

LOTIS Guidance Notes

LOTIS is available on the Glasgow's Learning Website at www.glasgowlearning.org.uk

You have several options for completing the LOTIS forms:

- You can complete the forms on-line: this is the easiest option, but requires access to an appropriate space with web access.
- You can download and print a PDF version of LOTIS forms from the Glasgow's Learning website (www.glasgowlearning.org.uk) or request to be sent a paper version. You can complete these by hand and return by post.
- You can complete an electronic word version of LOTIS (off line) and submit it by email.

General Guidelines

Who should complete LOTIS?

LOTIS has designed so that both the on-line or paper versions can be completed directly by learners or by tutors on behalf of learners, who would have difficulty completing the forms. (In this case, the information must be provided by the learner!)

LOTIS is not intended to be completed by a learner without the immediate support of a tutor.

Some of the questions, especially on the Equalities form, are of a sensitive nature and consideration should be given to this when selecting an appropriate space and setting.

Confidentiality and Data Protection Agreements

Do not attempt to complete any of the LOTIS forms without reading the confidentiality and data protection agreements out to your learners. Be sure to ask learners if they understand the agreement or have any questions.

It is important that your learners understand that they do not have to complete any or all of the LOTIS forms. Additionally, learners may opt out of answering individual questions.

Drop Down and Tick Box Options

When you see **drop down options**, you will **only** be able to select **one option**.

When you see **tick box options**, as a general rule, you can tick **as many options as are applicable** for your learner.

Please note that some of the tick box lists are long. We used our analysis of the original LOTIS system to identify the most likely range of options. Tutors are encouraged to group these to make answers more manageable for learners. The answers to previous questions may help you decide how you will arrange the tick box questions.

The LOTIS Entry, Interim and Exit forms ask a lot of questions about anticipated or actual outcomes. We are not trying to be repetitive and to unnecessarily complicate and lengthen this process.

LOTIS has been designed to capture consistent information on outcomes in the following three general areas:

- Improvements to the quality of learners' lives
 - Personal
 - Family
 - Work
 - Community
- Literacy and numeracy skills development
- Progression and movement onto other learning

The following steps are needed only if you complete the form on line or are involved in uploading LOTIS forms.

Sign In Process

When you are working with a learner on-line for the first time, you will need to sign them up. You should use the learner's details (and not the tutor's) to sign up the learner.

Once you've entered in the learner details, you will receive a learner code. It is important that you record this code. Your pack contains a Learner Code Log. Please use this to keep track of your learner codes. Labels have also been provided. These can be used by tutors who will then submit the labels to a respective development worker/coordinator/administration worker or manager to be entered into the **Learner Code Log**.

Saving and Completing Forms

Please be sure to save your forms and mark them as complete. If you have not finished a form, but want to save your answers, click the save button but do not tick that the form is completed.

If you are doing a paper version of the form, you will need to put the forms in an individual folder with the learner's name and date of birth. **Do not put the learners' names on the Equalities Forms. The Equalities form should remain anonymous. You will need to put the learner's name and date of birth on the other four forms so that a code can be generated when this form is uploaded.**

Learner Registration Form

The on-line version of this form will automatically produce the provider/organisation code.

Please provide the tutor's name and then the learner's forename and surname as directed.

Complete questions as instructed.

It's important that the learners understand Questions 2.8 and 2.9. These questions will let us know whether your learner is comfortable being contacted to be asked about their learning experience and/or whether they will let us use information for purposes of research.

Please note that information from LOTIS will be analysed in a broad sense and that no **information from individual learners will be personalised.**

LOTIS Equal Opportunities Form

The information contained in this form is sensitive and we recognise that not all learners will be comfortable answering all of the questions. It is extremely important that you set the context and establish the purpose of collecting this information before you begin filling in this form. It is important that we are

able to collect information on the profiles of learners accessing our services and that we are able to show the impact of our services on equalities groups. This form will help us do just that.

The completion of this form is desirable, but not mandatory. Please be sure the learner understands that (as with other LOTIS forms), they may decline to fill them in or they may also opt out of any questions, which they do not feel comfortable answering. Please note that this form is anonymous and does not request information, which will identify a learner. The information provided will be kept separately from all other forms.

Tutors should explain the form and try to avoid making assumptions about their learners. Some of the information provided may be important to the learning process especially in a social practice model which acknowledges that learning should be relevant to learners' personal, family, community and work lives.

Due to the sensitive nature of the information requested through this form, it is acknowledged that some tutors will want to establish rapport with their learners before completing this form. **The equalities form does not have to be completed before the entry form.**

Learner Entry Form

This form will provide important information on previous learning experiences, motivating factors and goals.

Please complete the form as requested.

This form contains lengthy tick box options and grouping of options is recommended.

Learner Interim Form

This form has been designed to provide information on outcomes of learning (as requested by Scottish Government) more quickly. The analysis of LOTIS Exit Forms has indicated that ALN learners often dip in and out of provision and many leave before completing LOTIS and their learning programmes.

