



Report to ADCS Council April 15 2010

A – VSC England

1 - Appendix A to this report provides a summary of the key VSC activity since the last Council meeting. In the main, these have been led by the Director of CPD, Chris Berry and the Director of Operations, Pam Snowball, as I have been occupied significantly with the NC/ADCS/CWDC DCS Leadership Programme. I believe this report continues to demonstrate strong progress against the objectives for 2008–10 agreed by the VSC Board namely;

- Developing increasingly bespoke programmes geared to the needs of regions or individual authorities
- Broadening the scope of CPD activity to the whole range of Children's Trust activity
- Being involved strategically in workforce development planning in order to be able to anticipate and plan for CPD needs
- Creating key linkages with partners in CPD delivery

2 – National leadership provision for current and aspiring DCSs

Since my last report to Council there has been further significant progress on the extended remit of the National College. A detailed paper outlining the progress to date of all of the DCS Leadership provision is attached to this report as **Appendix B**. I have also attached the design framework for the Aspirant DCS Leadership Programme as **Appendix C** in order to provide Council members with a detailed overview to the initial thinking behind the proposed model for delivery. As this is very much a work in progress I will update Council members further at the meeting on April 15th.

3 - Individual Council Support

Since my last report to Council we have delivered consultancy/facilitation support to Bury, Herefordshire, Rutland, Telford and Wrekin, Derby City, Camden and Waltham Forest Councils. In the main these commissions have been supporting the development of Children's Trust arrangements although we are working with Camden Council in particular on a longer term change management programme and have had exploratory discussions with further councils in the North West and the South East. These initiatives are described more fully in **Appendix A**.

B - VSC Scotland

I continue to maintain my support to the development of the VSC in Scotland by contributing to the ongoing design and delivery of management development programmes for middle and senior leaders and managers of children's services. We have recently completed a six day module for senior colleagues entitled Leaders of Tomorrow with very positive evaluations from the participants involved. This was a partnership venture with Edinburgh City Council and was aimed at providing

strategic leadership development for a small number of team leaders and Heads of Service from across the City Council and two adjacent local authorities. I anticipate that this model of a larger authority inviting adjacent smaller authorities to join it in a leadership development programme will become a more common option in the future as CPD budgets are reduced.

We also provided our usual event management support to the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland for its annual national conference which took place in Glasgow on November 26th/27th 2009.

C - VSC Wales

The Director of the VSC in Wales continues to make significant progress in raising the profile of CPD and local authority capacity building. As I mentioned in my last report to Council, she has initiated a national report entitled: A review of current Local Authority (LA) use of and future Continuing Professional Development (CPD) needs. As a result of the cross Wales consultation on this report the Chair and Director of VSC Cymru have met with the Director General of Education and Lifelong Learning in order to consider how the VSC might support the development of a national CPD programme for senior managers in services for children, young people and families.

D – International

I attended the annual International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement on January 5th – 9th 2010. Council members may recall that I am the convenor for the Policymakers, Practitioners and Politicians (3P) Network of ICSEI which is developing as one of the key networks within ICSEI. It brings together colleagues from both the northern and southern hemispheres who are working at national and local government level to exchange policy and practice in the delivery of services to children and young people.

As a result of the discussion at two breakfast meetings and two symposia we have agreed to organise our fourth international summer leadership seminar in the Netherlands. This seminar is due to take place early in July 2010 and will, of course, be open to ADCS members.

Anton Florek

Chief Executive
Virtual Staff College
April 2010

Appendix A

1. Introduction

1.1 This report gives an update of the work since the last meeting and planned future projects.

2. IYSS training

2.1 The consortium lead by FPM recruited very well to the three programmes. Over 5,000 staff from Integrated Youth Support Services and the Voluntary Community Sector will have participated in the programme by the end of this contract.

