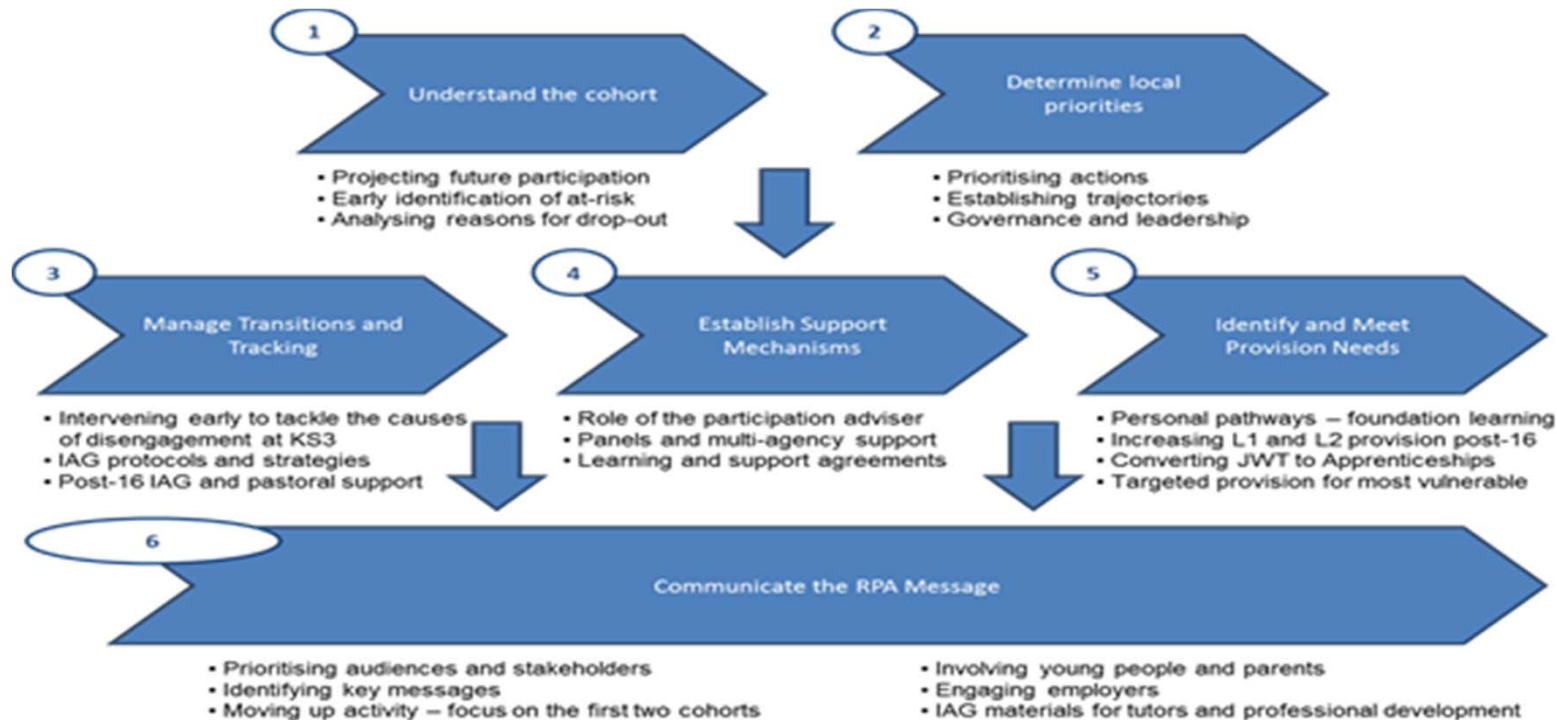# Achieving RPA – A Self-Assessment Framework for local authorities and their partners

Delivering RPA – Self-Assessment Framework

What is the framework for?

