



Hampshire Learning

Learner Involvement Strategy

Date of review/update	Date of next review	Staff involved
September 2009	August 2011	GF/CS

Contents

	Page
1 Mission statement	3
2 Purpose and aims of the strategy	3
3 Existing arrangements	4
4 Criteria for establishing which approaches to use	4
5 Approaches that will be used to implement the Learner Involvement Strategy	5
6 What learners will be consulted about	5
7 Learning Champions and E-guides	6
8 Non-learners	6
9 Gathering and collation of information	6
10 Measuring the impact of the Learner Involvement Strategy	6
11 Incorporating Learner Involvement Strategy findings into Service planning activities	7
12 Annual review	7
13 Scope of the Strategy Document	7

This document is available in a number of formats: please request by contacting:

Hampshire Learning, Culture, Communities and Rural Affairs,
Mottisfont Court, High Street, Winchester, SO23 8ZF

Email: hampshire.learning@hants.gov.uk Phone: 01962 845127

1 Mission statement

Hampshire Learning's mission statement for Adult and Family Learning, 'Developing Adult and Family Learning', reflects the County Council's commitment to deliver a quality service and supports the three priorities of the Council's corporate strategy listed below.

- ◆ Hampshire safer and more secure for all
- ◆ Maximising wellbeing
- ◆ Enhancing our quality of place

Hampshire Learning aims to offer provision that enables adult learners regardless of individual differences in age, gender, race, background, disability or learning difficulty, sexual orientation, religion or belief to:

- ◆ gain knowledge and skills
- ◆ develop interests and confidence
- ◆ support their family's learning
- ◆ be active in their neighbourhoods and communities
- ◆ gain relevant qualifications.

2 Purpose and aims of the strategy

The purpose of this document is to describe how Hampshire Learning will gather and make effective use of the views of local people who attend Hampshire County Council's adult learning activities. It also describes briefly how the views of non-learners will be gathered and incorporated into Service planning.

The overarching aim of the strategy is described in the FE White Paper *Further Education: Raising skills, improving life chances* (DfES, 2006c).

Benefits for learners

...a more responsive, more engaging, higher quality offer that empowers learners in shaping their own experience, and delivers improved outcomes for more learners, especially those who might otherwise not succeed.

Benefits for providers

...increased participation, retention, progression and achievement, learners who are more expert and independent, and who can help to shape learning experiences tailored to meet their needs and objectives in a way that achieves success;

...better quality of information about the learners' perspective, which can be used to triangulate other sources of data and drive professional and organisational development and quality improvement;

...better decisions about resource allocation and investment;

...learners who feel more involved and are motivated to put something back into the organisation.

Locally, the aim of the Strategy is to provide the Service with a coherent, pro-active framework with which to support itself and its partners in achieving the benefits set out above. It is *not* simply a quality assurance measure for monitoring others' Learner Involvement Strategies.

This version of the Learner Involvement Strategy is the first phase in developing an effective approach to involving learners in key decision making activity. It is intended to be simple and achievable. As it develops, the Strategy will seek to improve:

- ◆ the success rates of all learners engaging in programmes; and
- ◆ the Service's capacity to recruit and engage with an inclusive range of learners across the Service's catchment area.

Over time, it will ensure learners' views are better reflected in the development of policies and quality improvement, and will contribute to the achievement of a high-quality, responsive service.

3 Existing arrangements

A range of learner involvement activities has been a feature of the work of Hampshire Learning for a number of years. The following mechanisms have been used to elicit learners' views:

- ◆ Learner course evaluation, including induction, mid-course and end-of-programme activities
- ◆ Learner satisfaction surveys and questionnaires
- ◆ A postcard survey, mainly covering satisfaction levels
- ◆ Observation of Teaching and Learning activity
- ◆ Formal complaints procedures
- ◆ Events, workshops and taster sessions
- ◆ Use of a Learner Entitlement statement

The impact of these activities as ways of hearing the learner's voice has at times been varied, given the number of providers. Implementation of the Strategy will seek to address this.

4 Criteria for establishing which approaches to use

The Learner Involvement Strategy recognises limitations in terms of time, budget, human and other resources and available means of synthesising raw data.

Therefore, the criteria for establishing which approaches to use are as follows:

- ♦ that they are seen as pragmatic and workable by Hampshire Learning including partners;
- ♦ that, broadly speaking, they will provide a balanced set of views across a range of learners;
- ♦ that, operationally, they are congruent with Hampshire Learning's wider strategic and Quality Improvement plans;
- ♦ that they are congruent with government policy in developing e-based approaches to learning and its associated support structures;
- ♦ that they have been successful locally when they have been tried; and
- ♦ that they provide opportunities to develop the overall effectiveness of the provision.

5 Approaches that will be used to implement the Learner Involvement Strategy

- ♦ Existing course evaluation activities
- ♦ Learner satisfaction surveys and questionnaires covering progression, satisfaction levels and, where appropriate, the impact of learning on participants and their families
- ♦ Forums and focus groups
- ♦ Online surveys and web-based feedback

Hampshire Learning believes that this constitutes a good balance of existing processes and of new ones that can be developed through realistic and achievable action planning.

