

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

SAQ Assessment Process

1. Purpose of document:

This document outlines the processes that NTST and partner agencies use in:

- a) Assessing local areas' responses in their Self Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) submissions;
- b) Applying criteria to benchmark local areas in relation to areas of good practice and areas for further development and;
- c) Determining the Development Stage they have reached during the Transition Support Programme.

2. Context

The Self Assessment Questionnaire is devised in a way that supports local areas to complete a multi agency self assessment in order to provide an honest shared understanding of how transition is operating within and across their services. It has been designed to capture the main statutory and guidance elements in relation to transition across all agencies and provide local areas with the space to share areas of improvement, innovation and good practice.

It is evident that in order for disabled young people and their families to experience positive support during the transition process a wide range of agencies, departments and processes need to work together effectively. The Self Assessment Questionnaire aims to capture a snapshot of how these agencies, processes and systems work together at a specific point in time in a local area. SAQ I was completed in January 2009, SAQ II in December 2009, and SAQ III in December 2010. The SAQs identify progress that has been made during this period of time and will determine the revised Development Stage each local area has reached during the course of the Transition Support Programme.

3. 4 Stage SAQ Assessment Process

This is the same method used in previous years to determine support allocated to local areas. In this final year the process is used to arrive at a Development Stage for each local area.

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| Stage 1 | NTST assess each local area's compliance with statutory requirements and guidance with regards to transition services from information contained in the SAQ. |
| Stage 2 | NTST assess areas of good practice, innovation and progress identified in the SAQ and provided by other sources (eg Named Advisors, Innovation and Outcomes work, case studies). |
| Stage 3 | Additional assessments and evidence is provided by TSP Named Advisors and local areas themselves. |
| Stage 4 | Recommendations are provided by NTST and Partners (CHaMP and National Strategies Leads) to DfE, DH and final decisions are made. |

The information provided by local areas in their completed SAQ is scored in order to develop a quantitative analysis that provides an indicator of progress. It is the SAQ score, alongside qualitative information and verification from TSP Named Advisors, that determines the recommendations NTST, National Strategies and CHaMP make to DfE and DH.

Assessing local area compliance with statutory requirements and guidance

Stage 1

The first stage of assessment is based on how local areas have self assessed that they are meeting **statutory requirements, guidance and regulation requirements**. Each question relating to statutory requirements and guidance is scored and graded based on how established and embedded they are in common practice.

- E.g. 2 points provided if work experience is available to all Disabled Young People in Year 10
1 point if some Disabled Young People have access to work experience in Year 10 but those with more complex needs have school based work experience
0 points if few disabled young people have access to work experience or figures aren't collated.

This scoring system enables NTST to identify on the assessment grid (Figure 1) at which point of the continuum a local area has assessed itself as being.

Stage 2

Although statutory requirements and guidance compliance are the main basis on which a local area will be benchmarked, examples and evidence of good practice across the 5 TSP focus areas will be analysed from the information provided in the SAQ.

5 focus areas for year 3 of the Transition Support Programme

1. **Participation** of disabled young people and their families
2. Effectiveness of **personalised approaches**
3. **Joint assessments** processes within children's trusts and adult services
4. Realistic **post 16 opportunities** for living life
5. Strategic **joint partnership** working

What this might mean locally:

- Effective engagement with and participation from disabled young people and also their families;
- Effectiveness of personalised approaches including person centred planning, use of individual budgets and direct payments;

- Joint assessment processes within **children's trust services, including schools and with adult social care;**
- Realistic **post 16 opportunities for living life and to help reduce the numbers of disabled young people who are not in education, employment or training;**
- Strategic partnership working **including commissioning, to ensure that all agencies are fully engaged in providing transition support. In addition ensuring that other AHDC activity and universal offers, like the youth strategy, take into account the needs of disabled young people at transition.**

This will provide a more holistic picture of transition practice in each local area and as such is as equally important an indicator, as Stage 1, in evaluating transition practice in local areas.

An example of good practice in relation to work experience may involve the identification of suitable work experience being completed in Year 9 person centred transition reviews, providing time for young people to complete visits with employers prior to work experience commencing to identify relevant support needs and clarify expectations.

Areas of good practice and innovation are scored and applied to the assessment grid at the relevant point of the continuum.

Stage 3

Each local area was allocated a TSP Named Advisor who will have worked closely with them to develop and implement a Transition Development Plan. Information provided by each Named Advisor is submitted through monthly reports and an assessment of progress made to verify and support the information provided by local areas in their SAQ.

