The matrix Standard
Guidance for Sole Trading Careers Advisors

ELEMENT 1 - LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
This element is about the way in which the organisation is led and managed to develop an effective service

Criteria	What this might mean	What this might mean in practice
1.1 The service has clearly defined measurable aims and objectives which link to any wider organisational strategic aims	Management and staff are able to describe and give examples of measurable aims and objectives of the service and how they link to the wider organisational strategic aims. Managers and staff can describe how they are involved in developing the aims and objectives of the service.	As a sole trader you are everything in the organisation, you are the strategic lead, the delivery person and everything else! Therefore, it is important to recognise yourself as a business/organisation and be clear about what you want to achieve as a business. For example, you may plan to increase the number of schools that you work with, you may have income targets or number of days you wish to 'sell' – this will all be framed within your 'reason for being', you may not describe this as your mission or vision, but that is exactly what it is. What are you trying to achieve as an organisation? You need to be clear about the contribution the IAG service makes to the achievement of your service aims. Milestones or targets for the IAG service need to be clear. You need to consider your IAG delivery, in measurable terms, what difference are you intending to make? This may be to support transition work, with the aim of reducing NEETS, or 'unknowns', or maintain the 0% NEET level. Other measurable objectives may be relating to increasing the number of destinations that year 11 students have progressed to, in order to demonstrate the breadth of opportunities and that young people have made informed choices.
1.2 The service is provided with clear leadership and direction	Managers can describe how they lead and direct people in the delivery of the service. Staff can describe how well managers lead them to deliver the service.	For you as a sole trader, this will link to the organisation aims you have described above in criterion 1.1. You will need to describe to your assessor the 'sense of direction' and the plans you have in place for your business.

ELEMENT 1 - LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
This element is about the way in which the organisation is led and managed to develop an effective service

Criteria	What this might mean	What this might mean in practice
1.3 The organisation implements policies to promote equality and diversity, impartiality, confidentiality and professional integrity in all aspects of service delivery	Managers and staff can describe and give examples of how the systems and processes in place promote equality, diversity, impartiality, confidentiality and professional integrity.	The implementation of equality and diversity could be demonstrated by providing materials in a range of formats, or by using monitoring data to target specific groups. For example, you may have found through monitoring that there is an attainment gap between different types of learners or clients and so you implement new approaches to address this. You could give examples of how you refer individuals to other help and support that the service can't directly provide to demonstrate impartiality through signposting. Confidentiality can be demonstrated by you explaining how you cover it during initial or entry IAG, and that learners/clients know they can discuss anything with you in the knowledge that it will be kept confidential unless there is a safeguarding risk. This could be described in materials for learners or clients, records stored in locked cabinets or by individuals confirming their understanding of how the service is confidential. You can also describe how you uphold any professional codes of practice in your work with learners or clients. You may be able to provide examples to the Assessor where they have implemented policies in practice.
1.4 The organisation complies with existing and new legislation which might impact upon the service	Managers and staff can describe and give examples of legislation including how it impacts on the service.	Appropriate legislation is likely to vary depending upon the nature of the service/s being delivered by you. However, it is likely to include areas such as health and safety, data protection and safeguarding legislation as a minimum. You may describe how you comply with the policies/legislation as it affects the organisations or schools that you work in. It is important you can provide examples of appropriate legislation and how you keep up to date with any changes. For example, how you ensure rigorous safeguarding, and how health and safety legislation is an integral part of day-to-day activities, this may also include lone working.

ELEMENT 1 - LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
This element is about the way in which the organisation is led and managed to develop an effective service

