

Camtree Digital Library



Implementing recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) in a college

Title	Implementing recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) in a college
Publisher	nasen
Publication date	2026
Download date	2026-03-08 13:10:17
Item License	https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/
Link to Item	https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14069/1173



Implementing recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) in a college

Professional Development Group

Setting: College

Introduction

This case study shows the impact of Universal SEND Services (USS) online training and professional development group for a sixth-form college.


The college is in the East Midlands, situated in an area of significant socio-economic deprivation. It serves approximately 1,200 learners, 125 of whom are enrolled in Learning for Life and Work (LLW) courses. Over the past five years, there has been a steady increase in the number of learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs). At present, 61 learners hold EHCPs, with 57 classified as High Needs. The college has established strong partnerships with the local authority and a network of special schools, gaining a growing reputation for its high-quality support and curriculum provision from Entry Level 1 to Level 3. In response to the growing number of learners with SEND and keen to extend best practices from the SEND department across the wider college, the Head of Support joined a WSS professional development (PD) group.

Implementation

In the first PD group meeting, participants are supported to identify a key priority that is amenable to change. Through collaboration and discussion with peers, they refine the theme and the direction of travel for their improvement project. The Head of Support from the college identified inconsistencies with the implementation of the Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) process within the department and chose this to be the focus of the project.

Through the guidance provided by the PD group, they were able to reflect on why practice was inconsistent and begin to create a clear and specific focus for the project. Although prior training and development efforts had primarily targeted the LLW team, factors such as the recruitment of new staff led to disparities in understanding and application. Some staff members lacked clarity regarding the purpose of RARPA, its implementation within the department, and with recording daily achievements. Additionally, the termly BRAG (Blue, Red, Amber, Green) analysis was not consistently understood or effectively utilised in quality monitoring meetings, underscoring the need for a comprehensive review of the overall quality assurance process.

Before the next PD group meeting, the Head of Support surveyed staff confidence about using the RARPA process (see Fig 1).

 More inclusive high-quality teaching

 More inclusive ethos/culture in the setting

 Earlier and more accurate identification of SEN

Implementation (continued)

Staff Role	Score
Teachers	Consistently Green
ECSW Staff	Amber/Green - depending on whether staff supported in LLW
APS/Middle leaders	APS/Middle leaders

Fig 1. RARPA Staff confidence scoring baseline

Staff were encouraged to share any questions they had regarding RARPA and to identify areas where they required further development. Their feedback highlighted key areas for development, including:

- Gaining a deeper understanding of RARPA implementation within Learning for Life and Work, and exploring its broader application across the college.
- Enhancing qualitative analysis to ensure the provision remains high-quality and fit for purpose.
- Exploring opportunities for external validation and improving the integration of these processes within the college.

While some staff members expressed confidence in their knowledge and experience with RARPA, others acknowledged the need for a refresher. These responses underscored the varying levels of familiarity with RARPA among staff and highlighted the need for targeted professional development to ensure a consistent and informed approach across the institution.

During PD group meeting 2, participants are guided through the process of developing an implementation plan. Using the evidence gathered, the Head of Support identified that training was needed to address several areas, namely around assessment and quality assurance. The implementation plan to address the areas for development identified:

Training for college staff through USS webinars and training on the RARPA handbook through ETF USS offer.
Training for Assistant Principal (AP) and Head of Department - Quality assurance and Quality improvement process - NATSPEC , as part of ETF's USS delivery.
Review and revise the Quality Assurance process within the department: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Develop a quality assurance cycle shared with all parties → Invite AP to Monday night and Friday pm meetings with the team to complete audits → Showcase and reviews of learners' work
Peer coaching triad focused on lesson visits, how live feedback is given in class, how progression ladders of skills are used to capture bite size student progress
Review new products which may support the stages of the RARPA process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Visit to the college to review 'we track me' and 'we teach you' assessment platforms → Complete SWOT analysis of use → Pilot assessment processes within our RARPA provision → Use the results analysis as part of quality management
Invite wider stakeholders to improve their understanding of RARPA and see RARPA teaching and learning in action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → College governors visit lessons. → Senior leadership team invited to take part in a coffee/drink morning to see the skills development of a group.

Implementation (continued)

Through the subsequent PD group meetings and 1:1 sessions with the RSL, the Head of Support was able to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the training plan in the college.

Outcomes and Impact

As a result of participation in the WSS professional development group and improvement project, staff have gained greater confidence in understanding and using assessment systems effectively. Staff feedback collected before and during the training highlighted this progress, with one participant stating, *"I think the course was really good, it helped me get my head around it, and I have a better understanding."*

There is now increased positive engagement in the whole college development and the quality assurance process, with staff more willing to contribute to new developments. College staff have benefited from RARPA and assessment training, leading to the creation of more accurate and personalised RARPA records. Additionally, a more consistent approach to assessment has been established across the discrete provision, with a strong focus on assessment ladders and skill observations.

The cross-college approach has led to the development of a working group consisting of Assistant Principals, Heads of Department, and the Head of Support. This group have conducted a comprehensive review and revision of curriculum documents, including the programme of study guidance, exemption processes, behaviour for learning strategies, and positive relationship frameworks.

The PD group model will be sustained in the college through the introduction of peer coaching as a mechanism for reinforcing SEND best practices within the LLW and Health & Social Care (HSC) teams.

Key Learning

Sustaining the current quality assurance processes is essential, ensuring they align effectively with the LLW calendar. Additionally, continued development of assessment processes is essential for enhancing consistency and accessibility across the provision.

Partnering with a peer college to audit the RARPA provision during the summer term will provide insights for improvement. Exploring the possibility of inviting a local Inclusion Leader to demonstrate the assessment system to the local authority may also offer a strategic opportunity to promote the adoption of a unified system across multiple settings.



More inclusive high-quality teaching



More inclusive ethos/culture in the setting



Earlier and more accurate identification of SEN