2.2 The Leadership Development Programme commenced in January. This was a 6 day programme (three two days) which completed in March 2010 and was aimed at staff who wish to progress into Senior Positions within the IYSS. The VSC was involved in the delivery of this programme. There were 150 participants with programmes based in Bristol, Manchester, Southwark, Peterborough, Leeds and Camden.

2.3 The CWDC have agreed a contract with the consortium to train a further 150 participants on the Leadership Enhancement Programme, this programme starts in April and will complete in June.

3. Coaching

3.1 A new programme offering personal coaching has been developed. The programme is based upon one to one telephone coaching along with a support manual. Participants can also email or contact the coach in between sessions should they need to. To date, three colleagues have taken up this opportunity and we envisage more as people learn about it.

3.2 We have also established a 1 day 'coaching for leadership' programme. This will run several times throughout the year subject to demand.

4. Management Development Programme

4.1 Discussions have been held with DCSs in Yorkshire and Humber and they have agreed that a bespoke management development programme be established for their Heads of IYSS and a one day Leadership Academy for Assistant Directors who have a responsibility for IYSS. This programme is due to start in April and complete in September 2010.

4.2 Two management development programmes have been advertised to start in April, one in London and one in the North West.

5. Outcomes Based Accountability

5.1 An OBA day took place with Wirral Children's Services in March.

6. Commissioning programme

6.1 We were commissioned by Lancashire Children's Trust to implement a bespoke training programme for their staff. This programme completed in January 2010.

7. Senior Management Team Training

7.1 We are working in collaboration with a company called Xue (Mandarin 'to learn'). We have been invited to tender for the Senior Management Training and middle managers training programme for Nottingham City Council. We will know in April if we have been successful.

7.2 Meetings are planned with two DCSs to look at the training needs of their senior and middle manager team's management training in two city authorities.

8. Children's Social Care

8.1 In January we ran the first two days of a programme aimed at social care practitioners entitled "How to improve your front door". This has been a particularly popular programme so we envisage that this will be added to our core activities for colleagues in children's services.

9. Academic Accreditation

9.1 We are now in partnership with the University of Cumbria who will accredit our Management Development Programmes in order to provide cost effective accreditation for our core programmes aimed at middle and senior colleagues within the sector. The MDP course commencing next month will be the first one to offer accreditation by the University of Cumbria, for those participants who are interested in accessing the University's Masters Programme in Leading Integrated Children's Services. We are able to offer participants from previous courses the opportunity to gain accreditation from Cumbria if they have not already submitted work to another University programme. We are also currently in discussion with the University of Cumbria regarding developing joint programmes for the sector.

10. P.I.R.G.E.

10.1 VSC was represented at the recent national LGiU and CSN conference: Making the Case for Children and Young People in the Next Decade, attended by Data and Information Professionals from the sector. This conference is an important national forum for potential DIPs participants and gives previous candidates an opportunity to showcase their DIPs projects.

11. Future developments

11.1 We are offering a 'Training the Trainer' programme and an 'Introduction to Counselling' programme in the spring.

11.2 We are currently finalising a proposal to present to each regional group of Directors of Children's Services to assist them with the implementation of the new regional Succession Planning programme for 2010/2011. Further details will be available at the next meeting of Council.

11.3 We are reviewing the Management Development Programme and the Making Data Count seminars for Information and Data professionals to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the target audience. Alongside this we are also exploring the feasibility of the VSC brokering regional networks to enable Local Authorities to develop joint initiatives and processes to support developments in data and information systems and analysis. Andrew Crompton from Sheffield City Council is a main contributor to the review.

11.4 The VSC is working with Blackpool Council to support their hosting of the North of England Education Conference in January 2011.

