

Review of the Natspec Year 2021 to 2022

Annual report to members

Since the last annual report was published in May 2021, Natspec and its members have continued to operate in the context of the Covid pandemic. Unlike the emergency response of 2020-21, however, this year has been one of building on experience and consolidating strengths. Member colleges have been maintaining and developing new ways of working, growing support networks and supporting students and staff to re-establish pre-pandemic routines, adjusted where necessary and developed using the skills and experience gained over the past two years.

This paper summarises our activities since the start of the membership year in April 2021.

Once again, Natspec members have responded to all the challenges of the year with determination, resilience, and stamina. We have also seen the expansion and development of Natspec networks, both formal and informal, with member colleges using each other's knowledge and experience to connect with each other for mutual support. Members have reported that the connections they are making with each other have demonstrably helped to improve quality, with clear benefits for students. Opportunities to connect have included one-off "national conversations", multiple Transform and TechAbility training events, regional and national networks, our national conference (held online in May 2021), a new "Peer Exchange Week" in January 2022, and new member networks for safeguarding, data, fundraising, and careers leads.

Whilst supporting members will always be a key priority, representing your views is also an essential Natspec function. Our work with DfE, the Welsh Government, Ofsted, Estyn, and a range of other national agencies has resulted in significant movement on key policy areas. The publication of the SEND review Green Paper in March 2022 now presents us with a further challenge to ensure that the role of specialist colleges is recognised in both new and amended legislation.

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1. Member support and quality

1.1 Member support

Natspec has [117 members](#) (at April 2022), an increase of 15 since April 2021. All new members are offered a [Quality health check](#) and 10 took place during the 2021-22 membership year. Our membership has also expanded in Wales, with two Welsh FEIs having become members of the Transform service in February 2022.

Regional member meetings were held for each region, usually online, chaired by our [Regional Directors](#). A new [page for regional meetings](#) has been added to our website, to help members keep track of upcoming dates. These meetings are one of the most valued aspects of membership, as they enable Heads of Colleges to network at a regional level and provide mutual support.

Member-only networks have continued this year, with meetings held for staff responsible for HR, Learner Voice, Finance, Care, Employment, Publicity and (new for 2021) Safeguarding. Other member-only sessions took place for staff responsible for fundraising, data management, and staff leading the curriculum for PMLD learners.

Natspec also facilitates and promotes other member forums run by colleges – for example the Admissions Forum, developed and facilitated by Sue Jeffries from National Star College, and the Careers Lead Forum, developed and facilitated by Hannah Wharton from Sense College Loughborough.

Discussions at networks are wide-ranging – more information about each network is held on the [network pages of our website](#).

Natspec member-only Peer Exchange Week

The first Natspec Peer Exchange week was held in January 2022. Each of the four days featured two peer exchange sessions and one viewing of a recording of a Natspec Awards 2021 winners' webinar.

A total of 149 delegates took part in the following 8 peer exchange sessions:

- Sex and relationships education in specialist colleges
- Working with young people and families on mental capacity and decision-making
- Refreshing the PMLD curriculum
- Learner Voice practitioners: communication approaches
- Delivering Assistive Technology
- Choosing the right MIS system
- Top tips for fundraisers
- Delivering inclusive sport and physical activity

44% of survey respondents rated the week as "excellent" and 56% as "very good", and we propose to repeat the week in future years.

ILR: We have increased the amount of support given to member colleges on completing the ILR. There are now at least 5 ILR training sessions per year, each with a different focus – from beginner to more advanced, with a drop-in session added before each ILR return. Members who found that they had lost money due to the condition of funding requirement were also given free consultancy support to appeal.

The [ILR top tips document](#) is one of the resources provided on the [ILR page](#) on the Natspec website. Dates for upcoming training and member-only drop-ins can also be found on the resource page.

Learner Voice: Andrew Evans from National Star College has been seconded to the role of Learner Voice Co-ordinator. The aims for the work this year were to increase resources available to colleges and involve more colleges in Learner Voice activities, including the Practitioner Network and Student Parliament. A further important aspect of the work is to increase the opportunities for students to have a voice in our policy work, and to represent their views more fully in consultations and publications.

