developing and delivering E2E

Local LSCs, Connexions services, providers, key stakeholders and those organisations with an interest in E2E need to be involved in the collective approach to developing and delivering E2E. This ensures that all stakeholder needs and wants are incorporated in the planning, design and delivery and that programmes offered meet the needs of the local learners and employers and offer suitable progression within and from E2E.

Partnerships that have evaluated the local learners' learning needs and development requirements and the capacity and capability needs of provision to meet these have been successful in engaging young people within the NEET group.

Recognition of the importance of partnerships is fundamental to the whole process of partnership working. The most critical success factors are to :

- have clear objectives
- develop clear lines of communication
- manage resources
- agree responsibility for the learner
- adopt clear roles and responsibilities
- operate impartially
- manage the curriculum
- allow for flexibility.

Have clear objectives

The objectives of the programme need to be clear and there is a need for 'buy-in' from the partner organisations involved in the local partnerships. The objectives also need to be identified and communicated well within these partner organisations at all levels.

Develop clear lines of communication

Whatever the model, and whichever organisation is managing provision, there must be clear and direct lines of communication detailing which organisations are responsible for which areas. This will enable providers to feed into the local LSC's strategic planning cycle, and so influence the planning and funding of overall provision in relation to the number of learning places / starts on the programme.

Manage resources

Sufficient resources need to be devoted to managing the partnerships. Designated E2E lead managers and coordinators may also be required within the partner organisations and not just in the lead body.

Agree responsibility for the learner

A key issue in partnerships is learners not having a clear 'home' within E2E provision, which can result in a lack of clear accountability and responsibility for the learner. Given that communication between partners / agencies may not always be immediate, direct or entirely perfect, one partner should have the responsibility for the learner and management of the programme delivery.

Adopt clear roles and responsibilities

The overall leadership as well as the specific responsibilities need to be clarified, possibly by producing detailed specifications or more general written agreements. This is important within a programme such as E2E where collaborative working rather than competition is the model.

Operate impartially

Where agencies are managing and organising delivery, some of which they are also providing, they must be seen to be impartial. Where organisations both manage and deliver there is a requirement for openness and accountability across all procedures in order to ensure that management and delivery partnerships work effectively.

Manage the curriculum

With the introduction of the E2E Passport and the Entitlement Curriculum it is important that the most appropriate providers are brought in to deliver the programme and support learners. This may involve a wide range of voluntary, community or youth organisations being part of local partnerships.

Allow for flexibility

There is a requirement for innovative approaches to programme design in order to address individual needs as identified in the initial assessment process. Each learner should have an individual learning plan developed to meet their learning and support needs in order to prepare for progression. At the partnership level, local labour market intelligence and skills gaps data from the local LSC can be considered, so that the partnership can respond effectively to identified gaps by introducing new provision and/or extending existing programmes.

Example One E2E delivery partnership has developed a series of partnership documents that outline the :

- overall aim of the E2E curriculum offer
- partnership terms of reference
- partnership structure (membership) and approach
- local background to E2E (local opportunities and market needs)
- agreed protocols underpinning the use of the E2E Passport.

The partnership consists of a strategic group, operational group and the provider forum.

This partnership uses the above information to clarify its purpose and to communicate clear messages not only to the membership but also to a wider group of organisations working with E2E learners.

Its approach is to respond to the needs of the learners and wider local communities, ensuring that the design and delivery of the E2E programmes meets the needs of learners, responds to the opportunities presented by the local labour market and is focused on progression pathways.

Establish aims and objectives of partnerships

A critical success factor in the development of effective partnerships is the establishment of the aims and objectives of the partnership. The five main steps to achieve this are to:

- agree the membership of the partnership
- agree the structure of the partnership
- define the terms of reference
- create a vision
- make it work.

Tip It is apparent from recent research that a 'one size fits all' approach is inappropriate for many partnerships and that the membership needs to reflect the particular aims and objectives of the individual partnership. Many well-established historical partnerships between stakeholders may exist but not all of these will automatically be applicable for E2E.

Example One local LSC had been using partnership working to address strategic local labour market needs and to plan and support learning for both the employed community and individuals outside the labour market. With the national establishment of E2E this partnership working was adapted and refined.

Agree the membership of the partnership

Partnerships have varying perceptions of the appropriate nature and membership of steering groups, operational groups, strategy groups and provider forums. Generally, however, the key partner organisations are seen to include :

- local LSCs
- the Connexions service
- careers partners
- training providers
- Education Business Links Consortia
- Jobcentre Plus
- employer bodies – including employment agencies
- Youth Offending Teams (Yots) – Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP)
- Teenage Pregnancy Units
- Social Services departments
- specialist community organisations.

Agree the structure of the partnership

The following case study provides an example of a structure for partnership working.

Example

An approach identified by a local partnership has been to engage an external organisation to facilitate the partnership at both the strategic and operational level. The consultancy, as an independent and impartial body, engaged representation from key partner organisations covering the entire local LSC area and identified and established an agreed model that would have a strategic steering group and four operational subgroups.

Membership of the *strategic steering group* comprises senior managers from elected providers (FE colleges, private providers and the voluntary sector), and senior staff from the LSC, Connexions and careers service partners, and Education Business Link.

