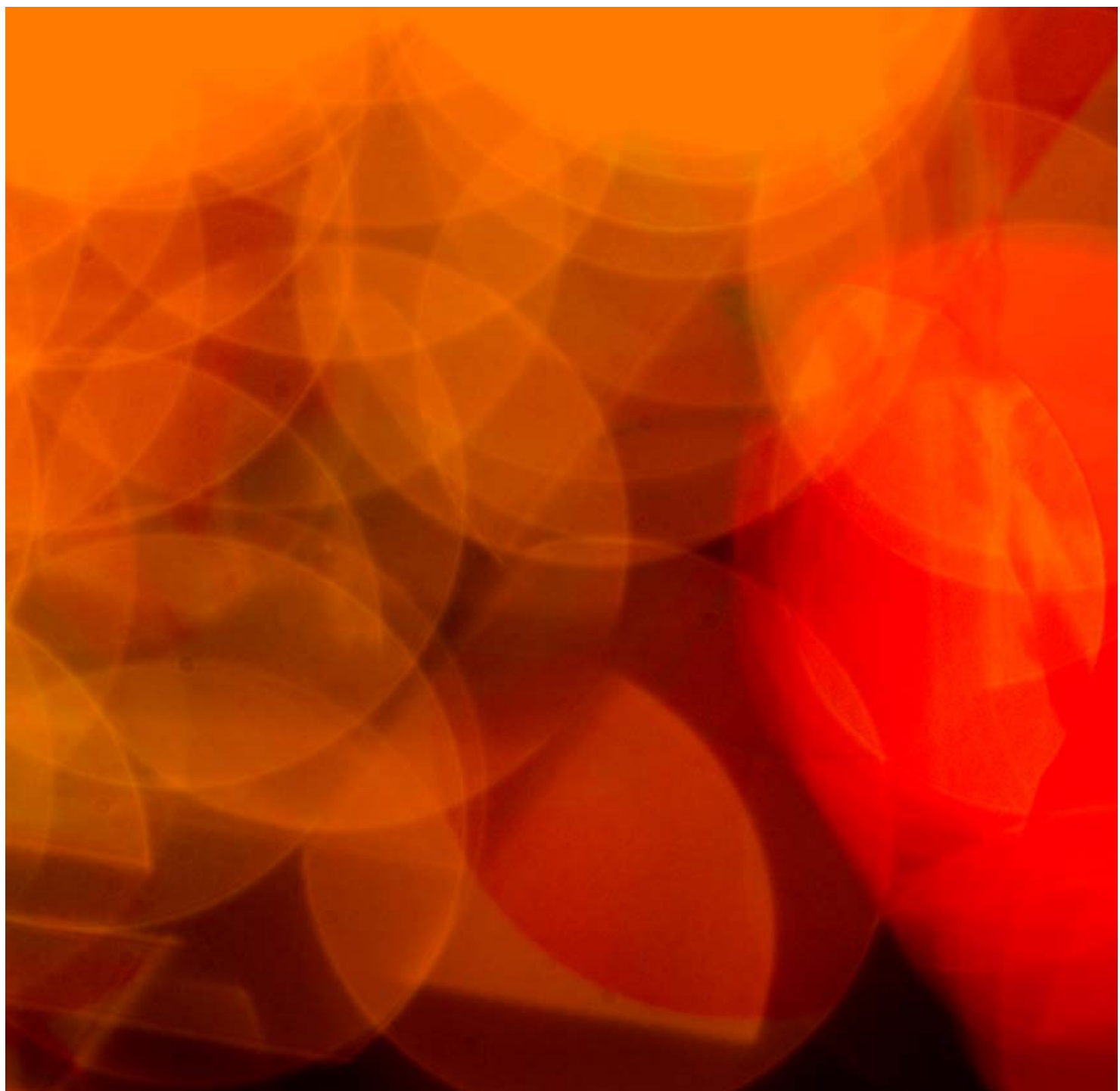


Training Quality Standard Part B

Part 3: Application guide



Support resources for training providers in the automotive (retail motor industry) sector

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Introduction

The Training Quality Standard (TQS) is 'an assessment framework designed to recognise and celebrate the best organisations delivering training and development solutions to employers' (Introducing the Training Quality Standard CFE/LSC July 2008).

For detailed information about the TQS, please go to the TQS website www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk. It would be useful to look at the Eligibility document which has details of the requirements, eligibility criteria and special conditions that will determine whether a training provider can make a TQS application. From September 2008 TQS assessment is the responsibility of a number of new licensed certification bodies. These certification bodies also provide applicant training courses that will benefit providers aspiring to achieve the TQS.

Most Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) have produced TQS Part B guidance to assist training providers to consider their impact in their specific sector and to help identify possible evidence sources for a TQS Part B application. The SSC for the automotive (retail motor industry) sector, The Institute of the Motor Industry has produced guidance (September 2009 latest version) that can be found on the TQS main website at www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk. The Institute of the Motor Industry has also provided other resources in direct support of this application guide, including the Appendix A 'footprint' guide.

This application guide is the third part in a three-part suite of resources designed to assist training providers that aspire to achieve TQS Part B certification of excellence in automotive skills. Part 1 was the readiness checklist and part 2 was the development guide. Before you begin to use this application guide you should refer to the readiness checklist. The 'Interpreting your responses' section will enable you to decide whether this application guide or the development guide is the appropriate resource to support your progress.

NB. Feedback from road shows, workshops and other sources indicates that high-level organisational buy-in to TQS from governors, principals, chief executives, senior management teams, etc, is 'patchy'.

You should be aware that certification under the TQS will be very difficult, or impossible, without the support and commitment of senior staff in your organisation. Furthermore, training providers that register for TQS are formally required to do so with the 'full support of the appropriate management authorities' who are also 'committed to the organisation preparing an application for assessment'.

A new kind of quality mark

The Training Quality Standard (TQS) is a new sort of quality mark. Organisations will want to complete a high-quality application but to do that they will need to know:

- what to include in the application
- how to present the evidence.

Applicants that simply slot evidence into each section will not present a strong application because the application needs to:

- tell a coherent story about the provision
- explain the processes that form the structure of the provision
- explain the links between the processes, vital to a high-quality operation.

TQS guidance is explicit that the above features form the basis of a completed application but most applications show clear weaknesses in evidence presentation in these areas.

TQS applicants need to use cross-referencing and diagrams to simplify the presentation of their Part B evidence and link the Part B and Part A application. Research evidence and SSC feedback have identified that application evidence is typically repetitive, and linking and cross-referencing are weak or non-existent.

This guide is not designed to tell a provider organisation what story to tell. That would be inappropriate, and, in any case, every story will be different. However, it is designed to provide an understanding of the processes that TQS assessors expect to see. Importantly, it also suggests how the processes and outcomes can be effectively linked (see the flowchart, page 6) making the presentation of a coherent story much simpler.

TQS assessors will expect all employer-facing staff to understand the operation of the processes explained in the application and this forms a key part of the verification visit. Research visits to certified providers revealed that they displayed excellent communication strategies and a business-focused culture, both across the organisation and in the specific Part B area.

