



The Quality in Careers Standard >>>

A Guide for CEIAG Quality Award providers

What is The Quality in Careers Standard?

The Quality in Careers Consortium owns and oversees the Quality in Careers Standard which provides national validation for England's range of Quality Awards for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). The Standard is governed by the Quality in Careers Consortium Board.

To gain the Standard, Quality Award providers must furnish sufficient current evidence to demonstrate that they meet national validation criteria in three areas:

1. Criteria, content and coverage of the CEIAG Award
2. Assessment processes for the CEIAG Award
3. Management of the CEIAG Award

This guide sets out the criteria in detail and outlines the steps CEIAG Quality Award providers are invited to take in order to seek national validation. All CEIAG Quality Award providers may apply for the Standard.

Providers offering Quality Awards that include but extend beyond CEIAG may apply for the Standard on the understanding that the national validation process and the Standard only cover CEIAG and will state this explicitly.

Applying for the Standard incurs a fee which is payable at the external assessment stage of the national validation process.

National Validation Criteria

1. Criteria, content and coverage of the CEIAG Award

All CEIAG Quality Award providers must supply evidence showing how their Award covers and supports:

- the delivery of the core principles and themes of equality and diversity, participation and progression¹, raising aspirations, promoting social mobility and linking with work-related learning
- the promotion by learning providers (*i.e. schools, colleges and work-based learning providers*) of CEIAG within the curriculum.

Specifically, providers must furnish evidence demonstrating that their CEIAG Award meets the following criteria.

National validation criteria	Evidence required
1.1 Providing effective leadership, management and promotion of CEIAG	How the Award assesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which the learning provider's leadership and management team (<i>including those providing the governance</i>) has developed and implemented a clear and effective strategy for its CEIAG provision to ensure that all learners can access and receive CEIAG. • the learning provider's arrangements for promoting CEIAG within the curriculum.
1.2 Ensuring appropriate initial staff training and continuing professional development (CPD) to	How the Award assesses a learning provider's arrangements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysing the training needs of all its CEIAG leadership, management and delivery staff and teams

¹ This is to incorporate the need to address concerns about social mobility, inclusion, sustained destinations, qualification achievement rates and students being enabled to make successful next steps. Under 'leadership & management' in the revised Ofsted 'School Inspection Handbook (January 2015), Inspectors are tasked to explore "the extent to which the school has developed and implemented a strategy for ensuring that all pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive effective careers guidance" (para. 154).

National validation criteria	Evidence required
secure the competence required of all staff involved in the learning provider's CEIAG provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning and securing CPD to meet identified training needs to ensure that all staff have a basic understanding of CEIAG, and that senior leaders have the enhanced understanding required to '<u>secure access to independent careers guidance</u>' to meet the needs of all young people within their learning provision • ensuring that all staff involved demonstrate their competence in delivering CEIAG and actively review their CPD to ensure their knowledge is up-to-date and accurate. <p><i>In addressing this national validation criteria, learning providers should take full account of the professional standards and qualifications determined by the Career Development Institute (www.thecdi.net) and/or other appropriate representative bodies</i></p>
1.3 Providing a planned and progressive programme of careers education and work-related learning in the curriculum, together with careers information and careers advice and guidance	<p>How the Award assesses a learning provider's arrangements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a strategic approach to the teaching, learning and assessment of careers education and work-related learning that effectively addresses the needs of all its young people and secures identified learning outcomes • embedding CEIAG within the mainstream curriculum (pre-16) and within the 16-19 study programme, delivering enrichment and extra-curricular activities which enhance and extend careers education and work-related learning • ensuring that all young people have access to advice and support from teachers, tutors and other relevant staff • ensuring that all young people have access to a comprehensive range of up-to-date careers information resources in formats suitable to their needs and requirements • involving young people in assessing and reviewing their own career-related learning and contributing to the career-related learning of others.
1.4 Securing independent and impartial careers advice and guidance for young people	<p>How the Award assesses a learning provider's arrangements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that <u>all</u> internally-appointed CEIAG staff are able to act with impartiality and always in the best interests of the young person, and that they subscribe to a relevant code of professional practice² • ensuring that all young people have equity of access to independent and impartial careers advice and guidance (both from external as well as internal sources) which includes opportunities for face-to-face provision for those seeking it³. • commissioning and securing access to independent and impartial careers advice and guidance that is effective in meeting all young people's needs {including the 'Gifted and Talented', the disadvantaged and at risk, and students with special educational needs (SEN)/learning difficulties and

² We expect Quality Award providers to stress to schools and colleges that all staff need to act with impartiality, and where the learning provider appoints a 'careers adviser' to its staff, the Quality Award provider must satisfy itself that the adviser is qualified to QCF L6, is registered with the Career Development Institute, complies with the CDI code of ethics and maintains his/her annual CPD requirements.

