

Find Your Talent Leads

Quality cultural activities for children and young people

Getting in the Frame

A guide to quality assurance models



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This document provides an independent guide to the main quality marks and frameworks currently in use for accreditation of cultural provision for children and young people in Leeds. It has been researched by CAPE UK on behalf of the Find Your Talent programme with a focus on participatory and educational youth arts work delivered locally. However, much of what is collected here is also relevant nationally and appropriate to other settings.

Quality marks and badges are often looked for by commissioners of work as assurances that external specialists are going to bring excellence into their environment. Meanwhile, activity providers seek to earn them to demonstrate the standard and effectiveness of their practice to potential clients. But with a wide range of schemes in use, what should you be looking for, and what is really being guaranteed?

Our aim is to make the various frameworks currently in use more legible and directly comparable. Each is designed to do a different job. Professionals working in the field need to be aware of what those differences are, and to make clear decisions about which tool is most appropriate for their own practice or setting. We hope this guide helps you consider those choices.

For more on developing high quality cultural activities for children and young people in all settings, please refer to our "[Eight Best Practice Principles](#)" guide.

Don't forget that all of the QA frameworks listed can be used alongside the ABC Guidance and Toolkit developed by Education Leeds, which supports safeguarding and best practice for schools and other settings working with external providers: www.educationleeds.co.uk

UK Clubs for Young People Quality Mark

Contact

Lead Organisation: National Association of Clubs for Young People
www.clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk
office@clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk

UK Clubs for Young People (CYP) offer a Quality Mark (QM) for voluntary organisations. It is accredited by CYP and endorsed by Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCSF) and the National Youth Agency.

The QM is designed to:

- Encourage clubs and projects to assess their provision and recognise and celebrate good work with children and young people.
- Provide standards to work toward to make clubs and projects even more effective.
- Set a standard for work with young people in the voluntary sector.

The QM is divided into 11 areas

1. Young person centred service
2. Youth work outcomes
3. Equal opportunities
4. Staff quality policy
5. Premises
6. Resources
7. Management
8. Administration
9. Community involvement
10. Quality policy

Each area is broken down into a number of indications. Applying organisations build up a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate how they meet these. Evidence can take many forms, including job descriptions, minutes of meetings, press coverage, photographs, and peer observations. There are three levels or 'phases' at which to achieve the award. The higher phases have additional indicators.

Clubs are supported to achieve the award by a local CYP 'constituted organisation'. In Leeds, this is Archway. Contact: archway@renew-leeds.co.uk

For clubs and projects that are members of CYP, an initial familiarisation session and the moderation process is free of charge. The charges for non-members are negotiated with a view to making them affordable. The QM manual costs £25 for members and £50 for non members.

Positive features

- It allows voluntary organisations to gain a recognised Quality Mark.
- Young people participate in the process.
- It is affordable and achievable for smaller organisations.
- The availability of support by Archway injects local awareness into a national system.

Points to ponder

- This award is for the voluntary sector only and is not 'arts specific'.
- Organisations should allow around 3 months to build their portfolio of evidence at the first phase – longer for phases two and three.



Photo - Space2

Contact:

Lead Organisation: National Youth Agency
www.nya.org.uk
T: 0116 242 7350

Hear by Right is a standards framework for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people. It is intended to be applied to all services that affect children and young people, directly or indirectly.

Hear by Right is self assessed and based around a Seven S model for organisational change:

- Shared values
- Strategy
- Structure
- Systems
- Staff
- Skills and knowledge
- Style of leadership

Each of these seven standards has seven indicators. The indicators are split into three levels of performance - emerging, established and advanced - with each building upon the previous one. The standards require self-assessment and are all evidence based. Evidence can be from paper/verbal records or direct observation and may be gained from practitioners, managers, elected members or trustees as well as the children and young people themselves.

There are three golden rules for Hear by Right:

1. It is based on evidence not opinion.
2. Young people are involved in the process.
3. There is a plan for continuous improvement.

Hear by Right has a wide range of users including Local Authorities, health providers, education environments and the voluntary, community and third sectors.

Positive features

- The standards framework is focused on facilitating continual improvement in an organisation's activities (as opposed to simply assessing current performance).
- Its flexible evidence process would allow it to be used by a wide range of organisations. The number of indicators that an organisation or individual seeks to meet at any one time can be matched to their capacity.
- An electronic mapping and planning tool supports the processes of self assessment and evidence gathering.
- Other resources available include tools developed with young people to enable other young people to be actively involved
- The principle of sharing best practice via the website is a key strength and fits well with the principle of continual improvement.

