

## Dealing with disclosure of information and handling sensitive issues

### Stage 1: Activities and sheets

#### Activity 1: Defining disclosure

##### Resources required

- Flip chart paper.
- Pens.

##### Instructions

- Split the large group into smaller groups of three to five members.
- Ask the groups to write an agreed definition for 'disclosure' on a piece of flip chart paper.
- Pass the flip chart to the next group in a clockwise direction. Invite the group to add to, remove from, or re-word the definition.
- Repeat until all groups have had the opportunity to read and amend all definitions.
- Feed back in the large group. Agree on one overall definition.
- Compare to definitions from the web (for example, NSPCC, DCSF).

## Activity 2: Direct and indirect disclosure

### Resources required

- Flip chart paper.
- Pens.
- **Sheet 1.1: Direct and indirect disclosure.**

### Instructions

- Discuss the meanings of 'direct' and 'indirect' disclosure.
- In small groups consider the range of disclosure statements in **Sheet 1.1: Direct and indirect disclosure.**
- Sort into direct or indirect disclosure.
- Discuss the possible range of strategies to deal with the issues surrounding disclosure.
- In your group, decide what the appropriate action for each statement would be. Consider these questions: What happens next? What would I do? To whom would I refer the matter? Who is the designated protection officer or named person?
- Share the key points from your discussions with other groups.
- In the large group, explore the consequences of reporting the issue to the named person (protection officer).

Remember, safeguarding aims to protect the well-being and safety of learners and this must override all other considerations.

Note: Make sure that you are aware of the policies and procedures for reporting issues surrounding disclosure to the named person and that you know who that person is. You should be aware of the policies and procedures for disclosure within your organisation.

**Sheet 1.1: Direct and indirect disclosure**

The following statements need to be cut into strips for a sorting activity.

**Questions and statements for direct and indirect disclosure**

- My brother's friend keeps bothering me.
- What would happen if a learner was being touched and someone told you about it?
- My friend thinks that she is pregnant. What should she do?
- Something terrible has happened but I can't tell you about it.
- I am so frightened of what my Dad might do that I don't want to go home.
- I might have to leave the course as my family wants me to have an arranged marriage.
- I can't discuss this topic anymore. I'm going to have to leave the room. (crying uncontrollably)
- That's not emotional abuse. You've got it all wrong.
- So it's not right for your mum to do those things to you?
- I can't talk about bullying. It's too personal.
- At my placement, the care workers aren't very nice to Mrs Jones.
- My friend has seen a child being smacked at nursery. What would happen if she reported this?
- I don't like the names they call me.

- I think that I have a sexually transmitted infection but you mustn't tell anyone.
- My girlfriend made me do things that I didn't want to do last night.
- Someone I know wants to have a termination. How would she go about it?
- The assistants sit in the staff room on a Saturday night drinking lager and leaves me on my own to look after the residents.
- A friend has been taking ecstasy. Will he get thrown off the course if anyone finds out about it?
- I don't know what to do. My nan has thrown me out and I'm sleeping on the floor of my friend's room.
- One of my colleagues keeps turning up for work smelling of alcohol. She is dealing with medicines and I'm afraid some terrible mistake is going to be made.
- I don't feel safe here anymore. I'm tired of being shouted at and being treated as if I were a naughty child.
- Mum has bruises on her arm. I don't know if she just bruises easily or if she is being treated roughly. She can't tell me.

**Sheet 1.1: Direct and indirect disclosure****Teacher\* answer sheet****Questions and statements for direct and indirect disclosure****D = direct, I = indirect**

- My brother's friend keeps bothering me. (D)
- What would happen if a learner was being touched and someone told you about it? (I)
- My friend thinks that she is pregnant. What should she do? (I)
- Something terrible has happened but I can't tell you about it. (I – with strings)
- I am so frightened of what my Dad might do that I don't want to go home. (D)
- I might have to leave the course as my family want me to have an arranged marriage. (D)
- I can't discuss this topic anymore. I'm going to have to leave the room. (crying uncontrollably) (I)
- That's not emotional abuse. You've got it all wrong. (I)
- So it's not right for your mum to do those things to you? (I)
- I can't talk about bullying. It's too personal. (D)
- At my placement, the care workers aren't very nice to Mrs Jones. (D)
- My friend has seen a child being smacked at nursery. What would happen if she reported this? (I)
- I don't like the names they call me. (D)

