

THE QUALITY EXCHANGE – 30 May 2007
The National Youth Agency, Leicester

WORKSHOP REPORT

Section 1 - Introduction, Aims and Objectives

The Quality Exchange workshop, held at The NYA's offices in Leicester on 30 May 2007, was a partnership event jointly supported by The NYA and the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services. The event involved 34 people from a variety of voluntary, maintained and independent youth sector organisations. It was funded through the VCS Exchange programme.

The aims of the Quality Exchange were to offer participants an opportunity to hear more about quality systems tailor made for youth organisations and services for young people, and to exchange ideas about assuring quality in youth organisations.

Steve Drowley, Team Manager for Standards and Workforce Development at NYA introduced the event and explained its objectives as being to:

- Showcase three tried and tested quality assurance systems of relevance to the youth sector and explain how they fit together - the systems being The NYA's Quality Mark (YSQM) and Hear by Right, and NCVYS' Sound Systems;
- Enable participants to explore these systems in detail and discuss how they might be relevant to their organizations;
- Provide an opportunity for the sector to network and share good practice around quality assurance systems;
- Explore ways in which the *Quality Exchange* could be taken forward, including consulting on what a mini-guide might contain.

He welcomed the message of support for the Quality Exchange event from Jamie Kelly on behalf of the Supporting Young People Group at the DfES:

"DfES welcome the partnership working by the NYA and NCVYS that has resulted in this event. The workshop provides participants with an excellent opportunity to share learning, and will help the youth sector make further progress in how it responds to the needs of young people."

Quality Exchange – the concept

Jenny Willmott, Head of Membership Development at NCVYS, who co-facilitated the workshop, explained the background to the Quality Exchange idea. It stemmed from:

- Discussions between NCVYS, The NYA and DfES about different quality systems;
- Phasing out of the self-assessment for National Voluntary Youth Organisations (NVYOs);
- Identified need for clearer information on quality systems in the youth sector.

The potential aims of Quality Exchange in general terms were to:

- Provide information and clarity on the various recommended quality systems and processes available to organisations;
- Recommend various quality systems to the youth sector;
- Identify areas of overlap and where appropriate cross-recognise standards in order to avoid duplication of effort for youth organisations wanting to go through more than one quality system;
- Provide information and advice to the youth sector on the recommended quality systems via, for example, events, signposting, written communications, links on websites;
- Provide guidance for commissioning and funding bodies seeking suitable quality assurance for bodies they wished to commission or fund;
- Provide opportunities for the sector network and share practice around quality assurance systems.

Section 2 - Presentations of 3 Quality Systems

(Power Point presentations and summaries of the quality processes are available for each of these systems linked to this report on The NYA website)

- 1. NYA's Quality Mark for Services for Young People (YSQM) – Steve Drowley explained**
 - the rationale for the Quality Mark – building blocks for improving service quality;
 - the uses it could be put to including supporting commissioning;
 - the 3 sections and 11 standards;
 - how to sign up for the Quality Mark; and
 - registering for the National Award – the process.
- 2. Sound Systems – Keeping It Safe – Claudine Rane Development Officer (Safeguarding) gave this presentation, covering**
 - child protection & safeguarding – definitions & differences;
 - what we are protecting children & young people from;
 - how to safeguard – what's involved;
 - what are Sound Systems & Keeping It Safe; and
 - training consultancy & support available from NCVYS.

- 3. Hear By Right – standards for the active involvement of young People** – Harry Wade NYA’s Participation Team Manager presented
- the HbR standards – based on shared values;
 - the benefits for children & young people, organisations & the community;
 - the standards framework & the mapping & planning tool;
 - measuring impact – the ‘what’s changed’ tool; and
 - Hear by Right ‘with teeth’.