Points to ponder

- Hear by Right is designed as a development process and is not an award.



Contact:

Lead Organisation: UK Commission for Employment and Skills
www.investorsinpeople.co.uk
info@investorsinpeople.com

This well-known business improvement tool was established during the recession of the 1990's in order to help organisations transform their business performance. A wide variety of sectors are able to use the same flexible framework which is clearly explained and outcome focused.

The Investors in People (IiP) process is designed to assist senior management to get the best results possible in line with the strategic objectives of their business plan, answering the question *"Are our aims and objectives being understood and implemented throughout the organisation?"*

Based on interviews with a cross-section of people from across an organisation (or everyone if the organisation is small) the IiP process itself involves no paperwork or form filling. However, organisations need the relevant strategies and procedures in place and in use, in order that 'understanding and implementation' is evident during the interviews.

There are four IiP levels. The entry level being known as 'The Standard'; beyond this organisations can achieve bronze, silver and gold levels.

Photo – Find Your Talent



The scope of the assessment is negotiated with one of nine regional centres in England. An adviser provides live intervention, ongoing support and a diagnostic report. Costs are calculated on a daily rate; the number of days required depends on the level within the framework that an organisation hopes to attain. liP also offers telephone and web-based advice and free self-check tools (liP Interactive).

liP looks to the people who work in an organisation to confirm the strength of five management practices: strategic planning; effective management; culture and communication; developing people; managing performance. 'The Standard' measures performance against ten indicators:

Plan	Do	Review
Business Strategy	Management Effectiveness	Performance Measurement
Learning Development Strategy	Recognition and Reward	Continuous Improvement
People Management Strategy	Involvement and Empowerment	
Leadership and Management Strategy	Learning and Development	

Positive features

- The live elements of this process encourage reflective thinking and offer access to a 'critical friend', which can be invaluable.
- The brand is widely recognised and respected.
- The written report generated can be used as a baseline for future organisational reflection.
- Ongoing 'after care', including funding opportunities, e-newsletter and regular journals, is good.
- The web site offers free diagnostic tools; documents downloaded can be adapted to particular learning styles.

Points to ponder

- Depending on the scale of the process it can be time-consuming.
- As it is not coloured by the needs of the youth or cultural sectors it may feel commercial in its ethos.
- The process is relatively expensive.

Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge

Contact:

Lead Organisation: Council for Learning Outside the Classroom
www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk
contact@lotcqualitybadge.org.uk

Launched in February 2009 by the Department for Children Families and Schools and now run by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, this award is designed to assist providers of learning outside the traditional classroom environment, to offer experiences that are both safe and of high quality.

Such providers include theatres, galleries, concert halls, heritage sites, farms, places of worship, outdoor activity centres and residential centres. They can be organisations that, rather than working in their own venues, create learning opportunities in the countryside, in the built environment, in school grounds or even in school halls. The quality badge is one strand of Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC). It complements a manifesto (available at www.lotc.org.uk) and extensive guidance for schools and teachers on the benefits of extending learning beyond the classroom. It is anticipated that schools and other users will increasingly expect providers to hold the LOtC quality badge.

The badge establishes a common framework for all LOtC providers and there are two routes, depending on the level of risk management required. The majority of creative and cultural sector organisations would fall under the Route One procedure.



Photo – Find Your Talent

The framework comprises of a set of quality indicators:

Pre-experience quality indicators	During the experience quality indicators	Post Experience quality indicators	Organisational quality indicators
The provider has a process in place to assist users to plan the learning experience effectively.	The provider provides activities, experiences and resources which meet learner needs.	The provider reviews the experience and acts upon feedback.	The provider meets the needs of users.
The provider provides accurate information about its offer.			The provider has safety management processes in place to manage risk effectively.

To gain the badge each 'Route One' organisation completes a short online self-evaluation form, describing how it complies with generic features of good practice. Of the organisations then awarded the badge, a proportion receive a quality assurance visit within three months. Two week's notice is given of the visit, at which the organisation is required to provide evidence of how it meets each of the indicators.

Positive features

- There is extensive LOtC guidance on the web and a telephone helpline to support the application process.
- Regional training may be available.
- The self-evaluation form is quick to complete.
- The quality sub-indicators are developmentally helpful, as can be the assessor visit (if triggered).

