



Skills and Training Services (STS)

Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Strategy and Framework 2024/25

Version Control Sheet

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Approval

Name	Job Role	Date	Signature
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Change Control

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Introduction

The fundamental purpose of STS is captured in the Intent, Mission and the Values that underpin everything we do.

The purpose of this Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Strategy and framework is to outline the overall Quality and Performance Framework to assist and support STS in achieving its Vision.

Intent

Investing to create a best-in-class skills and training business to meet the needs and deliver the ambitions of government, authorities, communities, businesses, and citizens. This is a key investment priority for Serco in the UK.

We aim to not just be a best-in-class training provider but to also provide renowned services and solutions to our partners.

Mission and Serco Values

Formed in October 2023 and driven by place, need and ambition we will deliver innovative, responsive, and trusted skills, training and services that positively impact government, business, communities, and citizens.



Strategic Outcomes

Continuous monitoring will allow STS to evaluate its progress. Application of the Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Framework will result in:

- Evidence of continued improvements of high levels of achievement.
- Evidence of learners and apprentices achieving the highest grades they are capable of.
- Evidence of high numbers of learners and apprentices reaching their intended next steps and progressing to positive destinations.
- Evidence of learners and apprentices developing substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to lead successful lives, alongside achieving their qualifications.
- Evidence of successful employer engagement, and skills market intelligence, in the development of a high-quality curriculum that is relevant, purposeful and reflects the needs of employers and the economy.
- Evidence of employers enhancing the curriculum, ensuring that cutting edge skills needed by employers are identified and effectively embedded within delivery.
- Evidence of reducing any discernible achievement gaps, addressing social inequalities and ensuring the best opportunity for all individuals.

Continuous Improvement Strategy

The Continuous Improvement Strategy that will:

- Provide a Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Framework which will support the development of excellent provision across the curriculum and customer facing business across STS, ensuring all learners benefit high quality teaching and learning.
 - Ensure timely and effective intervention and support for areas of underperformance utilising STS's Requiring Improvement Process.
 - Set and monitor aspirational and challenging targets through agreed KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for the whole of STS, including types of provision and customer facing activity.
 - Adhere to a planned programme of support and challenge deep dive activities and quality hygiene checks as detailed within the Continuous improvement and Quality Assurance Calendar to continuously improve the quality of teaching and learning and assure compliance.
 - Promote the sharing of identified good practice and continuous improvement strategies across the business, to continuously improve teaching and learning.
 - Provide an efficient and effective examination service ensuring that student achievement is collated and recorded in a timely manner.
 - Ensure effective response to external quality monitoring agencies and external awarding body verification activities.
 - Effectively and accurately measure in-year performance, ensuring leaders and managers have access to timely, accurate and complete information on learner progress.
 - Robust quality assurance processes are in place to ensure equality of opportunity to reduce any achievement gaps for disadvantaged learners and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
 - Effectively capture, analyse and respond to learner, apprentice and employer feedback to proactively support continuous improvement activities.
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Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Framework

The Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Framework sets out how STS will ensure improving and consistently high-quality provision and customer facing business activity:

- Ensuring robust processes and for improving, assessing and monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Ensuring a timely, accurate and robust annual self-assessment report, leading to the development and implementation of clear, focused and timely continuous improvement plan (CIP).
- Quarterly Performance Review Boards of all relevant key performance indicators and progress against improvement planning activities as documented on the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP).
- Maintaining up to date key quality policies and procedures to deliver the commitments of the Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Framework.
- Develop and implement a Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Calendar which sets out key dates for monitoring activities and measuring in-year progress against quality improvement plans and key performance indicators.
- Frequent and timely consultation with customers, employers, learners, apprentices and staff to inform improvement strategies, levels of impact and satisfaction.
- Frequent and effective training and skills updating for all staff regarding continuous improvement and quality processes and standards.
- Providing timely and accurate management reports on all aspects of the Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Framework to the Senior Leadership Team, Advisor Board and Staff.
- Maintaining rigorous quality assurance arrangements which provide objective assessments of the quality of provision, and which facilitate an open and transparent accounting for performance.
- Ensure there are no discernible achievement gaps in relation to equality, ensuring the best opportunity for all individuals.

Ensure timely and effective intervention and support for areas of underperformance by:

- Identify quickly areas of underperforming provision through the regular monitoring of in-year performance and continuous self-assessment activity.
- Supporting managers and staff in implementing improvement and intervention strategies.
- Ensuring sharing and adopting of good practice across STS.
- The timely and regular review of the Quality Improvement Plan as detailed in the Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Calendar.

