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Demonstrating Success: Handbook for Practitioners Summary Document

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Demonstrating Success Summary

This document provides a summary of the *Demonstrating Success Handbook for Practitioners* and is designed as a brief introduction to the concepts and approaches outlined in that handbook. It has been designed through work with practitioners and young people to ensure that it helps them recognise the skills that they develop through their interaction with different services and support.

The full handbook can be accessed at www.demonstratingsuccess.com and describes ways of demonstrating the success of young people and provides a set of methods and guidelines for assessing young people's achievements, development and progress in a range of settings.

What is Demonstrating Success?

Supporting young people to achieve their potential and secure the qualifications and skills they need for future employment is a key priority for the Welsh Assembly Government. Many interventions supported by the Welsh Assembly Government aim to provide young people with a range of skills which can contribute to their educational success and wider wellbeing. Many of these skills have been termed soft or generic skills and there is increasing evidence to show that employers value these skills in young people alongside formal qualifications as a starting point for employment. Demonstrating Success is about capturing evidence of progress in those skills.

Demonstrating Success is a framework for capturing the progress and success achieved by young people who receive services and support through policy based initiatives and programmes in different sectors and settings. As part of this wider framework, this summary

handbook for practitioners describes a framework for assessing the “distance travelled” in relation to skills that have been termed soft or generic skills. In this handbook these skills are explored further as well as the concept of **the social and emotional groups of skills**, which are *Interaction, Motivation and Taking Part, Independence and Respect for Others*.

As part of the process in developing the approach, we worked with young people to develop this description:

Demonstrating Success is about finding out the best ways to see what activities or projects are making a difference to you [the young person]. We want to assess things like how motivated you are to take part in activities, how well you listen to others or ask questions, how independent you are and how you handle situations.

We can do this by asking your opinion on different parts of a project, working in groups to discuss your ideas, questionnaires, video or drama presentations about what you’ve got out of a project and so on. This can help you and other young people get the best out of projects and activities now and in the future. Most importantly, it’s about celebrating your success and talking about it with your friends and others.

Description developed by, and for, young people

What are we trying to assess?

We want to show how young people progress in their *Social and Emotional Dispositions and Skills (SEDS)*. These are made up of four ‘constructs’, which are *Interaction, Motivation and Taking part, Independence and Respect for Others*. Each of these is defined in the summary table below.

Social and Emotional Dispositions and Skills (SEDS)				
Constructs				
Interaction		Motivation and Taking Part	Independence	Respect for Others
Listens to others		Demonstrates a willingness to take part	Manages own feelings	Accepts others
Key elements	Asks questions	Makes a positive contribution to an activity	Knows rights and takes responsibility for their actions	Practices empathy
	Uses appropriate body language	Sees value in taking part	Manages risk and understands consequences	Values relationships
	Uses appropriate verbal communication	Shows resilience	Is individual	

Each of these constructs and key elements can be seen in many different ways by different people and at different times. The young person, a friend, different practitioners or a parent might have different opinions on how well a young person is doing at any given time.

Why use Demonstrating Success?

Many programmes and initiatives improve the SEDS of young people. The Demonstrating Success framework can be used by practitioners to capture these improvements for a number of reasons including:



Evaluating what progress?

Demonstrating Success is about trying to see and record progress in a young person's SEDS. Progress can be seen in a number of ways: observations (by a practitioner, peer or parent); self-assessment (e.g. a questionnaire); one-to-one discussion with the young person; or ideally a combination of these. Each of these could be done using activities the young person is already involved in, or by using a method from the full handbook for practitioners, such as role plays, diaries or creative methods.

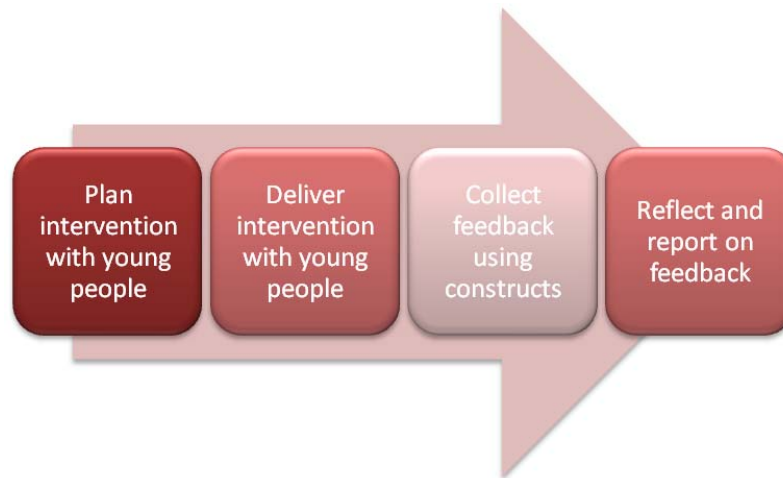
The approach taken will depend on the length, intensity and frequency of the activity. In longer term interventions where young people attend regularly, or practitioners can build a relationship with them, an initial assessment could be undertaken towards the beginning of an intervention (not necessarily the first session), followed by another assessment later on. It is recommended that the young people should be fully involved and aware of the assessments. Demonstrating Success over longer term interventions is the focus of much of this handbook.