This framework is a tool to assist local authorities and their partners in understanding their current state of readiness for delivering Raising the Participation Age from 2013/15. It has been developed as part of the evaluation of the RPA local delivery projects and RPA trials and is intended to accompany a series of tools which have been produced to help local areas think through implementation of RPA. The self-assessment is designed to be completed by the local authority working with the full range of partners that will be needed to deliver RPA. The purpose of the self-assessment is to identify areas of strength and challenges in a local area. It is not intended to provide a prescriptive check list for all RPA plans, and areas may want to look at some questions in particular. The overall framework is presented below. The following pages present individual elements of the framework with questions for local authorities to consider, examples of what weak and strong delivery would look like (from the RPA trials), and space for local authorities to record where they feel they are strong and where they have weaknesses or issues to address:

1. Understand the cohort

Questions to consider...	Strong Delivery (1)	Weak Delivery (4)	1	2	3	4
1A. Projecting Participation... a) how many 16 and 17 year olds there will be each year in the future b) where the 16 year olds in 2013 and 17 year olds in 2015 are now in the system	• The local authority has a clear view of how the local 16 and 17 year old population will change between now and 2013 and 2015 • The local authority places planning team has been involved in this work	• The local authority only has a vague idea of how the local 16 and 17 year old population will change between now and 2013 and 2015 and cannot quantify this with precise numbers • There has been no join up between the RPA and places planning team				
1B. Early identification of risk... a) factors at each age pre-16 associated with non-participation at age 16 and 17 b) interrelationships between risks and their relative importance c) the relationship between present risk factors and post-16 outcomes	• The local authority has undertaken detailed analysis to consider the risks to non-participation by looking at evidence from previous cohorts • The local authority and schools have developed and are using pre and post-16 risk of NEET indicators to target interventions, and are measuring the impact of these	• The local authority and schools think they know why young people drop out but it has no evidence to support this • The local authority and schools have no mechanisms (or don't use them) for identifying young people at risk of dropping out pre- or post -16				
1C. Understanding current performance... a) why 16 year olds do not participate and 17 year olds drop out in their first year b) how 16 and 17 year olds feel about the availability and quality of IAG & provision c) how at risk pupils are distributed across secondary schools d) how well secondary schools perform against the post-16 Destination Measure e) drop-out rates at age 17 years by provider f) trends in take-up of provision (by subject and level) by provider	• The local authority has undertaken recent surveys to understand the reasons given by young people for non-participation or dropping out • All providers complete a leavers form whenever a young person drops out and the local authority regularly collates this intelligence • Data on NEET numbers at 16 and 17 by school are published and discussed at partnership meetings • Provision mapping has identified areas of over supply or demand	• Completion of leaver forms is sporadic at best and the local authority has no other intelligence on the reasons why young people don't participate or drop out • The local authority and schools don't have any data on NEET numbers at 16 and 17 by school or this data is not discussed openly • There is little or no understanding of what new provision might be needed or basis for establishing demand from young people				

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2. Determine priorities

Questions to consider…	Strong Delivery (1)	Weak Delivery (4)	1	2	3	4
2A. Prioritising actions… a) what are the common issues which have the biggest impact on participation b) what are the biggest priorities for increasing overall participation rates c) what actions will have the greatest impact on these priorities; taking into account the ease of implementation and resources involved d) what actions will have limited impact or get in the way and should be stopped	• The local authority has a clear strategy for implementing RPA with a mix of quick wins and long term actions which have been identified on the basis of evidence of impact • The local authority and its partners have discussed and prioritised actions and agreed what they are going to stop doing or do less of	• The local authority has a long list of actions which it is taking to implement RPA but there is no sense of priority or likely impact • The local authority and it's partners don't know what actions they will need to take to implement RPA • The local authority and its partners have not stopped any activities				
2B. Plan the trajectory & monitor progress… a) when are actions likely to be implemented and their impact b) the shape of the trajectory based on when impact is expected over time c) the level of full-participation based on how many young people are likely to have a temporary break in learning at any one time d) interim data points that will be used for monitoring progress against the trajectory	• The local authority knows what full participation will mean in its area and has estimated how many young people may have a temporary break in learning at any one time • There is a clear trajectory between the current level of participation and the level of full participation with interim milestones identified	• The local authority does not know what level of full participation it is aiming for and does not know how many young people may have a temporary break in learning at any one time • The local authority does not know when actions will have an impact and have been unable to plot a trajectory to full participation				
2C. Governance and Leadership… a) what is the basic governance model for monitoring the implementation of RPA b) are the full range of partners within and outside the local authority engaged in RPA c) are roles and responsibilities for implementing RPA clear and are senior managers within the local authority aware	• There are clear roles and responsibilities identified at a local authority level & amongst partners • The full range of partners from all sectors are involved in delivery • Senior managers within the local authority see RPA as a strategic priority and give sufficient attention	• There are too many overlapping groups responsible for RPA • The governance and leadership of RPA happens at too low a level within the local authority and senior managers are unaware • There is a lack of join up across the local authority and with partners				