Set and monitor ambitious and challenging targets for agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by:

- Monitor and report on agreed targets for achievement and retention, high grades, destinations, attendance, the quality of teaching and learning, and customer, learner and employer satisfaction and previous performance.
- Monitor and report on agreed KPIs for customer and learner facing business activity.
- Ensuring valid and accurate data to support the above.

Adhere to a planned programme of audits via support and challenge activities and continuous improvement quality assurance hygiene checks by:

- Agreeing a Deep Dive cycle, informed by need and at least annual, as documented on the Quality Calendar encompassing the accurate assessment of the quality of teaching and learning, effectiveness of learner and apprentice target setting, feedback, marking and progress reviews to support progress and positive outcomes.
- Engaging with external agencies to provide external validation, review and audit if required.

Cultivate and assure consistently excellent teaching and learning experiences, promoting the sharing of identified good practice and continuous improvement strategies across STS by:

- Ensuring examples of good practice are identified, celebrated and promoted across STS, through the delivery of a robust and effective quality improvement plan.
- Ensuring that the Teaching, Training and Coaching Framework is effectively launched.
- Ensuring timely support is provided where underperformance is identified including effective intervention strategies.

Provide an efficient and effective examination service by:

- Ensuring all learners and apprentices are registered with the appropriate awarding body in a timely and accurate manner.
- The effective scheduling of all paper based and online examinations.
- Ensuring all examinations and assessment practices are carried out in line with awarding body and Joint Council Requirements and Guidelines.
- Ensuring all results are recorded on STS systems in an efficient, accurate and timely manner.
- Ensuring learners, apprentices, staff and where appropriate employers, are notified of examination outcomes in a timely manner.

Ensure effective response to external quality monitoring agencies by:

- Organising and supporting cross provider responses to external agencies, including Ofsted and Awarding Bodies ensuring positive outcomes.

Quality Protocols

Timescales and deadlines for each activity vary dependent upon provision type and detailed in individual Quality Tracking Record.

Activity	Responsible Role	Continuous Improvement
Customer Enquiry	Learner Recruitment	Mystery shopper
Enrolment	Learner Recruitment	Dip sample 20% enrolment forms - funding paperwork compliance Customer Survey
Onboarding ILP, IA's, LLDD referrals	Learner Recruitment	Dip sample 20% ILPs (must include LLDD where possible) Observation of each learner recruitment co-ordinator
Induction	Tutor	Learner focus group
Learning delivery	Tutor	Learning walks (at least 1 session per cohort) Work scrutiny of 30% of cohort Learner focus group
Progress Reviews	Progress Coach	Learning walks (at least 1 per coach) Audit 30% of completed review forms.
Subcontracted delivery	Adult Manager/ Continuous Improvement	Learning walk (at least 1 session per relevant cohort), to include a learner focus group.
Milestone progress monitoring (Bootcamp only)	Adult Manager/SLT	Weekly adult provision meeting Data scrutiny Monthly Progress Boards

Milestone Tracking (Skills Bootcamps Only)

Deadline/ Timescale	Activity	Responsible Role
Enrolment	Learner enrolment includes consent for CV to be shared and commitment to work with Adecco (unemployed only)	Learner recruitment manager
Week 1	Milestone 1 Quality Assurance ILP Reviews and update (focus upon individual from starting points)	Data co-ordinator Learner progression success manager
Weeks 1-2	Learners supported to complete their CV (unemployed only)	Learner progression and success manager
Week 2	Milestone 1 claim	Data and ILR Lead
Week 3	Learners to have completed section 1 of reflective journal and PD topics	Adult manager
Week 4	Introductory Adecco online sessions with candidates, then monthly until job secured.	Learner progression and success and employer engagement team Adecco regional / branch leads
Week 5	Learners supported to complete 'Connect' profile	Learner progression and success manager
Week 6	Learners to have completed reflective journals and working towards summative assessment	Adult manager
Week 7	'Connect' profiles completed by learners confirmed to Adecco	Employer engagement manager
Week 8	Adecco regional colleagues to reach out to learners advising on range and locations of roles available	Learner progression and success and employer engagement team Adecco regional / branch leads
Week 9	Learners to have completed summative assessment	Adult manager
Week 10	Adecco candidates individual screening / pre interview meetings with STS origin candidates	Employer engagement manager Adecco regional / branch leads
Week 11	Adecco facilitated interviews for STS origin candidates with employers. Milestone 2 Quality Assurance (could be earlier)	Employer engagement manager Adecco regional / branch leads Data co-ordinator
Week 12	Learners to have completed learning	Adult manager
Week 12+	Claim Milestone 2 Learners supported to gain employment	Data and ILR Lead Learner progression and success manager Learner recruitment manager Adecco regional / branch leads
Week 13	Claim certification. Milestone 3 Quality Assurance (queries to be resolved by Head of Customer Impact)	Administration team leader Data co-ordinator
Week 13 +	Claim Milestone 3	Data and ILR Lead