- I think that I have a sexually transmitted infection but you mustn't tell anyone. (I – with strings)
- My girlfriend made me do things that I didn't want to do last night. (D)
- Someone I know wants to have a termination. How would she go about it? (I)
- The assistants sit in the staff room on a Saturday night drinking lager and leaves me on my own to look after the residents. (D)
- A friend has been taking ecstasy. Will he get thrown off the course if anyone finds out about it? (I)
- I don't know what to do. My nan has thrown me out and I'm sleeping on the floor of my friend's room. (D)
- One of my colleagues keeps turning up for work smelling of alcohol. She is dealing with medicines and I'm afraid some terrible mistake is going to be made. (I)
- I don't feel safe here anymore. I'm tired of being shouted at and being treated as if I were a naughty child. (D)
- Mum has bruises on her arm. I don't know if she just bruises easily or if she is being treated roughly. She can't tell me. (I)

<p>* We use the word 'teacher' as a generic term to include teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors in the further education (FE) system.</p>
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### Activity 3: Excerpt from Barbara's story

#### Resources required

- Sticky notes.
- Flip chart paper.
- Pens.
- **Sheet 1.2: Excerpt from Barbara's story.**
- Audio recording of Barbara's story (optional).
- Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults (optional).

#### Instructions

- Work in groups of three to five members.
- Read or listen to the excerpt from Barbara's story. Discuss with the group when this action took place and the historical perspectives around it.
- Use the sticky notes provided, note down as much information as you can about the information from the transcript of Barbara's story and the implications for reporting disclosure.
- Discuss the changes in the protection of children and vulnerable adults from when Barbara was a child and now. You can also use the timeline from the Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults resource to look at changes to legislation around child protection.
- Different groups could discuss different aspects of the story. For example, taking the point of view of Barbara or of her brother or sister disclosing the information about physical abuse.

Feed back the main points from your discussion to the larger group.

**Sheet: 1.2: Excerpt from Barbara's story**

"I used to go up with dad because he wouldn't leave me with my mother, he doesn't. Because she hit me one day, I was left with my brother and sister, she hit me one day and, oh my god, my mother would have killed me if it hadn't have been for my brother and sister".



## Activity 4: Immediate responses and follow-up actions following disclosure

### Resources required

- Flip chart paper.
- Pens.
- **Sheet 1.3: How to respond to disclosure.**

### Instructions

- As a large group, brainstorm what the immediate response would be to a learner 'disclosing'.
- Discuss appropriate follow-up actions.
- Discuss what information, if any, would need to be shared with colleagues or the named person (child protection officer).
- Consider the information provided in **Sheet 1.3: How to respond to disclosure.**

**Sheet 1.3: How to respond to disclosure**

- Find a private place to talk.
- Don't touch the learner; this may be associated with the disclosure.
- Remain calm and listen to what your learner has to say.
- The learner may start by telling you about something that has happened to a 'friend'. By talking about the situation, they may tell you that the disclosure is actually with them.
- Encourage the learner to tell you what has happened but avoid asking questions.
- Listen carefully. Disclosure is not always related to abuse but may have a profound effect on the learner, such as bereavement or issues around living accommodation.
- Reassure the learner and let them know that you believe what they are saying.
- Tell the learner that you may need to refer the matter to the named protection person.
- Reassure them that the matter is confidential and that the issue will not be discussed with other learners or teachers.

## Activity 5: Triad activity using scenarios

### Resources required

- Pen and paper for observer.
- **Sheet 1.4: Triad activity.**

### Instructions

- Work in a triad (group of three).
- Each group will have a learner, a teacher and an observer.
- Each group will work through one of the five scenarios.
- The learner and teacher will role-play the scenario, with the teacher providing the support and referral options that are appropriate to the situation.
- The observer listens to the 'unfolding' situation. The observer may make notes but they do not interact in any way with the 'players'.
- At the end of the activity, the observer feeds back to the learner and teacher about how the situation has been dealt with.
- An extension to this is the group then discussing the impact that the situation may have on the organisation.

