

FINAL

**EDUCATION & TRAINING
FOUNDATION**

In partnership with

SDN 
The Strategic Development Network

OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Exploring delivery in apprenticeship standards

Project Prospectus

April 2018



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
The Education and Training Foundation ('the Foundation')	2
The Strategic Development Network ('SDN')	2
Background - Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA) programmes	2
The apprenticeship reforms and their impact on teaching learning and assessment	3

EXPLORING DELIVERY IN APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS	4
What we are trying to achieve – aims, outcomes and possible outputs	4
What will the projects explore - areas for exploration	4
Why get involved	6
The research framework	7
Assessment criteria and process	9

MAKING A PROJECT PROPOSAL	10
Identifying a theme for investigation and specifying your research questions	10
Outputs	10
Building your Project Consortium	12
Eligibility Criteria	12
Timetable	13

MANAGING YOUR PROJECT	14
Project Roles	14
Project initiation	15
Project leads development day	15
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	15
Value of grants and financial management	16
Data Protection and Cyber Security	16
Terms and Conditions	16

INTRODUCTION

The Education and Training Foundation ('the Foundation')

The Education and Training Foundation is the government-backed, sector-owned national workforce and professional development body for the Further Education (FE) and Training sector. Its role is to support the continuing transformation of the technical and vocational education system by ensuring the sector has world-class leaders, teachers and trainers.

The Foundation do this through four key areas:

- Setting professional standards, running the sector's professional membership body
- Supporting sector change
- Leading workforce development for leaders, governors and practitioners
- Providing key workforce data and research

One of The Foundation's four main areas of work is Professional Standards and Workforce Development. The Outstanding, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Programme is led by the Professional Development team.

The Strategic Development Network ('SDN')

The Foundation has commissioned the Strategic Development Network to manage the OTLA (apprenticeship standards) programme.

SDN specialise in FE, HE and apprenticeships, supporting training and education organisations to grow, adapt and improve their provision. SDN has a strong track record in supporting the sector with the apprenticeship reforms – the team have worked closely with 80 employer trailblazer groups, supported over 3,000 staff from 900 apprenticeship organisations to prepare to deliver new standards and end-point assessment, and are authors of the Future Apprenticeships toolkit.

Background - Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA) programmes

The Foundation's OTLA programmes draw together activity to support practitioners to improve and develop their practice.

OTLA activity is driven by the values and expectations set out in the Foundation's Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers; a drive towards Ofsted outstanding (and similar success with other metrics); a clear focus on proven methodologies; intelligent and purposeful use of learner data and the need to work collaboratively/across organisational boundaries/across a variety of provider types, to source the most effective teaching, and share this with the sector.

The two aims of the OTLA programme are to:

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the FE and training sector and;
- Support increased professionalism for practitioners in the sector.

The programme is made up of four strands: Collaborative Projects, Professional Exchanges, Support, Training and Resources, and the Practitioner Research Programme.

Collaborative projects focus on provider and practitioner defined problems, often linked to a current theme important to the sector. They centre on developing evidence-based solutions to improve teaching, learning and assessment to outstanding.

Professional Exchanges are locally organised groups who meet regularly. They identify practitioner focused issues, and support practitioners to reflect on their practice, and share, collaborate and develop solutions.

Training and support encompasses a wide range of activity from in-house training or regional and national training events, to holistic support packages for providers and the creation and dissemination of effective practice resources.

The Practitioner Research Programme provides opportunities for individual practitioners to carry out detailed research into the sector with expert support.

OTLA collaborative projects are now entering their fourth phase which includes this new focus on exploring delivery of apprenticeship standards. Previous phases have produced a wide range of outputs. Many of these can be found on the OTLA Exhibition Site improving-teaching.excellencegateway.org.uk/

The apprenticeship reforms and their impact on teaching learning and assessment

Apprenticeship standards are fundamentally different from apprenticeship frameworks and the apprenticeship reforms have brought significant changes for providers. This is not just about a change in curriculum, although this is a part of it. The shift to an employer-led approach, the substantial changes to the funding methodology and the introduction of a significantly new way of assessing learners, mean that providers have to reconfigure their offer and the way they run their businesses.

The apprenticeship reforms create a greater expectation of 'on programme delivery' or technical teaching and learning as part of the new apprenticeship standards. The role of the traditional assessor no longer exists and people delivering apprenticeships will need to develop new skills. The introduction of end-point assessment moves formal assessment to the end of the apprenticeship programme. Providers will need to ensure that learners are prepared for the end-point assessment process whilst not (in a lot of cases) having the structure of qualifications.