Please also note that at the National Validation Panel, if the CEIAG Quality Award has been awarded to one or more schools which have ONLY appointed a 'careers adviser' without additional access contractually secured from an external professionally qualified careers adviser as well, the NVP will require one such school to be part of the Award provider's team attending the Panel so that the Panel can satisfy itself that all of the tests of sufficiency expected in respect of NVC 1.4 are met.

³ Where the learning provider appoints a 'careers adviser' to its staff, the Quality Award provider must satisfy itself that young people confirm equity of access to external provision if they seek it.

National validation criteria	Evidence required
	<p><i>disabilities (LDD)}</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using agreements and contracts that set out the external careers advice and guidance services secured including the review arrangements for ensuring that those services remain effective and are aligned to the learning provider's overall strategy for CEIAG • ensuring that where externally-provided careers advice and guidance is secured from professionally qualified careers advisers, the learning provider ensures that any organisation⁴ providing such services meets the agreed sector standard (<i>i.e. the matrix Standard</i>) and that account is taken of the professional standards and qualifications determined by the Career Development Institute and/or other appropriate representative bodies • ensuring that employer engagement in CEIAG is effectively embedded within the careers education and work-related learning curriculum • data sharing (<i>including with the appropriate local authority/authorities</i>), and the extent to which data sharing agreements and processes benefit young people.
1.5 Working with employers and other external partners and agencies to enhance and extend CEIAG provision	<p>How the Award assesses a learning provider's arrangements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that employers can effectively contribute to the overall CEIAG provision - including enhancing learners' understanding of the world of work as well as providing inspiration and raising career awareness • involving other agencies in effective partnerships to support young people's career aspirations and decisions <i>{as well as engaging employers and employer-led bodies, partnerships should draw on external providers of careers information, advice and guidance services, local authorities, further and higher education, work-based learning providers, and community and charitable organisations}</i> • establishing effective partnerships with other organisations that support or provide information, advice and guidance for vulnerable young people.
1.6 Involving and supporting families and carers	<p>How the Award assesses a learning provider's arrangements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informing families and carers about how their children can access and benefit from its CEIAG programme • involving and supporting families and carers in its CEIAG programme.
1.7 Monitoring, reviewing, evaluating and continuously improving provision (<i>including measuring the impact</i>)	<p>How the Award assesses a learning provider's arrangements for systematic evaluation, including using an evidence-based approach to inform planning and to improve its CEIAG provision by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regularly reviewing its CEIAG programme and collecting feedback from young people, their families and carers, the delivery team(s) (<i>including</i>

⁴ Whilst every organisation providing professional careers advice and guidance should be expected to hold (or be working towards achieving) the *matrix* Standard, it is accepted that there will be 'careers advisers' working as sole-traders/in small partnerships/cooperatives, for whom it is not expected that they must be *matrix* accredited; however, there are growing numbers of sole traders/small partnerships which are *matrix* accredited, and we would hope Quality Award providers would encourage learning providers securing services from sole traders/small partnerships to encourage these to contact emqc (the awarding body for the *matrix* Standard: www.emqc.co.uk) to consider *matrix* accreditation. We would expect sole traders to meet the CDI requirements and to be registered.

National validation criteria	Evidence required
<i>of CEIAG on learning outcomes and learner progression)</i>	<p><i>external service providers)</i> and external partners such as further and higher education, work-based learning providers and employers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using data on young people's attainment and progression outcomes to set targets and objectives for learners.

2. Assessment processes for the CEIAG Award

All CEIAG Quality Award providers must supply evidence showing how their Award meets the following criteria.

National validation criteria	Evidence required
2.1 Effective evidence gathering system(s)	<p>How the Award's assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that objective, external assessment of a learning provider includes scrutiny of documentation, observations and discussions with young people, families and carers, and staff.
2.2 Sufficient and valid evidence-based self-assessment by a learning provider against the established criteria for the CEIAG Award	<p>How the Award's assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that a learning provider is required to undertake self-assessment against the established criteria for the CEIAG Award ensure that a learning provider is required to provide robust evidence for self-assessment judgements – including content, processes and outcomes for young people.
2.3 Explicit assessment criteria	<p>That the Award's assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include outcomes as well as inputs and processes have explicit criteria showing what is expected of learning providers with clear guidance on what the Award requires them to do.
2.4 Written assessment report	<p>That the Award's assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that all learning providers assessed for the Award receive a written report that includes future development targets.
2.5 Appeals and complaints procedure	<p>That the Award has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a clear appeals and complaints procedure.

3. Management of the CEIAG Award

Gaining The Quality in Careers Standard requires CEIAG Quality Award providers to have robust management processes in place for their Awards. It also requires those managing a CEIAG Award (and its implementation and assessment) to have demonstrable professional expertise in CEIAG. The Standard's national validation process recognises that providers may use different approaches to reflect their circumstances but it does not support any dilution of standards arising from this.