**Sheet 1.4: Triad activity****Scenario 1**

At the end of a session a learner waits for the rest of the class to leave. He then approaches you and tells you in confidence that he is very concerned as he is hugely in debt and he has been warned that bailiffs may repossess his car and some of his possessions.

What would you do in this situation?

**Scenario 2**

During a visit to a learner at their work placement, they report that the staff do not undertake risk assessments and are at risk of harming the service users through some of their moving and handling techniques.

What would you do in this situation?

**Scenario 3**

A learner asks to speak to you in confidence and reports that he has heard one of the tutors telling a colleague “You know the one, he acts a bit gay”.

What would you do in this situation?

**Scenario 4**

During a pastoral review, a learner discloses that she was really desperate but she took £5.00 from a service user’s purse. She returned it the next day and nobody had noticed but she now feels really guilty.

What would you do in this situation?

**Scenario 5**

A learner discloses to you that she was arrested at the weekend and has been charged with assault and criminal damage.

What would you do in this situation?

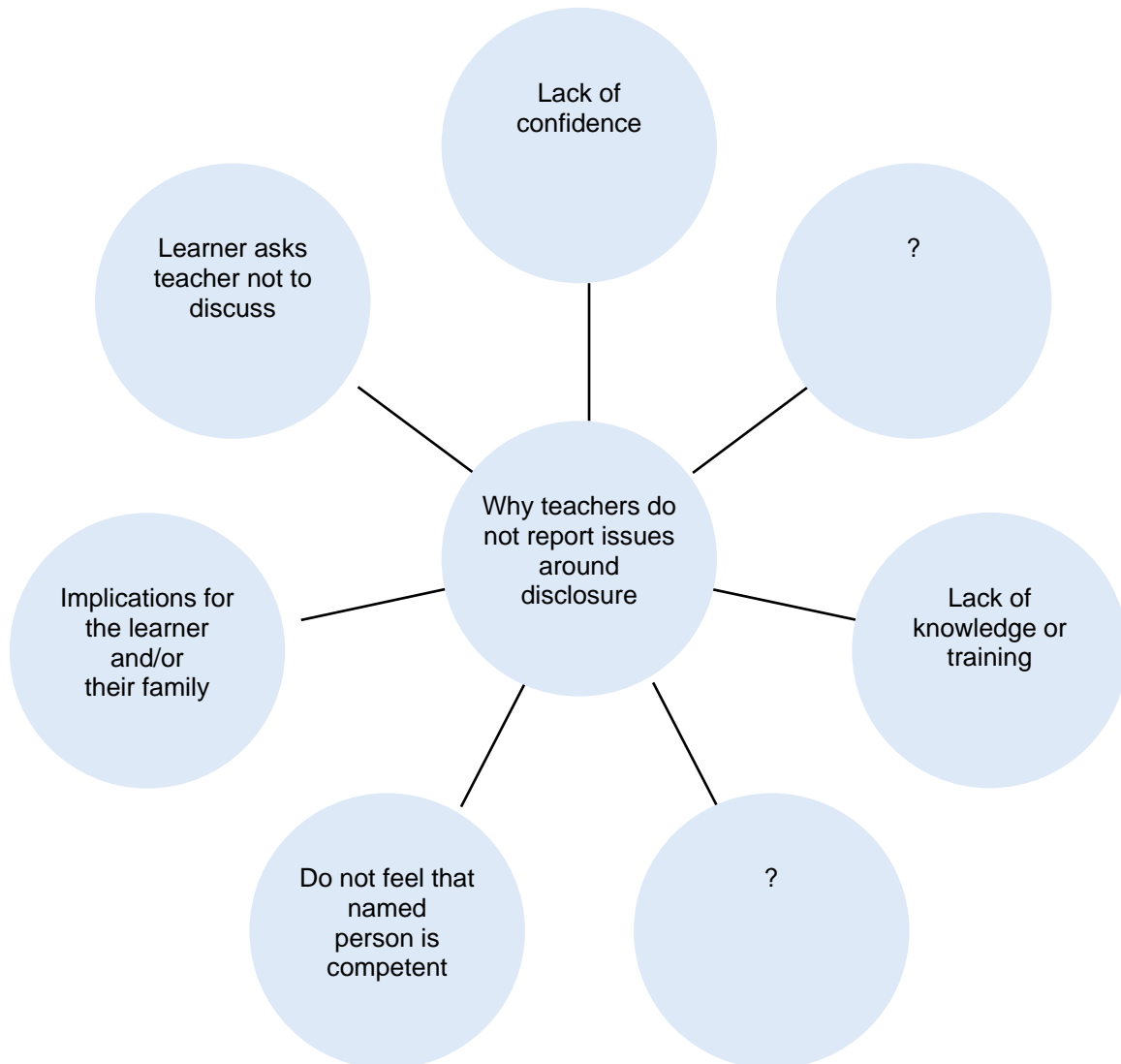
**Activity 6: Why teachers do not report issues around disclosure****Resources required**