NB. Even if a provider has decided that a Part B application lies in the future, they need to consider the requirements as early as possible because it is very unlikely that any provider will have all the required processes and retrospective evidence will not be available if these processes are introduced close to the point of application.

How to use this guide

When planning for TQS Part B, training providers need to determine the ‘fit’ of their provision with the relevant SSC to know what to include in a Part B application. (See Appendix A for Automotive Skills ‘footprint’ guidance.)

This guide has been produced specifically to assist provider organisations to:

- tell a coherent story about their specialist retail motor industry provision
- explain the processes that form the structure of the provision
- explain the links between the processes, vital to a high-quality operation.

The Training Quality Standard is explicitly non-prescriptive. That is, a provider organisation is not obliged to do things in a predetermined way to become certified. However, much of the assessment is ‘scored’ on the basis of the ‘approaches’ that a provider uses. These approaches have to be ‘sound’ and effectively ‘deployed’.

This guide focuses on the main TQS Part B headings. Each section describes in detail the evidence requirements that relate to that particular Part B area. It is clear from existing applications that misinterpretation is relatively common, so time taken to fully understand the evidence required in each section is likely to be rewarded.

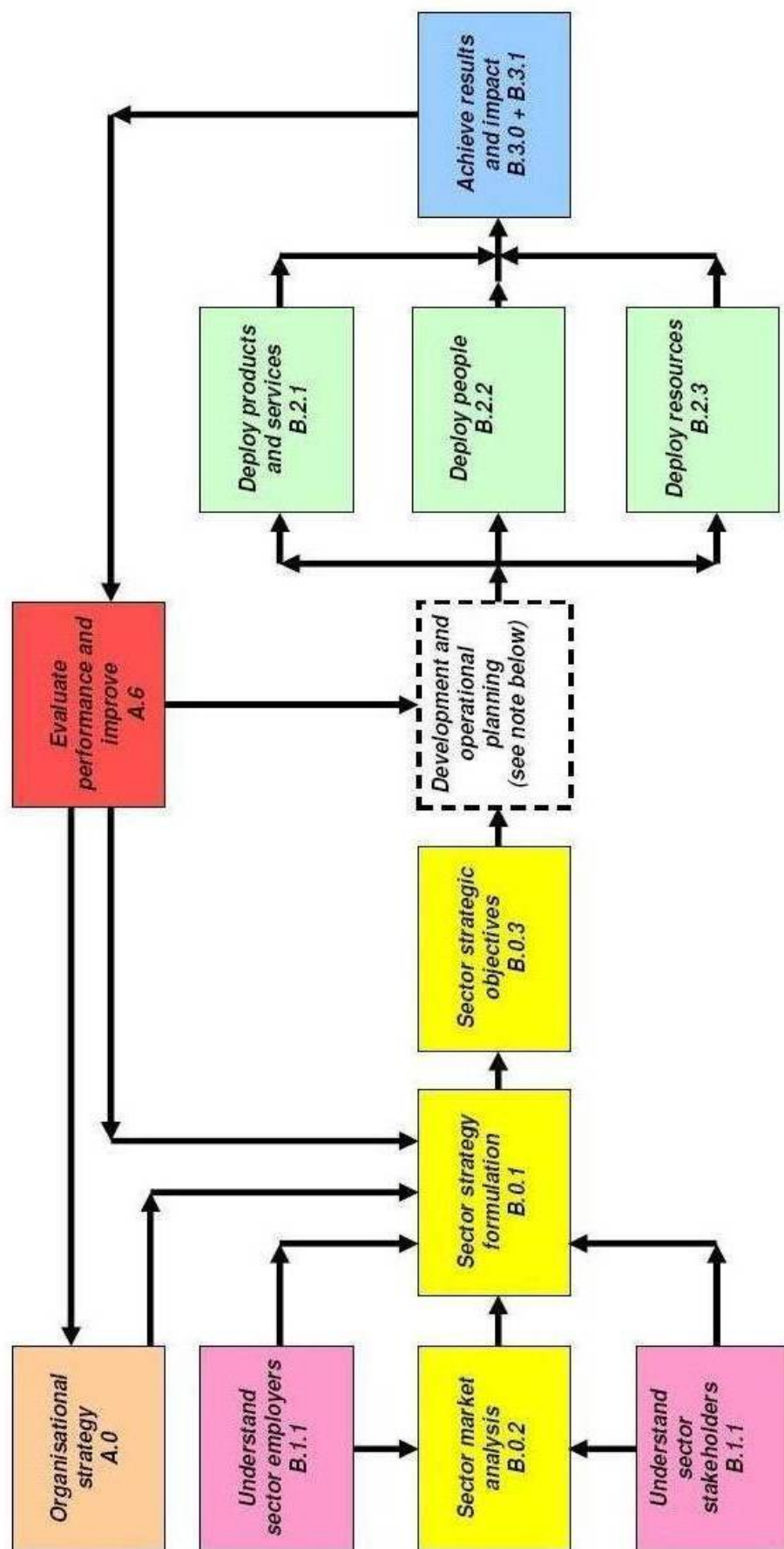
One way of presenting a coherent story about expert provision is for a provider to base their story on the way that their processes are linked. In this way they can demonstrate that they have a complete range of appropriate processes, in line with the evidence requirements, but also the links between the processes will allow the story to ‘flow’ naturally.

This guide suggests the use of a range of processes that relate to the main Part B areas and a way that groups of processes and outcomes can be linked. This is illustrated generally by the flowchart on page 6 and backed up by more detailed information in each section.

Even with the above approach presenting a ‘coherent story’ is something that providers are very likely to struggle to articulate and so an example has been provided in the form of a ‘journey’ for a particular strategic aim within the retail motor industry sector (see page 7). This is absolutely not something you should ‘cut and paste’ into your application, but it is an example of how you should represent the journey of each of your own strategic performance objectives, starting with the research, etc and culminating in the ultimate delivery of training solutions that meet the defined need. It is represented early in this application guide to underline the importance of this approach and ensure that it is at the forefront of your thoughts throughout the development of your automotive skills TQS Part B application.

Finally, the guide identifies appropriate links between the Part B and Part A application and a range of opportunities to include quality improvement examples, vital in a high-quality application.

Training Quality Standard Part B Flowchart – suggested process and outcome links



Note: Although there are not specific TQS criteria for operational and development planning, these processes are considered to be essential for the effective deployment and continuous improvement of products and services, people and physical resources. Development planning guidance can be found in section B.2 of this guide; however, operational planning is considered to be a routine training deployment process and is not therefore covered in this guide.