Two Student Parliament meetings were held online this year. In November, 33 colleges and circa 150 learners joined the Parliament. A consultation with members of the Parliament resulted in the chairing of each Parliament being devolved to member colleges. Members of the Parliament are keen to talk about national issues and wrote to Transport Minister, Grant Shapps, about not being able to use bus passes until after 9.30am. The February 2022 Student Voice Parliament was equally well attended, again with around 150 learners joining the event.

Three Learner Voice Practitioner networks were held, involving between 20-30 colleges. We also published a practitioner toolkit for colleges wishing to further develop the learner voice. This toolkit can be found on our [Learner Voice resource page](#).

1.2 Quality and inspection

Quality Times is our comprehensive publication which brings together case studies and articles from Natspec members on a range of quality issues. There were two editions during the membership year, in June 2021 and January 2022. These are published as protected member-only resources on the [quality page of our website](#).

Inspection: We have strengthened our links with both Ofsted and Estyn over the course of the membership year. This includes being part of advisory groups:

- In England, we were represented on a group to develop the new inspection framework and methodology for local area SEND inspections. These are likely to be more focused on the quality of the experience of young people and families using the system rather than on compliance; schools/colleges are likely to be more closely involved.
- In Wales, we were represented on an expert group that considered how Estyn would return to full inspections and their approach to measuring quality in anticipation of the Tertiary Education and Research Bill. Specialist colleges have been re-categorised by Estyn to sit within the parameters of post-16 provision alongside FE colleges and away from sitting with independent schools. Our work with Welsh member colleges has identified their training needs with a view to prepare them for full inspections which are expected from September 2022. Estyn will no longer make summative judgments: their reports will focus on providers' strengths and areas for improvement.

Our work with the inspection agencies also enabled us to provide events and publications to support Natspec members with quality improvement throughout the year. For example:

- Lead officers from Ofsted presented webinars for Natspec members, including one on the return to inspection following Covid and another on social care inspections.
- Member colleges were invited to take part in pilot inspections.
- An analysis of Ofsted reports was updated regularly and made available to member colleges, published on the [quality page of the website](#).
- A member exchange event was held in December 2021, focussing on learning from inspections and giving 56 attendees the chance to hear from recently inspected colleges.
- We also held our first ever Welsh Quality Improvement event, which focused on lessons learned during the pandemic, learner progress and self-evaluation.

- Networking meetings for new member colleges took place in July and November. Five new providers (Grow 19, LINK19 College, Great Oaks College, The Oaks Specialist College, and Aurora Boveridge College) have been judged “significant progress” across all three themes in their first monitoring inspection visit.
- The annual therapy conference was held in May 2021 with therapists from member colleges coming together to share good practice and develop peer support groups.

Quality toolkits and resources

The [Measuring Outcomes of Therapy toolkit](#) was developed and launched – this is designed to improve the quality of outcome measurement through better selection of tools suitable for measuring small steps of progress in young people with LDD.

We also developed and launched a new [best practice toolkit for enhancing the learner voice](#), following research by Helen Evans (Derwen College) and other learner voice practitioners.

A new set of resources for [improving college governance](#) was developed, backed up by a networking session attended by 19 members exploring how to improve their college governance structures and systems.

We collated all of our advice and guidance for organisations that are exploring [opening new specialist colleges](#) onto a new page of the website. A key part of this process is assessing whether new provision is needed or not, or whether a partnership with an existing college is a better option.

2. Advocacy, influencing policy, lobbying

2.1 SEND review

Our most pressing issue and the majority of our time over the course of the year was spent on influencing the SEND review team to ensure a post-16/FE focus in the Green Paper. We held multiple meetings with DfE officials and review team members and have also submitted papers, some in partnership with Association of Colleges and the Special Education Consortium, and others just from Natspec, focussing specifically on the future role of specialist colleges.

Unfortunately, the positive discussions we had with the review team did not achieve what we had hoped and, although we received assurances that FE would be comprehensively covered in the Green Paper, this did not happen. The [Green Paper](#) only contained two pages on FE and, whilst it accurately summarised the issues for children, there was no detailed analysis of the situation for young people and colleges, and very few recommendations or proposals. We have [responded to the publication](#) on our website and in articles in [FE Week](#), [Special Needs Jungle](#), and [The Mark](#)). We will also shortly be meeting with members to formulate our response. Amended legislation will take many months/years so we have some time to ensure that this policy gap is filled.

