Criteria for assessment of stage 2 SCIF applications

This document outlines the criteria that will be used to review stage 2 SCIF applications.

Assessment criteria will be scored on a scale of 1 to 4. A score of 1 denotes "inadequate", a score of 2 denotes "moderate demonstration", a score of 3 denotes "good demonstration" and score of 4 denotes "strong demonstration".

Scoring will be primarily based on the content of the application, but external information from the Further Education Commissioner team and the ESFA intervention teams will also be considered by the Assessment Panel as relevant. Purple font denotes information from external sources.

To be considered for an award, applicants must score at least "moderate demonstration" on all and "good demonstration" on at least some areas of assessment.

Area of assessment	Information assessed	Strong demonstration (4 points)	Good demonstration (3 points)	Moderate demonstration (2 points)	Inadequate demonstration (1 point)
1. Effectiveness and impact on students of the proposed improvement activities	**Application response to questions 3 and 4:** Please outline the programme of work you have developed with your quality improvement partner to address the quality challenge(s) identified in your stage 1 application form What are the specific activities of your programme of work and how will each contribute to your overall quality improvement programme?	• In the application, the link between the identified challenge(s) at stage 1, the activities specified in the programme of work, and their projected outputs and outcomes is **very comprehensively and persuasively** demonstrated. • In the application, there is a **very clear and compelling** argument with **strong evidence** outlining how the programme of work will address the underlying challenges identified at stage 1. • The application includes a **robust and very well-developed** project management plan, **fully** outlining what will happen at each stage of the programme of work; providing dates by which each stage will be completed; and identifying who will be responsible for each stage.	• In the application, the link between the identified challenge(s) at stage 1, the activities specified in the programme of work, and their projected outputs and outcomes is **well set out in details.** • In the application, there is a **well set out argument** with **good evidence** outlining how the programme of work will address the underlying challenges identified at stage 1. • The application includes a **good** project management plan, outlining in a **good amount detail** what will happen at each stage of the programme of work; providing dates by which each stage will be completed; and identifying who will be responsible for each stage.	• In the application, the link between the identified challenge(s) at stage 1, the activities specified in the programme of work, and their projected outputs and outcomes is **adequately outlined but there is limited detail in plans.** • In the application, there is an **acceptable argument** with **some evidence** outlining how the work will address the underlying challenges identified at stage 1. • The application includes an **adequate** project management plan, outlining to **an acceptable degree of detail** what will happen at each stage of the programme of work; providing dates by which each stage will be completed; and identifying who will be responsible for each stage.	• In the application, the link between the identified challenge(s) at stage 1, the activities specified in the programme of work, and their outputs and outcomes is **not clearly outlined,** or **important elements are absent.** • The application provides **insufficient or not very persuasive** evidence of how the programme of work will address the underlying challenges identified at stage 1. • The application **does not include an adequate or realistic** project management plan outlining what will happen at each stage of the programme of work; providing dates by which each stage will be completed; and identifying who will be responsible for each stage.

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	Additional information from Further Education Commissioner's team and ESFA's intervention teams provided to the panel corroborates or challenges the information provided in response to questions 3 and 4.	• Additional information available to the panel **strongly corroborates** that the programme of work is appropriate to the challenge.	• Additional information available to the panel **corroborates** that the programme of work is appropriate to the challenge.	• Additional information available to the panel **partially challenges** that the programme of work is appropriate to the challenge.	• Additional information available to the panel **does not corroborate** that the programme of work is appropriate to the challenge.
2. Capacity to undertake the detailed improvement programme	**Application response to questions 5 and 6:** What are the risks you have identified to the success of your programme of work, and how will you mitigate these? Does your college have the resources and support for the programme of work?	• **Top risks** are identified and explained, and **comprehensive and well-formed** mitigation strategies are outlined. • The applicant college **fully demonstrates** that it has the financial and staffing resources needed to successfully undertake the programme of work. • The applicant college demonstrates that is has a **strong** leadership that is	• **Top risks** are identified and explained, and **good** mitigation strategies are outlined. • The applicant college **demonstrates in detail** that it has the financial and staffing resources needed to successfully undertake the programme of work. • The applicant college demonstrates that is has **good levels** of the leadership and stakeholder buy-in needed to	**Some important** risks are identified and **adequate** mitigation strategies are outlined, but other important risks are not addressed. • The applicant college generally **demonstrates** that it has the financial and staffing resources needed to successfully undertake the programme of work although **there are some gaps.**	• The risks identified **are not likely the most pressing**, and/or the mitigation strategies proposed are likely to only be **partially effective.** • The applicant college **does not demonstrate** that it has the financial and staffing resources needed to successfully undertake the programme of work. • The applicant college **does not fully demonstrate or fails to demonstrate** that it has the leadership and

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		committed to the success of the programme of work, and **strong** stakeholder buy-in for the programme of work.	successfully undertake the programme of work.	• The applicant college demonstrates that it has **adequate levels** of the leadership and stakeholder buy-in needed to successfully undertake the programme of work.	stakeholder buy-in needed to successfully undertake the programme of work.
	Additional information from Further Education Commissioner's team and ESFA's intervention teams provided to the panel corroborates or challenges the information provided in response to questions 5 and 6.	• Additional information available to the panel **strongly corroborates** that the college has the resources and capacity required by the programme of work to successfully undertake it.	• Additional information available to the panel **corroborates** that the college has the resources and capacity required by the programme to successfully undertake it.	• Additional information available to the panel **partially challenges** that the college has the resources and capacity required by the programme of work to successfully undertake it.	• Additional information available to the panel **fails to corroborate** that the college has the resources and capacity required by the programme of work to successfully undertake it.