All CEIAG Quality Award providers must supply evidence showing how their Award meets the following criteria.

National validation criteria	Evidence required
3.1 Consultation and validation of the CEIAG Award	<p>That management of the Award:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes regular reviews with key stakeholders that help the management team to evaluate the Award's effectiveness and maintain its local and national currency • accommodates the context and needs of different types of learning provider • responds to changes in national policies for CEIAG • responds to evidence of established and emerging good practice in CEIAG.
3.2 Assessor selection, training, development, moderation and support	<p>That management of the Award:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures that assessors have a clear role specification (including knowledge and skills), training and effective support meetings • ensures that consistency is assured between assessors and provides moderation opportunities to check that they are working to the same standard.
3.3 Levels of support offered by the provider of the CEIAG Award to learning providers seeking to gain the Award	<p>That management of the Award:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides support for learning providers that can be enhanced by face-to-face and/or online training/CPD events, resources and consultations, as appropriate • ensures that support and advice processes are separate from external assessment processes.

The National Validation Process

The national validation process is undertaken by The Quality in Careers Consortium Board, under the leadership of the QiCS Director.

Step 1: Make a commitment to achieve The Quality in Careers Standard

Following receipt of a letter of commitment, The Quality in Careers Consortium Board will authorise Quality Award providers to advise their Award holders that they may refer to the national validation for the life-span of their existing Award. They must use the words *'working towards the national validation for CEIAG Quality Awards – The Quality in Careers Standard'*. New providers of CEIAG Quality Awards will be authorised to use this wording for a period of two years.

Step 2: Self-assessment (for which detailed self-assessment forms and a report template are available)

Quality Award providers assess their Award against the national validation criteria, selecting evidence that demonstrates what they deem to be effective in respect of each. For example, for criterion 1.1 'Providing effective leadership, management and delivery of CEIAG', they might include evidence of a senior leadership team committed to CEIAG and supported by:

- a clear strategy for CEIAG with an effective management structure and delivery model
- the involvement of the Governing Body of a school or college, or the Board of Trustees or others providing the governance of a work-based learning provider
- administrative support for the more routine organisational and clerical tasks
- access to other resources, including finance.

In respect of criterion 1.2, the self-assessment that Quality Award providers undertake should show how their Award assesses the extent to which learning providers take account of the professional standards and qualifications determined by the Career Development Institute and/or other appropriate representative bodies.

Step 3: Apply for an external assessment – national validation

Quality Award providers apply for national validation when they think they are ready and present a written submission to The Quality in Careers Consortium Board. This step incurs a fee.

Step 4: External assessment – national validation

The Consortium Board appoints a National Validation Panel (involving three members of the Consortium Board and a Validation Panel Adviser). This Panel considers a Quality Award provider's documentary evidence – the self-assessment outcomes with supporting materials from users and accredited Award holders.

A face-to-face meeting then takes place with the National Validation Panel which allows Quality Award providers to present their case, answer questions and discuss any issues arising (please note that the Panel will wish to meet with two learning providers⁵ holding the Quality Award as part of the validation process).

Step 5: Decision and feedback

The National Validation Panel informs Quality Award providers of its decision within two working days of the meeting and provides a formal national validation report within fourteen days.

Unsuccessful applicants have fourteen days after receiving their assessment report to appeal against the National Validation Panel's decision. They may resubmit their Award for a second stage assessment no less than three but no more than six months after receiving their national validation report.

Step 6: Validation

Upon receipt of national validation for their CEIAG Award, Quality Award providers and their accredited Award holders may use The Quality in Careers Standard logo on their materials for a period of three years. They will receive a reminder to reapply for the Standard in the three months prior to expiry.

Annual Continuous Quality Improvement Reviews

CEIAG Quality Award providers which have successfully achieved QiCS national validation are required annually to demonstrate their continuous quality improvement activities, and the potential impact of these, to their QiCS Panel Adviser. This will be initiated by the QiCS Director and undertaken by the Panel Adviser through a Continuous Quality Improvement Review (CQIR), conducted 12 and 24 months after the date of the National Validation Panel and the national validation report. Each CQIR incurs a fee.

Additional Information

Additional information and news updates on The Quality in Careers Standard, The Quality in Careers Consortium Board and the national validation process are available on the dedicated QiCS section of the Careers England website <http://www.careersengland.org.uk/quality.php?page=introduction>. The website also hosts information on Careers Guidance in Schools and Colleges in England <http://www.careersengland.org.uk/careersguidance.php?page=introduction> which incorporates case studies of good practice which we commend to all CEIAG Quality Award providers.

⁵ Please note footnote 2 earlier.