'Journey' example

TQS Part B in Automotive Skills – example of strategy to impact journey

	Indicator	Example from a strategic aim originally set in 2007
B.0: Strategy	B.0.1: Define aims	To develop a quality, innovative automotive skills curriculum offer to have an impact on the local community, employers, the wider retail motor industry and to be a lead provider of high-impact, quality business training solutions
	B.0.2: Define market	Internal research and EU legislation (a key driver) identified a training need for employers to understand the requirements of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for handling refrigerants as well as for their repair technicians to be trained and certificated. The service and repair of mobile air-conditioning (MAC) units on vehicles is carried out by 80% of employers surveyed (total 100). This is supporting evidence of a common business need that has been confirmed by the Sector Skills Council as a priority for the sector.
	B.0.3: Define results	<p>Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound (SMART) objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide DEFRA/MAC awareness training to at least 50% of the employers surveyed by end July 2008 (40 employers) to train/certificate at least one technician at each site (at least 40) within the same timeline to roll-out a second phase offer to the other 50% (40 employers/technicians) by end July 2009 <p>Reported against our operational business plan on a monthly basis – actions documented and put in place if slippage is occurring</p>
B.1: Understand	B.1.1: Understand employers	Increasing numbers of enquiries (many derived from assessors in the field) for training and development solutions for MAC maintenance and repair technicians have been documented. This need has also been confirmed by our employer advisory group and our employer survey (100 employers) – 80% will require training.
	B.1.2: Understand stakeholders	DEFRA specified that from 4 July 2007 all individuals who handle air-conditioning refrigerants need to have been trained and certificated to meet European regulations by 2010, which has significant implications for the industry. The SSC has confirmed this as a key priority, strengthened by advice from our Regional Development Agency. Key trade bodies the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) and the Retail Motor Industry Federation (RMIF) confirmed MAC training as a common business need of their employer members

	Indicator	Example from a strategic aim originally set in 2007															
B.2: Deploy	B.2.1: Deploy products and services	<p>The following training solutions will be introduced from Sept 07:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DEFRA legislation awareness training (for employers)• The handling of refrigerants in MAC systems (technician training) <p>Employers informed of MAC training products/solutions via various media but specifically through direct mail</p>															
	B.2.2: Deploy people	<p>MAC specific training and certification was completed for three front line delivery staff by August 2007 to ensure they have the full range of skills and knowledge to deliver MAC training solutions. To enhance expertise and best practice we have developed a MAC staff information pack, supported/agreed by the awarding body. Our employer advisory group confirmed the delivery team is suitable and prepared for MAC training to begin in September 2007</p>															
	B.2.3: Deploy resources	<p>Investment of £30k in up-to-date industry standard MAC equipment in September 2007. Further £10k available per annum to provide sufficient resources and consumables to accommodate a maximum of 100 technicians from 40 employers in the first year of delivery.</p> <p>Physical/workshop resources agreed by our employer advisory group and the awarding body pre-training rollout.</p>															
	B.3.0: Achieve results	<p>Results for 2007/08 – target figure in brackets</p> <table><tr><th>Course</th><th>Recruitment</th><th>Retention %</th><th>Achievement %</th><th>Satisfaction %</th></tr><tr><td>MAC employer awareness</td><td>42 (40)</td><td>100 (100)</td><td>100 (100)</td><td>96 (95)</td></tr><tr><td>MAC regulation course (technicians)</td><td>58 (40)</td><td>97 (100)</td><td>96 (95)</td><td>95 (95)</td></tr></table>	Course	Recruitment	Retention %	Achievement %	Satisfaction %	MAC employer awareness	42 (40)	100 (100)	100 (100)	96 (95)	MAC regulation course (technicians)	58 (40)	97 (100)	96 (95)	95 (95)
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MAC regulation course (technicians)	58 (40)	97 (100)	96 (95)	95 (95)													
	B.3.1: Achieve impact	<p>The introduction of MAC training solutions has achieved the following impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 42 local employers are now aware of the regulatory requirements• 56 technicians are qualified and certificated in the safe handling of refrigerants and associated MAC regulations• 2 employers have expanded their businesses to include MAC service/repair. <p>The above is an indicator of impact on the sector as these achievement volumes contribute to SSC SSA and SQS targets to address technical skills shortages and meet statutory EU and DEFRA legislation well before the 2010 deadline - this is a key priority and compliance need for the sector.</p>															

Section B.0 – Strategy

Providers having sectoral expertise have a **strategy for working with the sector** based on the market including **clearly defined objectives**. They take actions to ensure that their aims and approaches are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.

B.0.1 The strategy for working with the sector defines aims and approaches which are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.

B.0.2 The strategy for working with the sector includes an analysis of the market and key customer groups.

B.0.3 The strategy for working with the sector defines specific, measurable and time-based performance objectives, which are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.

(Introducing the Training Quality Standard, CFE/LSC, July 2008)

General notes to assist in completing the B.0 (Strategy) section

1. Although the 'Strategy' section of the Part B application is not 'scored' directly, it plays a vital role in a high-quality bid for the following key reasons:

- It forms the basis for the 'story' of your automotive skills provision so the impact on scoring is through how successfully the later narrative links back to the strategy and strategic objectives.
- It presents the main opportunity for the automotive skills area, through its strategies, to show that the management team understand their business, are not operating in isolation and are serious about their performance and the opportunities to improve quality.

An objective review of this evidence will be the key first impression for an assessor of the 'overall' quality of the automotive skills area. Poorly presented or missing evidence in the strategy section will lead to an uphill battle for the rest of the Part B application.

- It allows the automotive skills area to demonstrate that it understands and uses the business development strategies in place across the whole organisation. Assuming the organisation gets through Part A successfully, it will have demonstrated the effectiveness of its relationship with employers. The automotive skills area can then show that it has the strategy for taking best advantage of the business development expertise and support available through its commitment to a number of cross-organisation working practices.
2. Criteria B.0.1 and B.0.3 both require interaction with appropriate stakeholders. This should involve quite a few organisations external to the provider (Regional Development Agencies, employer groups, Sector Skills Councils, etc) and contacts inside the provider (business development forum, quality committees, marketing groups, etc). Although the requirement is for the bulk of the evidence to be text-based narrative, a diagram or flowchart illustrating the extent of stakeholder contact and active links would be an effective addition.
3. Before attempting to complete the three elements of the 'Strategy' section, take some time to think about the relationship between them. This will enable you to get the best evidence in the appropriate section, make the sections easier to complete and make it much clearer for an assessor to understand:

B.0.1 should explain your **overall strategy for working with the retail motor industry** and

how this strategy was informed and created. The relationship with the employer engagement elements of your organisation's strategic plan should be explained as simply as possible. However, the retail motor industry strategy will need to show how well the management team understand the sector and how this understanding translates into general aims and approaches. The way in which the 'market view' established in B.0.2 is integrated will also need to be clear. Having explained the strategy, and how it was formulated, it is necessary to show how the strategy will be delivered (in a general sense) although this may already be clear from the way the aims and approaches have been presented. It is also necessary to make clear how the effectiveness of the strategy will be reviewed and how the strategic aims and approaches are communicated to retail motor industry stakeholders.