Please note that the learner must be present or consulted to complete the LOTIS Interim Form. This form should contain information provided by learners only. Tutors may call their learners to complete for form, for example, but should not attempt to complete the form based on the tutor's own knowledge of the learner.

We do not want to be prescriptive about the use of this form. We want organisations to use this form flexibly to capture data on the outcomes

of learners, who are likely to leave provision before completing an Exit Form.

It is important that the Interim Form be offered at a time where outcomes will have been realised and before a learner is likely to leave provision. This is human science and as such will never be sufficiently precise to ensure that outcomes are captured for every learner. We know that learners will continue to leave provision before they have an opportunity to tell us about the impact of our services on their lives. However, this form is designed to help us reduce this and increase our ability to demonstrate outcomes.

Please note that it is not recommended that LOTIS Interim Forms be used with learners undertaking group provision for a specific period of time (e.g. learners on a 15 week course), if most of the learners are likely to complete the course and a LOTIS Exit Form.

We are not trying to make more work for tutors and learners. Rather we are trying to implement a tool which will allow us to improve our ability to demonstrate the impact of our services.

More than one LOTIS Interim Form may be completed for a learner. However, only one Interim Form can be entered on line. Additional Interim Forms must be done on the paper version.

LOTIS Exit Form

The LOTIS Exit Form has been designed to capture data on the outcomes of the learner's journey, when learners are formally exiting the ALN provision.

- Please note that the learner must be present or consulted to complete the LOTIS Exit Form. This form should contain information provided by learners only. Tutors may call their learners to complete for form, for example, but should not attempt to complete the form based on the tutor's own knowledge of the learner.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What does LOTIS stand for?

- LOTIS means Learner Outcome Tracking Information System

2. Why do we need to use LOTIS?

- It's important that we know a bit about our learners and their learning experiences. LOTIS will help us build a picture of the people accessing our service and the impact of their learning.
- Funders want to know the difference that their contributions are making. LOTIS will help us show this.

3. Why are there so many forms?

- LOTIS used to consist of only two forms - an entry and an exit form. However, a lot of learners were leaving provision without completing exit forms. This made it look like most learners were leaving without any outcomes.
- An Interim Form was designed to collect outcomes more quickly. This form will be particularly useful with target groups or individual learners are likely to withdraw from learning before completing their learning plan.
- The former entry form has been separated into 3 much shorter forms to help us manage and retrieve information and to afford more flexibility to tutors and learners.
 - A Learner Register Form – to provide contact information on learners
 - An Equalities Form – to help us build a profile of the people who are using our services
 - An Entry Form – to provide background *and learning goals information*

4. Do I have to use all forms with my learner?

- All learners should complete a Learner Register, Learner Entry and Equalities Form where possible. Of course each form is to be completed on a voluntary basis.
- The purpose of Interim Forms is to collect outcome information more quickly so that we are able to show the impact of services on learners who are likely to exit provision suddenly or dip in and out of provision. Sometimes it may not be useful to do a LOTIS Interim

Form with a learner (e.g. when a structured learning programme is run over a specific period of times and most of the learners who started the course are likely to complete it). Sufficient outcomes should be obtained for these learners through the LOTIS Exit Form.

- When possible a learner exit form should be completed for each learner. We know that a lot of learners leave provision unexpectedly so this is not always possible. If a lot of your learners leave provision before completing their programme, you should consider using LOTIS Interim Forms.

5. If the LOTIS Interim Form is not mandatory, why should I use it?

- It is true that the Interim Form is not required. However, if a lot of your learners leave their learning programmes without completing exit forms, it will look as though your service does not have an impact on learners. This could portray a poor picture of your organisation and our citywide provision. The LOTIS interim form has been designed to be used, along with the learning plan, to capture outcomes quickly.
- When used correctly, the Interim Form can help you support your learners to set and review goals. It can also help you develop a learning plan.

6. What do I do if my learner does not want to use LOTIS?

- LOTIS is voluntary. If your learner does not want to participate s/he should still be offered your learning programme. You will need to keep a record of learners who do not wish to participate. We may ask you to report on this information.

7. How and when do I use the forms?

- We realise that you have a much better understanding of your learners' needs than we do. We are trying to ensure that LOTIS is flexible and can be used by different organisations in different ways to suit their learners' needs. We do not want to be prescriptive about this.
- The use of LOTIS may depend on your learner's needs. For example, it may not be appropriate to use the Equalities Form with your learner on the first meeting.

- You may wish to use the Learner Entry form before the Equalities (or vice versa). We are leaving this up to the discretion of organisations and their tutors.
- With regards to the Interim Form, we'd recommend you combine this with learning plan reviews (eg maybe every second plan review). The form has been designed to complement the learning plan. However, there is no specific rule. Again we hope that you will use your discretion and experiences as tutors. You don't want to use the form before real outcomes are achieved and you don't want to wait too long (or the learner might have left).