To maximise the effectiveness of the steering group, an overall vision statement with key priority areas was agreed along with some basic ground rules for the working relationships of the group.

Subgroups act as channels for the steering group and feed information from the local delivery and vice versa. The subgroups have specific delivery areas of focus :

- referral and recruitment
- initial assessment and induction
- curriculum development
- accreditation and progression.

Membership of the subgroups was drawn from both providers and partner organisations supporting E2E learners (eg Connexions personal advisers (PAs) and Yot staff at operational level).

The responsibility of the subgroups is to consider the operational delivery and identify key tasks to achieve within the partnership.

An example of what the subgroups considered is given in Appendix 1. These example plans were agreed and implemented by each subgroup, with outcomes and implications discussed and reviewed within the steering group.

Clear strategic direction, as perceived by many providers and partners, originates from the local steering group and its role has been to charge the operational groups with objective-based research to resolve local delivery issues.

Define the terms of reference

Terms of reference provide a formal framework for the scope and context within which the partnership can work. They will vary depending on the maturity of the partnership and the particular focus that has been adopted locally.

Example

One partnership revised its terms of reference to align with the development achieved within the partnership. Its terms of reference are to :

- ensure that clear lines of communication exist between all providers and partners
- develop breadth of provision across the partnership, identifying current sector skills gaps within the geographical area, and to work together to broaden provision as identified by key stakeholders and the learners' needs, across the three E2E learning strands
- develop a clear entitlement for all learners that encompasses accredited and non-accredited learning and a process for recognising learner achievement
- identify clear and appropriate progression opportunities for the learners across the partnership
- develop an effective marketing strategy in accordance with LSC National Office and the local LSC requirements
- liaise closely with Connexions offices and establish clear communication pathways and procedures
- provide a summary of the progression of the group to the strategic group in accordance with the established calendar of meetings
- continue with the development of employer collaboration and partnerships, targeting specific companies where needs for employment opportunities / work placements are required within the region
- adopt a standardised approach to quality assurance and audit procedures across the partnership
- develop and maintain an effective management information system (MIS), forwarding relevant information on to the strategic group and to the LSC.

Create a vision

An overall vision statement will help focus and steer the work of the partnership. A clearly defined vision, agreed by all, will provide a process to move from a strategic level to an operational level.

Example The strategic steering group of one local partnership identified an overall vision statement along with key priority areas agreed by the wider partnership. These were supported by some basic ‘ground rules’ that stakeholders agreed as core values and reflected the aims of the partnership.

Vision statement

To work together in an effective partnership to ensure delivery of a quality learning experience for the young people which will prepare them for their adult and working life.

Ground rules

The ground rules below set in context the working environment of the steering group, based on the ethos and values of the E2E programme. The ground rules for the partners’ working relationships are :

- to be open and honest
- to be prepared to contribute and listen
- to have the learner as the focus
- to be constructive
- to always treat each other with mutual respect.

Each of these rules will be implicit in the work of the steering group and the wider partnership as it develops.

Aims

The main aims of the steering group are :

- to ensure the engagement of key strategic partners and stakeholders
- to ensure the partnership works together effectively
- to provide the LSC with the strategic influence, specialist guidance and advice needed for the successful implementation of the E2E programme
- to ensure regular, qualitative communication of purposes, processes, outcomes and proposals to all key players
- to facilitate synergy with other existing partnerships in the area.

Set priorities

In order to achieve the aims listed above, the steering group has set itself a series of ‘Priorities for action’, which will guide the activity of the group over its period of establishment and initial working. These actions will, from time to time, be updated and prioritised. The initial priorities are set out in Appendix 2.

Example One partnership identified as its vision statement the series of strategic objectives listed below.

Strategic objectives

We will support each other to meet our joint strategic objectives :

- to reduce by 10% those young people who are not engaged in education or training [NEET group]
- to raise and widen participation of 16–19 year olds in quality assured education or training
- to raise levels of basic skills
- to develop links with schools on the 14–19 agenda (work-related curriculum)
- to ensure equality of opportunity.

Make it work

Partnerships have invested considerable resources to facilitate collaborative approaches. E2E poses a challenge to providers, in particular, to work in partnership with one another in order to deliver a learner-led and flexible programme. This requires effective management of changes to and within these organisations' values and cultures.

Clarifying the full curriculum offer across the partnership can help in providing access to learning opportunities that particular learners require which is not being delivered by the provider managing the learners' E2E programme. Partnerships with strong leadership have identified the full curriculum offer across the partnership and the processes to engage subcontractors in meeting this demand.

Example *Secondments* – Within one local partnership a member of staff was seconded from the LSC to the Connexions service to support the establishment of the partnership and the creation of partnership agreements and a code of practice between stakeholders. Their role involved developing common practice and monitoring the partnership's effectiveness. Close working between two key organisations improved both communication and understanding of the need to change practice.

Example *Developing partnership arrangements* – One local partnership engaged external consultants to manage the development of the partnership. The consultants facilitated the identification and setting of clear objectives with the partnership as a whole at the initial partnership meeting. These objectives are reviewed to keep the focus on current local needs.

