Community Adult Learning Services Branch

Quality Program:

Quality Self-Assessment Tool

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Introduction

The Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool was developed by the Community Adult Learning Services (CALS) Branch to assess the quality of their adult literacy and essential skills programs and to assist the department and its partners create an action plan for continuous program improvement.

The quality self-assessment process should be undertaken every other year, and does not necessarily have to be undertaken all at once. The self-assessment may be broken down into elements e.g. each quality standard or area of responsibility, or different program units, at the discretion of the organization, and different elements may be undertaken at different times. It can be conducted over the course of a whole year. You can focus on one element a month throughout the program year, or choose specific elements to focus on with particular groups of stakeholders. Regardless of when it is done, the timing needs to complement what is happening at your organization.

QSA Tool Structure

The QSA Tool is organized around the eight elements of program and service delivery that are seen to ultimately influence the quality of learner experience and achievement of stakeholder (including learner) outcomes, all of which comes from evidence-based practice. These are management, planning, resources, environment, human resources, delivery, partnerships and continuous improvement.

The eight quality standards for adult literacy and essential skills service delivery in New Brunswick are as follows:

QS1.	The service delivery organization is managed responsibly and meets all regulatory requirements
QS2.	Planning processes are in place which leads to a documented strategy and action plan outlining how the organization plans to meet the literacy and essential skills needs of their stakeholders
QS3.	The service delivery organization identifies, deploys and manages effectively the resources required to support its adult literacy and essential skills action plan
QS4.	Adult literacy and essential skills services promote mutual respect, equality and diversity and are sensitive to the social, cultural, vocational and learning context/s of learners
QS5.	Human resources are qualified and/or experienced in line with provincial guidelines, are supported appropriately by the organization, and have access to regular opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills
QS6.	Program development and delivery is focused on enabling learners to meet their literacy and essential skills goals and reflects best practice in adult learning principles
QS7.	Adult literacy and essential skills service delivery organizations work in partnership with other stakeholders to ensure learner needs are met
QS8.	The service delivery organization conducts its business in an open and transparent manner and is committed to the continuous improvement of its practices, programs and services

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Under each element, there is a list of quality indicators. As you address each indicator, you will give the program a performance level from 1 to 4. The results of these ratings should be discussed as a group in order to gain a full perspective on the management, programming and operations of adult literacy and essential skills programs. The performance level rating is as follows:

Rating	Performance Level	Example
4	Excellent/Exceeds Standards	Is prepared to help and work with others in this area.
3	Satisfactory/Meets Standards	Good practice with cited evidence.
2	Some progress made/ Approaching Standards	Could use additional focused assistance in this area.
1	Must Address and Improve/Standards not met	Needs significant support in this area.

Organizations are expected to strive for a satisfactory performance level (3) on all the quality indicators within each of the eight elements of program and service delivery. Over time, adult literacy and essential skills programs should continue to strive for an excellent performance level (4). At this level of performance, organizations consistently show evidence of promising practices throughout all elements of program and service delivery and serve as a model for other adult literacy and essential skills programs.

Program Planning and Improvement

The quality self-assessment process offers all of the core components of program planning and improvement, including identifying areas in need of improvement, setting goals and timelines and assigning responsibility for strategies. For organizations that already have a process for program improvement, such as annual meetings, the use of or findings from the QSA Tool can be integrated into the process and can help guide your conversations. Embedded in the QSA Tool are places to prioritize improvement efforts by making them as in need of improvement "right now", "this year" or "next year". Every organization is expected to create an action plan for improvement after the self-assessment is concluded.

Element 1: Management

Quality Standard - The service delivery organization is managed responsibly and meets all regulatory requirements.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
1	Has a written statement of mission and values.		☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Employs staff members who demonstrate the program's mission and values.		☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Has a governance model that explains how it advances the mission and values of the organization.		☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Ensures a copy of the Quality Framework is available to all staff (includes teachers, trainers and tutors) and copies are available for reference in each adult learning classroom.		☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Roles and responsibilities within the organization and between partners are defined and understood.		☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Has evidence of meeting all regulatory requirements including:					
a.	adequate insurance coverage		☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	health and safety measures		☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	first aid procedures		☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	protection of personal information in accordance with the most recent Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act/Policy.		☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Keeps complete and current registration documents for all learners.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 1: Management

Quality Standard - The service delivery organization is managed responsibly and meets all regulatory requirements.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
8	Has a clear salary structure for staff.		☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Has well-defined methods of communication with program stakeholders.		☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Organizes regular staff meetings which include information, planning, monitoring and review.		☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Has an Annual General Meeting to adopt reports and financial statements.		☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Has and adheres to a Constitution and By-Laws.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 2: Planning