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3. Relevant expertise and capacity of the partner(s) to deliver the improvement programme	**Application response to questions 7 & 8:** What makes your quality improvement partner(s) well-suited to help you deliver this programme of work? Do the partner(s) have the resources and flexibility required to provide the improvement services outlined in the application?	• Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) have a **high level** of expertise required to support the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, there is **strong evidence** the partner(s) have played a **very active role** in developing the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) have **substantially more than the minimum level** of resources and flexibility needed to support the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) will **very actively contribute** to the programme's implementation.	• Based on the information contained in the application. the partner(s) have a **good level** of expertise to support the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, there is **good evidence** the partner(s) have played an **active role** in developing the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) have **sufficient** resources and flexibility needed to support the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) will **actively contribute** to the programme's implementation.	• Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) have **adequate expertise** to support the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) have played **some role** in developing the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) **very likely** have **adequate levels** of resources and flexibility needed to support the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) will **fairly actively contribute** to the programme's implementation.	• Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) **lack or have insufficient levels** of expertise needed to support the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) have played **little or no role** in developing the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) **appear in some areas to lack the minimum levels** of resources and flexibility needed to support the programme of work. • Based on the information contained in the application, the partner(s) will only **contribute in a limited or minimal fashion** to the programme's implementation.

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	Additional information from Further Education Commissioner's team and ESFA's intervention teams provided to the panel corroborates or challenges the information provided in response to questions 7 and 8.	• Additional information available to the panel **strongly corroborates** the judgement that the partner(s) has the capacity and capability required to successfully support the programme of work.	• Additional information available to the panel **corroborate**s the judgement that the partner has the capacity and capability required to successfully support the programme of work.	• Additional information available to the panel **partially corroborates** the judgement that the partner has the capacity and capability required to successfully support the programme of work.	• Additional information available to the panel **does not corroborate** the judgement that the partner has the capacity and capability required to successfully support the programme of work.
4. Scale and scope of expected benefits, and how value for money will be ensured.	**Application response to questions 3,4 and 9:** What are the main benefits and impacts from the programme of work?	• Application **convincingly** outlines an **extensive** array of benefits (i.e. in terms of their magnitude and/or the range of their beneficiaries and/or their nature). • Application demonstrates how improvements / learning from project may generate **significant** wider benefits for other colleges. • Application provides **strong evidence** about how the programme of work will contribute to building improvement	• Application outlines a **solid** array of benefits (i.e. in terms of their magnitude and/or the range of their beneficiaries and/or their nature). • Application demonstrates how improvements / learning from project may **generate some wider benefits** for other colleges. • Application provides **good evidence** about how the programme of work will contribute to building improvement capacity in the broader sector.	• Application **convincingly** outlines an **extensive** array of benefits (i.e. in terms of their magnitude and/or the range of their beneficiaries and/or their nature). • Application demonstrates how improvements / learning from project **may generate benefits** for other colleges. • Application provides **some evidence** about how the programme of work will contribute to building improvement capacity in the broader sector.	• Application outlines a **limited** array of benefits (i.e. in terms of their magnitude and/or the range of their beneficiaries and/or their nature), or outlines benefits that are **uncertain.** • Application proposes to make **more** use of non-college providers than of colleges. • Application provides **little or no evidence** about how the programme of work will contribute to building improvement capacity in the broader sector.

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		capacity in the broader sector.			
	Additional information from Further Education Commissioner's team and ESFA's intervention teams provided to the panel corroborates or challenges the information provided in response to questions 3, 4, or 9.	• Additional information available to the panel **strongly corroborates** that programme of work is likely to generate an extensive array of important benefits at a reasonable cost.	• Additional information available to the panel **partially corroborates** that programme of work is likely to generate an extensive array of important benefits at a reasonable cost.	• Additional information available to the panel **partially challenges** that programme of work is likely to generate an extensive array of important benefits at a reasonable cost.	• Additional information available to the panel **does not corroborate** that programme of work is likely to generate an extensive array of important benefits at a reasonable cost.
	Application response to question 10: How will you ensure that the activities outlined for your programme of work demonstrate value for money? a. What evidence do you have that the costs for the specific activities of your programme of work are	• The application provides **strong evidence** that the costs of the specific activities of the programme are proportionate and reasonable. • The application **persuasively demonstrates** that the programme of work will use funds to support activities that are *additional* to current staff/activities (e.g. expansion or acceleration of	• The application provides **good evidence** that the costs of the specific activities of the programme are proportionate and reasonable. • The application **demonstrates** that the programme of work will use funds to support activities that are *additional* to current staff/activities (e.g. expansion or acceleration of activities that have	• The application provides **some evidence** that the costs of the specific activities of the programme are proportionate and reasonable. • The application **broadly demonstrates** that the programme of work will use funds to support activities that are *additional* to current staff/activities (e.g. expansion or acceleration of	• The application provides **little or no evidence** that the costs of the specific activities of the programme are proportionate and reasonable. • The application proposes to use funds to **simply continue existing funding** for staff/activities that have up until that point been supported out of regular revenue streams.