Criteria	What this might mean	What this might mean in practice
1.5 The organisation defines client outcomes and uses them as a measure of success for the service	Examples of definitions of client outcomes are provided. Managers can describe how they are set and who is involved. They can describe how they are reviewed.	You can describe how as part of your planning process you have identified the impacts/outcomes you expect your IAG service to achieve for your learners or clients. These could include • Increased awareness and understanding of progression routes to employment or further learning • Awareness of a range of volunteering, work placement or paid employment opportunities • Informed decision making about the right course/action • Improved employability skills through the development of a CV etc. • Improved confidence and motivation to achieve goals • Barriers to progression are addressed
1.6 The organisation promotes the service in ways which are accessible to all those eligible to use it	Managers and staff can explain different methods of how the service is promoted - what works well and why in relation to the eligible client group.	Consider how your IAG service is promoted including how different methods of marketing and promotion have been used. Does this ensure that the information about the IAG available is accessible to all eligible potential learners and clients? You should be able to describe which promotional activity works best and why in relation to the different learner or client group/s. Examples could include, attendance at Jobs Fairs, information days or careers evenings, presentations in assemblies or staff meetings to enable referral.
1.7 Clients and staff influence the design and development of the service	Service design and delivery reflects the views and experiences of staff and clients. Staff and clients are able to describe how they are involved in the design and development of the service and give examples of how they have influenced both.	This is about the opportunities you provide for learners and clients to influence the service. For example, you may have developed different ways in which your clients/learners are involved in developing the service. The 'staff' aspect of this criterion is how you make on-going developments to the service you offer. You will need to give examples to demonstrate changes as a result of this involvement and show how this feedback has helped shape the current service.

ELEMENT 1 - LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
This element is about the way in which the organisation is led and managed to develop an effective service

Criteria	What this might mean	What this might mean in practice
1.8 The organisation establishes effective links with other appropriate partnerships and networks to enhance the service	Managers and staff are able to describe how they establish links with other partnerships and networks and measure the effectiveness of the relationship. Representatives from partnerships and networks are able to give examples of how well their relationship is working with the service.	You can describe the partnerships and networks you are involved with and how these benefit your IAG service. These could be organisations with whom you have a contractual relationship for example the schools in which you are delivering, employers who offer work placements or those that you network with in order to provide wider support to your learners or clients. This could also include involvement in local networking meetings for other advisers where you are able to share information and help to contribute to developing your practice. This criterion links closely to criterion 4.4 so you will need to describe how you evaluate the effectiveness of the relationships.

ELEMENT 2 - Resources
This element describes the assets invested and applied in providing an effective service

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
2.1 The organisation uses its resources effectively to deliver the service	Managers and staff are able to explain what resources – including human, physical and financial are needed to deliver the service/s. Managers and staff are able to explain how the level of resource, in relation to client needs, are established and can give examples of how effectively resources are used.	You need to demonstrate how when planning service delivery, you ensure there are sufficient resources to deliver the IAG service effectively. For example, what resources do you employ? Consider people (that will be you), premises (you may deliver only on other organisation's premises, such as schools which means you do not need to have a delivery venue), equipment (such as laptop, access to resources/internet etc).
2.2 Clients are provided with current, accurate and quality assured information which is inclusive	Clients and staff are able to describe and give examples of the types of information they were able to access and explain how appropriate it was to their needs. Managers and staff are able to describe what quality assurance systems are in place to ensure information is current, accurate and is written in plain language, free from bias and takes account of diversity. Managers and staff delivering the service are able to explain how they support clients and how the resources they use are quality assured	You need to describe the information resources you use, (both paper-based and electronic) for example, current labour market information, occupational job profiles and training and provider prospectuses, careers and job search websites, leaflets from local agencies and also the systems used to maintain them. You could review resources as part of network meetings, or you could take responsibility for reviewing new and existing resources periodically. You could also be using only reputable websites that you know are quality assured. You may have an approved, and quality assured directory of IAG resources, such as those with the CDI kite mark.

ELEMENT 2 - Resources
This element describes the assets invested and applied in providing an effective service