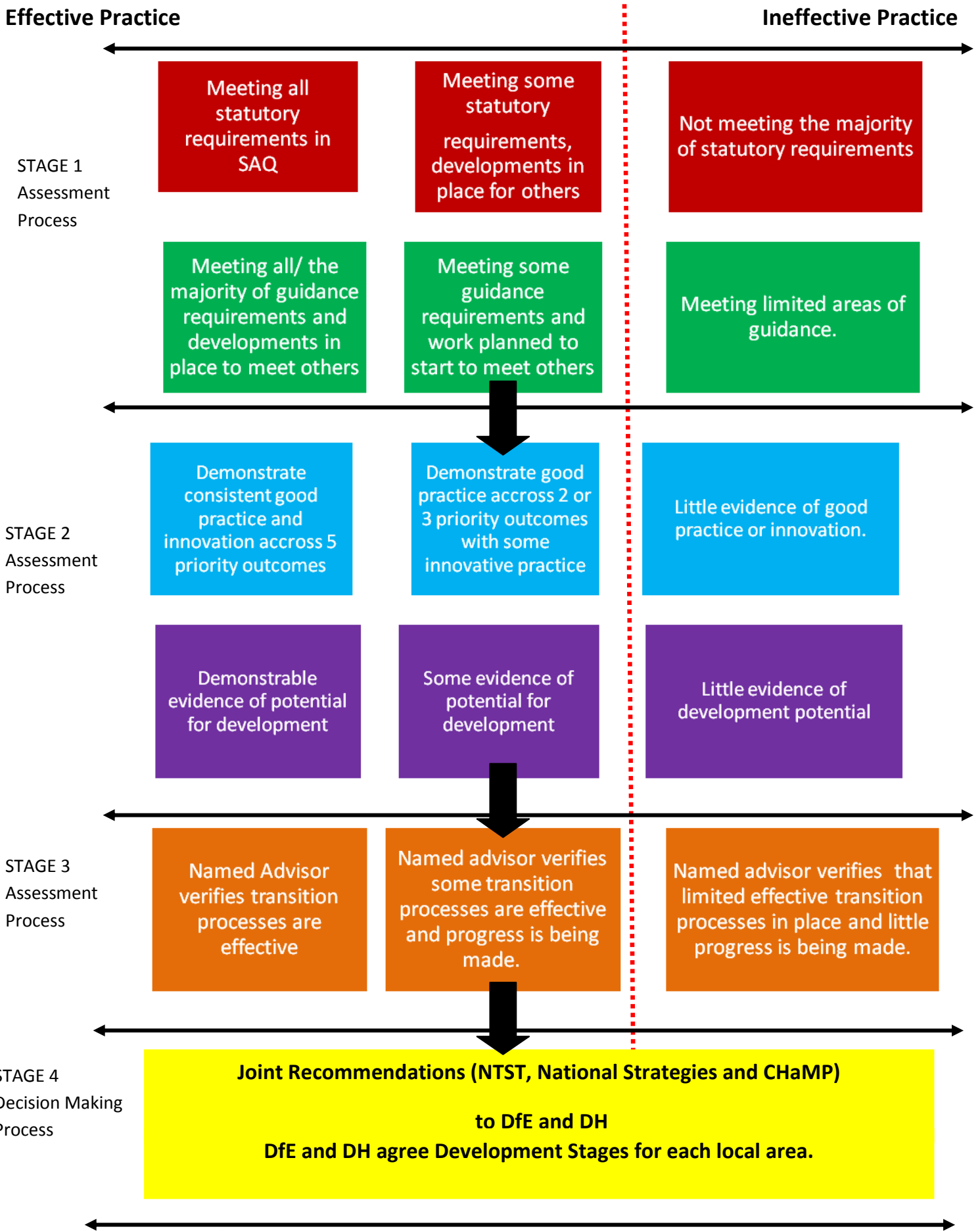
Stage 4

DfE and DH are the final decision makers in which Development Stage local areas are placed in. This decision is made through a scrutiny process with representatives from DfE and DH that discuss recommendations put forward by NTST, National Strategies and CHaMP and the rationale behind this decision making.

NTST will submit in report form individual local areas benchmarked position and the rationale and evidence that have led to this position.

DfE and DH will scrutinise recommendations and may ask questions to gain further clarification and request to see the evidence on which recommendations are made. (E.g. protocols, Named Advisor reports, steering group minutes, statistical data, SAQ etc.)

Figure 1. Assessment Grid



Benefits of Development Stage at end of the programme

The majority of local areas have worked hard to collaborate across agencies and develop a significant and effective workplan to improve support to disabled young people and their families locally. They have used their engagement with the TSP, and in particular the completion of the SAQ, to check on progress, identify success and gaps requiring further attention.

This process has been particularly useful in providing evidence locally on how areas are doing in relation to other areas, engaging young people and families in future planning, informing the commissioning process and in cementing joint working. Going forward with a final DS placement gives local areas the opportunity to continue with this model, using the revised SAQ available beyond the TSP, to regularly monitor progress, clearly show success and make the case for continued and improving support.

See overleaf for a chart setting out the Development Stages

Chart of development stages

Development Stage	Local area delivery
Development Stage 4 (17 local areas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local areas that are meeting all statutory and all guidance requirements • Have excellent/ innovative practice in at least 3 of the 5 focus areas, and good practice in the remainder. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership and commitment to continued improvement • Active strategic involvement across key agencies • Young people and family members are actively involved in developing and reviewing transition practice • Have demonstrable evidence that developments have potential to have a long term impact on outcomes for disabled young people
Development Stage 3 (67 local areas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local areas that are meeting all statutory requirements and the majority of guidance requirements • Demonstrate good practice across the 5 focus areas with evidence of innovative practice. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have evidence of participation of young people and their family members in the development or review of transition practice • Have evidence that developments have potential to have a long term impact on outcomes for disabled young people
Development Stage 2 (67 local areas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local areas that are meeting most statutory requirements and some guidance requirements • Demonstrate good practice across at least 2 of the 5 focus areas with some innovative practice. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have some evidence of participation of young people and their family members in the development or review of transition practice • Have some evidence that developments have potential to have a long term impact on outcomes for disabled young people
Development Stage 1 (1 local area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local areas that are not meeting all statutory requirements and meeting limited areas of guidance. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have little evidence of good practice or innovation • Have little or no evidence of participation of young people and their family members in the development or review of transition practice • Have little or no evidence of potential for development