8. Isn't LOTIS duplicating the learning plan?

- We hope not. LOTIS is a tool which allows learners to tell us a bit about themselves and their learning experience. LOTIS is primarily quantitative. It will provide statistical information and will allow us to count outcomes for the city. The learning plan is a tool which helps learners and their tutors plan and review their learning journeys. It is almost impossible to capture statistical information from these plans.
- There will be some areas of overlap between learning plans and LOTIS, but they could be used together to cut down on time.

9. How long will you keep the learners' details?

- We will not keep LOTIS forms for longer than five years. They will be disposed of in a secure way to protect confidentiality.

10. Will you contact my learner after s/he leaves provision?

- Only if your learner gives us permission to make contact. Learners who give permission may be contacted and asked about their learning experiences.
- Attempted contact will not be made to learners who do not give us permission.

11. What if my learner doesn't want to participate?

- Participation is completely voluntary. Learners do not have to participate to enrol in our ALN learning programmes. Please record when learners do not wish to participate so that we are able to report on this.

12. Why do we need to use a learner code?

- Learner codes are assigned to ensure confidentiality. Only the LOTIS registration form and sign up sheets will contain information which identifies learners. All other forms contain a code, which helps us manage LOTIS.

13. What do I do if my learner leaves the learning programme before completing an exit form?

- Some organisations may have a practice of contacting learners (with their consent) who have left programmes. If this is the case, you may wish to contact your learner to complete an exit form.
- If you are not able to contact a learner, be sure to record that the learner left without completion of the exit form.

14. If my learner leaves provision, can I fill out the form on her/his behalf?

- LOTIS is a tool, which gives us information from the learner's direct perspective. Even if a tutor knows information about a learner, who has left the programme, this information should not be entered into LOTIS forms.
- Providers are encouraged to establish other systems which involve tutors in evidencing outcomes of provision.

15. Does my learner have to be present to complete LOTIS?

- The learner does not have to be physically present, but does have to consent to use LOTIS. Tutors may contact learners by phone to complete forms or may send forms out to learners.

16. What is the point of the interim form?

- To capture information on learners before they leave provision. Interim forms will be particularly useful for learners who are likely to leave provision without completing a learning plan or the programme.

17. What do I do if my learner leaves provision having completed a LOTIS exit form and then returns to start learning again?

- You should call us for advice on how to re-register a learner.

18. Why do ask for sensitive equalities information?

- It is important that we demonstrate that our ALN services are accessible. Our equalities form is derived from the recommended CLD equalities pack. This will help the city achieve a more consistent

approach to equalities monitoring. The intended uses of the equalities information are specified in the confidentiality and data protection agreements.

19. What do I do if my learner has difficulty understanding the questions in LOTIS (e.g. ESOL and learning difficulties)?

- An alternative version of LOTIS is being designed to be used specifically with ESOL learners, those with learning difficulties, those with profound comprehension issues and those undergoing short-term group provision. We anticipate that this system will be implemented early in 2008.

20. Can I give the form to my learner to complete on his or her own?

- LOTIS has can be completed directly by learners. However, tutors/practitioners should be supporting their learners to use LOTIS. In other words, it is recommended that learners at appropriate levels complete the web-based form. This can be turned into an excellent on line forming session. However, tutors/practitioners should be on hand to support the learner to complete the form and to answer any questions. It is important that tutors/practitioners make sure that the learners understand the confidentiality and data protection agreements before they begin completing the forms.

21. How do I use LOTIS with a group?

- An alternative LOTIS will be designed to be used with learners in short-term group provision. Learners in longer-term group provision should be given the form on a 1:1 or should be supported to complete the form in an appropriate space, which affords confidentiality.

22. What should I do if my learner is not new to ALN?

- You will not be able to register an existing learner and will need to contact us to get the existing code.
- If your learner indicates that s/he is not new to ALN, try to find out when and where the learner had previous provision. With the learner's permission, you may wish to contact the provider for learning records.

23. What do I do if I lose a copy of my learner code?

- Please contact us and we will retrieve it for you. We will need to know your learner's name and date of birth to do this.

24. How often will you collect LOTIS forms?

- We will collect LOTIS forms on a quarterly basis so be sure to keep yours updated regularly.

25. What should I do if I encounter a technical problem?

- Please contact us and we will make every effort to sort it out.

26. What will you do with all the LOTIS forms?

- LOTIS forms will be stored in five separate databases. Information will be retrieved, queried and analysed. We will not identify individual learners. If learners agree to future contact, we may contact them directly to find out more about their learning experiences.

27. Should I keep a hardcopy of each LOTIS form?

- This depends on your organisation. If you do keep a hard copy, you must remember to store it in accordance with the Data Protection Act of 1998. Your organisation will be responsible for this.

28. What should I do if I don't have access to a computer?

- If you don't have access to a computer or the web, we will provide you with hard copies of the forms. These can be sent to us and we will ensure they are inputted.

29. Who do I contact if I have a question about LOTIS?

- Give us a call on **0141 287 8961** and we'll be happy to answer your questions. If we don't know the answer, we'll make every effort to get the information you need.