



Factors which contribute to the success of a National Test Centre

The Move On Regional Advisors have been visiting National Test Centres to discover what contributes to and what might inhibit success, in terms of the number of people taking the test and their success.

Characteristics of a successful National Test Centre

- Top-down support with strong leadership and management across the institution.
- Frontline staff who have benefited from 'recruiter briefing'.
- All learners on Level 1 & 2 programmes assessed for skill gaps.
- Providers who are prepared to think 'outside the box' when considering who/where the potential learners are.
- Able to work effectively with an internal market of learners as well as new learners.
- Good links and strategies for working with specific groups, e.g. teaching assistants completing other courses.
- Teaching staff who are motivated and experienced and who are confident in using initial and diagnostic assessment tools.
- Good use of Individual Learning Plans to track learner progress from 'other provision' to National Test qualification aim.
- Quality resources to support learning.
- The offer of a taster session.
- Built-in test practice.
- A flexible response involving onscreen and regular paper-based assessment opportunities.
- Learners sit the test when ready.
- Understanding exam officers, who are keen to support learners and teachers.
- Contextualised learning.
- It happens best where there is a dynamic advocate of the National Certificates, e.g. Move On Coordinators or Champions.

Factors which appear to inhibit success

- A history of difficulties in updating and developing a quality Skills for Life provision.
- Undeveloped links with the main curriculum.
- Organisations relying on Key Skills and GCSE to make its target contribution.
- Lack of progression strategies for learners.
- Tutors with little experience of working beyond Entry Level.
- A narrow approach to the potential market of learners.
- Undeveloped community-based provision.
- Entering all learners without a screening/diagnostic assessment, as a casual add on to another course.
- Lack of analysis of weak areas and focused skills development.
- Lack of test practice.
- Lack of staff training.
- Lack of materials to support teaching/learning.
- No on-screen or weekly testing regime.
- Rigid exam office procedures.