2.2 Welsh ALN reforms

In Wales, policy and lobbying work focussed on working with Welsh Government officials and lobbying Members of the Senedd on the ALN code. We have concerns that the code gives LAs the legitimacy to not offer post-16 education and training to young people who have stayed in special school to age 19 if they are unable to attend regional general FE. We have been pushing throughout the year for equitable access to further education for young people whose needs cannot be met by a general FE college. We are also lobbying for ringfencing the funding for young people who need specialist provision.

Recognition of the place of specialist colleges is growing in Wales and our concerns are now being raised in wider lobbying work and discussed by other organisations. This has been helped by Natspec’s membership of the Third Sector Additional Needs Alliance (TSANA). A positive outcome of

this has been Welsh Government's agreement that an ALN post-16 website for general FE colleges will be expanded to include specialist colleges. Membership of TSANA has also led to liaison with the Children, Young People and Education Committee and monthly meetings with senior ALN officials.

2.3 The Skills Bill

This year saw a big increase in our work with members of the House of Lords and House of Commons, which added to our usual practice of writing to ministers. A good example of this was working with AoC and members of the SEC to draft amendments which aimed to strengthen SEN/disability content of the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill. We worked with various MPs, Bishops and Lords on these amendments which were laid down and debated in the Houses of Commons and Lords. Whilst the amendments themselves were not accepted, the debate led to a commitment from government to include disability employment in the related statutory guidance.

2.4 Consultation responses

Natspec submitted responses to the following consultations during the membership year:

- [March 2021: Natspec response to the Procurement Green Paper](#)
- [May 2021: Natspec submission to the Education Committee Inquiry: The impact of COVID-19 on education and children's services](#) plus [supplementary evidence from Natspec for the inquiry](#)
- [May 2021: Student Parliament response to the National Strategy for Disabled People](#) (prepared by Natspec Student Parliament, its first consultation response – part of our commitment to better reflect learner voice in our policy work)
- [September 2021: Natspec response to Children, Young People and Education Committee Sixth Senedd Priorities Consultation](#)
- [October 2021: Natspec response to DWP Health and Disability Green Paper](#), calling for dedicated funding to support disabled education leavers into employment and increased training for DWP in supported employment approaches
- [December 2021: Natspec response to the Senedd's Children, Young People and Education Committee consultation on Tertiary Education reforms](#) – this was directly quoted by the Senedd's Children, Young People and Education Committee Stage 1 Report on the TER Bill
- [January 2022: Natspec response to Ofqual consultation on assessment accessibility](#)
- [February 2022: Natspec response to the mandatory registration of adult care home workers in Wales](#)

We also had more informal consultation meetings with DfE and fed back on several other issues, including:

- Amendments to Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE)
- Consultation about recording college attendance and whether or not it might be possible to create a standardised approach
- Designation of SPIs, and what proportion of students should have EHCPs in an SPI
- The high needs funding system as it relates to Supported Internships (SIs) and the need for clearer information from central government about SIs for employers.

2.5 Other policy work and publications

In addition to these consultation responses, other policy work this year included:

- Continuing to inform the DfE Review of Qualifications at level 2 and below, following our [initial response](#) which was made back in February 2021. We are promoting the retention of a range

of lower level preparation for employment, vocational skills and English and maths qualifications, and attaching more value to non-accredited learning.

- The launch of a [Natspec Manifesto for the Senedd Elections](#). Within the new Welsh Government a new Education Minister, Jeremy Miles, was appointed.
- Increased involvement with SE19 Preparing for Adulthood group (as a model for better collaborative working with LAs) to encourage them to respond to the [LGA, Natspec, AoC report on high needs commissioning](#). Task and finish groups tackled a series of issues and produced joint LA/provider guidance on ceasing EHCPs post-19, and [information for families about specialist colleges](#).
- A similar brochure about the [options available for young people at college](#) was produced in Wales, aimed at local authorities, to explain what colleges do and to help with transition planning.
- In Wales, we joined a group including Heads of Special Schools and the Wales Independent Schools Council (WISC) that meets monthly with the Welsh Government Education Directorate. As a result of this work, specialist colleges were finally included within education-related Covid guidance. Specific reference to specialist colleges was also made for the first time in updated Welsh Government guidance on supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged learners.
- Our annual review of Local Offer websites was conducted in the summer of 2021. The findings were more positive than last year, with increasing numbers of LAs improving their navigation to post-16 options and mentioning specialist colleges. However, many are still using the S41 list as a substitute for specialist colleges, and colleges are often still listed under different headings, making them difficult to find. 83 LA websites were reviewed (covering every home LA for all Natspec member colleges). Over 90% of these mentioned at least one specialist college, but only 43% mentioned all relevant member colleges for that area. Only 57% of member colleges were listed in their LA's Local Offer, and we have sent feedback to the LAs that had particularly poor websites.