B.0.2 is concerned with the **analysis of the market in which the provision operates and its key customer groups**. It is likely to include reference to national labour market intelligence (LMI) in the sector but must also include the range of ways in which LMI and other relevant information are gathered from the geographic area of the provision. The structured way in which the information is analysed should be illustrated, as should the way in which the 'market view' is converted into general strategy and linked to B.0.1 and the strategic performance objectives in B.0.3.

B.0.3 should contain **performance objectives that relate directly to the strategic aims and approaches laid out in B.0.1**. These strategic performance objectives should set the challenge of high-quality operational activity in the retail motor industry sector. The objectives must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based (SMART) to ensure that there are comparators for actual performance. The processes for reviewing performance must be clear, as must the processes for taking action on underperforming areas and for communicating performance information, at appropriate stages, to retail motor industry stakeholders.

Completing the application – B.0.1

This section is concerned with the general approach of the overall retail motor industry strategy. Resist the temptation to include lengthy lists of objectives and/or targets that are likely to complicate an assessor's understanding of the basic features of the overall approach. (B.0.3 should contain your SMART strategic objectives and/or targets in any case.)

A logical and effective way to ensure you have included information in each of the required areas is to present your narrative in paragraphs relating to these areas.

Organisational strategic planning

Show in as simple terms as possible how the organisation as a whole strategically plans its employer engagement activities and describe what influence automotive section management has on this process. Explain how the strategic planning for the automotive skills area of provision relates to, or is influenced by, the organisation-wide employer approach.

Strategy formulation

A key part of this section is to show how the strategy for the automotive skills area is created. This should include reference to a range of appropriate sources and how they inform the strategy. For clarity these sources can be separated into three sections as outlined below.

1. External retail motor industry stakeholders: SSC, skills observatories, Regional Development Agencies, sector advisory groups, economic development organisations, professional organisations, employer groups, awarding bodies, etc. Identifying the range of contacts and the level of interaction (see note 2 on page 9) will not only show the stature of the provision in the retail motor industry sector as a whole, but will provide the opportunity to show that the creation of the strategy is underpinned by credible information sources. Identify key information sources from the above organisations – the Sector Qualification Strategy (SQS) and the Sector Skills Agreement (SSA) for example – and any other skills priority documents relating to the retail motor industry. Further guidance and links to some of the key documents can be found in sections B.0.1 and B.0.2 of the Institute of the Motor Industry Part B guidance (September 2009 version), available on the TQS website.
2. Internal organisational contacts (see note 2 above) such as business development forums, quality committees, marketing groups, etc, and the way these contribute to strategy formulation should be explained.
3. Your ‘market view’ established during the analysis in B.0.2. The way this influences the general strategic aims and approaches should be explained.

The strategy formulation process is also likely to include consideration of and reference to development planning (see B.2.1), especially the evaluation of the impact of new products and services.

This general strategy section should also include a fundamental commitment to quality improvement. You could refer to the quality improvement processes used by the Part B area and how they link to the quality processes employed by the wider organisation (A.6), although detail of how this actually works will be better located in the performance section B.3.0.

Strategic aims and approaches

List the strategic aims and approaches that flow naturally from the formulation process above. Aims and approaches suggest relatively general statements so there should be no need to have many of them or to make them lengthy or very detailed. Aims are general statements that identify the main thrust of the strategy and approaches show generally how these aims will be met (policies, objectives, plans and processes). There will be opportunities to include more specific statements and appropriate detail in the performance objectives in B.0.3.

Strategy delivery

Illustrate the way the strategic aims and approaches will be delivered. It is possible that this will already be clear from the aims and approaches. However, it may be better to narrate this separately, especially if inclusion in the aims and approaches would make them unwieldy and detract from the key messages.

Strategic review

A high-quality application will be full of evidence of a serious commitment to quality improvement. It must be clear that processes are in place to review the effectiveness of the strategy and more importantly how the outcomes of these processes feed back into the 'strategy formulation' process. An effective example of this would be how employer consultation (B.1.1) subsequently affected the 'market view' (B.0.2), which in turn influenced/changed a particular strategic aim or approach (B.0.1) requiring a change/modification to a strategic performance objective (B.0.3)

Stakeholder communication

It should be clear how the strategic aims and approaches are communicated to retail motor industry stakeholders and if it has not been clarified in the 'strategy formulation' paragraph, what opportunities these stakeholders have to influence strategy. Real examples of this influence in action are important, but at the very least an assessor should be left in no doubt that stakeholders support the content and extent of the strategic aims and approaches.

Completing the application – B.0.2

This section is concerned with the **analysis of the retail motor industry market (in which the provision operates) and its key customer groups.**

A summary of a general analysis of national LMI in the retail motor industry would be a good starting point including the documents used and the organisations that produce them (LSC, SSC, retail motor industry organisations, etc).

However, most providers will have a geographic area of operation based on a combination of local and regional delivery. Information relating to the determination of this would be useful to set the context of an effective market analysis and demonstrate a sound understanding of the factors in play.

Analysis should go on to include the range of ways in which LMI and other relevant information is gathered including documents published by the RDA and regional LSC, where they specifically refer to the retail motor industry, and information from regional observatories, economic support organisations, local employer bodies and group training associations. Evidence of retail motor industry stakeholder consultation is also required in section B.1.2 and the outcome of analysis of these processes will provide important market analysis contributions.

Section B.1.1 also requires evidence that retail motor industry employers have had opportunities to express their expectations of training solutions and that the automotive provision supports common business needs. Clearly, an effective strategy would take account of this employer input and so reference should be made to section B.1.1 (which will explain the processes for capturing and analysing employer information). The impact of this employer consultation on the 'market view' should form part of the analysis for this section. Showing how retail motor industry employers' views subsequently influence/change strategy would be a powerful addition to the 'strategic review' section of B.0.1.

Retail motor industry employer consultation (B.1.1) should have provided further useful information on appropriate training solutions. Real examples of these should be included, and the importance of their contribution to marketplace understanding explained. Other initiatives

that identify and target 'hard-to-reach' customers (such as small and medium-sized enterprises) would enhance the analysis and provide further evidence of a proactive approach to the needs of the retail motor industry.

The structured way in which all of the above information is analysed should be illustrated (who is responsible, how often does it happen, what information sources contribute, what analytical processes are used, etc). If this is done well it will prove that the 'market view' is current and robust.

Finally, cross-referencing will be required to show how the 'market view' is converted to general strategy (B.0.1) and the performance of this key element of strategy is monitored through the strategic performance objectives (B.0.3).

Completing the application – B.0.3

This section should contain retail motor industry training provision performance objectives that relate directly to the strategic aims and approaches laid out in B.0.1.

NB In national documentation (from the TQS website or the SSC guidance) this section is headed 'define results' and this has led to some applicants displaying performance data for their courses and training solutions in this section which is incorrect!

The strategic performance objectives should set the challenge of high-quality retail motor industry work in the context of the marketplace in which the provision operates and they should have been generated specifically from the general aims and approaches defined in B.0.1.

The objectives must be SMART to ensure that there is clarity in the comparison between them and the actual performance of the provision.