Example *Clear communication* – One local partnership felt the national E2E objectives were not clear and needed communicating more specifically to reduce local partnerships' problems. It felt this needed to be addressed as a priority locally to ensure clarity and consistency with E2E delivery.

The Adult Learning Inspectorate's Common Inspection Framework (CIF) emphasises the importance of partnership working. Providers need to consider the implications of the relevant questions in the CIF when planning the E2E offer and the implications to the learner of providers working in isolation. This is particularly relevant when delivering learning across the three core strands and in engaging organisations to compliment the curriculum offer.

Example The Adult Learning Inspectorate's Common Inspection Framework (ALI 2001) judges the extent to which :

partnerships with other providers and relevant agencies involved in advice and guidance are effective

(Question 6)

clear direction is given through strategic objectives, targets and values that are fully understood by staff, including subcontractors and work placement providers.

(Question 7)

Establish roles and responsibilities

Both the Adult Learning Inspectorate's (ALI) review of the Pathfinder phase of E2E and the commissioned evaluation of the Pathfinder phase and first period of national establishment identified that within some partnerships the roles and responsibilities of different organisations were unclear. As national establishment has progressed, partnerships have reviewed their roles and defined responsibilities for the learners at all the key stages while on the E2E programme.

A considerable number of providers are now addressing roles and responsibilities within their partnership agreements and seeking to formalise these across all organisations managing E2E referral, recruitment, assessment, delivery and accreditation processes.

What should agreements for roles and responsibilities include?

- Who is involved – key staff in organisation?
- How are they involved?
- What is required?
- By when do objectives need to be achieved?
- How is the success of achieved objectives measured?
- Levels of responsibility?
- Accountability?

How should they be agreed?

- By the membership of the partnership.
- Consensus.
- Reviewed by partnership (correct level).
- Individually and collectively.

Appendix 3 provides a useful checklist for the above.

Steps to achieve agreements

- Identify clear roles and responsibilities for partners.
- Define the roles and responsibilities and protocols.

Example The following are examples of roles and responsibilities produced at local level for use for the personal advisers and other key members of the partnership interfacing with the young person. APIR = assessment, planning, implementation and review, LA = link adviser, PA = personal adviser, YP = young person.

Personal advisers

- Where appropriate the referral form should be accompanied by any assessment paperwork that has already been undertaken (from April 2004 this will be APIR paperwork). Assessments should not be duplicated during the initial assessment period.
- The PA may take part in any further assessments but, if not, should be made aware of the results of these.
- The E2E programme should be signed off by the PA responsible. This can be done by the PA visiting the YP to sign or by the programme being faxed or sent to the PA. (If there are any queries then the PA may have to speak to the YP first.) The PA may also agree with the LA to sign on their behalf, having seen the programme. This should be noted on any paperwork and on the programme itself.
- If the PA does not agree with what is in the programme, then an appointment should be made to see the YP and the training provider at the earliest opportunity.
- The PA is the responsible person for the YP they have referred. However, they may agree with another PA that it is more appropriate for them to become the lead PA. Where there is uncertainty, they should refer to a team leader for a decision.
- Once the responsible PA has been informed by the LA that their young person is currently attending E2E, the PA must contact and follow up the young person within two weeks of being informed.
- It is not the responsibility of the PA to attend every review for their YP. The LA or training supplier key worker should alert them if there are issues that would require their attendance. However, the PA should also follow up with the YP after reviews to check on progress.
- An agreement may be made for the LA to attend a review on the PA's behalf, if appropriate.
- The assigned PA is responsible for any further follow-up.

Link adviser

- The LA will monitor starters, those dropping out and participants. They are responsible for alerting the responsible PA to changes in circumstance of young people on the programme.
- LAs will take responsibility for starters who have self-referred or been referred by other agencies.

Self-referrals and referrals from other agencies

Establish which agency made the referral of the young person, if appropriate.

If the responsible PA (centre contact) is in the same area team as the LA, the LA should alert that responsible PA who will then become the YP's responsible PA. The PA should then follow up the YP as shown in 'responsibilities of PAs'. In some circumstances, the PA may be the key worker from a Connexions partnership agency.

If the responsible PA (centre contact) is in a different area team than the LA, the LA should alert one of the team leaders from that area. The team leader will then allocate a responsible PA who should then follow up the YP as shown in 'responsibilities of PAs'.

- The LA may take on the case of a YP who has previously been on the caseload of another PA if this is agreed.
- The LA should be the contact between the training provider and other Connexions staff. This contact will involve:
 - confirming the partnership agreement with the training provider
 - obtaining regular lists of all young people taking part in the E2E programme and checking that these young people are linked up to a PA in order to ensure that no young people 'slip through the net'
 - informing the training provider about who is the responsible PA for each young person
 - taking up any issues / difficulties and either resolving these with Connexions staff or training providers directly, or referring to a team leader / area manager / E2E coordinator.
- The LA will be the responsible PA in the case of an emergency.
- The LA will be the main link with the E2E coordinator and will provide feedback to them on issues that need addressing or areas for development.

Referrals from out of county

The LA will be responsible for identifying young people who have come from out of county. The above will then apply.

Identifying clear roles and responsibilities for partners

Roles and responsibilities should be agreed at both strategic and operational levels and communicated to the wider partnership. It is essential for these roles and responsibilities to be agreed by all partners.

