

Guidance for making an endorsement application

The purpose of the national quality assurance panel (NQAP) is to support the national consistency of NQSWs' experience across the ASYE programme's dimensions of support, assessment and outcome.

It aims to achieve this through three objectives:

- to scrutinise and review a sample of ASYE assessment decisions from employers and partnerships throughout England in order to promote consistency
- to provide an annual set of key messages to promote the development of national consistency
- to identify and endorse practice in programme delivery and to make these examples available to the sector.

The panel is co-ordinated by Skills for Care and has at least twelve members including two from Skills for Care.

It meets at least twice yearly and reviews:

- samples of evidence
- external moderation summary reports from partnership moderation meetings
- applications for endorsement of specific areas of a programme's delivery.

The panel gives feedback:

- to employers and partnerships on their submissions and produces annual key messages of collated themes and issues
- to employers on their endorsement applications

Background

The ASYE quality assessment framework includes the national evaluation criteria (NEC) and criteria that are a step beyond the NEC (known as NEC+).

In the process of meeting the criteria, programmes are likely to have a 'spiky profile', which means:

- there are specific areas where they're able to demonstrate or exceed the NEC in their programme delivery
- there are areas for further development.

The sector has asked for examples of good practice, where a programme has met or contributed to meeting in a meaningful way an element of the NEC/ NEC+. Some examples we've already come across are:

- the development with assessors of a toolkit to support them in writing their review reports, which has been trialed and evaluated by assessors
- the introduction and evaluation of an app for NQSWs to support their understanding of anti-racist perspectives and practice

- NQSWs who have recently completed their programme writing a letter to a new NQSW in their team giving practical support tips such as where the nearest café is and where to get lunch
- the development of a system with young people to support their safe and meaningful involvement in the assessment of NQSWs.

The process set out here is designed to facilitate this and also provide a process for the NQAP to endorse examples of good practice in the delivery of an ASYE programme that can be shared with and adopted by other programmes.

The endorsement will run for two years. The resource will be flagged with its period of endorsement so that readers can be confident that it's recent.

A bank of good practice resources will support individual programmes in their journey of continuous development to improve the consistency of NQSWs' experience of support, assessment and outcome.

Application for endorsement of practice

Application process

An organisation can apply for an element of their practice in delivering the ASYE programme to be endorsed. There are two ways in which you can do that and whichever one you choose, support is available from a panel member or Skills for Care lead. The two ways are:

- **Self-initiated:** an organisation approaches Skills for Care to start an application to the NQAP for endorsement of an area(s) of their programme that meets or contributes in a meaningful way to meeting an element(s) of the NEC/NEC+.
- **Skills for Care initiated:** Skills for Care approaches an organisation as a result of a quality assurance visit or moderation by the NQAP and asks them to consider an endorsement application in relation to an element of their practice in the delivery of the programme that either meets or contributes in a meaningful way to meeting an element of the NEC/NEC+.

Self-initiated

- An organisation that would like to submit an endorsement application contacts Skills for Care for an initial discussion via regulatedworkforce@skillsforcare.org.uk
- From the initial discussion, Skills for Care will pair up the organisation's ASYE co-ordinator with a panel member/Skills for Care lead so that a meeting can be co-ordinated to develop and complete a draft of the endorsement application. To reduce the impact on capacity, the meeting will be held virtually, unless both parties decide that a face-to-face meeting would be more appropriate.
- The panel member/Skills for Care lead's approach to the meeting and the conversation about the practice example will be a strengths-based one.
- At the meeting the panel member/Skills for Care lead should check with the organisation their current OFSTED/CQC status.
- Once the draft is finalised, the application is submitted to Skills for Care via regulatedworkforce@skillsforcare.org.uk

- When received by Skills for Care, it will be included on the NQAP's agenda for its next meeting and, through the chair, considered by the panel.

Skills for Care initiated

- Skills for Care approaches an organisation from their quality assurance visits or from the NQAP moderation to explore if the organisation would like to make an endorsement application in relation to an identified example of their practice.
- A panel member/Skills for Care lead will contact the ASYE co-ordinator for the organisation and arrange a meeting with them. To reduce the impact on capacity, the meeting will be held virtually, unless both parties decide that a face-to-face meeting would be more appropriate.
- The panel member/Skills for Care lead's approach to the meeting and the conversation about the practice example will be a strengths-based one.
- At the meeting the panel member/Skills for Care lead should check with the organisation their current OFSTED/CQC status.
- Once the draft is finalised, the application is submitted to Skills for Care via regulatedworkforce@skillsforcare.org.uk
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Outcomes from the conversation between the ASYE co-ordinator and the panel member/Skills for Care lead

There are two different outcomes from the conversation:

1. **Endorsement application proceeds:** there is an agreement that the endorsement application should be submitted to the NQAP for its consideration.
2. **Endorsement application is paused:** the organisation and panel member agree to pause an application while the organisation further develops its delivery of practice in relation to an element(s) of the NEC/NEC+. In this event, it's the panel member/Skills for Care lead's responsibility to offer guidance and support on how they could improve what they're doing to strengthen a future application within twelve months. If this is the organisation's intention, they may also wish to offer a level of ongoing guidance and support over the twelve months This is at the panel member/Skills for Care's discretion.

Panel meeting process

Applications

The chair ensures the submitted applications are considered by the panel and the outcome recorded.

It's the responsibility of the panel member/Skills for Care lead who has been involved in the application to speak to it at the panel meeting and, following the meeting, to provide feedback to the organisation making the application.

Outcomes

There are two possible outcomes at panel:

1. **Endorsement application approved:** it is the responsibility of the panel member/ Skills for Care lead who has been involved in the application to provide feedback to the organisation making the application. They may also choose to meet with them to provide the feedback. Skills for Care will arrange for the practice example to be shared where appropriate.
2. **Endorsement application paused:** if the panel decides not to endorse the practice example the panel will provide written feedback on how the practice example could be developed. The relevant panel member/Skills for Care lead should offer to meet with the organisation to provide feedback and offer guidance and support on how they could develop what they're doing to strengthen a future application within twelve months, if this is the organisation's intention.

Process for considering applications between panel meetings

It is within the discretion of the panel to decide to consider applications between panels.

The application must be considered by a minimum of two panel members and the chair informed of the outcome.

Process review

The NQAP may review and develop its processes for considering an endorsement application at any time.