2.6 Public affairs and key campaigns

To help raise the profile of specialist colleges, we wrote to over 200 MPs in September, introducing them to Natspec and its work, and providing a briefing on the SEND review and the Skills Bill. As a result, several MPs requested a visit to their local specialist college.

Many member colleges already have a close working relationship with their MP and, to build on this work, we ran a public affairs training and information session for Natspec members in October, with advice and guidance on how to gain support from their MPs and local politicians.

Our campaigning work with MPs and Lords began with the Skills Bill (see section 2.3 above) and continued with letters to MPs and members of the Education Select Committee regarding the SEND review and funding for specialist colleges.

In February 2022, we wrote to a selection of MPs and Ministers regarding [the staffing crisis, and produced a briefing paper for colleges](#) to use with their own local politicians. This resulted in 6 written parliamentary questions drafted by Natspec and asked of DfE and DHSC in relation to capacity and staffing in the specialist college sector. These and other parliamentary questions regarding specialist colleges have helped raise our profile amongst more senior politicians. We also submitted a [briefing paper to Welsh Government](#) highlighting the staffing crisis, a need for fee increases and our ongoing concerns around ALN Transformation.

Our campaigning will continue into 2022-23, beginning with the [exclusion of specialist colleges from capital funding streams](#).

2.7 Member promotion and awards

We continued to publish our monthly roundup of stories from the sector in our [Natspec Highlights](#) as well as promoting members' stories and key information on our social media pages.

[The Natspec Awards](#) for 2021 were presented to the winners during our online conference in May 2021. Trophies were made by Portland College and St. John's College and were sent to the winners following the award ceremony. The winning colleges were:

- Innovative use of technology: Bridge College
- Pathways into employment: LEAP College
- Student voice: Sense College
- Wellbeing and mental health: Eat That Frog
- Inter-disciplinary working: Portland College
- Partnership working: Linkage College
- Curriculum innovation: Orchard Hill College
- Home learning: Ambitious College

You can [read more about the 2021 winners](#) on our website.

The 2022 Awards has seen the introduction of our new award, Equality, diversity and inclusion, which replaces our 2021 Home learning category. This year we have received 54 entries from 32 member colleges. Shortlisted entries will be announced in May 2022 with winners announced at our Awards Ceremony during our [National Conference](#) on Wednesday 22 June 2022.

3. Wider Sector CPD, training and projects

Natspec's vision is for all learners, wherever they study, to access quality education and training. This means that we have a responsibility to work across the FE sector with a wide range of organisations to support and upskill FE professionals who work with learners with SEND.

We also use our partnership and project work to influence policy, so we ensure that any projects we work on contribute towards the aim of improving FE provision for learners with SEND.

3.1 Partnership project

In early 2021, we decided to initiate a project to facilitate partnerships between specialist and mainstream colleges, with a view to testing various approaches and explore how partnership working could open up new opportunities for learners with SEND. [The project was launched in July 2021](#), and in February 2022 was expanded to include Welsh Colleges, with the support of Welsh Government.

In England, 13 partnerships, each including a specialist FE college and a general FE college, worked on a shared project with the support of a facilitator and a small amount of funding which was largely used to free up staff time. The colleges were selected following an application process involving over 70 colleges. Those that were selected have explored a number of distinct areas in which partnership-working can benefit learners with SEND, including:

- **Extending or enriching learning opportunities for young people** – examples include increased work placements, colleges opening access to their sites and facilities to both sets of learners, and two colleges 'sharing a learner' with some aspects of provision delivered by one and some by the other.

- **Enabling learners to progress further or more fully reach their potential** – for example some partnerships are focused on transition from specialist FE to general FE for learners who might not otherwise have been able to access higher levels of learning.
- **Upskilling the current and future workforce to better meet learner need** – over half the projects include some focus on continuous professional development (CPD), with colleges building communities of practice across the partner organisations, opening up planned CPD sessions to each other's staff, and exchanging in-house training that reflects their different expertise.
- **Supporting greater inclusion** – for example one specialist college is providing advice, guidance and support services to a neighbouring GFE to enable them to enrol students with high-level health needs onto mainstream courses.