When formalising the roles and responsibilities within the partnership, the key processes experienced by the learner need to be identified and the organisations' responsibilities for the processes clarified.

Defining the roles and responsibilities and protocols

Where roles and responsibilities have not been clearly defined within the partnership at strategic level, providers, Connexions offices and other agencies have generated protocols and working practices to ensure consistency. These protocols identify specific roles and responsibilities and cover some of the following key activities :

- the process for Connexions referrals, other agency referrals and self-referrals
- establishing the link PA for a specific provider
- the training provider sharing learner information with the referral provider (ie initial assessment (IA), reviews, E2E Passport)
- information- and data-sharing requirements: IA, reviews etc
- use of the APIR framework and IA tools and outcomes from them
- agreement of the PA's schedule for visiting the provider to agree and sign E2E programmes, reviews and 'moving on plan'
- tripartite reviews – learner, PA and provider
- PA involvement with provider in planning and support for learner progression out from E2E
- providing additional learning support.

Establish clear routes for communication

As E2E has firmly placed the learner at the centre of the delivery, there is now an even greater need to establish what information needs to be gathered, stored and shared within the partnership to support the learner-centred approach. Partners who have not historically shared information may find this difficult as individual organisations gather and store data for their own needs. Effective E2E delivery requires a common collection method that allows providers to share, compare and contrast information from all the key stages a learner experiences while on an E2E programme.

What learner information needs to be communicated?

Learners starting on an E2E programme may have experienced threshold assessments or the like at some point in their life. The need to identify the outcomes and share this with the new organisation has been established in the guidance for the E2E Passport, and ensuring the right information follows the learner at the appropriate time is essential in guaranteeing a positive experience for the learner. Avoiding duplication of assessment activities can be addressed through partners agreeing strategies to ensure partners learn to rely on each other's assessment data.

Examples of some of the types of information to be shared include:

- initial assessment outcomes
- learning styles
- criminal incidents
- housing needs
- previous learning experiences.

What information needs to be communicated to sustain E2E partnerships ?

The reliance of partners on providing and sharing information and data for their local communities and economies supports the decision-making process and ensures that the supply of learning not only meets learners' needs but also facilitates successful progression and achievement. Clear leadership within the local learning partnerships and provider communities will use the outcomes of Strategic Area Reviews and provider mission statements among other things to inform learning and development provision. Also, when local Connexions services and their partners participate in the activity to provide NEET data and outreach work this may provide innovative techniques to penetrate the hardest to reach groups.

Steps to achieve the establishment of clear routes for communication fall into two broad categories of:

- facilitating information sharing
- building on existing practice.

Facilitating information sharing

Monitoring the partnership's delivery will require the collection of data and this historically has been the responsibility of the provider and the local LSC in isolation. Providers have a responsibility to collect data to monitor their delivery, evaluate performance and continuously improve the product. Providers, Connexions services and subcontractors that compare and contrast their data are able to identify the impact that the delivery has on the learners' progression and achievement.

Use of these outcomes can identify what is working well and what potentially can be developed to improve the learners' experience. Having clear data-sharing protocols and common collection techniques will ease this process and establish both internal and external benchmarks to draw comparisons.

Example

A 'brokerage' system – Some providers feel that to help the flow of information about the learner requires specified individuals tasked with the responsibility of gathering, managing and distributing information on the learner.

A pilot 'brokerage' system where key personnel work between clusters of providers and other organisations seems to work well. This resource has not yet been fully evaluated.

Example *Establish working group within partnership to manage curriculum offer –* The E2E subgroup of a partnership undertook a mapping exercise to identify the nature and extent of learning across the county. All providers are part of this subgroup and attend meetings, review findings and agree activities. Minutes of meetings are circulated to all providers within the local LSC area.

Example *Data-sharing protocols –* One specific LSC has an agreement with Connexions that within the care leaving teams and Yots there are dedicated PAs, in addition to the PAs within the agency. During the four-week review, case conferences are held and information is shared.

For young offenders, the LSC has agreed with the ISSP a quota of E2E places representing about half the ISSP cohort. They have agreed the respective roles of the designated E2E provider and the ISSP officer with regard to initial assessment, information sharing, learner support and staff involved in reviews.

The learners are placed with an employer only following a case conference, and will remain tagged.

The LSC insists on all relevant information being available, on the grounds that if the learner is not prepared to share information about him or herself, he or she is not ready for employment. The LSC is also collaborating with the local Young Offenders' Institution, whereby young people are assessed three months before their release, leading to day release on an E2E programme of vocational learning at a local FE college.

Building on existing practice

Providers delivering within the partnership need to :

- communicate the full curriculum offer to Connexions service PAs to inform the referral process and identify the suitability of the organisation to meet needs
- encourage Connexions offices within the local partnership to identify link PAs for specific providers who not only link with the provider but also stay with the learner while they require additional support and guidance
- develop the key workers within the provider partnership with the skills for effective planning of learning, reviewing and action planning
- develop the key worker's role with the employer and /or learning institutions and ensure adequate time is available so that the key worker can accompany the young person to work tasters, placements and learning tasters in the workplace and in learning organisations
- ensure effective completion of the E2E Passport by all members within the partnership, with the partnership monitoring and evaluating its effective use
- ensure that PA roles and responsibilities are clear
- establish a clear plan of dates when PAs will be in E2E provider centres so that learners, PAs and key workers can all be involved in the signing of E2E programmes, undertaking reviews (if required) and planning the support required for the 'moving on' document.