The processes for reviewing performance against the objectives should be explained clearly. This is not the place to provide detail of strategic performance successes (that should be evidenced in section B.3). However, the effectiveness of the performance review process should be demonstrated. The best evidence of this is likely to be provided by explaining the processes for taking action on underperforming areas. Actual examples of how these processes have improved performance through strategic modifications, i.e. how the 'cycle' of quality improvement has been effective in this case, contribute powerfully to this section. One possible source is from the retail motor industry employer consultation processes (B.1.1.) but there may be no evidence to this effect if 'across-the-board' performance has exceeded the expectations of the objectives in all aspects.

Finally, it should be clear how strategic performance information is communicated to retail motor industry stakeholders and the relationship of this to the 'stakeholder influence' issue discussed in B.0.1. stakeholder communication.

Section B.1 – Understand

Providers having sectoral expertise **engage in dialogue with employers and stakeholders in their sectors** and look to lead in the adoption and sharing of good practice.

B.1.1 Input is sought from sector employers on their expectations for training solutions and common business needs.

B.1.2 Input is sought from appropriate stakeholders to share good practice and understand the sector's common business needs.

(Introducing the Training Quality Standard, CFE/LSC, July 2008)

Completing the application – B.1.1

The narrative in this section will need to explain the effectiveness of the processes that the automotive skills provision uses to understand retail motor industry employers, particularly the training solutions that these employers need and their relationship with the employers' common business needs.

General note to set the context of B.1.1

High-quality training solution provision does not happen accidentally. Managers, technical experts and work-based specialists will have worked together to ensure that the content of their training portfolio, coupled with a range of responsive delivery options, meet the needs of retail motor industry employers in their area of operation.

Development of such provision requires a significant input from retail motor industry employers and training delegate customers. Indeed, a training provider's understanding of the 'retail motor industry employer audience' is likely to have evolved over a long time and be based on contact with many retail motor industry employer representatives, employers and company delegates.

Training providers may consider this part of their business to be well informed but may still find it difficult to provide formal evidence. Most of their information will probably have come from informal verbal dialogue so evidence is likely to be anecdotal and impossible to validate.

A high-quality Part B application will show a clear understanding of the marketplace in which it operates (B.0.2) and the retail motor industry employers it considers to be its key customer groups. It will now need to show formally how it has been able to understand these employers.

The layout of this section is particularly important to allow information to be presented coherently and enable appropriate links to be made with other Part B criteria.

The information could be sorted into the following three sections:

- show that you have planned the way you gather and analyse information from retail motor industry employers
- show that you have done what you planned to do using real examples and make references to the results of your analysis

- show how the views of retail motor industry employers have had an impact on the training solutions on offer and how their views have influenced/changed strategy.

Further guidance

1. Show that you have planned the way you gather and analyse information from retail motor industry employers

There are many varied opportunities to seek employer (or employer representative) views of the training solutions on offer, e.g. Employer Federations, Sector Advisory Committees, SSC forums, organisational needs analysis (ONA), training needs analysis (TNA), programme delivery, on-site or work-based assessment, site visits, industry placements for staff, projects, visiting speakers, specialist advisers, employer update events, workshops, questionnaires (and there are many more).

Consultation should not just consider the training products or solutions on offer but take clear account of the common business needs of employers in the retail motor industry. High-quality training solutions will help retail motor industry employers to develop their businesses and be ambitious about 'business impact', so employer consultation should include the range of possibilities that training solutions can offer to improve businesses.

There should also be quality processes to capture the satisfaction levels of employers and trainee delegates about training solution delivery.

You will need to explain your plan for capturing and analysing information from this vast array of opportunity, e.g. which opportunities you consider most valuable and why; when, how often and how you will capture the information; how the information will be analysed; by whom and how often.

2. Show that you have done what you planned to do using real examples and make references to the results of your analysis

Having explained how you intended to gather and analyse information from retail motor industry employers, employer representatives and trainee delegates, you should evidence the outcome of these processes. Explain how well your planned activities actually worked and what they produced in terms of volume and extent of information.

The results of the analysis will be the key information, supported by appropriate references to evidence sources (minutes of meetings, workshop planning, consultation papers, and completed questionnaires, etc). This information may be presented in different formats but would probably include the summarised views of retail motor industry employers. It will then be necessary to consider a reaction to each view and determine appropriate courses of action.

This information as a whole should be used to inform the 'market view' of the training provision determined in B.0.2.

Information relating to the availability of products and services, and issues relating to the delivery of products and services, should be used to inform the development-planning processes explained in B.2.1.

3. Show how the views of retail motor industry employers have had an impact on the training solutions on offer and how their views have influenced/changed strategy

Consultation is pointless if the information gathered and the views formed as a result do not affect the strategy and operational procedures of the automotive training provision on offer!

On the other hand, where issues have been raised and changes suggested and there is an 'audit trail' of effect through the quality improvement and/or the strategic planning processes, this reflects a responsive and high-quality operation.

The outcome of the above analysis will have produced evidence that retail motor industry employers have had opportunities to express their expectations of training solutions and the links to common business needs and business impact. The general link to strategic planning will be clear, if the information has been used to form the 'market view' (B.0.2) and has subsequently been used to inform the general strategic aims and approaches through 'strategy formulation' (B.0.1).

However, this may not have provided specific examples of strategic or operational changes as a direct result of retail motor industry employer views. Consider the statement below:

An effective example of this would be how retail motor industry employer consultation (B.1.1) subsequently affected the 'market view' (B.0.2) which in turn influenced/changed a particular strategic aim or approach (B.0.1) requiring a change/modification to a strategic performance objective (B.0.3).

Identifying real examples of this would significantly enhance a TQS Part B application. They could be included here or in the 'strategic review' section of B.0.1, but clear links should be made to prove the effectiveness of the strategic planning and quality improvement processes.

Completing the application – B.1.2

The narrative in this section will need to explain the effectiveness of the processes that the automotive skills provision uses to understand retail motor industry stakeholders, particularly sharing good practice and understanding the sector's common business needs.

In the strategy section (B.0) you should have shown that you engage with retail motor industry stakeholders, that they have opportunity to influence the formation of your strategy and that you communicate with them about strategic performance. For clarity, you may have chosen to illustrate the extent of stakeholder contact with a diagram.

In this section you should explain how you systematically use your contact with stakeholders to ensure you have a current and robust understanding of the retail motor industry's common business needs.

Who are you in contact with? How often? How do you use the opportunities to gather information? What form does the information take? How is it analysed? By whom? Etc.

You should also be able to demonstrate a proactive approach to the sharing of good practice with other retail motor industry training providers.

How is this planned? What dissemination processes are used? Who is involved? What processes are used to consider the information captured from partners etc? Who is responsible? Etc.

The outcome of the above analysis will have produced evidence that retail motor industry stakeholders have had opportunities to contribute and influence training provision, and that they have provided important information about the links to common business needs and business impact. Further useful information should also be available from 'best practice' exchanges.