Appendix B

**National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services
Prepared for ADCS Council
April 15 2010**

Report Title: Director's of Children's Services Leadership Provision Highlight Report – progress to date

Report Author: Aidan Melling

Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National College and its partners have made very good progress over the course of the last year in the design and development of the DCS Provision. • The governance arrangements have ensured strong partnership working both in strategic planning through the Guiding Coalition and in operational activity through the Leadership Consortium. The College has worked hard to build strong and credible relationships with new partners and stakeholders. • A large number of DCSs have registered or already begun the DCS Leadership Programme and good progress has been made in the co-construction of the DCS Leadership Programme by the first cohort ensuring benefits for subsequent cohorts. • The design of the wider provision has progressed well with considerable involvement of serving DCSs and others within children's services being heavily involved in this process. Getting the balance of involvement right is important. • A significant piece of research has been commissioned as a first phase in the work of the College's new Children's Services Research Team. This is being carried out with C4EO and involves a range of DCSs across the country. • The College has recently submitted Advice to the Secretary of State on a more coherent approach to senior and middle level leadership development across children's services. • Early work on the impact and evaluation along with the development of a benefits realisation plan is underway. • The final financial settlement for the DCS Provision work is less than was requested for 2010/11. The College has made a range of changes to reduce the impact of this.
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1. Introduction

The DCS Leadership Provision is being developed in partnership with the Association of Directors of Children's Services and the Children's Workforce Development Council, supported by the Virtual Staff College with additional expert advice from the Centre for Excellence in Outcomes for Children and Young People. Most importantly DCSs and aspirant DCSs have played an active role in the design and ongoing development of the provision. The following sections of this report highlight key areas of progress.

2. Governance

The National College and its partners have developed a robust governance model that has served the early period of this work well. Governing groups, the Guiding Coalition, the Expert Group, the Leadership Consortium and internal groups such as the DCS Programme Board have all met frequently and dealt with very full and challenging agendas. The robust governance has enabled the provision to progress at a very fast pace whilst maintaining rigour in decision making and credibility in the implementation. As the provision is now moving forward from design to delivery the current governance arrangements will be reviewed in order to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

3. The DCS Provision

The provision as a whole is ambitious, it aims to provide a coherent suite of programmes and initiatives, developed in partnership, that will support both serving DCSs and those aspiring to the role as well as supporting the wider system in dealing with complex and sometimes wicked issues.

4. The DCS Leadership Programme

Almost 100 DCSs are now either on or registered for the Programme. Two cohorts have begun, a third will commence in April 2010, a fourth in November 2010 and a fifth in April 2011. The evaluations from the programme to date indicate high levels of satisfaction, but also identify areas where the programme, through co-construction, can be improved. The College has been responsive to this challenge and saw a marked improvement in the feedback from cohort 1 launch to cohort 2 launch. The College has also significantly redesigned elements of the first residential which focuses on adaptive leadership in the light of feedback from cohort 1 participants.

The coaching element of the programme has been very well received with many DCS reporting positively on the impact of the coach. The Leadership Challenge groups and the concept of wicked issues has developed well. There is evidence that learning from the launch and residential activities is being applied within these groups and beyond with some DCSs now working with their own teams, using the programme resources and implementing elements of their learning.

The first cohort will complete the Programme in late autumn 2010.

5. The Mentor Plus Scheme

The Mentor Plus Scheme was adapted from the work of the Virtual Staff College. It has developed into a scheme where mentors are accredited through both mentor training and then through evaluation of practice. The Scheme was launched in September 2009 and to date, 24 DCSs have been invited to consider receiving mentoring support, eighteen mentees have been offered mentors and, of these, fifteen have been confirmed. We have received a number of positive comments regarding the programme content and organisation from both mentees and mentors.

The next phase of the scheme is aimed at interim DCSs and, in particular, those ADs who are acting up in the DCS role from within the authority. Working with ADCS, we have now completed the analysis of all 12 current interim posts and, of these, six are internal acting up roles. An offer of a mentor has been made to these six colleagues with a commitment to allocate them a mentor within two weeks.

6. The DCS Executive Leadership Programme

The College will launch the first cohort in the autumn of 2010 with registrations being invited in late summer 2010, it is anticipated that there will be up to 6 DCSs per cohort, each running for one year. The second cohort will begin in February 2011. The Programme will be open to all serving DCSs.