Continuous Improvement Framework

Activity	Responsible Role	Purpose
Self-Assessment Process	Head of Continuous Improvement Quality Improvement and Audit Manager	<p>An annual process intended to assess the strengths and areas for improvement across STS. This process is structured to reflect all key aspects of the Education Inspection Framework. The reports are accompanied by a Continuous Improvement (CIP), which is monitored at regular intervals throughout the year to assess progress towards the identified areas for improvement. The Senior Leadership Team and the Advisory Board assist in the validation of the judgements.</p> <p>The Self-Assessment Report is submitted to the Advisory Board and Ofsted.</p> <p>Self-assessment continues in-year, with emerging concerns added to the CIP to focus attention, deploy intervention and drive improvement.</p>
Performance Boards	Head of Continuous Improvement Head of Delivery Head of Customer Impact Head of Funding, Registry and Governance Quality Improvement and Audit Manager	<p>A monthly process to assess and review provision type performance across STS. A schedule of Performance Boards is planned at the beginning of each academic year and detailed on the Annual Quality Calendar. The monthly review assesses the progress made towards improving areas identified on the CIP and assesses the in-year quality of provision reviewing a range of indicators including outcomes of the observation of teaching and learning; learning walks; stakeholder feedback; in-year retention; attendance; predicted achievement and high-grade attainment. This process assesses the impact against the agreed success criteria.</p>
Observation of Teaching Learning and Assessment Cycle	Head of Continuous Improvement Quality Improvement and Audit Manager	<p>Observations of teaching, learning and assessment contribute significantly towards forming a judgement on whether teaching, learning and assessment are effective in supporting learner/apprentice progression and positive outcomes. STS's Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and Cycle is to encourage an 'open door' culture support managers and staff in driving forward improvements in teaching, learning and assessment through formal and developmental learning observations. It is the aim of STS that all new delivery staff are subject to an observation within six weeks of commencing employment after a developmental observation has taken place. In addition, all existing staff can request a developmental observation at any time. All staff are subject to one formal observation in a one-year period. Outcomes of all observation activity is reported to the Senior Leadership Team monthly and informs CPD activities for individuals and teams. Following all observations areas of strength and development are recorded and associated development plans and if appropriate support is agreed and implemented. Good practice is shared across teams and provision to further enhance teaching, learning and assessment across different type of provision.</p>

<p>Internal Quality Assurance and Assessment</p>	<p>Quality Improvement and Audit Manager Adults Manager Apprenticeships Manager</p>	<p>STS has a robust Internal Quality Assurance Policy and process specific to types of provision. This policy is key to ensuring robust quality assessment on all programmes. The Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) will sample the planning, level and accuracy of marking of all assessments including RARPA on courses across the types of provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A schedule for IQA and appropriate tracking documents must be held by the relevant provision type manager. • Internal Verifiers must have the appropriate verification qualifications at L3 or L4. • Ensuring the rigour of assessment on all accredited qualifications and non-accredited provision is key to learner/apprentice and STS success. • The IQA process ensures the quality and accuracy of assessment. • Timely standardisation meetings will be held for all courses at regular and timely intervals. This process is monitored by the relevant provision type manager. • The continuous improvement team monitor and review the effectiveness and accuracy of internal quality assurance activities through the completion of half quarterly IQA review activities. Outcomes are reported to SLT.
<p>Stakeholder Satisfaction Activities</p>	<p>Quality Improvement and Audit Manager</p>	<p>STS has a Stakeholder Satisfaction Policy which details a schedule of learner and employer surveys completed each year across all types of provision at specified times. They provide valuable information to assist quality improvement. All surveys are scheduled and documented on the Quality Calendar. Reference to actions taken because of survey outcomes are included within the Performance Review Board process, self-assessment reports and Continuous Improvement Plans.</p> <p>Focus groups are used across various areas to provide further detail for improvement planning purposes. The surveys also assess the effectiveness of student facing business support areas and inform improvement planning activities to further enhance and improve the student experience.</p>
<p>Annual Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance Calendar</p>	<p>Head of Continuous Improvement Quality Improvement and Audit Manager</p>	<p>A comprehensive calendar of improvement activities throughout the year that proactively monitor the quality of education and include a schedule of 'deep dive' activities including the review of student progress, target setting, effectiveness of internal quality assurance and student voice outcomes. The Quality Calendar encompasses all stages of the student journey and proactively assesses the quality of provision being delivered. Performance against targets and the impact of improvement planning activities are regularly tested, reviewed and reported.</p>
<p>External Verification</p>	<p>Quality Improvement and Audit Manager</p>	<p>Awarding Bodies have their own methods of ensuring compliance and Quality Assurance. Most will involve an external moderator or external quality assurer either visiting STS or asking for samples of work. They will look for compliance with their regulations and procedures and assess the rigour of the internal systems. A report is submitted to the provider detailing their findings. All reports are kept centrally by the Continuous Improvement Department who monitor actions required and progress.</p>