The Foundation's work through Future Apprenticeships (<http://futureapprenticeships.org.uk/>) has provided a wide range of support to providers preparing to deliver apprenticeship standards.

This phase of OTLA will now look at **delivering apprenticeship standards** and will focus on identifying and developing practitioner knowledge, skills and confidence in delivering apprenticeship standards to a high level of effectiveness.

EXPLORING DELIVERY IN APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS

What we are trying to achieve – aims, outcomes and possible outputs

The objectives of this work are to identify, explore and disseminate, through ten practitioner-led collaborative projects:

1. effective approaches to teaching, training and assessment in the delivery of apprenticeship standards
2. effective approaches to the development of staff who deliver apprenticeship standards
3. effective practice in the delivery of apprenticeships

These collaborative projects will allow providers to explore what works and how best to build skill and confidence in the delivery of apprenticeship standards.

The projects will focus on the development of high quality teaching, training and assessment so that apprentices achieve the levels of knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for successful independent end-point assessment.

What will the projects explore - areas for exploration

We are looking to commission projects within four themes:

- a. the importance of a collaborative approach to teaching, training, learning and assessment between providers and employers
- b. curriculum development so that apprentices develop the right knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for success
- c. how the apprentice progress is monitored and assessed
- d. what constitutes outstanding technical pedagogy in apprenticeship delivery

We've provided, by way of example, some areas that you could explore through a collaborative project under each of these themes:

Collaborative approaches to teaching, training, learning and assessment between providers and employers

Projects that explore and create practical solutions to:

- Deploy standards in specific job roles and contexts
- Develop training plans
- Co-deliver training
- Set up on and off-the-job projects, assignments, and training
- Create outstanding employer workplace coaching and mentoring
- Support apprentices to meet gateway requirements
- Prepare apprentices for end-point assessment

Curriculum development

Projects that explore and create practical solutions to:

- Decode standards, assessment plans and occupational briefs as a basis for curriculum planning
- Design curricula to develop apprentice knowledge, skills and behaviours and so create job competence
- Co-design (with employers) of training and curriculum materials
- Utilise the latest pedagogy and technology
- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding and Prevent into the curriculum

Apprentice progress monitoring and assessment

Projects that explore and create practical solutions to:

- Enhance apprentice progress and improve their achievement of standards
- Track progress through formative on-programme assessment and demonstrates progress towards successful end-point assessment
- Improve feed-back and on-programme communication with apprentices
- Use on-programme grading to measure apprentice progress
- Holistically track on-programme progress monitoring learning plan milestones
- Understanding how attitudes towards learning excellence have a strong, positive impact on progress
- Prepare for end-point assessment without “training for the test”

Outstanding technical pedagogy

Projects to explore, understand and define outstanding pedagogy:

- The knowledge, skills and techniques practitioners will need to deliver standards effectively
- What outstanding technical pedagogy looks like in particular sectors and at all levels including Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
- Exploring outstanding technical pedagogy for different practitioner roles and different apprenticeship organisations, including employers and workplace delivery

Why get involved

Apprenticeship standards are new, with new approaches being developed around working with employers, training itself and end-point assessment.

An OTLA project will give you the chance to focus on how teaching, learning and assessment practice can achieve outstanding results for apprentices and for their employers in these new areas.

You'll have a "safe space" and a funding grant to subsidise project work with colleagues to explore new and emerging practice.

OTLA projects are collaborative and research focused. Previous rounds of projects have provided strong evidence that intensive collaboration with other practitioners does result in improved teaching, learning and assessment.

You'll have the opportunity to create a network of like-minded colleagues working in similar areas that you'll be able to draw on, build on and sustain as you deliver standards into the future.

OTLA projects generate a wealth of knowledge and resources, and a range of materials that have been of interest to practitioners, managers and leaders across the sector. You will have a chance to help define what constitutes outstanding practice; to create examples and models of effective practice; and to produce resources for fellow practitioners.

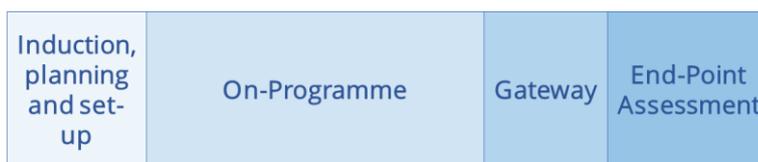
The research framework

All projects within this phase of the programme will sit within an overall framework that has two elements **collaborative inquiry** and **impact measurement**.