The aims of the programme have been supported by the Guiding Coalition and can be summarised as:

- shaping future thinking about the development of children's services and the role of the DCS, focusing on those system-wide issues which are the most challenging to leaders of children's services
- contributing to the growing knowledge base about the effective delivery of children's services and the theoretical underpinning of leadership practice in the sector

- supporting the sustainability of the children's services sector as a "self-improving system" by contributing to policy development within the sector

7. The Peer Support Programme

The Peer Support Programme has been developed by building on the concept of supporting a self-sustaining and self improving system, in many ways similar to the DCS Executive Leadership Programme. However, the aims of this programme are more focussed on supporting those individuals and their teams who are facing particular challenges rather than tackling system wide wicked issues on behalf of the system. The aims are described as to:

- improve outcomes for children, young people and families by improving sector leadership (and preventing service failure)
- improve capacity of DCSs to manage the complexity, accountability and relationship dimensions of the role
- increase understanding of how inspirational and highly effective leadership is applied to addressing challenges and barriers to improvement in a DCSs own local context
- tackle emerging 'wicked issues' at an early preventative stage to avoid escalation and service failure
- use effective leadership skills, knowledge and behaviour to increase the impact of teams/partnerships working across the local children's services sector

The Guiding Coalition is continuing to consider the emerging detailed design of this programme and the College plans to launch the first phase of this programme in the autumn of 2010 in a pilot form, the structure of which is currently being developed.

8. DCS Leadership Qualities Framework

This Framework was approved by the Secretary of State on 29 March 2010. Considerable work has been undertaken by the Leadership Consortium in developing the DCS Leadership Qualities Framework. This document has been developed through extensive consultation and collaboration and provides a key point of reference for ongoing development of the DCS provision and provision beyond the boundaries of the College's work which will be developed by others, for example CWDC. The final version was published just before Easter.

9. Succession Planning

The *National Framework for Succession Planning* has been completed and is now available, along with the Partnership Agreement, to support the work with the DCS regional groups to establish the local programme of activity which will be available from September 2010. The Framework is aimed predominantly at the DCS sponsors in regions and the regional leads that they will be appointing over the next 3 - 4 months. It offers advice about drawing up a strategy and plan and provides a wealth of support material for the regional leads to use with local authorities and other partners. A draft of the Framework was tested with a sample of DCSs who had been involved in the initial fieldwork.

A dedicated area on the college's website for succession planning has been developed in parallel with the National Framework. Amongst other things, the site includes an abbreviated version of the National Framework, video case studies of good practice in partnership working, audio and video explanations by serving DCSs about the nature of the role, and a report on a recent seminar held by the college with a number of the recruitment agencies that specialise in the appointment of DCSs and 2nd tier officers. Patrick Scott has been appointed National Lead for Succession Planning and the recruitment of 3 National Co-ordinators is currently in progress.

10. Aspirant DCS Programme

Work is progressing well on the design of the Aspirant DCS Leadership Programme and the associated commissioning strategy. In February, the Guiding Coalition approved the approach of launching the programme in June with a series of three regional 'roadshows' followed by the first Cohort of participants starting the programme in September. Plans for the initial assessment phase of the programme (self assessment, talent spotter tool, initial interview and assessment centre) are well advanced.

Delivery of the programme has commenced with the launch of the expression of interest tool which can be accessed via the Aspirant page of the National College website. So far over 145 expressions of interest in participating in the programme have been received.

11. Children's Services Research

A research project – Leading for Outcomes – was commissioned in January in partnership with C4EO. It aims to develop our understanding of how DCSs and their teams lead to secure improved outcomes, looking across the eight C4EO areas.

'International approaches to children's services leadership and leadership development: literature and good practice review' by Martin Purcell at Leeds Met University has been completed and will be published immediately after the election. The review has looked at how senior leadership roles in children's services are configured and supported in five countries: Denmark, The Netherlands, Ireland, Canada and Scotland. The report also provides an overview of approaches to supporting leadership development for children's services leaders in the selected countries and more widely.