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3. Manage transitions and tracking

Questions to consider…	Strong Delivery (1)	Weak Delivery (4)	1	2	3	4
3A. Early intervention in KS3 and beyond… a) what transition strategies are needed at each stage of young people's education b) have interventions and strategies been mapped to ensure overlaps are identified c) what gaps exist & what additional support might be needed by young people d) what specific support has been provided to the first cohorts to be affected by RPA	• The local authority has worked with providers to map existing support for young people at each transition • The local authority has identified additional support needed to support all young people or specific groups or has rationalised support • Held 'Moving up' activities (or similar) for the first RPA cohorts	• There is little or no support for transition or support is concentrated at the start and end of secondary education • Support for transitions of young people is delivered by multiple agencies and is uncoordinated • There has been no support for the first cohorts to be affected by RPA				
3B. IAG protocols and strategies… a) does data or feedback from young people tell you that IAG needs to be improved across the local authority or in schools. b) what can you do to support schools to improve the quality of their own IAG c) how are you managing the transition from Connexions to new arrangements d) how is the LA performing on the "September Guarantee" process of matching places with demand	• There are clear roles and responsibilities between the local authority and schools & transition to new arrangements is clear to all • LA is making sure all young people have a place in learning to progress to after Year 11	• The local authority has no sense of the quality of IAG locally and/or is not working with or influencing the quality of IAG at local level • There is confusion about roles and responsibilities and what will happen in transition to the new arrangements • A low proportion of young people have places agreed for when they leave Year 11, or the LA does not have data on this				
3C. Focus on groups with specific barriers… a) which groups does the analysis of your cohort suggest are your biggest priority b) what differentiated strategies and approaches are needed to address the particular needs of these groups c) Is support to these groups being joined-up effectively across the local authority	• The local authority has identified a small number of groups of young people with specific barriers, based on their local data e.g. teenage parents or learners with learning difficulties and disabilities • Specific strategies and interventions have been planned and delivered for these groups using all resources	• The local authority doesn't know which groups are a priority and /or doesn't understand what specific needs these groups may have • The local authority has failed to effectively join up support across the local authority for these groups				

4. Establish Support Mechanisms

Questions to consider...	Strong Delivery (1)	Weak Delivery (4)	1	2	3	4
4A. Support from a participation advisor... a) what initial support is offered to young people at risk of disengagement b) what role might a participation advisor play in supporting young people at risk c) how does the role of participation advisor fit with other roles & responsibilities	• The local authority has identified a clearly defined role for the participation advisor and are clear how the role will fit with other responsibilities within the authority, or they are clear about how other roles are supporting young people • The local authority has identified the resources for the participation advisor role internally and externally	• The local authority is unclear where the initial support to young people at risk will come from • They have not clearly thought through what role a participation advisor might play or are unclear how the role would fit with others; or have not considered how support could be offered by others • There are no resources available				
4B. The role and use of support panels... a) what should the local authority do to support young people with multiple needs b) what role should support panels play in determining the support to be provided c) how does the use of support panels fit with the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)	• The local authority has a clearly established process for supporting at-risk young people and the role of the panel is clear to all involved • There is a clearly defined link between the use of the CAF and the role of the support panels for RPA	• The process for establishing multi-agency support for young people is unclear or confused • There is no clarity about the role and purpose of support panels or their fit with the use of the CAF				
4C. Determining if support is working... a) are there clear arrangements in place for all providers to notify the local authority if a young person drops out and are they used b) how is the effectiveness of any support provided being evaluate d by both the local authority and schools c) how do you determine when young people need a temporary break from learning d) how do you determine when young people are ready to re-engage after a temporary break from learning	• There is a clearly agreed local protocol for providers notifying the local authority when young people drop-out and it is adhered to by all • The effectiveness of any support provided is reviewed regularly by both schools and the local authority • There are clear criteria for determining when young people may have a temporary break from learning and when they may be ready to re-engage. These have been shared and discussed with partners	• There is no protocol for providers notifying the local authority when young people drop-out, or if a protocol exists, it is not used by all • The effectiveness of support is not discussed by schools or the local authority, or is only reviewed on an annual or infrequent basis • The criteria for when young people may have a temporary break from learning are unclear and there is no system for reviewing whether young people are ready to re-engage				

