

Quarterly Performance Summary

Quarter 4
January-March 2015

Overall organisation summary

This report covers January – March 2015. Our performance ratings have the same overall position as Quarter 3 with an equal balance of green and amber ratings. The main movement has been Deliverable 2.3 (Investment programmes) improving to green, and Deliverable 1.3 (Communications) moving to amber.

This quarter we have continued to strengthen our outward facing role by building on the positive response to 'Growth through People'. We published the underpinning evidence and analysis alongside other key messages and information from our research products, as well as holding events and continuing to develop our networks in key sectors and localities.

We are continuing to work with the industrial partnerships and employer-led projects to promote the benefits of effective employer collaboration on skills and are strengthening innovation and collaboration through the UK Futures Programme, focussing on identifying "what works" through the early learning from the first two competitions. Our support for employer collaborative projects through the Employer Investment Fund and the Growth and Innovation Fund programmes is now largely completed and we have started to share the findings and lessons emerging from the final first phase evaluation and stocktake reports.

We are preparing our position on key areas of skills policy and plan to publish our proposals after the election. We have consulted further on the content of our position paper on NOS, 'Start with Standards', and have shared our discussion paper on local outcome agreements, jointly developed with the Association of Colleges, with a wide range of stakeholders.

We have delivered a strong financial performance having managed our budget within the agreed tolerance level of 0-1% of our Quarter 2 forecast expenditure and have continued to generate efficiency savings with average non-pay running costs reducing by 11% compared to 2013-14. In addition we have successfully concluded our voluntary exit scheme, with 13 exits agreed by the end of 2014/15. We have now agreed our Grant in Aid letter and associated budget for 2015/16 with our sponsors, led by BIS. Our operational Business plan for 2015/16 and associated budget allocation has been approved by our Strategic Management Group and the plan is now with our sponsors for comment. Approval has been given for the re-appointment of four Commissioners and potential new Commissioners are being interviewed by BIS, supported by Charlie Mayfield.

Some challenges remain as we go into the new operating year with four deliverables ending the year on an amber rating. Our Communications activity has moved to amber largely due to the re-arranged timing of a number of publications and events which will now take place after the election, reflecting the heightened sensitivities during the pre-election period.

Policy on the value of national occupational standards (NOS) and the relationship between NOS and Trailblazer Apprenticeship work remains unclear in England. We will continue to work through these issues and seek to gain agreement from the four nations to our vision of the future of NOS in early 2016.

Whilst the industrial partnerships have themselves reported very positive progress, we need to have a better understanding of their actual performance based on comprehensive data to feel confident in their progress. We will continue to work with the Investors in People Delivery Partner in the South of England to address under performance relating to First Time Assessments targets and ensure that the agreed remedial plan is carried out so that the overall performance targets in 2015/16 remain achievable.

Headline ratings



Proven impact/
on track to
deliver in
line with
expectations



Impact not yet
proven/ progress
behind expectations
but can get back on
track



Impact unlikely/
progress significantly
behind expectations
and unlikely to get
back on track

Objectives and deliverables	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1 Lead the debate with industry to drive better outcomes for skills, jobs and growth				
1.1 Policy insights/enquiries				
1.2 Intelligence/research				
Communications				
2 Work with industrial partnerships and wider networks to push forward employer ownership of skills				
2.1 Standards and frameworks				
2.2 Industrial partnerships				
2.3 Employer investment programmes				
3 Test out employer-led innovation to address persistent skills challenges				
3.1 UK Futures Programme				
4 Help businesses realise the potential of their people through Investors in People				
4. Investors in People				