Once again, demonstrate the systematic nature of your management processes by clarifying the following links:

- as with the previous section, the link to strategic planning will be clear, if the information has been used to inform the 'market view' (B.0.2) and this has subsequently been used to inform the general strategic aims and approaches through 'strategy formulation' (B.0.1)
- retail motor industry stakeholder consultation conclusions will significantly enhance the rationale for the development plan for the deployment of products and services (B.2.1)
- actual examples of how retail motor industry stakeholder consultation conclusions or best practice information have influenced development planning (B.2.1) and how subsequently delivery has been well received by customers (through feedback in B.1.1) is another important 'quality improvement' opportunity.

Section B.2 – Deploy

Providers having sectoral **expertise deploy products and services to meet employer needs**, supported by the content, people and resources able to meet industry expectations.

B.2.1 Products and services are developed and delivered to sector expectations and employers' business needs.

B.2.2 The people arranging and delivering products and services have the knowledge and skills to meet sector expectations.

B.2.3 The resources used to arrange and deliver products and services meet sector expectations.

(Introducing the Training Quality Standard, CFE/LSC, July 2008)

Completing the application – B.2.1

The narrative in this section will need to show that the development and delivery of products and services meet (or exceed) retail motor industry expectations and take account of employers' business needs

You could initially focus on your existing range of products and services. However, it is very important that you can show that these were formally and systematically designed to meet retail motor industry employer needs, that you rigorously evaluate their effectiveness (especially business impact) and that you are continuously striving to improve/extend your provision portfolio.

It may be that historically your product development processes have been relatively informal, based on your belief that you understand the nature of the retail motor industry and your continued interaction with automotive employers (and this may have been very effective!). However, the TQS requires that you show evidence of the quality and effectiveness of your management processes and for this reason you should consider the following.

The evidence for this section could be presented very effectively if it focused on a development plan for automotive skills provision. However, you should be clear that while a development plan can indicate the extent of the ambition of management to improve the products and services on offer, it may not show the rationale that predetermined its creation, the processes for reviewing development progress or the processes for evaluating the impact of the new products and services.

The development plan

Rationale

You should explain the consultation, research and internal decision-making processes that predetermined the creation of the development plan. The original aim or approach that initiated the creation of a development plan should be strategic (B.0.1) and there should be a link back to that aim or approach.

There should be multiple sources of evidence that support a sound rationale from the content of the automotive skills Part B application that you have created, and they should be referred to in your explanation.

For example, there is research and sector needs information from sector-based guidance documents such as the SSA and SQS. Copies of the SSA documents may be viewed and/or downloaded from www.motor.org.uk/research. You should also refer to section B.2.1 of the TQS Part B guidance (September 2009 version) provided by The Institute of the Motor Industry, which provides advice on sector-specific products and services. There is also national, regional and local LMI from the 'market analysis' process (B.0.2).

Additionally, consultation outcomes from retail motor industry employers (B.1.1) and retail motor industry stakeholder organisations (B.1.2) will show that your plan is designed to develop products and services to meet employers' needs and sector expectations.

It will also be very important to consider the implications of your development objectives for your existing resources (B.2.3). It makes sense to incorporate resource development targets and related staff-development targets (B.2.2) into the development plan, to demonstrate a cohesive approach to the overall process.

Last, but definitely not least, consideration of the results of evaluation impact studies of the previous development plan compared with the targets in the new plan, would also demonstrate quality improvement in action.

What is the process that uses the above information in the production of the development plan? Who is responsible? How often does this happen?

Progress review

You should show that you are proactive in achieving the targets in the development plan and that you regularly review progress towards delivering them. Minutes of automotive section or automotive management meetings in which progress is specifically discussed could be used as evidence, and actions taken to boost underperformance formally recorded.

A relatively simple spreadsheet with the targets listed, review dates and outcomes, action taken, etc, would be an effective way of presenting evidence of a proactive approach.

Evaluating the impact of new products and services

You should be able to show that you take a close interest in monitoring the impact of new products and services. This should include a planned approach to evaluation, especially of business impact/improvement, and specifically including feedback from delivery staff and retail motor industry employers and employer delegates.

How are you going to do this? When? Who is responsible?

Finally, you should show that the results of the evaluation are used constructively and effectively to inform future 'strategy formulation' (B.0.1) and 'development planning' (B.2.1) processes.

Examples of how successes or failures in this area have tangibly influenced strategy or development planning would significantly enhance a TQS Part B application.

Completing the application – B.2.2

The narrative in this section will need to show that the people arranging and delivering products and services have the knowledge and skills to meet retail motor industry sector expectations.

There may be a tendency here to simply show that all the technical teaching and assessment staff in the automotive area are qualified to recognised retail motor industry standards and they have appropriate teaching and/or assessment qualifications. However, consideration should be given to **the whole process of arranging and delivering the products and services identified above**. Staff involved in all aspects of this process should have an appropriate set of skills and knowledge.

A good starting point would be to explain the general way that a training solution is delivered to a retail motor industry employer, from first contact right through to the post-delivery evaluation.

The organisation will have explained its procedure for dealing with employer enquiries in the Part A application and reference could be made to this. Explanation should begin from the point at which the enquiry reaches the automotive area.

How do you respond to this? Who responds? When? What processes are used to establish the needs of the employer? How do these take account of the business needs of the company? Who is responsible for establishing these needs? If business development staff and technical delivery staff are involved at this point, what integrated working practices are established? If training solutions are agreed, do business development staff continue to be involved throughout the delivery phase or is this left to technical staff? How is the impact of the training solution evaluated? Who is responsible?

The explanation will put into context appropriate sets of skill and knowledge for those involved in different aspects of the process. It would be inappropriate to include a 'list' of possible qualifications here but these should be predetermined for each role in the process and evidence of compliance with these should be provided.

In addition to appropriate skills and knowledge for all staff involved in the delivery of existing products and services there should be robust evidence of automotive staff development. It would make sense if this formed part of the development plan (B.2.1), because the development and delivery of new or modified products and services will be adversely affected by staff that do not have the expertise to work with them. This should also be linked clearly to the deployment of up-to-date resources (B.2.3).

Furthermore, you should leave no doubt about your commitment to maintaining the credibility of your staff with employers through a methodical and well-resourced programme of continuing professional development (CPD). You should have records of retail motor industry professional development that are likely to include relevant industry placements, exchanges, awarding body certification, specialist training, e.g. vehicle manufacturers' courses, etc.

Finally, you should have evidence that staff arranging and delivering training solutions are respected by retail motor industry employers (through positive feedback reports, programme evaluations, etc). You could have evidence where employers have agreed the delivery staff before training begins.

Completing the application – B.2.3

The narrative in this section will need to show that the physical resources used to arrange and deliver products and services meet retail motor industry expectations.

You should have shown that you have credible products and services (B.2.1) and expert automotive staff (B.2.2) and now you need to show that your physical resources meet the needs and highest expectations of a highly technical, rapidly changing industry.