The Demonstrating Success process – longer term interventions



However, some practitioners may deliver a one-off session (e.g. a workshop), or a short term intervention (e.g. a weekend residential) that does not enable them to gauge progress over time nor get to know the young people. In such cases, practitioners and organisations should consider other ways of collecting evidence such as asking young people for feedback on an activity, or by recording practitioners' observations of a group as a whole.

The Demonstrating Success process – short term or one-off interventions



Methods that might be more appropriate for practitioners delivering one off or shorter term interventions are outlined in the full handbook. These include feedback questionnaires from young people and group observations by practitioners. These are likely to indicate whether a session has addressed any of the SEDS rather than assessing using the levels.

How do we show progress?

Levels of progress – longer term interventions

For longer term interventions, four levels of progress have been developed to show distance travelled over time. These are Starting level, Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3. These are independent of any levels used in qualifications and would be classified as 'informal learning'. Not all of these principles will apply in any given setting and practitioners can choose the most appropriate principles for their activities.

Guiding principles behind levelling the constructs

Level	The context	Guidance	The individual	Reflect and evaluate
Starting Level	Very familiar; Working towards Level 1	Constant supervision and encouragement; Working towards Level 1	Experiencing; Working towards Level 1	Discuss an action; Working towards Level 1
1	Familiar	Supervised	Knowing	Describe an action
2	Less familiar	Supported	Applying	Reflect and evaluate self
3	Unfamiliar	Unsupported	Supporting others	Reflect and evaluate self and others

Levels are independent of any curriculum and would be classified as 'informal learning'

More detail on each of these principles is provided in the table below. These four principles should give you some flexibility to show progress in different ways. For example, if you only see a young person in one setting, then 'the context' is always likely to be familiar and therefore this is unlikely to be a useful approach to levelling for you.

Note – not all of the principles for levelling are applicable to each construct. It is also important to remember that the list of example behaviours is not exhaustive.

What do these principles mean?

Principle	The context	Guidance	The individual	Reflect and evaluate
Definition	The context in which the young person is being observed	The level of guidance provided by practitioners whilst the young person is being observed	How well the individual knows and understands their actions	The extent to which the young person is able to describe, reflect and evaluate their actions
Starting Level	Very Familiar – a context that the young person seems very comfortable in; Working towards Level 1	Constant supervision and encouragement – the young person is under the direction of an adult at all times; Working towards Level 1	Experiencing – the young person is engaged in the activity; Working towards Level 1	Discusses an action – the young person can hold a conversation about an activity; Working towards Level 1
1	Familiar – a context that the young person knows well (e.g. a class or youth club they attend often)	Supervised – a situation where a practitioner is present and leading the activity	Knowing – where the individual knows and understands what skill/behaviour is required	Describe an action – where the individual can describe an action that they carry out, or that is expected of them
2	Less familiar – a context that the young person occasionally attends	Supported – a situation where a practitioner is at hand, but not directly leading an activity	Applying – can apply the skills in relation to their own behaviour	Reflect and evaluate self – the individual can think back to an activity and reflect on how well they performed their actions and behaviours
3	Unfamiliar – a context that the young person has not been in before	Unsupervised – a situation where a practitioner is not immediately at hand	Supporting others – can identify the skill in others and help them in their performance of it	Reflect and evaluate self and others – the individual can think back to an activity and reflect on how well they and their peers performed their actions and behaviours

Levels are independent of any curriculum and would be classified as 'informal learning'.

How progress is recorded – longer term interventions

Having considered the progress of young people using the SEDS constructs and the levels, practitioners can record thoughts, observations and discussions using a basic recording sheet.

Once the practitioner feels comfortable in making an initial assessment based on these methods (this could be after a few sessions), they can use the assessment sheet below to record an initial assessment. In most cases the completion of the sheet will be made with the young person, although practitioners should use their professional judgement as to when this might not be suitable. A follow-up assessment can then be recorded although more than two assessments can be added to this sheet. It is likely that practitioners would need to amend this sheet based on their own setting and nature of their work.

Note – Demonstrating Success is therefore an assessment framework, rather than a programme of learning, or a developmental tool. However, the framework may also assist with processes such as identifying issues to work on with young people, or helping them reflect on their own learning.

DEMONSTRATING SUCCESS ASSESSMENT SHEET

Name		Date #1.....	
Staff name.....		Date #2.....	
Setting & context of the observation (e.g. where, what activity?)			
.....			
<input type="checkbox"/> Interaction (listens to others; asks questions; uses appropriate body language; uses appropriate verbal communication) <input type="checkbox"/> Motivation and Taking Part (demonstrates a willingness to take part; makes a positive contribution to an activity; sees value in taking part; shows resilience) <input type="checkbox"/> Independence (manages their own feelings; knows their rights and takes responsibility for their actions; manages risk and understands consequences; shows independence) <input type="checkbox"/> Respect for Others (is accepting of others; practices empathy; values relationships)			
Construct	Initial level	Follow-up level*	Notes
Interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> Starting <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Starting <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	
Motivation and Taking Part	<input type="checkbox"/> Starting <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Starting <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	
Independence	<input type="checkbox"/> Starting <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Starting <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	
Respect for Others	<input type="checkbox"/> Starting <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Starting <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	
Initial assessment:	Signed by (young person) Signed by (staff/mentor)		
Follow-up assessment*	Signed by (young person) Signed by (staff/mentor)		

*More than two assessments can be made by amending this sheet, or visiting www.demonstratingsuccess.com for supplementary sheets.