12. Advice to the secretary of state

In December 2008 the College was asked by the Secretary of State to chair a group of partners to develop proposals for a more coherent offer of support for middle and senior managers and leaders throughout the workforce. This advice was submitted to the department at the end of March 2010. The proposals have three main elements:

- a robust and clearly defined strategic architecture that sets out expectations and accountabilities across the system, reinforces recent statutory guidance for Children's Trusts and their Boards and other relevant national guidance, and creates the conditions for coherent leadership development
- advice, guidance and support aimed at two specific audiences:
 - the strategic integrated workforce leads within Children's Trusts who are principally responsible for workforce and leadership development
 - middle and senior managers and leaders themselves
- new national provision for two specific groups:
 - those managers and leaders that play the key roles in championing integrated service delivery within their Children's Trust
 - senior managers and leaders, often working at Tier 2 or its equivalent, who occupy critical positions in Children's Trust partner organisations but do not aspire to the DCS role

The College will provide further information once the advice has been considered by the Secretary of State.

13. Impact and Evaluation

Early work on impact and evaluation is underway along with the development of a benefits realisation plan. The College recognises that this area is challenging and drawing on the knowledge and expertise in the sector will be important in shaping this work.

14. DCS Provision Funding

The funding for the DCS Provision that the College has received from the DCSF is less than was originally requested, £10million, down from the requested £11.5million. This has had an impact on elements on the provision. However, the DCS team have been able to identify savings and efficiencies such that, at this time, the provision will remain as described albeit some elements will have lower funding allocations than would have been desired. The College will be continuing to identify ongoing efficiencies and savings over the coming year.

APPENDIX C

Aspirant DCS Leadership Programme

Abridged Design Framework

16 October 2009 (abridged version 11 February 2010)

In partnership with:

Supported by:

1.1 The National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services (National College or 'the College'), in partnership with the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC), the Association of Director's of Children's Services (ADCS) and the Virtual Staff College (VSC), has developed a design framework for a programme for aspiring Directors of Children's Services (DCS).

1.2 The Aspirant DCS Programme is part of the wider DCS Provision for which the National College has responsibility. This programme aims to support the development of aspiring DCSs to become appointable and credible DCSs.

1.3 The programme will help aspiring DCSs understand and appreciate the challenge and complexity associated with the DCS role.

1.4 To inform the content and approach for a leadership programme to support aspiring DCSs, the following research was conducted over an eight week period:

- Desk based research – review of papers to set the wider context; and
- Conversations with a wide selection of stakeholders including representatives from 16 local authorities, 9 DCSs, 9 Assistant Directors, 3 Chief Executives, the third sector and other interested parties

1.5 The research identifies five critical success factors for an Aspirant DCS Leadership Programme:

- The "step up" to the DCS role is significant and consequently the programme content, delivery and support mechanisms need to meet that requirement comprehensively.
- Aspiring DCSs were often described as having diverse backgrounds with ranges of experience. This drives the need for a personalised approach for each participant and supervisory contact.
- Self-awareness and self-reflection were considered critical components. The programme should provide mechanisms for participants to build self-awareness and allow structured time to reflect away from the pressures of day to day work.
- Rigorous assessment on entry to the programme was considered important by the majority of stakeholders to maintain the programme's reputation; a selection panel being the most supported form of selection process.
- All senior stakeholders interviewed confirmed their commitment to the programme and offered an open invitation for further contact. Continued involvement of third sector stakeholders, Chief Executives, Lead Members and sector associations e.g. SOLACE is regarded as essential to ensure political support.

1.6 The framework in this report has also been tested with key stakeholders from across the sector including serving and ex-DCSs, Assistant Directors, Chief Executives, Elected Members and senior stakeholders from the third sector through one-to-one conversations and web-based conferences.