Put the learner at the centre of the delivery

The E2E Learning Framework (LSC 2002) places great reliance on the effective impact of partnership involvement, and in particular has regard to the eight key principles of Connexions, namely:

- raising aspirations
- meeting individual need
- taking account of young people's views
- inclusion – keeping young people within education and training
- partnership of agencies
- community involvement
- extending opportunity and equality of opportunity
- evidence-based practice.

These core values must guide the planning, implementation and evaluation of E2E and, ideally, be incorporated into the quality assurance processes. The core values set the tone for building effective relationships between young people and those who support them, and for inter-agency relationships.

These principles need to focus on the individual learner and reinforce the requirement to put the learner at the centre of the planning, design and delivery of E2E. Partnerships need to identify how such principles can be established and the mechanisms to encourage providers, subcontractors and other stakeholders to consider the demand rather than the supply-led model.

The E2E Passport was developed and released to partnerships in March 2004 and its use became mandatory on 1 June 2004 (LSC 2004b). The Passport presents a number of issues for members of local partnerships. The completion of this documentation is not in itself an indication of putting the learner at the centre; what is vital is that all the components mentioned above are included and incorporated into all the Passport documents.

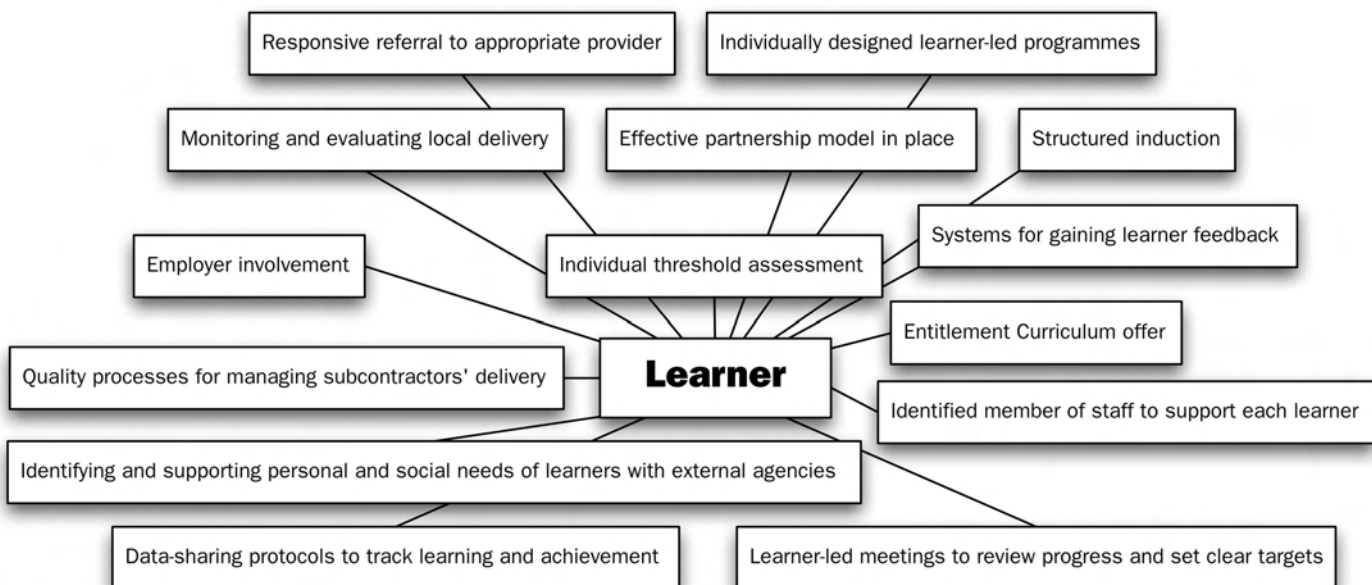
The involvement and inclusion of the learner in all learner-facing processes (ie referral, initial assessment, induction, E2E programme completion, placement etc) needs to have the learners' active participation and not be perceived as something done to them. Learners who are placed with subcontractors or associated providers need, for example, to have planned coherent learning programmes that are well informed and agreed by the learner. The role of the key worker in coordinating learning, placements and reviews is essential to sustain the interest of the learner and to identify and celebrate learner achievement and progression while on the programme.

What are the challenges ?

- Clarifying partnership members' roles and responsibilities for the learner throughout the learning cycle.
- Managing the consistent use, quality and impact of the Passport documentation to identify and plan learning.
- Agreeing inter-agency working practice to support learners' personal, social and learning needs.
- Sharing information and data on learner achievement and progression.
- Maintaining flexibility through roll-on, roll-off provision.
- Responding to individual learners' evolving needs.
- Understanding the diversity of the local population and the local labour market requirements.
- Providing sufficient capacity so that all eligible learners have early access to the Entitlement Curriculum offer.