Quality Standard - Planning processes are in place which leads to a documented strategy and action plan outlining how the organization plans to meet the literacy and essential skills needs of its stakeholders.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
1	Has a current strategic plan that focuses specifically on literacy and essential skills.		☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Sets measurable program goals and objectives that are aligned with the organizational mission, values and identified needs.		☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Disseminates annual program goals, objectives and targets to all staff.		☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Regularly reviews the strategic plan and takes into account changing circumstances/factors (internal and external).		☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Develops an annual action plan which:					
a.	details programs and services to be offered		☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	sets realistic but challenging targets/goals (incl. need served, retention, progress and outcomes)		☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	outlines timeframes for achieving those goals		☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	explains how progress will be tracked and reported		☐	☐	☐	☐
e.	is updated on a regular basis.		☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Reviews new research and development in adult learning, literacy and essential skills.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 2: Planning

Quality Standard - Planning processes are in place which leads to a documented strategy and action plan outlining how the organization plans to meet the literacy and essential skills needs of its stakeholders.

	A Quality Program:	**What evidence do you have?**	Performance Level:			
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**
7	Monitors learner progress, skills, knowledge and the attainment of learning goals.		☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Develops and/or plans for program evaluation that includes gathering both qualitative and quantitative data.		☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Uses objective data to measure progress toward outcomes as defined by the adult learning programs and individual learners.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 3: Resources

Quality Standard - The service delivery organization identifies, deploys and manages effectively the resources required to support its adult literacy and essential skills action plan.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
1	Ensures program space is clean and safe.		☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Identifies resource requirements required to execute the action plan, and how those resource requirements will be met.		☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Reviews resources to ensure they are adequate and appropriate to the learning context, program goals and they meet adult learners' needs.		☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Reviews learning resources to ensure they remain adequate and appropriate to the learning context, program goals and adult learners' needs.		☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Has resource management policies and procedures, that cover:					
a.	human resources		☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	finances		☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	learning environments as per the CALS guidelines		☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	learning resources (print, audio visual, computer-based, other), condition, availability		☐	☐	☐	☐
e.	equipment and technology support		☐	☐	☐	☐
f.	administrative support and time		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 3: Resources

Quality Standard - The service delivery organization identifies, deploys and manages effectively the resources required to support its adult literacy and essential skills action plan.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
g.	partnerships that inform or enhance service delivery.		☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Keeps detailed financial records and conducts an annual review of all program accounts.		☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Is committed to managing its resources in a sustainable way.		☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Manages and uses resources for different activities to meet the needs of all learners.		☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Allocates financial resources within the program's budget.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 4: Social Inclusion and Respect for Diversity

Quality Standard - Adult literacy and essential skills services promote mutual respect, equality and diversity and is sensitive to the social, cultural, vocational and learning context/s of learners.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
1	Provides a stimulating, welcoming, and supportive environment for all learners.		☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Delivers a range of service delivery options that maximize access and meets diverse needs (e.g. level, geography, time of day, attendance requirements).		☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Creates and uses recruitment plan, policies, and procedures that recognize the range of adult learner contexts.		☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Has policies and procedures that promote mutual respect, understanding and openness to all individuals and groups who access services including:					
a.	a safe, positive and appropriate learning environment		☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	learner confidentiality		☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	information on relevant support services e.g. funding, childcare, transportation, access to computers etc.		☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	contextually relevant learning materials.		☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Has staff that respect and communicate with one another and are role models of positive adult relationships.		☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Is sensitive to the culture and language of learners.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 5: Human Resources

Quality Standard - Human resources are appropriately qualified and/or experienced for their role, are supported appropriately by the organization, and have access to regular opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
1	Creates and uses well-defined policies , procedures and/or plans for and evaluation of:					
a.	recruits and hires staff that are qualified and/or experienced for their role		☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	orientation processes and tools		☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	standard personnel practices including grievance procedures		☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	performance appraisals and prompt feedback		☐	☐	☐	☐
e.	feedback from staff at all levels		☐	☐	☐	☐
f.	code of conduct		☐	☐	☐	☐
g.	reward and recognition for staff (paid and unpaid).		☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Offers training and development activities that include:					
a.	human resource development plans		☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	orientation program/s		☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	in-service training program/s and other professional development provisions		☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	processes to monitor the effectiveness of tutoring/ teaching/ instruction and for helping tutors/teachers/ instructors improve practice.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 5: Human Resources

Quality Standard - Human resources are appropriately qualified and/or experienced for their role, are supported appropriately by the organization, and have access to regular opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
3	Creates and uses support systems such as:					
a.	Tools to support processes and procedures e.g. comprehensive guidelines, job specifications for all involved		☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	Defined communication processes for day to day, change management, consultations etc.		☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	Reference materials, suggested curriculum, example learner activities, learning resources		☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	Regular meetings, peer support groups, networking opportunities.		☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Provides staff with appropriate supervision, support, and feedback.		☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Organizes regular staff meetings.		☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Assesses professional development needs of staff and provides appropriate supports such as training, coaching, mentoring, and peer learning.		☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Demonstrates understanding and appreciation for established program quality standards, evaluation, and program improvement strategies among staff.		☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Provides opportunities for advancement.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 6: Delivery