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
2.3 The organisation defines the skills, knowledge, competencies and qualifications, in line with current national recognised professional qualifications and frameworks, for individual staff roles, linked to the aims and objectives of the service	Managers can describe and give examples of how they identify and define the skills, knowledge and competencies of staff roles linked to achieving the aims and objectives of the service/s including being aware of the boundaries of their role. Managers and staff can describe the qualifications and frameworks which are appropriate to their role in delivering the aims and objectives of the service/s. For careers guidance staff in England this should include professional standards and qualifications determined by the Career Development Institute or other representative bodies.	You need to describe the skills, knowledge, competencies and qualifications you need to undertake your job. As a Careers Advisers you will be expected to have or be working towards appropriate CDI qualifications. Depending on the nature of the IAG service you are offering, you may also need additional skills and qualifications, such as being registered to administer certain profiling tools.
2.4 Staff are supported in undertaking continuous professional development and provided with opportunities for career progression	Managers and staff can explain and give examples of how they are supported in continually developing their skills, knowledge and competence including any appropriate qualifications for their role. Managers and staff are able to describe how they are involved in the process of identifying their needs and appropriate learning and development activities, including career progression opportunities.	Examples here could include short courses (such as motivational interviewing techniques or using career aptitude tests with learners or clients, engaging with employers, understanding the local job market), shadowing, informal training through networking meetings, reading, contribution to professional journals, sharing best practice, safeguarding, attending conferences, peer observation of service delivery as well as formal qualifications such as coaching and mentoring.
2.5 Effective induction processes are in place for all staff	Managers are able to describe the induction process for all roles including staff employed by the organisation and any volunteers. Newly recruited staff and those who have recently changed roles can describe the induction process and how this has helped them perform effectively.	You do not need an induction to your business, but how do you prepare yourself when taking on a new piece of commissioned work? You will need to describe the effectiveness of preparation for new or developing activities you have undertaken.

ELEMENT 3 - Service Delivery
This element describes the way in which the service is delivered effectively

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
3.1 The service is defined so that clients are clear about what they might expect	Managers and staff are able to define the service/s offering, in relation to their client group including prospective / potential clients and give examples how they ensure clients understand the service/s offering. Clients can describe and give examples of how they know what to expect from the service/s.	You can provide examples of how you ensure learners and clients understand possible outcomes that can be achieved by the IAG service delivered. Learners and clients can describe and give examples of how they know what to expect from the service as explained to them at the beginning of their journey. For example, learners and clients are aware of the support available to them, such as one to one meetings, and understand how it would help them in making decisions about their next steps. This criterion is linked closely to criteria 1.5 and 4.2.
3.2 The service is delivered effectively to meet its aims and objectives	Managers and staff can describe and give examples of the service/s delivery in place which supports the delivery of the aims and objectives.	You can describe how the IAG service that has been provided was delivered in ways that meet the aims and objectives as described in criterion 1.1. Some illustrative examples might be that IAG delivery is undertaken to support the achievement of the IAG service objectives through: • Delivery of 1-1 appointments with a focussed career action plan • Presentation on progression routes such as apprenticeships or college provision • Information on student finance for access to higher education • Support with applications for UCAS or post 16 options
3.3 The service provided is impartial and objective	Managers and staff are able to describe how they ensure the service/s is impartial, free from bias and objective. Clients can describe how they are made aware of any potential conflicts of interest in the advice provided and understand the limitations of the service/s.	Consider how you would explain to an Assessor that the service delivery is centred on the individual and their needs and goals and how your IAG service is free from bias. You may wish to show examples of learner and client outcomes and destination data to emphasise the breadth of progression pathways and or impartiality. Where you are working in a school with a sixth form, you will need to show how there is no conflict of interest.

ELEMENT 3 - Service Delivery
This element describes the way in which the service is delivered effectively

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
3.4 Clients are given appropriate options to explore and understand that they are responsible for making their own decisions	Clients are able to describe and give examples of how they have benefited from support process and how they were able to explore different options that met their expectations. Clients are able to describe what support they were given to understand and make appropriate choices. Clients are able to describe how they came to their decisions	You should be able to describe how you check that learners and clients have understood the options open to them and the consequences of alternative courses of action. Learners and clients should also be able to describe their experience and how they made up their mind without any pressure.
3.5 When exploring options, clients are provided with and supported to use appropriate resources including access to technology	Clients are able to describe and give examples of what resources were made available when exploring different and appropriate options.	You, along with your learners and clients can give examples of the resources used, for example, researching useful websites for information such as the National Careers Service, National Apprenticeship Service, job search and college or university websites, or using software packages to help individuals make choices. Other examples are listed in criterion 4.7 and could include Apps for smart phones and hardcopy resources such as prospectuses and job vacancies.
3.6 Clients benefit from signposting and referral to other appropriate agencies or organisations	Clients are able to describe the benefits they received by being referred to other appropriate agencies or organisations. Representatives from partnerships and networks are able to explain what benefits and services clients referred to them have received.	You should describe examples of when you have referred learners and clients and how you know that individuals have benefited from this. Learners, clients and partners can also describe how effective such referrals have been.