The first step to achieve the placement of the learner at the centre of delivery is to ask what is required at the starting point (see Figure 1). Then subsequent steps to achieve this are encompassed within ongoing supporting collaboration to put the learner at the centre.

Figure 1. Requirements for the starting point



Example *Match-making routes* – One LSC is pursuing two ‘match-making’ routes. One is through the consortium of Education Business Partnerships (EBPs) to match E2E learners to placements, with the EBPs carrying out workplace risk assessments and other practicalities. The other is through a Connexions careers guidance company that is very proactive with employers and has a good careers database of current vacancies, job descriptions and individuals seeking work placements.

The LSC is aiming to extend that database across a number of boroughs to the other guidance companies to encourage more matching of E2E learners to job opportunities.

Example *Mentoring schemes to meet learners’ needs* – One provider used LSC development funds to engage mentors to support the E2E learners and address severe barriers to learning and progression. The mentor meets with the learner on a weekly basis to address what has been achieved over the previous week and what has been agreed with the key worker to achieve for the following week. They discuss the learners’ perceptions on their own learning and barriers to this and identify ways of addressing these barriers.

The mentor builds a strong relationship with the learner and is available for discussion on the phone if urgent problems arise and the learner needs support in placement or in the centre.

Regular meetings between the mentors, key workers and teaching staff, and placement staff ensure information on specific learners is discussed and support strategies are adopted.

Example *Voice of the learner* – One provider has created a forum to communicate information from partners and provider to learners and vice versa. Learners are encouraged to actively monitor and evaluate their E2E programmes. The ‘Voice of the learner’ forum allows the young people to take some responsibility for the design and delivery of their E2E programme and the placements and work tasters they undertake.

The elected learners meet on a monthly basis in a semi-formal environment and follow pre-agreed agenda items. They report on the outcomes of the meetings to the provider’s manager through minutes of meetings, presentations and short reports. The outcomes are used by the provider partnership to inform future design and delivery changes.

Supporting ongoing collaboration

The following were identified as ways of building on existing practice in order to support ongoing collaboration.

- Identify and share practice within the partnership and with other partnerships outside the local area.
- Develop benchmarks to monitor and evaluate performance.
- Support provider capacity to engage in collaborative delivery. Develop models for providers to adapt to support the subcontracting of learning and facilitate the seamless transition of one provider's learning to another. Develop staff competencies in planning, reviewing and accrediting non-accredited learning.
- Create good practice networks of providers to share schemes of work, session plans and learning materials.
- Share premises and develop joint provision.
- Identify shared ownership and responsibility for common quality assurance procedures.
- Identify a common system to 'risk assess' a young person who may possibly be at higher risk of failing within a learning or employment experience, perhaps using the four indicators identified within the APIR framework. Ensure this activity occurs for all self-referrals and other agency referrals. Allocate sufficient resources to support the young person through periods of instability or uncertainty.
- Establish key support staff within the partnership to 'move' with the learner from one learning centre to another and address challenges and barriers before a young person becomes disengaged from learning.

Manage the allocation of resources

What are the challenges ?

- Who has responsibility for funding the partnership?
- How do partnerships achieve value-added?
- Who monitors and evaluates the resources?

Tip Some of the key good practice was seen within partnerships that already had a partnership approach to identification and bidding for additional funds to address capacity and capability issues of providers and their staff.

Steps to achieve the management of resources allocation start with identifying and implementing the most appropriate approach, which builds on existing practice.

Identifying and implementing the appropriate approach

Funding for the E2E offer has been progressive and more learner focused than previous provision, and there have been a variety of funding models adopted by local LSCs. This has introduced quite complicated funding chains and management issues. Development funds have been allocated differently, with some local LSCs funding the partnership while others still fund the provider in isolation.

Example *Funding additional support* – One partnership identifies funding streams for cross-county use and bids in partnership for additional funds.

These funds are used to :

- link with local authority learning centres to address outreach issues
- reduce the learner / staff ratio to 3:4 (staff:learner)
- set up provider networks to share practice
- enable the same PA to remain with the learner throughout, from 13 to 19 years of age
- engage mentors to support placements, work experience and progression.

Funding is secured from the local LSC.

Additional funding is secured from the :

- Regional Development Agency
- Single Regeneration Budget
- European Social Fund
- Health Authority Drug and Alcohol Action Team
- Local Intervention and Development Fund.

Example *Funding partnership managers* – One partnership set up these positions, which are funded via the local LSC. The partnership managers' role is to attend all meetings except the 16–18 Participation Committee and 16+ Transition Group. They report to lead providers and borough steering groups.

They are responsible for finding new provision as identified by the young people, steering group and PAs. They are also a first point of contact for minor /local issues between providers and Connexions staff.

Example *E2E development managers* – These posts involved secondments to Connexions, paid for by the local LSC. The development managers attend all E2E meetings and chair several of them.

They help ensure a consistent message, two-way communication with groups, and raising of issues at appropriate groups. They provide a first point of contact for anyone within the Connexions service and deal with issues, concerns, lack of provision, unsuitable provision, eligibility and views of young people.

They are also a first point of contact for the local LSC, dealing with joint planning and development issues, concerns regarding the Connexions or PA role within E2E, non-completion / non-compliance of the Passport and unresolved issues with young people.