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	reasonable and proportionate? b. How will the programme of work fund activity that is additional to current activities?	activities that have already been planned; additional activities beyond those that are planned; adoption of new ways of addressing quality challenges).	already been planned; additional activities beyond those that are planned; adoption of new ways of addressing quality challenges).	activities that have already been planned; additional activities beyond those that are planned; adoption of new ways of addressing quality challenges).	
5. The capacity to sustain improvement when the SCIF funding is no longer available	**Application response to question 11:** How will the benefits from the programme of work be sustained over time (i.e. once the SCIF grant has been spent)?	• Application provides a **very comprehensive** demonstration of how the improvements achieved will be sustained beyond the period of SCIF funding, e.g. through embedding improved practices, behaviours, systems and people in the college's business as usual operations. • Based on the information provided in the application, the college **clearly has sufficient** financial, human and other resources needed to sustain any progress that is made.	• Application provides a **solid** demonstration of how the improvements achieved will persist beyond the period of SCIF funding, e.g. through embedding improved practices, behaviours, systems and people in the college's business as usual operations. • Based on the information provided in the application, the college **likely has sufficient** financial, human and other resources to sustain any progress that is made.	• Application provides an **adequate** demonstration of how the improvements achieved will persist beyond the period of SCIF funding, e.g. through embedding improved practices, behaviours, systems and people in the college's business as usual operations. • Based on the information provided in the application, the college **appears to have sufficient** financial, human and other resources to sustain any progress that is made.	• Application provides an **partial or problematic** demonstration of how the improvements achieved will persist beyond the period of SCIF funding. • Based on the information provided in the application, the college **appears to lack some** of the financial, human and other resources needed to sustain any progress that is made.

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	Additional information from Further Education Commissioner's team and ESFA's intervention teams provided to the panel corroborates or challenges the information provided in response to question 11.	• Additional information available to the panel **strongly corroborates** that the college has sufficient resources and capacity to sustain the improvements that will follow from the programme of work, and is likely to successfully embed these in its ongoing operations.	• Additional information available to the panel **corroborates** that the college has sufficient resources and capacity to sustain the improvements that will follow from the programme of work, and is likely to successfully embed these in its ongoing operations.	• Additional information available to the panel **partially challenges** that the college has sufficient resources and capacity to sustain the improvements that will follow from the programme of work, and is likely to successfully embed these in its ongoing operations.	• Additional information available to the panel **does not corroborate** that the college has sufficient resources and capacity to sustain the improvements that will follow from the programme of work, and is likely to successfully embed these in its ongoing operations.
6. Sound approach to monitoring progress and to evaluating the results of the programme of work	**Application response to question 12:** What strategies will you use to monitor the progress of your programme of work?	• Application outlines a **comprehensive and rigorous** plan showing how progress will be measured over the course of the programme of work, and how the programme of work will be evaluated at its close. • The plan includes a **broad and appropriate** range of indicators/success measures against which the success of the programme of work will be judged.	• Application outlines a **good, detailed** plan showing how progress will be measured over the course of the programme of work, and how the programme of work will be evaluated at its close. • The plan includes a **broad** and **appropriate** range of indicators/success measures against which the success of the programme of work will be judged.	• Application outlines an **acceptable** plan showing how progress will be measured over the course of the programme of work, and how the programme of work will be evaluated at its close. • The plan includes an **acceptable** range of appropriate indicators/success measures against which the success of the programme of work will be judged.	• Application demonstrates **little** planning for how progress will be measured over the course of the programme of work, and how the programme of work will be evaluated at its close. • The plan only outlines a very **limited** range of indicators/success measures against which the success of the programme of work will be judged, or the measures outlined are only **partially appropriate.**

Area of assessment	Information assessed	Strong demonstration (4 points)	Good demonstration (3 points)	Moderate demonstration (2 points)	Inadequate demonstration (1 point)
		• The application **describes in a good level of detail** how it plans to utilise existing datasets or create new datasets to effectively monitor the programme of work.	• The application **describes in some detail** how it plans to utilise existing datasets or create new datasets to effectively monitor the programme of work.	• The application **outlines but is limited in detail** how it plans to utilise existing datasets or create new datasets to effectively monitor the programme of work.	• The application **fails to describe** how it plans to utilise existing datasets or create new datasets to effectively monitor the programme of work.