ELEMENT 4 - Continuous Quality Improvement
This element describes the way in which the service provided is reviewed and performance improves as a result.

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
4.1 The organisation measures and evaluates the service against its stated aims and objectives and identifies improvements	Managers and staff are able to explain and give measurable examples of the extent to which the aims and objectives have been met. Managers and staff can describe how all aspects of the service/s are reviewed against the measurable aims and objectives including promotion/engagement, service delivery, resources, leadership/management.	There are strong linkages between this criterion, 1.1 and 3.2. Linked together, the criteria help to demonstrate the 'plan, do, review' cycle. You need to provide information on the measurement of the aims and objectives you set in criterion 1.1 and, knowing the results, what improvements you have put in place.
		The emphasis here is on knowing what you have achieved against the objectives you set and implementing changes as a result. You may have this information in Management Information statistics, reports to Funders, etc.
		You should be able to explain how monitoring and evaluation have identified improvements and informed the future planning and review processes. So, linking to the examples suggested in 1.1, your service might determine that the IAG service contributes to reducing the number of young people who are NEET. However, through analysis it has been identified that there are high numbers of learners or clients with significant barriers to progression such as; low levels of confidence, low levels of literacy and ICT and some of the more personal aspects such as issues relating to being a Looked After Child and therefore you seek and develop partnerships with other support organisation in order to address these barriers to progression.

ELEMENT 4 - Continuous Quality Improvement

This element describes the way in which the service provided is reviewed and performance improves as a result.

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
4.2 The organisation monitors and evaluates client outcomes to support and improve service delivery	Managers, staff and where appropriate clients are able to describe and give examples of how client outcomes are used to improve the service.	There are strong linkages between this criterion, 1.5 and 3.1. The linkage of the criteria helps to demonstrate the learner or client's journey and the outcomes realised. You need to provide information on how your learners or clients have achieved the outcomes you defined in criterion 1.5 and what improvements you have implemented, as a result. You may have this information as survey results, through using distance travelled tools or other monitoring processes. The emphasis is on what improvements you have implemented as a result of knowing the outcomes of your learners or clients. For example: • Clear links to softer outcomes such as low levels of confidence noted as a barrier to progression and how these are used to show learners and clients the progress and their distance travelled. • Learners and clients are aware of their SMART targets, the review process and can see their progress as a result of the IAG service
4.3 The organisation evaluates feedback on the service to build upon its strengths and addresses any areas for improvement	Managers and staff are able to explain how all forms of feedback and evaluation information are used to establish areas of strength and areas for improvement. Clients are aware of who to contact with a compliment, comment or complaint and the process the organisation will follow in dealing with them. Managers and staff are able to explain how complaints are recorded, investigated and what action is taken.	There are strong linkages between criterion, 1.1, 1.5 and 1.7. You will need to describe how you collect feedback and give examples of how it has been used to improve the IAG service aspects of your service delivery. You, along with your learners and clients can also help by describing things that have changed as a result of their feedback.

ELEMENT 4 - Continuous Quality Improvement

This element describes the way in which the service provided is reviewed and performance improves as a result.

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
4.4 The organisation evaluates the effectiveness of its partnerships and networks to improve the service	Clients, staff and other stakeholders are able to describe the evaluation process and give examples of how the information is used to improve the service. Examples should show measurable outcomes and link to improvements.	This links to criterion 1.8. You will need to describe how you review the effectiveness of your partnership working; how you know that the relationships benefit both parties and your learners or clients. You will also need to share any changes you have made as a result of this evaluation. Informal evaluation could be through weekly updates and general communications. Formal evaluation could include contract meetings and performance reviews. A survey could be sent using formal evaluation forms or by using on-line surveys asking partners for feedback on the effectiveness of the relationship and the impact it is having on the IAG service you provide.
4.5 The organisation defines quality assurance approaches which are used to improve the service	Managers and staff are able to describe how the service is quality assured and what plans, policies, procedures and/or processes are in place and how they are implemented.	You will need to describe the systems you have in place to monitor the quality of IAG service delivery and how these processes help you to improve your information, advice or guidance. For example, you may have a reciprocal arrangement with another sole trading careers adviser to undertake observations of practice, or the school careers co-ordinator may review your action plans etc.; reflective practice will also be important. Consider how you know that you are doing a good job? And any improvements you have made as a result of your quality assurance activity.
4.6 Staff performance, linked to their role within the aims and objectives of the service, is reviewed and evaluated to improve the service	Managers and staff can describe the process for evaluating performance in relation to roles, aims and objectives of the service. Managers are able to give measurable examples of how effective staff performance has been in relation to service aims and objectives.	For you as a sole trader, this is linked with your review of the performance of your work and therefore is linked to 4.1, 4.2, 4.5.