In Wales, the partnerships are focusing on identifying how colleges can work collaboratively and proactively to meet the person-centred aspirations of the ALN reforms.

The work on the partnership projects in both England and Wales will continue into 2022-23.

3.2 Natspec Transform

The pandemic forced Transform events online in 2020-21. This year we continued to deliver almost all content online but we re-established face-to-face delivery for some in-house courses and for various elements of the SEND Leadership programme. We continue to invest in creating new content in response to training needs analysis.

Most of the Transform offer is delivered by associates. Natspec's associate pool now consists of 25 expert trainers and facilitators. Natspec associates attend termly meetings which this year provided training in using Zoom and Padlet, and gave them the opportunity to view recordings such as the Ofsted webinar delivered to Natspec members. Associates also received a termly update newsletter containing information on Transform training, policy updates, and news about events of interest such as the Natspec annual conference.

The core offer

From April 2021, Natspec Transform established a [core offer](#) of online CPD courses consisting of:

- four employability modules
- four RARPA modules
- monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and support for learners with SEND (MQTLAS).
- making the most of learning support assistants (discontinued from summer term 2022).

We delivered 38 open courses, attracting 621 delegates from multiple organisations.

We delivered 23 in-house training courses for 301 delegates for English and Welsh colleges.

The most popular courses were:

- [Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND](#)
- [Introduction to implementing RARPA effectively](#)
- [Introduction to job coaching](#)

A quality framework for Transform has been developed, with quality of courses monitored through observations and participant feedback. Courses have consistently achieved an average feedback score of 4 (good) or 5 (excellent) in participant evaluation surveys.

Development of new courses and modules

The “Mental health and wellbeing for principals and senior leaders” course was developed and delivered in June 2021. Three sessions were delivered looking at trauma, wellbeing and compassion for self and others.

Two new modules were also developed as extensions to existing courses following member feedback and demand:

1. Module on RARPA and target setting, an extension of the “Introduction to implementing RARPA” course.
2. A module for quality managers who have completed the “Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND” training.

Another new course was developed, and this is being launched in May 2022. [Developing the PMLD curriculum for learners aged 16-25](#) aims to support managers to shape a PMLD curriculum that supports good quality of life outcomes through focusing on person-centred approaches and preparation for adulthood. It was developed with and for managers who have responsibility for provision for learners aged 16-25 with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD) and includes video footage of PMLD provision provided by several Natspec member colleges.

Finally, we are in the process of developing a new coaching service that will be launched for delivery in 2022-23.

Webinars

Members can access our Transform webinars free of charge and receive discounts on chargeable content. These monthly lunch time one-hour sessions aim to promote an exchange of ideas, research, and effective practice between Natspec members. Eleven webinars were delivered in 21-22. Attendance figures have been low but there continues to be strong viewing figures of the webinar recordings on the [Natspec YouTube channel](#).

A list of all the events and webinars delivered can be found in the appendix to this report.

Consultancy support and visits

Both member and non-member colleges can access consultancy support through the Transform service. Four colleges have taken up this offer during the membership year: 3 members, 1 non-member.

Other training

We delivered two ‘[new to the FE sector](#)’ training sessions, in September 2021 and March 2022, for individual members of staff, or colleges, that are new to specialist FE. This remains a popular course, and will continue to run twice per year. [Information for organisations opening new provision](#) is also available on our website.

The Natspec SEND Leadership programme, developed in 2020-21, was delivered throughout 2021-22 with different 54 individuals across 3 cohorts starting the course in January 2021, September 2021, and January 2022. [The course](#) helps to develop leadership capacity in colleges at all levels, and aims to develop leadership skills, both internally within organisations but also within the wider context working with stakeholders and partner organisations. Participants have reported that the course helps them build and maintain a supportive peer network of senior leaders working in the specialist FE sector, leading to longer term change.

3.3 TechAbility

In March 2021, capacity for the TechAbility service was increased with the appointment of two full-time staff: Fil McIntyre as TechAbility Manager and Neil Harrod-Beck as Assistive Technology Projects Lead.