Points to ponder

- The award is available to a very wide range of organisations working with schools and some of the language of the quality indicators may be less familiar to those in the arts and culture sector.
- Organisations offering circus skills, particularly if these include aerial work, may need to apply through route two.
- Organisations should allow around 3 months to collate evidence of how they meet each of the indicators.

N.B. this award is not currently available to individuals.

MusicLeader code of practice

Contact:

Lead Organisation: Youth Music
www.musicleader.net
yorkshire@musicleader.net

MusicLeader was commissioned by Youth Music in 2005. As part of its remit, MusicLeader developed a Code of Practice for music practitioners. The code is a set of working principles that individual practitioners can choose to sign up to. It sets out in detail what is considered to be best practice in the sector under 6 key headings:

I am:

- Well prepared and organised
 - Safe and responsible
 - Prepare for and reflect on my work
 - Have appropriate musical skills
 - Work well with people
 - Committed to my own professional development
- The framework comprises six sets of quality indicators, each having detailed 'sub indicators'.

Signing up to the code can help freelance musicians to develop their professional practice with young people. They can use the code to identify skill areas that may require further improvement.

Support and advice is available from local MusicLeader networks on a one-to-one basis. Members benefit from other opportunities offered including networking, newsletters, and training. Practitioners can join a directory; if they have signed up to the MusicLeader Code of Practice, this is indicated by a 'stamp' in their listing.

Once signed up, practitioners are encouraged to show employers the Code of Practice as a way of demonstrating a commitment to providing high quality musical experiences. Some music agencies e.g. Youth Music and Sound Sense have made signing up to the Music Leader Code of Practice a condition of employment. To gain the badge each 'Route One' organisation completes a short online self-evaluation form, describing how it complies with generic features of good practice. Of the organisations then awarded the badge, a proportion receive a quality assurance visit within three months. Two week's notice is given of the visit, at which the organisation is required to provide evidence of how it meets each of the indicators.

Positive features

- This is a very simple process with no cost attached and it takes very little time to achieve the initial stamp – it is simply a case of making a commitment.
- It can be used as part of an ongoing process to improve practice.
- The code is recognised and supported by many key music bodies e.g. Sound Sense, Music Manifesto, Federation of Music Services, Musical Futures and Musicians Union.
- The code would be easy to adapt for other creative practice and would make a good basis for those wishing to develop their own code.

Points to ponder

- As MusicLeader is not an externally validated mark of standards, it only indicates the commitment of the practitioner rather than verifying the quality of delivery.
- The code places the responsibility for ensuring quality with the practitioner, contrasting with some quality assurance frameworks that present it as a responsibility shared between all partners.

Photo – Breeze Has Talent



Assurance System for Small Organisations

Contact:

Lead Organisation: Charities Evaluation Services
www.ces-vol.org.uk
enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk

Launched in 1997 by the Charities Evaluation Service (CES) this system was born out of pioneering quality assurance work completed by the Kids Club Network across a variety of primary childcare settings. This straightforward and 'user friendly' self-assessment system is now in its third edition (2008) and has been designed to help organisations take a systematic look at what they do; identify areas where they are doing well and not so well and decide exactly where improvements are needed. It then goes on to help with planning, budgeting and the allocation of resources for making these improvements over a realistic timeframe.

The system is published as a work pack with an accompanying CD which acts as an information management tool. There are three levels of achievement. It is envisaged that all organisations will achieve level one, with more complex organisations moving on to levels two and three. The system encourages consideration of twelve 'quality areas':

Planning	User Centred Service	Managing Money	Working with Others
Governance	Managing People	Managing Resources	Monitoring and Evaluation
Leadership & Management	Learning & Development	Communication and Promotion	Results

An organisation can purchase the PQASSO work pack and use it purely as a self-assessment tool against their chosen achievement level. Alternatively, they can move forwards to apply for a PQASSO Quality Mark (Level 1 or 2). Initially the work pack is implemented and an application form submitted. Next, an organisation is matched with two fully trained peer reviewers who will then agree dates for a desktop review of documentation and a site visit. The organisation then submits required documents to the peer reviewers who decide if the organisation is ready for a site visit. Most site visits span a couple of days and include interviews and scrutiny of additional evidence. Following the visit the organisation receives a report detailing the outcome.