Physical resources will align with the sub-sector of the retail motor industry that you deliver training to and will include your buildings/workshops, motor vehicle repair equipment, vehicles, teaching/learning materials and vehicle system components and models but may also include the resources of employers you work with, if delivery takes place in company premises.

Just as you may have decided to start with your existing products and services in section B.2.1 and explained how these were formally and systematically designed to meet retail motor industry employer needs, you would need to produce a similar explanation for your existing resources, if you choose to do the same here. You will also need to show how you systematically evaluate the effectiveness of the resources in action and that you are continuously striving to improve resources in support of the improvements to your products and services.

You may feel that you have not been able to show evidence of high-quality and effective management processes for resource development and deployment. If so, you should consider the following.

A comprehensive development planning process (B.2.1) will have considered the resource implications that are attached to the development plan objectives. It will have assessed existing physical resources against retail motor industry expectations, considered employer feedback on resource quality and evaluated the options for resource improvements. The process will have also demonstrated that you have taken account of retail motor industry research and that you have consulted with employers and stakeholders.

With the development planning and quality improvement documentation for reference, you can show that you have existing physical resources that have been proven to meet current retail motor industry expectations, but also that you have systematic processes in place that ensure your physical resources continue to improve in line with changing expectations.

Once again, you should refer to the Part B guidance (September 2009 version) provided by The Institute of the Motor Industry which includes resource-related suggestions in section B.2.3.

Section B.3 – Perform

Providers having sectoral expertise **cause improving results or sustained good performance** in the areas defined in their strategic objectives.

B.3.0 Indicators of performance against strategic objectives show an improving trend or a sustained high level of performance.

B.3.1 Impact on the sector shows an improving trend or sustained high level of performance.

(Introducing the Training Quality Standard, CFE/LSC, July 2008)

Completing the application – B.3.0

The narrative in this section will be different from the bulk of the application because it should be **based mainly on data, analysis and evaluation**.

This section is very important because it provides the opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the performance review process and how it provides a vital contribution to the ‘improvement journey’ of the provision.

There is likely to be a tendency here to simply list results for the training courses recently delivered in the automotive skills area. However, while data that provides evidence of ‘improving results or sustained good performance’ is vital, it should be presented as a continuation of the story of the provision, effectively a culmination of all the hard work of planning and delivering to the retail motor industry employer audience.

The guidance is also explicit that **performance should be measured against your own retail motor industry performance objectives defined in B.0.3**, and this is a stark omission from most existing applications. Effective processes will have been planned from beginning to end, and therefore you should be able to show that you have delivered against your performance objectives, which in turn will have delivered against your general strategic aims.

Some previous applicants have also struggled to understand the distinction between the two parts of this section, B.3.0 and B.3.1. TQS guidance is not particularly clear about this but the key distinction between the two sections is that the second section is focused specifically on ‘sector impact’. The recommendation of this guide is that for B.3.0 you need to display all your **results that relate to your retail motor industry performance objectives** and then for B.3.1 you need to analyse and evaluate what impact your strategy (B.0), understanding (B.1), deployment (B.2) and results (B.3.0) have had on the retail motor industry sector. To analyse and evaluate the sector impact of your results you will need to refer back to the retail motor industry sector priorities and also consider business impact (see further explanation in ‘completing the application’ B.3.1 below)

The form in which your results will need to be presented will depend on the nature of the performance objective you are addressing, but they could be made up of figures, graphs or tables and may relate to recruitment, retention and achievement data, new courses offered, workforce qualifications delivered (against LMI and sector priorities), etc. You should provide commentary on each achievement, explaining the way the B.0.3 performance objective has (or has not ... see following paragraph) been met and includes issues that were encountered on the journey to achievement, and other relevant features, such as trends.

Finally, the TQS is not about perfection: showing how you deal with performance objectives that have not been reached is as important as presenting the evidence of your success. You should therefore show how your performance review links to your improvement processes. This provides a key opportunity to link the Part B application to the Part A application, which has an improvement section (A.6). Assessors will be looking for harmonious interaction between the improvement processes used in the automotive skills area and those in use across the wider organisation. Real examples of the improvement process in action will do much to enhance your application.

Completing the application – B.3.1

Once again, the narrative in this section will be different from the bulk of the application because it should be **based mainly on data, analysis and evaluation**.

The focus of this final part of Part B of the TQS is that you demonstrate that your strategy, understanding, deployment and results have had an **impact on the businesses and workforce of the retail motor industry sector**. It is imperative that you are able to do this in order to prove your credibility as an expert provider of employer training solutions in the retail motor industry. If you researched effectively and reviewed key sector documentation during the 'market analysis' and 'strategy formulation' processes described earlier you will have developed an effective understanding of how you can achieve this impact. You should consider the following two areas as key requirements of this section:

- impact on the **sector** - retail motor industry workforce development priorities and sector targets contained in, for example, Sector Skills Council research documents such as the Sector Qualification Strategy and other **current** credible research documentation.
- business improvement impact on a range of specific automotive businesses (see further explanation below).

You should have performance objectives (B.0.3) that relate particularly to these two key requirements and you should provide analysis and evaluative commentary on how these have been achieved, backed up by cross references to the results communicated in B.3.0.

You should also refer to the Part B guidance (September 2009 version) provided by The Institute of the Motor Industry, which includes sector impact guidance in section B.3.1.

Further information about business impact

This is one area of the TQS that has proved particularly challenging for training providers. When they start to think about business impact they think about the turnover and profit of an employer and begin to get very nervous about issues such as the sensitivity of data. However, there is an effective way to consider this. Ask a simple question every time you negotiate training with a retail motor industry employer – why are we doing this? The training solution that you propose should not only be meeting the employer's needs but should be designed to tangibly improve the business. Your quality procedures will need to measure if this has been the case and therefore your pre-training dialogue with the employer should set out what you plan to achieve so that you can prove the impact during post-delivery evaluation!

The impact of a successful training intervention will be apparent in a variety of ways. The following impact themes will give you some ideas about what you could decide to measure:

- Career progression/promotion of individuals and post Apprenticeship CPD
- Expanded capacity/availability of a skilled workforce
- Meeting the needs of industry legislation/compliance
- Apprenticeship volumes contributing to sector targets for technical skills
- Worker productivity – evidence of bottom-line/profitability improvements
- Error reductions – fix first-time trends
- Raising standards and customer confidence in the sector – ATA volumes
- Customer service indicator improvements
- Improved management skills – Automotive Management Accreditation (AMA) volumes
- Increased vehicle sales volumes

There is huge variation in the organisation structure of training providers but in most cases there will be strong links between the technical and professional training staff in the TQS Part B area and their business development colleagues who usually have a more generic employer responsibility. Bearing in mind the importance of business impact to the TQS it is critical that potential applicants look closely at this relationship especially, the procedures in place for negotiating training solutions with employers. The procedure should ideally include a ‘business needs analysis’ from which training solutions are developed. If the outcomes are clearly defined and agreed with the employer at the outset, the impact on the business and more broadly on the sector can more easily be measured.