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5. Identify Provision Needs

Questions to consider...	Strong Delivery (1)	Weak Delivery (4)	1	2	3	4
5A. Mapping and identifying provision gaps... a) is there a clear picture of unmet demand or over-supply of existing provision b) does the local authority collect the views of young people about current provision c) do providers and advisers who work with young people know about the full range of re-engagement provision available	• The local authority has undertaken a detailed analysis of provision to identify existing provision gaps • The local authority has joined-up its work planning for full participation with analysis undertaken as part of producing a local statement of need • The local authority has produced an Alternative Provision catalogue	• The local authority and providers have no clear analysis of provision gaps and are unclear about the range and mix of existing provision • There is no join up between participation planning and the local statement of need being produced				
5B. Converting JWT to Apprenticeships... a) has the local authority worked with local employers to identify the JWT cohorts b) how is the local authority working with employers to increase Apprenticeships c) what is the local authority doing to support young people in JWT to move into an Apprenticeship place	• The local authority has a clear local strategy in place for increasing the number & range of Apprenticeships • The local authority has worked closely with employers employing young people in JWT to convert them into Apprenticeship places • The local authority is tracking closely the progress of young people in JWT	• The local authority has no idea how many young people are in JWT • The local authority has tried to work with local employers to increase the number of Apprenticeships on offer but has no or limited success and/or local employers do not see the need to increase training opportunities				
5C. Developing innovative new provision... a) does the local authority have a clear view of what new provision is needed and is this shared by existing local providers b) are there creative ways in which the local authority and providers could create new provision to meet unmet needs locally c) how is the local authority working with the voluntary sector or new providers to increase the range & nature of provision	• The local authority and providers have discussed and agreed where new provision might be needed • Existing providers have developed their current provision/established new provision to meet unmet needs • The local authority has successfully brokered new provision to meet identified provision needs	• There is no discussion or acceptance of the need for new provision between the local authority and existing providers • New providers that have entered the market have not discussed with the local authority what provision might be most needed in the area				

6. Communicate the RPA message

Questions to consider…	Strong Delivery (1)	Weak Delivery (4)	1	2	3	4
6A. Prioritising audiences and key messages… a) have you identified all of the groups and stakeholders you need to communicate to b) are you clear what your key messages should be and what myths might exist c) have you thought about how you will use existing communication channels to get the RPA message out on a regular basis	• The local authority has a clear communications strategy in place which has prioritised the audiences & identified key messages for each	• There is no clear view of who the local authority needs to communicate with or the messages they need to be giving about RPA • The local authority has produced limited information & materials about RPA but there has been no attempt to address myths/issues				
6B. Communicating with partners… a) can all local authority staff communicate the basic messages about RPA to partners b) do partners all understand the local approach and strategy to delivering RPA & their role in delivering it c) is there a clear strategy for engaging with relevant employers to help them understand RPA	• The local authority has organised a briefing event for all staff to discuss the implications for RPA and what it might mean for their local partners • The local authority has a clear strategy for communicating with partners and employers locally • The local authority has utilised appropriate channels to communicate to employers • LA staff and local partners are able to communicate the RPA message to young people and parents.	• Most staff in the local authority do not understand RPA and cannot communicate to partners about it • The local authority has tried to communicate directly with partner organisations and employers but the messages have not been heard • There are myths about RPA – partners are communicating inaccurate messages to young people and parents about the requirements				
6C. Producing materials and resources … a) have you ensured that existing resources have RPA messages inserted within them b) what resources and materials are available to tutors and IAG professionals c) are there simple resources and materials available to help parents & young people understand the implications of RPA	• The local authority has utilised existing communication channels to get RPA messages to key audiences • The local authority has pulled together a range of materials and resources for tutors and advisers • The local authority has included messages about RPA in materials for parents & young people	• There are little or no resources available which include messages about RPA • Tutors and advisers are unable to find the information they need • Parents and young people haven't received any information about RPA				