Positive features

- The design of this systematic Quality Assurance (QA) system is very compatible with the way small arts organisations work.
- There is also scope for adapting the system through negotiation with CES.
- Organisations moving on to apply for the Quality Mark can engage in dialogue with experienced professionals from their field.
- Since June 2009 organisations recently gaining the Quality Mark at level 2 (using 3rd Edition of PQASSO) can also be awarded the "Charity Commission Quality Standard" – the hallmark of an effective charity.
- Once PQASSO is completed the CES offer other opportunities for development.

Points to ponder

- The award is more recognised and therefore has more currency across the voluntary sector than the statutory education sector.



Photo – Youth Point

Contact:

Lead Organisation: Arts Council England
www.artscouncil.org.uk
T:0845 300 6200

Published in 2006 by Arts Council England, 'Providing the Best' outlines the key characteristics of high quality experiences of the arts for children and young people. This document is described as having many potential functions one of which is 'organisational review and development'.

It is divided into eight sections that cover the key features of good practice:

- Ideas that excite, inspire, challenge or affect children and young people
- An effective partnership between artists/arts organisation, host and children and young people
- Promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion
- The work of professional artists
- Artists who can communicate their art, knowledge or skills in an appropriate way for children and young people
- Opportunities for children and young people to create their own art
- A supportive framework to develop and foster progression
- Clear strategies for monitoring and evaluation



Photo – Find Your Talent

Each section includes a series of prompt questions which could be used in organisational or project planning and review.

'Providing the best' is primarily for artists and arts organisations that develop and deliver arts experiences and activities for children and young people. For many of the most experienced artists and arts organisations the document will primarily serve as a reflective tool to affirm good practice. For emerging artists, the document will help to define best practice and provide advice on developing and delivering arts experiences. Other people who are responsible for children and young people, such as teachers, youth workers, community and voluntary group leaders, parents and carers could use the document as a tool for assessing quality.

Positive features

- Sector specific.
- Accessible with straightforward jargon free language.
- Promotes self-evaluation in quite a detailed and discursive way because of the use of prompt questions.
- Versatile-can be used on a variety of scales for a variety of functions including training.
- Clear examples offered within document which is downloadable.
- There are no costs attached.

Points to ponder

- This document promotes reflective practice but is not a rigorous, criterion referenced or standardised award and consequently does not have the marketing benefits that a 'kitemark' carries.
- It could be useful to use this document as a development tool when working towards one of the other awards.

Contact:

Lead Organisation: Canterbury Christ Church University
www.canterbury.ac.uk/education/quality-in-study-support
T: 01227 767700

Quality in Study Support (QiSS) is a national programme that promotes quality in study support in schools and other centres where out of school hours learning takes place. It is implemented through the Centre for Education, Leadership and School Improvement (CELSI) at Canterbury Christ Church University College.

The QiSS Recognition Scheme provides public recognition that the standards embodied in the Extending Learning Opportunities; a framework for self-evaluation in study support (ELO) are being met. QiSS focuses on one area of the Extended Services offer that is made by individual schools or groups of schools – the provision of a varied menu of activities. The sister scheme, Quality in Extended Schools (QES), covers all five areas of the offer.

To gain recognition, centres work with a Critical Friend for a period of at least 6 months, build a portfolio of evidence and give a presentation at a special recognition meeting. The portfolio is peer read by practitioners from a centre that already has status (at the same level or higher) and the presentation is given to a group of peer scrutineers and observers. Those present with existing status and/or a recognised Critical Friends decide whether sufficient evidence has been shown to gain recognition or whether further supporting evidence is needed.

Photo – Sustainable Schools



Status lasts for 3 years at Emerged and Established level or 2 years at Advanced.

Assessment uses the key indicators set out in the ELO for Study Support;

Section 1: Vision, values and principles of learning	Section 2: Programme development and operation	Section 3: Making a difference and managing change
Clear purposes	Effective resourcing	Measuring the difference
Finding out what's needed	Communicating effectively	Getting results
A distinct ethos for learning	Developing programmes	Managing improvement
Empowering young people	Identifying leaders of learning	Achieving a return on investment
Learning together	Getting the best from leaders of learning	
	Developing partnerships	

Positive features

- QiSS offers a range of support for service improvement including consultancy, training & advice.
- The recognition scheme's link to the ELO gives it congruence with the national agenda.
- The themes can be linked to the quality indicators for the LOtC Quality Badge.

Points to ponder

- With origins in formal school settings this scheme is best suited to organisations working with schools.