Collaborative inquiry

The projects will be supported to use a collaborative inquiry model. The features of the model that projects will need to adopt will:

- Be evidence-based, drawing on actual experiences of one or more phases of the new apprenticeship process



- Develop new knowledge and understanding of the standards-based apprenticeship process, helping to define **outstanding** in teaching, learning and assessment practice
- Produce solution-focused and practical outcomes that can be widely shared across the apprenticeship sector as a catalyst for generating outstanding teaching, learning and assessment practice
- Allow a safe space to test out new approaches: allowing practitioners freedom to define and trial methods with a variety of possible outcomes, without fear of failure
- Adopt a similar process across all ten projects based on the following:
 - a. Identifying a theme for investigation and specifying research questions
 - b. Exploration of individuals' and the group's existing knowledge and perspectives
 - c. Collecting relevant existing materials
 - d. Searching for possible outstanding practice and solutions
 - e. Inquiry and research in practice
 - f. Review, evaluation and definition of outstanding practice and solutions
 - g. Producing tangible outputs
 - h. Review of outcomes and impacts, and process evaluation
- Be realistic and deliverable, within the timeframe of the programme and within the delivery context that the participants are working in
- Be democratic, with all project members having the right to express their own thoughts and values in the conduct and results of the inquiry
- Be measurable, relating directly to the impact measures set out on page 8
- Be supported, with an SDN project mentor throughout the research

Impact measurement

We will seek to measure impact within the programme, at programme, project and participant levels; and beyond the programme for the wider sector, and most importantly for apprentices and their employers. We expect each project to be able to generate and measure their contribution at each of these levels.

We will ask applicants to outline what they expect the outcomes and impact of their project to be, and how they intend to measure this. The SDN mentor will work with each of the project leads at the start of the project, to agree these and ensure the process for capturing this information is robust and links into wider programme evaluation.

As a summary, we will expect your outcome/impact indicators to link into the below:

	Outcome Impact indicators (participants)	Outcome Impact indicators (apprentices and employers)	Process indicators for the research (participants)
Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic improvements throughout the new apprenticeship learner journey • “Outstanding” practice making a significant contribution to TLA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners experiencing consistently high quality TLA in the areas of investigation • Effective employer engagement and contribution to TLA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration between projects and with other elements of the OTLA programme • Participation of a range of organisations and individuals that reflect the diversity of the sector
Projects / Direct Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to the OTLA body of knowledge • Embedding new knowledge and practical approaches • Direct improvements in teaching, learning and assessment • Embedding Professional Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners experiencing consistently high quality TLA in the areas of investigation • Effective employer engagement and contribution to TLA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness of the research-based approach in generating knowledge and resources • Collaboration between peers within and across providers • On-going collaborative working • Commitment of senior leaders in participating organisations to create sustainable impact from projects
Indirect Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding new knowledge and practical approaches • Improvements in teaching, learning and assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective employer engagement and contribution to TLA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of effective practice between providers

Assessment criteria and process

All applications will be assessed by an assessment panel, made up of representatives from the Foundation, SDN and Association of Colleges (who are independent of the programme). All applications will be reviewed and scored by at least two assessment panel members, before being moderated and final decisions being made.

The Assessment Panel will use the following assessment criteria to guide their scoring decisions: (Numbers in brackets relate to sections in the application form)

Criteria	Maximum score	Weighting
Eligibility (1) (2) Is the project / participants eligible for grant funding?	<i>Qualifying criteria</i>	
Research Question / Rationale / Fit with the programme (4) Are the research questions and the rationale for their selection clear? Do projects fit within the programme's areas for exploration?	<i>Qualifying criteria</i>	
Group demographics and experience (2) (3) Does the proposed make-up and diversity of the group, and their experience / expertise in the delivery of standards and/or end-point assessment, indicate that the project will be effective and well managed?	5	4
Approach (5) (6) Do the methods / approach set out in the proposal indicate that the project will be effective in their methodology? (page 7) How will the group work collaboratively, and how will the project lead manage the project group?	5	5
Outputs (7) What new knowledge and understanding of the standards-based apprenticeship process is the project aiming to create? What tangible outputs are expected to emerge from the project? How will these be effective, accessible and transferable to other practitioners?	5	7
Outcomes and impact (8) Will project proposals generate and be able to measure impact in relation to the indicators (page 7) during and after the programme?	5	4
Value for money Do the proposed activities, outputs, outcomes and impact (and any added value) represent value for money?	5	4
Overall: Balance Will the project sit alongside other high-scoring projects to help achieve a programme this is well balanced and high-impact?		

It is important that the 10 successful projects form a well-balanced programme overall, that achieves maximum reach, outcomes and impact for the sector. Scores in themselves will therefore not determine the final success or otherwise of the application.