- Sticky notes.
- Flipchart paper.
- Pens.
- **Sheet 1.5: Why teachers do not report issues around disclosure.**

**Instructions**

- Work in groups of three to five members.
- Use the sticky notes provided, note down as many reasons as you can why teachers may be unwilling or do not report issues surrounding disclosure.
- Feed back the main points from your discussion to the larger group.

**Sheet 1.5: Why teachers do not report issues surrounding disclosure**



## Stage 2 – Activities and sheets

### Activity 1: What is a sensitive issue?

#### Resources required

- Flip chart paper.
- Pens.
- Sticky notes.

#### Instructions

- Working in groups of three to four, identify the sensitive subjects and topics in the programmes of study you deliver. Note these down on the sticky notes provided. Can you group these together in different categories?
- Share your discussions within the larger group.
- Consider the information provided in **Sheet 2.1: What is a sensitive issue?**

#### Alternative approach

- Look through the cards with examples of sensitive issues and identify those you have dealt with in the past.
- In your group, discuss how you dealt with the situation and outcomes. If you were in the same situation again, would you handle it differently?
- Share key points from your discussions in the larger group.

**Sheet 2.1: What is a sensitive issue?**





**Sheet 2.2: Examples of sensitive issues**

**Cultural and/or traditional beliefs**

**Religion and issues around this**

**Disability**

**Sexual abuse**

**Harassment**

**Overworked at work place**

**Emotional well-being abuse**

**Self-esteem**

**Drugs and/or alcohol**

**Domestic violence**

**Terminal illness**

**Stealing**

**Cultural awareness and stereotypes**

**Bullying**

**Illness**

**Poverty**

**Cultural expectations**

**Physical abuse**

**Language**

**Assumptions based on background**

**Poor literacy and/or numeracy**

**Finances**

**Lateness**

**Stress**

**Neglect**

**Death and  
bereavement**