Building on existing practice

- Obtain consensus within the partnership as to who leads and manages the financial restraints.
- Apply value-for-money principles to activities.
- Generate a culture of cooperation not competition.
- Play to the membership's strengths.
- Identify a lead manager across the partnership to coordinate.

Support the professional development of staff

In the Skills Strategy (DfES 2003) one of the five key areas for action was identified as to:

...make colleges and training providers more responsive to employers' and learners' needs.

To achieve this, and to address the additional capacity and capability requirements on staff, a considerable investment by partnerships and individual organisations will be needed.

What are the challenges ?

- Finding qualified and experienced staff to deliver flexible learning.
- Meeting the sector's requirements for qualified basic skills teaching.
- Organising joint staff training within the partnership.
- Retaining staff expertise within the partnership.
- Defining responsibility for funding staff development.

Requirements for the starting point

- Identify and agree staff competencies for key processes within E2E.
- Undertake needs analysis for staff competencies for all stakeholders.
- Plan and deliver effective staff development.
- Ensure partners' participation in continuing professional development.
- Prioritise the development.
- Apply value-for-money principles to funding the professional development of staff across the partnership.

Since E2E's national launch a considerable amount of time and resources has been invested in staff within E2E partnerships; the examples below identify some ways this has worked.

Research and development undertaken by the Standards Unit has resulted in three key outputs:

- *Tutor guidance* – Tutor guidance to support the improvement in initial assessment of personal and social skills and an interactive CD-ROM showing tutors and learners engaged in adapted activities.
- *Activities for learners* – A series of activities with guidance and materials for tutors and learners to complete during the initial assessment of personal and social skills and supporting material containing session plans and resources that can be adapted for tutor delivery.
- *Continuing professional development* – Guidance for tutors for the four key stages of observation and feedback processes, flowcharting techniques, activities and resources. The guidance contains session plans and resources that can be adapted for tutor delivery.

Example *Collaborative working* – One London LSC was using the APIR framework as the basis for collaborative working between providers and Connexions. To ensure that providers work seamlessly and without duplication, the LSC arranged for providers to undertake APIR training with Connexions PAs.

Example *Staff development* – One partnership has a scheme in place to train provider staff with Connexions PA skills in order to deal with shortfalls and to integrate more highly trained people within organisations. The programme includes training in the use of the Rikter-scale and the APIR framework and an introduction to the Connexions service, and can lead eventually to the PA Diploma.

Training staff employed within the partnership are involved in the initial assessment training being piloted through the Standards Unit and work towards an NVQ unit on initial assessment from the Training and Development suite.

Example *Identification of employer skills needs* – One provider uses training needs analysis to identify the skills needs with its employer and matches these against learner profiles. Using this approach enables suitable tasters, placements or employment opportunities to be identified that provide the best match for E2E learners and apprenticeships.

Building on existing practice

- Set up a buddy system for staff support.
- Share resources across the partnership.
- Organise provider visits to share practice and see good practice in action.

Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership

The E2E Learning Framework (LSC 2002) indicates that partnerships should monitor the programme and evaluate its effectiveness, and identifies two distinct responsibilities. First, the partnership needs to make possible the collection of learner progression and achievement data in order to evaluate local performance of E2E. Second, the partnership needs to monitor its own effectiveness in driving the E2E offer.

What are the challenges ?

- Planning an outline E2E evaluation instrument that can be adapted and customised for use in the partnership and provider context.
- Planning mechanisms to collect learner feedback and perceptions.
- Reducing bureaucracy in order to maintain innovation.
- Bringing diverse practice together in partnership.
- Ensuring clear leadership within the partnership.
- Sharing confidential learner / provider information.
- Meeting ALI inspection requirements.

How these challenges are met varies considerably and with varying impact on the quality of the provision. The thematic reports collated by ALI indicate that there are good partnership working practices within E2E with good management of learner groups and learning resources. However, the reports also highlight inconsistencies in the sharing of good practice and the limited involvement of employers in the planning and design and participation of placements, along with the view that learning plans are unchallenging and that review processes are ineffective and lack sufficient targets.

Partnerships can address these issues through developing evaluation instruments that check and measure the key learner processes and by establishing monitoring protocols for each provider individually and the partnership as a whole. These would allow the impact to be measured and shortfalls to be rectified through development and capability building.

Requirements for the starting point

- Have clearly defined processes and measures.
- Establish a common quality assurance process across the partnership.
- Establish a protocol for sharing confidential information.
- Establish clarity of audit procedures across the partnership.
- Involve all providers and subcontractors in the audit and findings.
- Make sure that accountability is built into the delivery model.

Example *Evaluating performance* – Within one partnership the local LSC collates all performance data for the partnership providers and reports on this each quarter. This information forms a short report identifying benchmarks against national data and internal comparisons between providers. The report considers the following key measures :

- participation (starts) – by provider, the partnership as a whole and the national figures
- overall performance – in learning, early leavers and positive progression (%)
- early leavers – numbers and reasons for leaving early
- positive progression – destinations
- conclusions and recommendations to be considered by the partnership.