Not all approaches will be used with all learners. The table below provides a guide as to how they may be deployed.

THE APPROACHES	No. of glh per learner		
	10	20	30+
Learner end of course evaluation	All learners, all courses		
Learner satisfaction surveys and questionnaires	Sample across all courses on specific topics or areas of particular interest		
Forums and focus groups (through local area partnership arrangements)			✓
Online surveys and web-based feedback	In development		

6 What learners will be consulted about

The total number of learners in 2008-09 was around 14,000. With course length typically around 20 hours, the great majority of learners simply do not have

sufficient experience or understanding of the learning provision to be considered experts in offering well-informed views on curriculum and management-related issues pertaining to their course. They are, however, well placed to provide feedback on their experience of taking part in a learning activity.

On this basis, Hampshire Learning will seek learners' views in the following areas:

- ◆ individual learner support
- ◆ achievement of learning goals
- ◆ review of progress and achievement
- ◆ the quality and 'fit' of their learning experience to their individual needs
- ◆ progression opportunities and the quality of advice and guidance.

These are issues that affect the quality of the learning experience at the point of delivery. In the future, in particular when on-line and web-based survey facilities have been implemented, the Strategy will be developed to encompass a wider range of issues. Areas to be addressed include:

- ◆ equality and diversity related issues
- ◆ safe learning environment
- ◆ marketing and promotion of courses
- ◆ enrolment procedures
- ◆ facilities and resources

7 Curriculum Specialists and E-guides

Curriculum specialists and E-guides may from time to time offer support in establishing and accessing learners' views. Over a period, they may become responsible for running focus groups and learner forums.

However, their principal role within Hampshire Learning is to drive up quality by working alongside tutors on e-learning and curriculum-focussed issues. Therefore, their function in the context of this Strategy remains to implement change and improvements to provision identified through the Strategy's outcome measures described below.

8 Non-learners

For the current period, the views of people yet to engage with Hampshire Learning provision will be sought through existing feedback arrangements via taster sessions, workshops, introductory activities and meetings. In time, arrangements for feeding this into the overall data will be strengthened through the implementation of the Learner Involvement Strategy.

In order to improve Hampshire Learning's ability to listen to the views of non-learners, local learning partnerships will be encouraged to develop and share strategies for engaging with non learners.

9 Gathering and collation of information

From an operational standpoint, the gathering and collation of course evaluation data will be the responsibility of provider organisations. The other approaches will be managed centrally and through local learning partnerships with the support of Hampshire Learning's central team.

Providers will be required to submit evaluation data and findings to the central team in a timely manner, in accordance with Hampshire Learning's quality improvement and data processes.

10 Measuring the impact of the Learner Involvement Strategy:

Outcome measures

The success of the Learner Involvement Strategy in improving the quality of provision will be measured through a number of ways, for example:

- ◆ Learners will be asked to suggest improvements or changes that will improve the quality of their learning experience.
- ◆ Providers will be asked to report on the effectiveness of the Strategy in their organisation through the self-assessment process.
- ◆ Through local learning partnerships, learners and non-learners will be asked how and where improvements to provision could be made.

Process measures

The impact of the Learner Involvement Strategy will be measured in the following ways:

- ◆ Providers and local learning partnerships will explore in what areas, and how, the Learner Involvement Strategy could improve the involvement of learners.
- ◆ The numbers/percentage of learners taking up opportunities to offer feedback and views will be recorded and presented to the provider network.
- ◆ Satisfaction surveys will seek information on whether learners welcome the opportunity to express their views on issues affecting their participation on course.
- ◆ A record will be kept of the measures taken to inform learners about the impact of their views on the overall provision

11 Incorporating Learner Involvement Strategy findings into Hampshire Learning's planning activities

Learner Involvement Strategy findings will inform the Service's Self Assessment Report and 3 Year Development Plan. The Strategy will also contribute to the County Council's mission to develop a stronger customer focus.

The Common Inspection Framework and the 'responsiveness to learners' section in the Framework for Excellence will provide the structure for embedding the Learner Involvement Strategy at the self assessment and planning stages.

Through the Self Assessment Report, the Strategy will be used to develop a clear list of actions to be implemented in the areas it addresses. This list will appear in business and quality improvement plans.

12 Annual review

The Strategy will be subject to an annual review in order to improve its effectiveness. The review will be conducted at management level by Hampshire Learning and partners, but will draw considerably on learners' views via the process measures described above. If necessary, the views of other HCC departments will be included in the review process. In future years, Hampshire Learning may seek to involve 'expert' learners in the review process.

The outcome of the review will be reported to partners and to other appropriate HCC departments.

13 Scope of the Strategy Document

This Strategy applies predominantly to Hampshire Learning's funded adult learning provision, although views of non-learners and those participating in less formal programmes of learning will be welcomed. All staff will be made aware of the Strategy which will be updated on an annual basis. The responsibility for monitoring the Policy lies with Hampshire Learning's Quality Manager.