**Politics**

**Sex**

**Pregnancy**

**Confidence**

## Activity 2: Learner reactions to sensitive issues

### Resources required

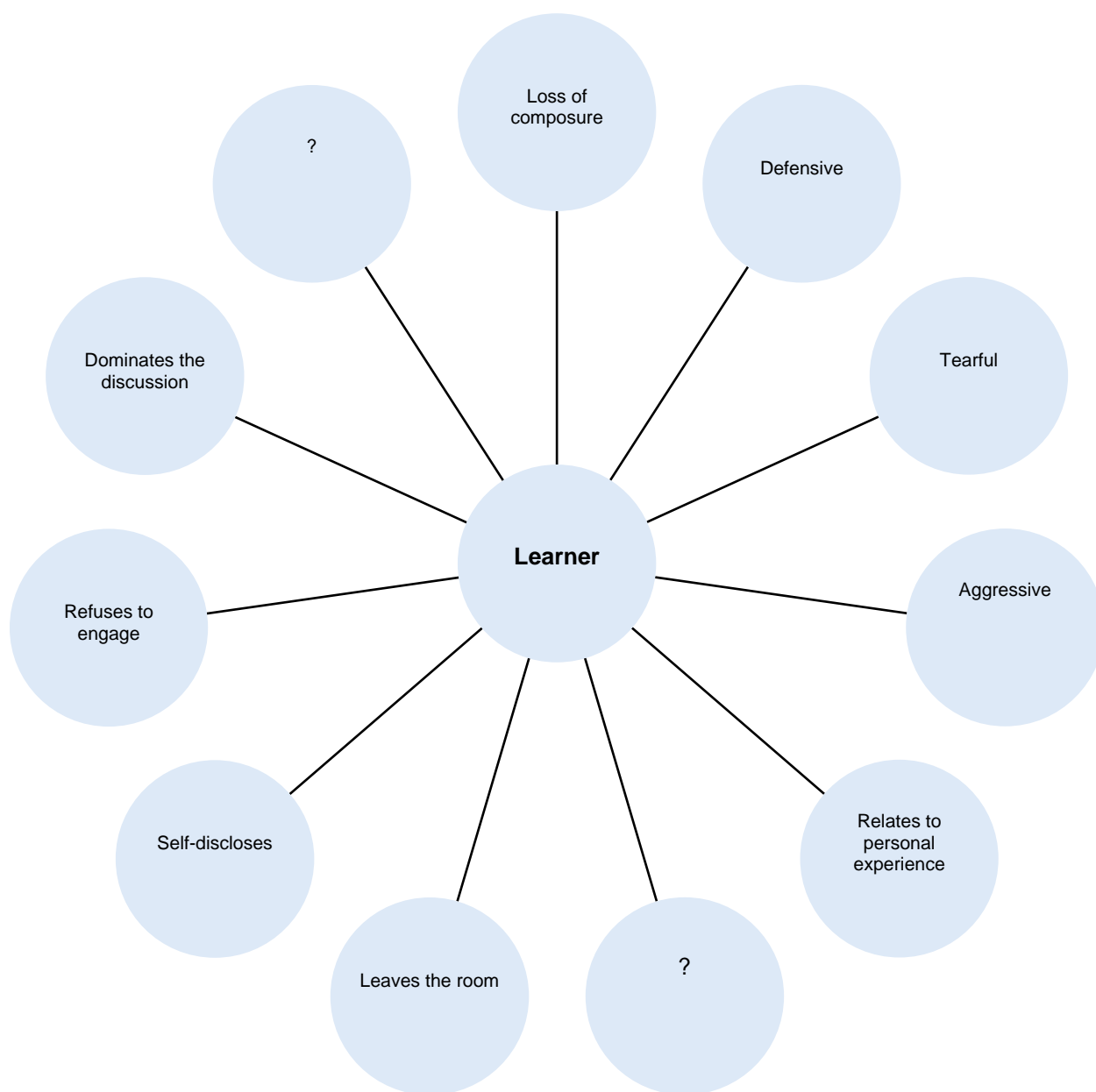
- Flip chart paper.
- Pens.
- **Sheet 2.3: Learner responses to sensitive issues.**

### Instructions

- In small groups of three or four people, discuss how learners may respond to sensitive issues that are discussed as part of their programme of study.
- Discuss and record the aspects of the curriculum that may provoke strong emotional responses.
- Feed back to the large group.
- Consider the information provided in **Sheet 2.3: Learner responses to sensitive issues.**

Remember, do not step outside of your role. You may be a counsellor or therapist but you must refer the learner to someone in line with your organisational policies and procedures. Inappropriate action may result in learners being placed in a harmful situation.

**Sheet 2.3: Learner responses to sensitive issues**



### Activity 3: Responses to sensitive issues

#### Resources required

- Flip chart paper.
- Pens.

#### Instructions

- In your group, brainstorm what your immediate response might be to a learner becoming distressed while exploring sensitive issues.
- Consider:
  - a. what your follow-up actions might be
  - b. what information, if any, would need to be shared with colleagues or the named person (child protection officer)
  - c. the similarities and differences between disclosure and the handling of sensitive issues.