1.7 Additionally, the framework has been tested with and endorsed by the Expert Group and the Guiding Coalition, both of which are key bodies within the governance of the DCS Leadership provision at the National College.

1.8 The purpose of the framework is to describe, at a high level, the key features for the Aspirant DCS Leadership Programme¹. The framework also raises, where relevant, questions which will need to be addressed in the detailed design of the programme. The detailed design for this programme will result in an expected degree of change.

1.9 The target group for the programme is senior children's services leaders and managers drawn from the children's services workforce who are working at Tier Two or equivalent level and who are within eighteen months to twenty four months of their first DCS application. All applicants to the programme will have a sponsor supporting their readiness for the role.

1.10 For candidates who do not match these requirements, the National College is proposing a succession planning initiative and the development of an Accelerated Leadership Programme. The College and its partners should give careful consideration of how these people are supported in order to avoid a sense of failure in not having been accepted onto the programme.

1.11 Distinctive features of the Aspirant DCS Design Framework:

a) The programme will be supported by a rigorous **end-to-end assessment process**:

Initial Assessment: A rigorous initial assessment of all candidates will be carried out in order to:

- Ensure participants who complete the programme have the potential to fulfil the DCS role;
- Minimise the risk of any participant failing to complete the programme;
- Establish the credibility of the programme within the sector; and
- Assure participants of the quality of the programme.

Mid-programme Assessment: The programme will offer all participants an opportunity to informally review their development on an ongoing basis. In addition, prior to commencing the 'Leadership in a Strategic Role' part of the programme, participants will undergo a formal mid-programme assessment to demonstrate that they have understood and have confidence in the 'Knowing the Business' element of the DCS role.

End of programme Assessment: All participants will undergo a two-hour end of programme assessment that will be led by a Board/ Panel. This will give confidence to the National College that all participants completing the programme have met the desired outcomes of the programme.

b) The programme will be **personalised** and tailored to each participant's background, skills and experience. Based on needs assessment, participants will spend between six and twenty months in the programme.

c) The programme will be delivered over two stages:

- **'Knowing the Business'** which will focus on the 'knowledge' elements associated with Every Child Matters (ECM), based on *Content Module A: Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People* from the DCS Leadership Programme.
 - *A1- Children's Health*
 - *A2- Safeguarding*

¹ Please refer to Figure one, Appendix one for the image of the design framework

- *A3- School standards and pupil achievements*
- *A4- Integrated Service Delivery*
- *A5- Narrowing the Gap*

Through 'Knowing the Business', the programme will provide all participants with the contextual knowledge within which the DCS role operates and will enable all participants, when appointed to the DCS role, 'to ask the right questions'.

- Safeguarding and School Standards will form the required elements of the 'Knowing the Business' stage; and
- **'Leadership in a Strategic Role'** which will focus on the leadership elements of the DCS role including the strategic, political, system and corporate aspects of the DCS role. This part of the programme will allow participants to experience aspects of the DCS role, putting into practice the knowledge learnt during the Knowing the Business element of the programme and moving into the organisation leadership and system leadership aspects of the DCS role.

d) The twelve content themes defined for the DCS Leadership Programme will be consistent across the provision and therefore apply equally to the Aspirant DCS Leadership Programme. In the Aspirant DCS Leadership programme there will be greater focus on the **'knowledge'** element and additional content will be developed to supplement existing material.

e) All participants in the programme will be provided with **high quality and credible support**. Each participant will be assigned a mentor who will come from a pool of sector experts including serving and ex-DCSs, Chief Executives, PCT Chief Executives, leaders from the Police etc. Additionally, a **Cohort Lead** will be assigned to each participant who will assess and support participants on an ongoing basis. Participants will also engage with one another as peer 'critical friends'.

f) Programme delivery will be through a combination of **online learning tools, experiential learning, work-based learning, peer learning and residentials**.