This partnership reports on key headlines and success stories, and what is working well, in its monthly publication, which is distributed to stakeholders.

Example

Secondment – Within one partnership a member of staff was seconded from the LSC to the Connexions service to facilitate the roll-out of E2E. This involved the sharing of practice and supporting the Connexions service in planning systems to ensure a seamless national roll-out. Once this had been achieved, they implemented the development work, building capabilities with the key staff interfacing with learners.

A key ongoing role was to review the local NEET figures and to draw comparison with referral rates to E2E by Connexions offices. It also involved the review of link PAs and how they worked with providers, including observations of initial assessment. Feedback was also sought from young people participating on E2E in order to inform these reviews. Feedback gathered from Connexions managers, PAs and providers was gathered to supply information for the monthly report to the steering group.

Building on existing practice

- Start to evaluate the partnerships externally to identify models of delivery and their effectiveness.
- Establish an effective learner support system.
- Look at messages learnt from New Deal Unit of Delivery (UoD) establishment, practice, self-assessment and inspection.
- Learn from the evaluations and act on the findings.

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Appendix 1. Establishing aims and objectives of partnerships : a focus on elements of the E2E programme

E2E work plan – initial assessment and induction

Task	Ranking	Activity	Completed date	Progress against action
<i>Examples</i>				
Organise joint training events with Connexions, careers companies and providers (cross-cutting issues)				
Investigate and review a range of initial assessment (IA) tools and sources of support available				
Create workable mechanisms and protocols for learner data to be shared and used within the partnership (cross-cutting issues)				
Agree common IA tools and techniques				
Design streamlined systems to ensure that data is captured only once and is not lost				
Clarify relationships between Connexions and providers				
Show clearly the difference in function between broad assessments of learning needs and more specific techniques of screening				

E2E work plan – curriculum development

Task	Ranking	Activity	Completed date	Progress against action
<i>Examples</i>				
Review local provision and ensure all partners are familiar with the partnership's curriculum offer				
Decide which delivery options can be offered for specific learning components				
Consider how to source placements and tasters – particularly in the context of identified skills shortages				
Ensure that learners' programmes include a variety of contexts and locations and relate to identified learning styles				
Develop flexibility within the core learning components				
Organise joint training events with Connexions, careers companies and providers (cross-cutting issues)				
Create workable mechanisms and protocols for learner data to be shared and used within the partnership (cross-cutting issues)				

E2E work plan – accreditation and progression

Task	Ranking	Activity	Completed date	Progress against action
<i>Examples</i>				
Agree a common method across the partnership for recording achievement				
Develop methods to recognise and record non-accredited routes				
Agree accredited personal and social development qualifications for learners				
Create systems to keep accreditation and assessments in line with employment opportunities through contact with employers				
Create workable mechanisms and protocols for learner data to be shared and used within the partnership (cross-cutting issues)				
Organise joint training events with Connexions, careers companies and providers (cross-cutting issues)				

Appendix 2. Practical steps to facilitate partnership working

To facilitate partnership working the following practical steps will be undertaken :

Priority area	Practical steps
Agree vision statement, terms of reference and ground rules of steering group	Remove any barriers by agreeing shared transparent working practices Agree meeting procedures
Agree roles and responsibilities of steering group members	Agree roles of all members and areas of responsibility Agree communication channels Build in a process for reviewing consistency, coherence and integration across the partnership Ensure that steering group meetings are used to innovate and share good practice

Operational issues

To make recommendations for an operational structure for the smooth delivery of the programme including the transitional period, the following practical steps will be undertaken :

Priority area	Practical steps
Agree roles and responsibilities of operational subgroups	Agree make-up and membership of each operational subgroup Agree roles and responsibilities Propose chairs of subgroups Agree terms of reference and meeting procedures Agree communication channels between steering group and subgroups

Specialist input

To advise and offer specialist input on operational guidance the following practical steps will be undertaken :

Priority area	Practical steps
Determine areas of expertise within the steering group	Volunteer to chair operational subgroups Offer specialist input to the development of a partnership / provider programme of training and staff development

Facilitating partnership

To facilitate synergy with existing partnerships and other stakeholders in the area (eg learning partnerships, employers, Jobcentre Plus) the following practical steps will be undertaken :

Priority area	Practical steps
Facilitate synergy with a wider partnership membership	Determine where steering group members can facilitate access to other stakeholders Ensure all stakeholders and key contacts are kept informed about progress of the E2E partnership Ensure all stakeholders and key contacts have an opportunity to input to the development of the E2E programme

Appendix 3. Roles and responsibilities – checklist for action

What needs to be achieved	Action
Have clear roles and responsibilities been identified for partners?	
Have information-sharing protocols been established and agreed?	
Establish a working group within the partnership to manage the curriculum offer	
Who will identify and manage the support needs for providers' staff?	
How will the provider capacity and capability to deliver curriculum offer be agreed?	
Identification of specialised provision to support delivery of special needs	
Draw up a Partnership Agreement to include: vision, roles and responsibilities, terms of reference, key priorities	
Agree frequency of meetings and terms of reference for these	
Develop and promote an effective and coherent marketing strategy for E2E programme delivered locally	
Establish a shared management information system to collect, monitor and evaluate local delivery	