TechAbility provides training and consultancy to the wider FE and Skills sector and lobbies government on Assistive Technology and educational technology, promoting how it can support learners and staff in education and care. TechAbility continues to be overseen by Natspec's Technology Director and the Technology Steering Group, which meets termly.

The national **TechAbility conference** was again held online in 2021 and featured practical and inspiring presentations. 126 delegates from 44 organisations attended, with over 90% of delegates rating the conference as "excellent" or "good". Learners from a Natspec college joined us to share the difference technology has made to their life and educational outcomes. The [2022 Conference](#) will return to a face-to-face single-day event held in Birmingham.

The [TechAbility Champions](#) scheme became firmly established this year. There are now 30 champions from member colleges who have received support from TechAbility and their peers through bi-monthly meetings. The aim of the scheme is to ensure the champions can deliver AT support more effectively within their college. Next year we hope this will develop further with training delivered by champions to the wider Natspec network.

[Online courses in educational and assistive technology](#) were delivered at least monthly. These are primarily aimed at staff supporting high-needs learners, though they are increasing in popularity with staff from general Further Education. 191 delegates attended 13 online or face-to-face training events during the membership year. The following training courses have been on offer online for staff to sign up, and these can also be delivered directly to colleges online or face-to-face:

- [Supporting AT at all stages of the learner journey](#)
- [Technology and leadership](#) – a new course this year, aimed at senior leaders
- [Built-in access](#) – exploring the features and accessibility options already built into operating systems
- [10 practical steps to include more learners](#) – a popular course covering 10 techniques to improve access
- [AT for physical access](#) – demonstrating a range of technologies such as touch devices, switches and voice control
- [Voice control for accessibility](#) – an overview of the key technologies available and how to use them in education
- [Emerging technologies for accessibility](#) – what's new? Learn about cutting edge technologies.

As well as online courses, TechAbility also hosts [webinars](#), with 14 delivered in 2021-22, all of which are free to view [on our YouTube channel](#). These recordings have been viewed a total of 1,432 times.

All Natspec full member colleges are offered in-depth support via a **free consultation** from TechAbility. This examines current strengths and areas for development with a report influencing a strategy to ensure learners benefit from accessible technology. 15 consultations have been completed with Natspec and Karten members, and two external organisations have paid for similar consultations. 12 further consultations are currently underway.

In addition, TechAbility have co-delivered **student assessments** for two colleges and support two Assistive Technologists by providing regular **professional supervision**.

TechAbility **lobbying activity** in 21-22 has included:

- writing a letter to the chief executive of Microsoft, which was signed by 68 principals and CEOs from Natspec member colleges. This letter asked that the new licensing agreement, which penalises colleges with high staff ratios, is adapted to take this into account. Microsoft have responded and we are meeting them in May.
- sitting on the Department for Education's AT Engagement group to feed into educational technology policy
- involvement in the consultation for the proposed [National Centre for Assistive and Accessible Technology](#).
- partnering with the DfE in late 2021 to co-deliver a survey researching the use of AT in specialist settings. The results of this survey fed into government policy on educational technology
- presenting to the National Association for Disability Practitioners conference, WorldSkills UK (to over 500 delegates), Digifest, and the Bett Show. These presentations have helped to raise the profile of the importance of AT in education.

Alongside Jisc, TechAbility supports the Assistive Technology Network (ATN), a forum for staff in FE and HE who utilise Assistive Technology and seek to promote it in their settings. By encouraging peer-to-peer support, this network builds capacity and promotes communication across mainstream and specialist education.

3.4 Events

Please see the appendix for the full list of Natspec events and delegates attending in 2021-22. We ran 130 events and reached over 3,000 attendees, not including those who watched back later [on our YouTube channel](#).

The **Natspec National Conference**, with a theme of "[Reflection and Renewal](#)" was held online in May 2021, attracting 350 delegates. Presentations and webinars covered a range of topics including college governance, access to employment, the SEND review, integration of learning and therapy, SEND legal issues, and more. All [presentations, webinars, and materials](#) can be downloaded from our website.

4. Organisational Development

Capacity in the [Natspec team](#) was increased this year with the addition of a new post to provide support to business administration and to the Transform and TechAbility training services.

After working individually from home since March 2020, the team enjoyed meeting in person again at a 2-day team building session in Shropshire in July 2021. We used the time for reflection and planning for the year ahead, and made decisions on new processes and systems, the development of our databases and information management, and a new project management tool.