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Director of Skills Head of Continuous Improvement Head of Delivery Head of Customer Impact Head of Funding, Registry and Governance	learner outcomes are a key indicator of the performance of STS and are scrutinised by the Senior Leadership Team, inspectorates and the Advisory Board. Targets include retention, pass and achievement, attendance rates, progression rates, value added and stakeholder voice. A combination of Power-Bi reporting software and central tracking reports are used to monitor this data and regularly reported to the Senior Leadership Team and Advisory Board.
Value Added High Grades Distance Travelled	Head of Continuous Improvement Head of Delivery Head of Customer Impact Head of Funding, Registry and Governance	All learners on programmes with graded outcomes to be given a Minimum Target Grade (MTG) upon commencement of their course. This is derived from starting point information, including prior attainment, initial assessments and skills scans. The progress each learner is making towards their MTG will be reviewed at each progress review. Progress towards MTGs is reported centrally and used to inform discussions at Quarterly Progress Boards.
Destination Collation and Reporting	Head of Continuous Improvement Head of Delivery Head of Customer Impact Head of Funding, Registry and Governance	All leavers complete an Exit Review that captures their destination information, including if they have gained new, or remain in sustained employment and if they have additional responsibilities/promotion/pay increase because of their training. Destinations are reported on annually through self-assessment activity, and in-year to SLT and the Advisory Board. Destination information is also used to inform discussion at Monthly Progress Boards.

2024/25 Self-Assessment

Section	Author	SLT Lead
Quality of Education	Victoria Wickington	Victoria Wickington
Behaviour and Attitudes	Jenn Palmer	Dean Hooton
Personal Development	Jenn Palmer	Dean Hooton
Leadership and Management	Victoria Wickington	Victoria Wickington
Adult Learning Programmes	Debbie Illidge	Dean Hooton
Apprenticeships (inc. relevant FS)	Jaqueline Beavis	Dean Hooton

Activity	Deadline
Data and reporting needs agreed and requested	23/08/24
Training for Section Authors	04/09/24
Draft SAR and CIP – Support and Challenge (Curriculum and Support)	27/09/24
Updated sections and CIP updates – Performance Board	08/10/24
Final updates using R14 data – Performance Board	05/11/24
STS Advisory Board to ‘sign off’ SAR and CIP	09/01/25
SAR and CIP sent to Ofsted	31/01/25

2024/25 Meeting Schedule

Meeting	Attendees
SLT	Director of Skills – Chair Head of Continuous Improvement Head of Delivery Head of Customer Impact Head of Funding, Registry and Governance
STS Advisory Board	Managing Director, Citizens Services - Chair External Board Members Head of Continuous Improvement Head of Delivery Head of Customer Impact Head of Funding, Registry and Governance Chief Legal Counsel Senior Finance Business Partner Senior People Partner
Performance Board	Head of Continuous Improvement - Chair Head of Delivery Head of Customer Impact Head of Funding, Registry and Governance Quality Improvement and Audit Manager Adult Manager Apprenticeship Manager Learner Progression and Success Manager

Date	Meeting	Date	Meeting
09/09/24	SLT	11/02/25	SLT
27/09/24	Performance Board SAR Support and Challenge (Curriculum)	04/03/25	Performance Board
03/10/24	STS Advisory Board	11/03/25	SLT
08/10/24	Performance Board	April (TBC)	Performance Board
09/10/24	SLT	April (TBC)	SLT
01/11/24	Performance Board	10/04/25	STS Advisory Board
07/11/24	SLT	May (TBC)	Performance Board
04/12/24	Performance Board	May (TBC)	SLT
11/12/24	SLT	June (TBC)	Performance Board
07/01/25	Performance Board	June (TBC)	SLT
08/01/25	SLT	July (TBC)	Performance Board
09/01/25	STS Advisory Board	July (TBC)	SLT
04/02/25	Performance Board	03/07/25	STS Advisory Board