Where your application is unsuccessful, we are happy to provide feedback on why this has been the case. Applicants however will not be able to appeal the decision or ask for a re-assessment.

MAKING A PROJECT PROPOSAL

Identifying a theme for investigation and specifying your research questions

Prior to presenting your proposals each collaborative team will need to define and agree a specific research question.

These must:

- a. relate to one or more of the four headline themes (page 4 and 4)
- b. specify precise questions for investigation
- c. clearly set out how the questions fits within the new apprenticeship journey
- d. describe the context within which the project will be conducted

Outputs

Practical outputs

Each project will aim to produce practical outputs that can be widely shared across the apprenticeship sector.

The types of outputs you might produce could be for example tools, templates, case studies, checklists, procedures, process documentation, guidance, etc.

Outputs could be produced in a variety of media in print, audio, video, app or other formats.

Projects do not need to limit themselves to a single output. The richness of the potential outputs set out in the proposal will be an important factor in assessing proposals.

Research and evaluation outputs

Each project will need to produce:

- concise monthly monitoring to a standard template
- two short formative evaluation reports during the project
- a final summative evaluation report in March 2018

Submitting your application

The application form can be downloaded as a separate document, alongside the prospectus here: www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/otla. Each section of the form directly relates to the assessment criteria. Please keep within the word limit – any words over the limit will not be taken into consideration. No additional attachments or annexes are permitted.

Applications must be submitted to otla@strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk and must be received by **(12 noon) Weds, 25th April 2018**. Any applications received after this time/date will not be assessed.

All questions about the programme and application process can be submitted to: otla@strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk. We will aim to answer questions within 48hrs. All questions and answers will be anonymised and published as an open-access downloadable document here: www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/otla. Deadline for questions is (5pm) Friday, 20th April 2018.

Professional Standards

The Foundation's Professional Standards underpin all research activities and support for practitioners: <http://www.etfoundation.co.uk/supporting/support-practitioners/professional-standards/>

It is important that you, and all project participants, have read and understand these Professional Standards. We expect these to be reflected in your application - in particular, in the way you design, carry out and evaluate your project.

We will conduct a session on the Professional Standards with each project lead, as part of the project initiation. We will also expect project leads to conduct a similar reflective session with all project participants during their first face-to-face meeting and discuss how the Professional Standards will be embedded in all project activities and outputs, and how you will measure progress against the Professional Standards.

Project leads will be asked to report on this, as part of their monthly and evaluative reports.

Building your Project Consortium

Proposals could originate from existing partners who have previous experience of collaborative projects, from individual organisations, from networks of organisations and from individual practitioners with a strong area for investigation looking to work with others. However, all projects must have a “home” with an eligible lead organisation.

To help individual practitioners to network and start to form project groups we are holding two Briefing and Networking events London (9th April) and Leeds (10th April). These are not compulsory. Where places remain, you can register for these here:

www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/sdnevents

In addition, a recorded webinar briefing will be published on 11th April and be made available here: www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/otla

Eligibility Criteria

The project lead must be an organisation which delivers apprenticeship training and/or end-point assessments, approved on either the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) and/or Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO)

Each group must include at least ten practitioners from at least three organisations that are involved with apprenticeship standards training or assessment (in progress or scheduled for 2018). Proposals from organisations already delivering standards training or assessment will be weighted more positively in the assessment process.

Practitioners could be from FE colleges, independent providers, employer-providers, specialist colleges, universities, third sector organisations, local authority providers, end-point assessment organisations, or other related organisations.

In most cases, we expect participants to be employed by a government approved organisation on either training or assessment organisation (RoATP / RoEPAOs), but recognise some groups may also include employer participants, free-lance trainer / assessor participants, member / network bodies, or others.

Each participant in the group must be directly involved in (or support) the front-line delivery of apprenticeship training or assessment. (*By front-line delivery, we mean those who have a day-to-day role in directly supporting, training or assessing the apprentice and/or working with the employer e.g. apprentice induction staff, tutors / trainers / teachers / coaches / on-programme assessors, curriculum design and employer engagement staff, end-point assessors, to name a few.*)

Multiple applications

Eligible practitioners / organisations may be involved in more than one application if they are materially different. If there is found to be a duplication of the same application, focus or activities, this is likely to disqualify all such applications from further review. It is unlikely that multiple applications from a single organisation or consortia would be approved as we want to achieve maximum spread, impact and value for money.