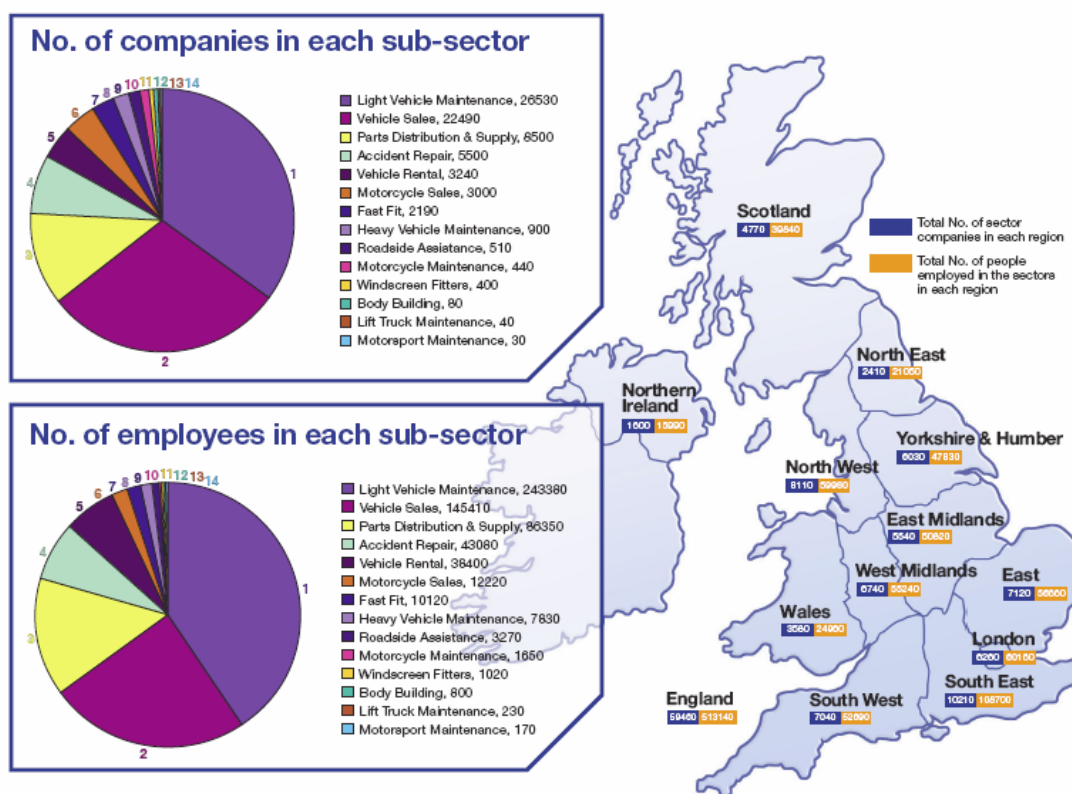
If you are able to measure the same things in many of the businesses with which you work you will very rapidly start to build up a useful profile of the success of your training solutions. If you measure quarterly, for example, in less than a year you will start to see trends and you will be able to make a case for the impact you are having. Using this approach will also help you to begin to benchmark performance more effectively. You may consider producing an aggregated score by surveying a number of employers to provide an **indicator** of the impact of a particular training solution against broad sector targets and priorities, which in turn relate to common business need.

The preceding text has concentrated on some non-fiscal ways in which your employer training solutions can impact on businesses. However, although the TQS does not explicitly expect training providers to include fiscal matters in their business impact deliberations you should be aware of the importance and the potential of the issue. Enhanced business profitability is not only one of the most tangible business impact indicators but also a powerful marketing tool. Case studies of training intervention successes in this respect will have a strong impact on your reputation with employers and this approach has the potential to significantly enhance your fee income and expand your employer service operation. Statistics relating to enhanced business profitability usually relate to the measurement of what an employee will be able to do once he or she has gained new skills and how this will benefit the business. A comparison with what the worker could do before the training and with what he or she can do afterwards will help to make the point. Ultimately, evidence relating to increased turnover and profit will be the key indicators.

The Automotive Sector

IMI
THE INSTITUTE OF THE MOTOR INDUSTRY

Who do we represent?



Brief Overview of the Retail Motor Industry

The retail motor industry is diverse and includes many different types of businesses and job roles. The types of businesses include, for example, car, commercial vehicle and motorcycle franchised dealerships, independent garages, roadside assistance and recovery operations, car rental and leasing offices and motorsport organisations.

Many of the job roles in the sector are technical and include; service technicians, diagnostic technicians and MOT vehicle examiners. The sales of all types of new and used vehicles, spare parts and accessories and maintenance and repair services are another important function within the sector, where some technical knowledge is required. Key roles in this function include sales managers and sales advisers, customer service advisers and service repair receptionists.

There is also a wealth of non-technical, office-based roles in the sector as people are needed in finance, marketing, customer service and administration. Key non-technical roles include; marketing managers, finance managers and general managers.

The sector comprises of 12 sub-sectors (for rationalisation bringing windscreen fitting into accident repair and motorcycle maintenance, repair and sales together) employing around 600, 000 people, approximately 2% of the working population, across approximately 74, 000 businesses throughout the UK.

Briefly, the activities undertaken in each of the 12 sub-sectors are:

Light vehicle maintenance and repair

Maintenance and repair of cars and light, commercial vehicles (less than 3.5 tonnes).

Heavy vehicle maintenance and repair

Maintenance and repair of heavy commercial vehicles including trailers and specialist vehicles, eg fire engines, dustcarts etc (more than 3.5 tonnes).

Motorcycle maintenance, repair and sales

Maintenance, repair and sales of motorcycles.

Accident repair

Reinstating vehicles to original condition following an accident: includes activities such as panel beating, re-spraying, mechanical electrical trim replacement and auto glazing/windscreen fitting.

Body building

The design, build and fitting of bespoke body work for a commercial vehicle chassis: for example fire engines, horse boxes and Luton-bodied vans.

Vehicle sales

Wholesale and retail sale of new and used vehicles: this includes the sale of heavy and light vehicles, commercial and non-commercial vehicles

Vehicle rental and leasing

Renting and leasing of cars and light commercial vehicles (up to 3.5 tonnes).

Roadside assistance and recovery

Diagnosis and repair of faults of vehicles at the roadside – recovery to a repair facility.

Fast fit operations

Fitting of tyres, exhausts, brakes, batteries, suspension components, etc – normally done while the customer waits.

Parts distribution and supply

Retail sales of motor vehicle parts and accessories

Lift truck maintenance and repair

The maintenance and repair of fork-lift trucks.

Motorsport maintenance and repair

Maintenance and repair of all types of motorsport vehicles, including trackside support and rally support teams.

Important: If you are in any way unsure of the 'fit' of any elements of your employer training provision within your Automotive Skills Part B application you can obtain specific guidance by contacting the following member of staff at the Institute of the Motor Industry:

Adrian Lawson, Development Manager – Quality Improvement

Email: adrianl@motor.org.uk