Comparison of Quality Assurance Frameworks

	Children Leeds ABC Guidance and Toolkit	Clubs for Young People QM	Hear by Right	Investors In People
Formal Award or Code of practice	Guidance for the design and monitoring of contracts and service level agreements	Formal Award	Standards Framework	Formal Award
Managing or awarding body	Children Leeds	UK Clubs for Young People	National Youth Agency	Investors in People
Who is it for?	Schools /settings and providers of extended services	Voluntary Organisations	All services that affect children and young people, directly or indirectly (10-25 years)	Universal – any organisation / business
Duration of award	Not applicable	3 years	Ongoing	3 years at which point holders are subject to a review
Tiered award	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tiers		Three levels	Emerging, established and advanced	The Standard, Bronze, Silver, Gold
Self assessment	Yes	In the portfolio building stage	Yes	Once recognised an organisation can have staff trained to carry out internal assessments
External assessment	No	Yes	No	Yes
Peer review elements	No	No	No	No
Cost	Free	Pack £50 (£25 for affiliated clubs) Assessment costs negotiable (free for affiliated clubs)	Free – they only ask you to share examples	Up to £750 per day (+VAT & expenses) for the assessment itself

Introduction copy to explain the purpose of the table and what can be gained.

LOTc Quality Badge	Music Leader Code of Practice	PQASSO	Providing the Best	QiSS
Formal Award	Code of practice	Formal Award	Guidance for organisational development and review	Formal Award
Council for Learning Outside the Classroom	Youth Music	Charities Evaluation Service	Arts Council England	QiSS/CELSI at Canterbury Christ Church University College
Organisations and venues that provide learning experiences outside the classroom	Individual music practitioners	Voluntary/ community organisations	Charities Arts organisations and individual practitioners Service	Schools, clusters of schools, LAs, and other providers of study support
2 years	Not applicable	3 years	Not applicable	3 years at Emerged and Established, 2 years at Advanced
No	No	Yes	No	Yes
		Level 1 or 2		Emerged, Established or Advanced Level
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1 in 10	No	Yes	No	Yes
No	No	Yes	No	Yes
£100	Free	£1055 - £2055 depending on organisation size	Free	Emerging £340 Established £400 Advanced £995

Comparison of Quality Award Systems

	Children Leeds ABC Guidance and Toolkit	Clubs for Young People QM	Hear by Right	Investors In People
External scrutiny	Low	High	Low	High
Cost	Free	Low	Free	High
Additional services offered	High	High	Medium	Medium
Paperwork involved in application	N/A	Medium	N/A	Low
Time/labour required for whole process	Medium	High	Medium	High
Applicable to wide range of organisations	Medium	Medium	High	High
Relevance to arts sector	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Relevance to youth sector	High	High	High	Low
Suitability for very small orgs	High	High	High	Low
Suitability for individuals	High	N/A	High	N/A
Emphasis on progression / improvement	Medium	High	High	Medium
Emphasis on achieving badge or 'signing up'	N/A	Medium	Medium	High

Introduction copy to explain the purpose of the table and what can be gained.

LOtC Quality Badge	Music Leader Code of Practice	PQASSO	Providing the Best	QiSS
Medium	Low	High	N/A	High
Medium	Free	High	Free	High
High	High	High	High	High
Low	N/A	High	N/A	High
Medium	Low	High	Medium	High
Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
Medium	High	Medium	High	Medium
High	High	Medium	High	High
High	High	Medium	High	High
N/A	High	High	N/A	High
Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
High	High	Medium	N/A	Medium

Contact information

UK Clubs For Young People Quality Mark

Lead Organisation: National Association of Clubs for Young People
www.clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk
office@clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk

Hear By Right

Lead Organisation: National Youth Agency
www.nya.org.uk
T: 0116 242 7350

Investors In People

Lead Organisation: UK Commission for Employment and Skills
www.investorsinpeople.co.uk
info@investorsinpeople.com

Learning Outside The Classroom

Lead organisation: Council for Learning Outside the Classroom
www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk
contact@lotcqualitybadge.org.uk

Music Leader

Lead Organisation: Youth Music
www.musicleader.net
yorkshire@musicleader.net

PQASSO

Lead Organisation: Charities Evaluation Services
www.ces-vol.org.uk
enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk

Providing The Best

Lead Organisation: Arts Council England
www.artscouncil.org.uk
T:0845 300 6200

QiSS

Lead Organisation: Canterbury Christ Church University
www.canterbury.ac.uk/education/quality-in-study-support
T: 01227 767700