IN CONFIDENCE
Aspirant DCS LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Appendix one: Figure one, the Aspirant DCS Design Framework

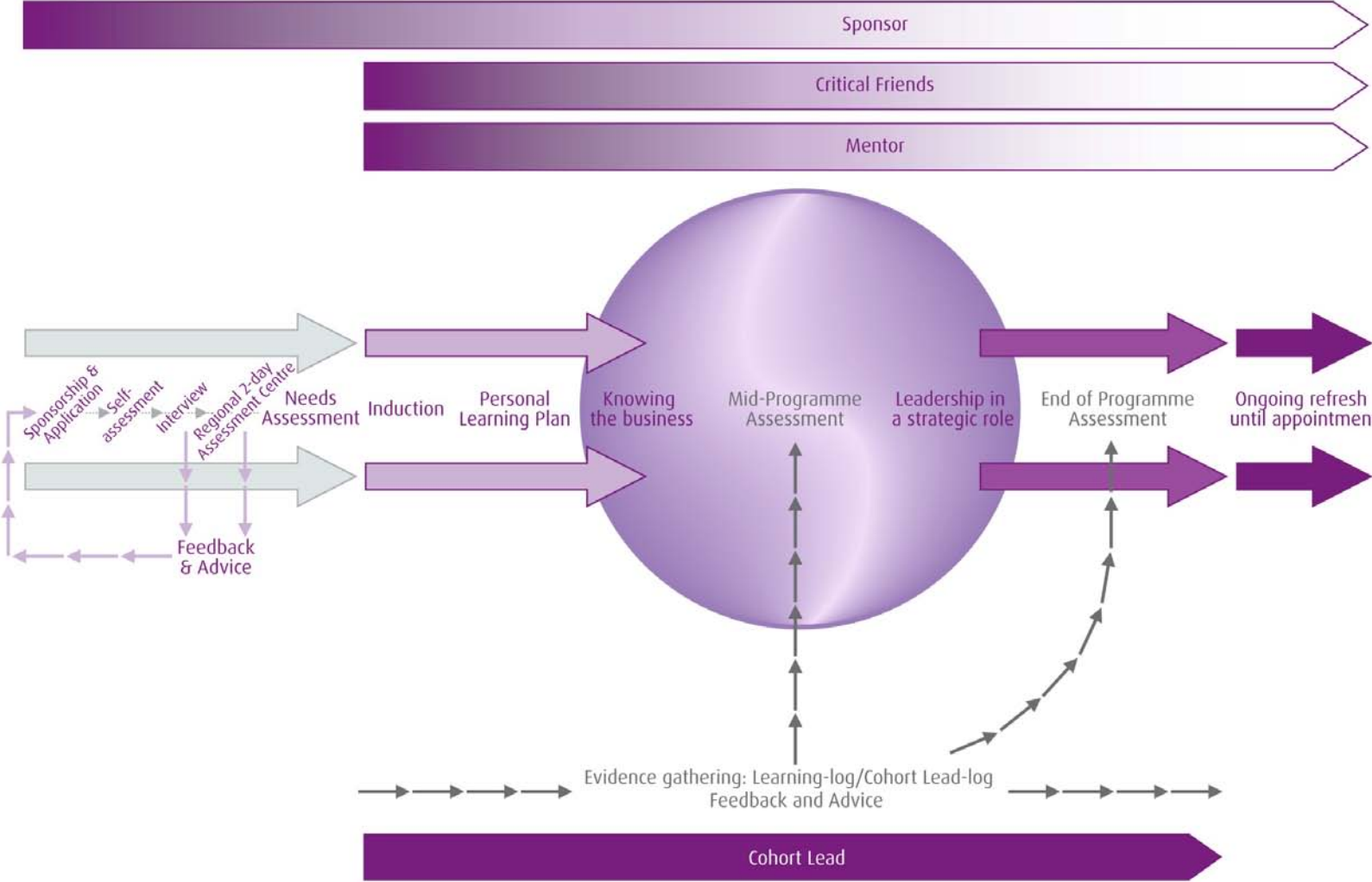


Figure 1