Timetable

Activity	Date
Prospectus issued	3 rd April
Launch events	9 th and 10 th April
Recorded webinar briefing published	11 th April
Deadline for questions	20 th April
Proposals to be received no later than	(12 noon) 25 th April
Assessment and appraisal of proposals	27 th April to 1 st May
Grants awarded / project lead and mentor contact commences	3 rd May
Project leads development day	9 th May

MANAGING YOUR PROJECT

Project Roles

The key roles in each project will be:

Project Leads

- project manager
- lead the team and maintain momentum during the project
- arrange face-to-face meetings and regular online catch-up points
- monitoring and reporting
- grant and project budget management
- be a practitioner researcher

Project Consortium Members

- practitioner participating in the research and output production processes
- providing peer support within the project
- reflect on their role as practitioner researchers

As a minimum, we would expect all participants to meet face-to-face at least four times throughout the project, with regular contact throughout (e.g. online meetings, email exchanges, surveys, Foundation portal).

It is also important that each participant has senior management permission / buy-in to collaborate in this way.

SDN Project Mentors

providing advice and guidance to the project lead with:

- understanding research and project processes
- defining project-specific evaluation indicators
- project set-up
- attending the initial meeting of the project team to provide briefing and support with methodology, requirements and professional standards
- providing input on the apprenticeship reforms
- monitoring project progress
- project output production

Project mentors will not be available for project administration or delivery.

Project initiation

All successful applicants will be notified on Thursday, 3rd May. The project lead will be contacted soon after this date by your assigned project mentor.

In some cases, your application may be approved subject to amendments. These will be agreed with the project lead, before any agreements or payments are issued.

Contract agreements will be issued to each project lead and signed (by both parties), along with a payment schedule.

Project leads development day

We will hold a project leads development day on Weds, 9th May in Birmingham, to

- brief you on programme and project management
- brief you on the research process and outputs
- discuss the Professional Standards and how these should be embedded
- meet your project mentor, and agree outcome and impact indicators

The development day is compulsory for all project leads - it is important you are available to attend this day, before submitting an application.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Foundation and SDN are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We expect each collaborative project to consider the equality, diversity and inclusion implications for practitioners, apprentices and employers, as part of their line of enquiry. We will ask you to reflect this in all outputs and reports. This will be taken into account when assessing applications and, as noted above, EDI-focused projects proposals are welcome.

All participants will be requested to complete the Foundation's Equality and Diversity survey, unless they have already done so as part of another project.

It is important that all project participants, and in particular project leads, consider the varying needs of people from all protected characteristic groups in all aspects of project delivery. This, for example, means:

- Sourcing meeting venues that meet minimum accessibility standards and are able to make reasonable adjustments
- Providing materials, papers or discussion points in advance, and in different formats, where requested
- Using accessible online meeting / teleconference platforms

It is also important that all project materials and outputs:

- are written in plain English
- conform to readability guidelines (e.g. uses accessible font sizes/colours)
- are suitable, where possible, for screen-readers
- reduce perceived / actual barriers e.g. using examples / images that represent diverse groups

Value of grants and financial management

The grant value available for each collaborative project is up to £12,000.

It is expected that the core purpose and activities conducted by each project group will sit outside of VAT requirements, and will therefore be treated as grant funding. If you think that any particular costs are likely to incur VAT, it is important that you make this clear in your budget when applying. Any such costs will need to sit within the total budget (maximum of £12,000).

Guidance on VAT rules can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vat-notice-70130-education-and-vocational-training/vat-notice-70130-education-and-vocational-training>

It is the responsibility of the lead organisation to ensure all VAT and State Aid regulations are complied with by all those in receipt of funding, including De Minimis Aid Regulations: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/state-aid>

It is important that project leads have agreement from all project participants that they are happy with the budget split submitted in the application form (as well as their activities and level of commitment).

Contract agreements will be issued to each project lead and signed (by both parties), along with a payment schedule.

Data Protection and Cyber Security

Protocols will be in place for programme data handling (electronic and physical) in accordance with the data protection legislation.

All project leads (and anyone else within the project who is required to store and/or share data from the project) will need to ensure appropriate security and password protections are in place for all servers, computers/devices, documents and software being used to host or share data. Back-up copies should be made and no project data should be shared with any organisation or participant outside of the programme, unless express permission has been given by those concerned.

We also expect you to have all relevant cyber security software and internal monitoring checks in place.

This will be reflected in the contract agreements signed with all project leads.

Terms and Conditions

- It is the project lead's responsibility to ensure all members of the group are in agreement with the proposed budget split submitted to us as part of the application, along with their role, level of commitment, outputs and timescales. It is also important that each participant has senior management permission / buy-in to collaborate in this way.
- All grant funding must be used solely for the purposes of the collaborative project
- The project lead organisation must have good financial health, and may be required to provide evidence (such as audited accounts) to prove this is the case