For more information on these 3 systems check the linked files (Power Point displays & summaries) on the NYA website – or contact for:

NYA’s Quality Mark (YSQM) – Sue Quinn (sueq@nya.org.uk)

Sound Systems / Keeping it Safe – Claudine Rane (claudine@ncvys.org.uk)

Hear by Right - Harry Wade (harryw@nya.org.uk)

Section 3 - Moving the Quality Exchange Forward

The final section of the day focussed on the future role of “Quality Exchange”. Participants worked in groups and considered a number of key questions. These are summarised below:

1. What quality assurance systems are you involved in?

Participants highlighted a number of quality assurance systems that they are currently involved in, including; Sound Systems, NYA’s Quality Mark, Hear by Right, Investors in People and various systems based on Ofsted. Participants also highlighted some in-house systems that they are involved in, including YMCA’s InSync standards and Clubs for Young People’s Quality Mark. Participants are also involved in a number of other quality assurance processes, including peer inspections, mystery shopping, the balanced scorecard and observations.

2. What would you like from a Quality Exchange?

Participants felt that Quality Exchange could benefit the youth sector in a number of ways:

- *Profile raising and lobbying* – to funders and commissioners;
- *Networking* – peer support, sharing information – both for those organisations going through different systems and those coordinating them;
- *Information* – on different quality assurance systems, examples of good practice, advice and information, practical tools, advice on how to involve young people in quality assurance;

- *Recommending and passporting* - recommendation of different marks and passporting/ cross-referencing between different systems to avoid duplication of work.

Participants were also keen that the Exchange broadens out beyond NCVYS and The NYA systems and encompasses more quality assurance systems.

3. How would you like to be involved in a “Quality Exchange”

Most participants wanted to be involved in Quality Exchange through being kept informed of developments and having further opportunities to network and share practice. Some wanted to be more actively involved in, for example, being involved in steering the Exchange. This particularly applied to those who are responsible for co-ordinating different quality assurance systems.

4. How should NCVYS and The NYA best use resources from VCS Engage? What might a mini-guide/ publication look like?

Participants were positive about the concept of a publication or mini-guide, which provided information on a range of quality assurance systems. It was felt that information on the different systems should include: information on cost, which type of organisations the systems are targeted at, the benefits of the system and examples of organisations that have been through the system. There were mixed views about whether a resource should be web and paper-based or just web-based. It was felt that the resource would need to remain very focussed and should pull together research that has already been carried out.

Section 4 - Participant feedback on the Quality Exchange Workshop

96% of participants found the event useful or very useful, and 96% thought the running of the day was good or excellent. Qualitative feedback on the forms highlighted the usefulness of gaining information on a number of quality assurance systems and the opportunity to share practice and network. Overall participants found the information provided and the opportunity to take part in discussions around the different quality assurance systems to be particularly beneficial.

78% of participants found out about the Quality Exchange event through NYA publicity via mailings (58%), publications (12%), and website (8%). A further 19% heard by word of mouth with 3% finding out from other sources.

Several participants stated that they would like further information on how to involve young people in quality assurance. Also a number of participants highlighted that they would have benefited from more time to discuss the systems in greater detail and to share experiences. There seems to be demand for a further event which might look at these systems in more detail, bring in any additional systems and look at the role of young people in quality assurance.

Next steps

As a result of the event and the above feedback The NYA and NCVYS will...

1. Pursue the Quality Exchange project;
2. Produce a 'mini guide' to quality processes relevant to the Youth Work sector and those organisations and services working with young people;
3. Seek to hold a further event for the Quality Exchange;
4. Launch the mini guide later in 2007 and publicise it widely through the Quality Exchange and other appropriate means;
5. Produce a report on the Quality Exchange event, place it on The NYA website with links to the NCVYS website, and circulate the links to all participants.

For more information on the Quality Exchange please contact

Jenny Willmott – NYCVYS Head of Membership Development
(jenny@ncvys.org.uk)

Sue Houlton – NYA Head of Development Services
(sueh@nya.org.uk)

For more information on the 3 quality systems check the linked files (Power Point displays & summaries) on the NYA website – or contact for:

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