ELEMENT 4 - Continuous Quality Improvement
This element describes the way in which the service provided is reviewed and performance improves as a result.

Criteria	What this means	What this might mean in practice
4.7 Effective use is made of technology to improve the service	Clients, managers and staff are able to describe and give examples of how technology has enhanced the way they deliver the service.	You should describe the technology used to support service delivery and give examples of how things have improved as a result. For example; • Use of tracking databases to understand the destinations of learners/clients • Skype could be used to provide an inclusive service and extend IAG opportunities for those who are unable to attend in person • Use of social media such as; Face Book and Twitter, could be used to communicate with learners who prefer using technology. These platforms could be further used to share news and events, to support service marketing campaigns, advertise options and choices to learners, share partnership offers, advertise employment / volunteering opportunities, publish success stories and case studies to share with its current and intended client group • Social media can be used to inform learners how their feedback is used to improve the service. As an example, 'You said we did' may be used • You may be able to have an area on the school's VLE to provide information and resources to learners
4.8 The organisation continually reviews improvements to help inform the future aims and objectives of the service	Managers and staff are able to provide examples of actions which have been taken to improve the service on an on-going basis.	This criterion is the overarching review cycle that relates to all aspects of the Standard. You will need to describe how your processes enable you to 'plan, do and review' in order to improve your IAG service to learners or clients. You will need to describe examples of how such reviews have influenced planning and led to further changes.

The matrix 6 Box – Example

Plan	Do	Review
Criteria 1.1 **Organisation aim:** To help provide an independent and impartial careers guidance service to raise aspirations, create awareness and enable effective transition to a positive destination. **Service objective:** To engage effectively with young people aged 14-19 and support effective transition, measured by • A reduction in NEETs by 10% per annum • To reduce the number of 'unknown' destinations • To increase the number of different progression routes taken up by learners	**Criteria 3.2** You work closely with the school pastoral lead to identify those young people who are currently lacking direction and are unclear on their progression routes and the availability of options. You deliver group 'options' talks, and 1-1 careers guidance interviews where action plans have SMART targets to ensure young people are clear about their next steps and actions they need to undertake.	**Criteria 4.1** All schools that you are working in, have reported a reduction in NEETS or have maintained their current 0% NEET. However, in reviewing with partner organisations, such as Colleges, you have identified a number of learners who have either left their course or changed course within the first 6 weeks of their new programme, in practical vocational areas. You have therefore worked with the local College and the school, to enable young people wishing to go on these types of courses to have a taster day.
Criteria 1.5 **Individual outcomes:** The individuals intended outcomes for learners are developed during the initial engagement and contact with learners, these include: • Learners are making informed decisions on their progression routes • Learners are exploring a range of different options • Learners have clear goals that they are working towards	**Criteria 3.1** Learners reported that they had been made aware of what to expect in relation to the content and structure of the IAG available through presentations in assemblies, 'quick chats' in tutorial times and through information provided by their personal tutor. They also understood the support they would receive from you to help them explore the options available to them.	**Criteria 4.2** Learners complete a short questionnaire at the start of their group session and also at the beginning of 1-1 sessions. This is completed again at the end of the session – as a short 'distance travelled' indicator. Results are collated and presented for each school where you are delivering a service. Review of analyses highlighted that there have been significant increases in the levels. Some areas, however, had learners who did not show significant distance travelled in having clear goals. You have discussed these results with school careers co-ordinators and are now sharing action plans with tutors so that they can be followed upon tutorial sessions.