## Activity 4: Guidelines for planning and ground rules for delivery

### Resources required

- Flip chart paper.
- Pens.
- **Sheet 2.4: Strategies for preventing problems and resolving issues.**

### Instructions

- You will be placed in one of four groups: A, B, C, or D. Groups A and C will consider the ground rules for delivering sessions that may lead to a discussion of sensitive issues. Groups B and D will consider the guidelines for planning sessions that may be sensitive.
- Elect a spokesperson for your group. The spokesperson will record the main points of the discussion and feed back to others as requested.
- At the end of the discussion, the spokespeople for groups A and B will swap groups to feed back and facilitate further discussion, and the spokespeople for groups C and D will do likewise.
- Share the main points of the discussions with the larger group.
- Consider the information in **Sheet 2.4: Strategies for preventing problems and resolving issues.**

## Sheet 2.4: Strategies for preventing problems and resolving issues

### Setting ground rules

These include:

- always informing learners about sensitive issues before the session begins
- ensuring that learners know what they should do if they feel uncomfortable about what is happening during the session; they may wish, for example, to leave the room
- respecting feelings; do not force learners to participate or share personal experiences if they feel that the topic is too sensitive
- treating others' opinions with respect
- ensuring that particular learners do not dominate the discussion
- maintaining confidentiality
- intervening if you feel that emotions are overtaking the learning experience.

### Guidelines for planning

These include:

- informing learners in advance about any sensitive topics you will be discussing
- planning ahead; anticipating problems and thinking about how they might be resolved
- being aware of the more sensitive members of the group and how you will meet their needs
- being aware of your own coping strategies, for example, what would you do if you lost your own composure when talking about life-threatening illnesses because you have a relative who has cancer
- being knowledgeable about disclosure policies and procedures, and knowing where to refer learners if appropriate
- being aware of any sensitive issues among group members and how to deal with them
- having 'back up'; discussing the session you are delivering with your own team and how it may impact on the learners
- knowing yourself and your own capabilities; do not impose your own views on learners.

Remember, what works well with one group of learners may not work as well with others.

## Stage 3 – Activities and sheets

### Sheet 3.1: Record and reflect

<b>Your name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Title of activity:</b>	CPD – Dealing with disclosure information and handling sensitive issues
<b>Learning objectives</b>	<p>When you have completed this activity you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• share an understanding of the term ‘disclosure’ and agree a common definition</li> <li>• extend your understanding of disclosure by participating in a card sort activity to classify direct and indirect disclosure</li> <li>• work co-operatively with colleagues to establish strategies for supporting learners that disclosure information of a sensitive nature</li> <li>• reflect on your own practice</li> <li>• read and review your organisation’s policy on disclosure.</li> </ul>

New overarching professional standards for teachers in the lifelong learning sector: professional value(s) and domain(s) addressed **BS2 Applying and developing own professional skills to enable learners to achieve their goals.**

What I have learned from this activity:

How I will use it to develop my professional practice:



How I will share what I have learned:

Further related CPD that I would find useful:

Indicative time (including reflection time):

**Sheet 3.2: The supported experiment**

Trying out new approaches or strategies in your teaching will help you to grow and improve as teachers. This process is enhanced by spending time reflecting on the whole process and documenting our thoughts and reflections. This not only helps you to clarify thoughts but it can contribute to your own personal reflective diary and form part of your continuing professional development. It is even more powerful if you can work collaboratively with others in working through this process.

**Planning**

What will you try out?

What specifically are you hoping to achieve?

Which group of learners will you try it out with?

Who can you work with on this project?

What support do you need and from whom?

**How will you evaluate your 'experiment' (for example, feedback from learners, self-assessment, peer review and evaluation)?**

**Feedback and evaluation (based on evidence)**

**What went well?**

**Why do you think it went well and how do you know that it went well?**

**What have you learned?**

**Next steps**

**What will you do next to extend and develop this work?**