Quality Standard - Program development and delivery is focused on enabling learners to meet their literacy and essential skills goals and reflects best practice in adult learning principles.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
1	Uses the intake assessment tool.		☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Has trained and/or qualified staff to agreed standards.		☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Maintains staff-to-learner ratio as per provincial guidelines, when applicable.		☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Establishes clear attendance and participation expectations.		☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Has a system for the collection and monitoring of learner attendance and learner progress data that is regularly updated and usable by staff.		☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Has evidence of practice that supports learners in achieving their goals and demonstrates best practice in adult learning principles, including:					
a.	skills profiles, where appropriate		☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	learner assessments		☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	individual, mutually agreed learning plans		☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	lesson plans, where appropriate		☐	☐	☐	☐
e.	a range of teaching styles that allow learners to work at their own pace		☐	☐	☐	☐
f.	adequate, current, contextually relevant teaching/learning resources		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 6: Delivery

Quality Standard - Program development and delivery is focused on enabling learners to meet their literacy and essential skills goals and reflects best practice in adult learning principles.

A Quality Program:		What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
g.	opportunities to practice acquired skills		☐	☐	☐	☐
h.	regular review of learner progress that informs the learning plan		☐	☐	☐	☐
i.	documented learning accomplishments		☐	☐	☐	☐
j.	recognized learning outcomes.		☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Establishes and maintains a centralized database of learners and program information.		☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Completes all required reports and submits them in a timely manner.		☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Provides information for learners regarding progression routes and transition/bridging support services available.		☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Has minimal waiting lists.		☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Provides continuity of service in support of other learning opportunities.		☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Has an effective marketing strategy that publicizes the program and its achievement within the region and community.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 6: Delivery

Quality Standard - Program development and delivery is focused on enabling learners to meet their literacy and essential skills goals and reflects best practice in adult learning principles.

A Quality Program:		What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
13	Provides reasonable accommodations and special materials as necessary for learners with disabilities during the program and at special events.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 7: Partnerships

Quality Standard - Service delivery organizations work in partnership with other stakeholders to ensure learner needs are met.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
1	Creates and uses defined communication protocols between stakeholders.		☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Establishes processes and procedures to ensure appropriate levels of stakeholder involvement.		☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Has documented discussion/ resolution of conflicts of interest between stakeholders.		☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Keeps records and reports on different measures of success that are meaningful to key stakeholder.		☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Conducts an organizational needs assessment.		☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Creates multi-stakeholder Initiative/program reports.		☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Accesses resources within the community by seeking support from and building relationships with municipalities, local businesses and community groups.		☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Secures commitment of resources (e.g., classroom space, bulletin boards, storage space, computer facilities, and site office) from staff, when possible.		☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Forges relationships within the community for program quality and availability, such as community leaders, businesses, and municipalities.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 8: Transparency and Continuous Improvement

Quality standard - The service delivery organization conducts its business in an open and transparent manner and is committed to the continuous improvement of its practices, programs and/or services.

	A Quality Program:	What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
1	Ensures program information is available to general public.		☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Has documented policy approval process/es.		☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Provides evidence of regular review and revision, where appropriate, of the organization's strategy and action plan.		☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Creates and uses processes to ensure accurate recording and reporting of learner data including progress information; effective reporting to inform continuous improvement.		☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Provides examples of stakeholder feedback on practitioners, programs and services, to inform continuous improvement.		☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Provides evidence of regular review and revision, where appropriate, of suggested curriculum, learning material and resources.		☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Develops and/or plans for program review that includes gathering both qualitative and quantitative data.		☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Uses objective data to measure progress toward outcomes as defined by programs and individual learners.		☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Identifies and shares best practices.		☐	☐	☐	☐

Element 8: Transparency and Continuous Improvement

Quality standard - The service delivery organization conducts its business in an open and transparent manner and is committed to the continuous improvement of its practices, programs and/or services.

A Quality Program:		What evidence do you have?	Performance Level:			
			1	2	3	4
10	Creates an internal method for assessing program activities.		☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Creates an internal method for assessing staff performance.		☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Creates an internal method for assessing learner engagement levels.		☐	☐	☐	☐
13	Includes feedback from stakeholders in the program review.		☐	☐	☐	☐
14	Uses self-assessment findings for continuous program improvement.		☐	☐	☐	☐
15	Conducts an exit interview with staff and learners that leave the program.		☐	☐	☐	☐