The Natspec office opened again in September 2021, but we continue to use a combination of home and office working to maximise efficiency.

The [Natspec Board](#) met in May, July, October 2021 and February 2022. We welcomed two new board directors this year: Lou Harman, policy director for care, and Andrew Smith, policy director for LAs and commissioning.

Members can access all board minutes which are held in [Natspec Knowledge](#) on the member section of the website. If you do not already have an account, you can set one up on the [login page](#).

Appendix: List of events 2021-22

Event	Date	Delegates	YouTube views
Top ten Chrome Browser extensions for accessibility	20/04/2021	23	247
Are we hearing the learner voice	21/04/2021	14	199
Assistive technologists in Welsh FE - best practice and guidance	22/04/2021	23	95
The ILR in practice	27/04/2021	16	n/a
Securing employer engagement: work based learning programmes for learners with SEND	27/04/2021	26	n/a
10 practical steps to include more learners	28/04/2021	4	n/a
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (MQTLAS) - 1	29/04/2021	23	n/a
Natspec student parliament 2021	29/04/2021	150	n/a
Finance managers network	04/05/2021	22	n/a
Ofsted update on phased return to inspection	04/05/2021	18	n/a
Implementing RARPA with your team	05/05/2021	12	n/a
Natspec HR forum (incl. employment law update)	05/05/2021	18	n/a
Introduction to implementing RARPA effectively	06/05/2021	22	n/a
Natspec conference week: Reflection and renewal	w/c 10/05/2021	350	n/a
Natspec Awards Ceremony	13/05/2021	63	157
Introduction to job coaching	18/05/2021	24	n/a
New to the ILR?	18/05/2021	16	n/a
EquatIO: Accessible maths	18/05/2021	9	92
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session two)	19/05/2021	24	n/a
Using a Functional Communication Training approach to reduce behaviours of concern	19/05/2021	8	83
Supporting learners' Assistive Technology at all stages of their college journey	19/05/2021	10	n/a
Learner voice practitioner forum	20/05/2021	17	n/a
The ILR Drop-in and Q&A session	20/05/2021	8	n/a
Natspec Employment Forum	26/05/2021	14	n/a
Natspec Therapy Conference	28/05/2021	~50	n/a
Arranging and conducting an internal review of your RARPA provision	08/06/2021	16	n/a
Starfish Covid apps: Staying safe, healthy and independent	08/06/2021	11	118
A silver lining approach: Improving independence and preparing for adulthood in a home learning setting	09/06/2021	5	79
Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement in the RARPA process (session one)	10/06/2021	17	n/a
Natspec Annual General Meeting 2021	10/06/2021	31	60
Leading with compassion for self and others: Mental health and wellbeing for principals and senior leaders	11/06/2021	11	n/a
Quality assuring supported internships and work-based learning programmes	15/06/2021	10	n/a

Event	Date	Delegates	YouTube views
Creating accessible documents	15/06/2021	19	134
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session one)	17/06/2021	7	n/a
Natspec virtual games week live events	21 June - 25 June	193	583
Making the most of learning support assistants	22/06/2021	10	n/a
Natspec Care Forum	22/06/2021	17	n/a
Introduction to job coaching	29/06/2021	19	n/a
Assistive Technology for physical access	29/06/2021	8	n/a
Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement in the RARPA process (session two)	01/07/2021	18	n/a
Introduction to implementing RARPA effectively	05/07/2021	15	n/a
ILR in practice	06/07/2021	9	n/a
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session two)	06/07/2021	10	n/a
Integration of a QT Humanoid Robot: Removing barriers to learning and providing structure for learners with autism	07/07/2021	3	95
Securing Employer Engagement	08/07/2021	11	n/a
Publicity Officers Network	08/07/2021	19	n/a
Emerging technologies for accessibility	13/07/2021	11	n/a
The ILR Drop-in and Q&A session	13/07/2021	1	n/a
Clicker8: Improving literacy	20/07/2021	7	93
Introduction to implementing RARPA effectively	02/09/2021	17	n/a
Assessment for AT	07/09/2021	3	85
Live, work, enjoy and thrive: a blueprint for a whole-area approach to partnership	15/09/2021	6	53
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session one)	16/09/2021	23	n/a
Introduction to job coaching	21/09/2021	9	n/a
Post-16 specialist education: essential information for anyone new to the FE sector (day one)	22/09/2021	19	n/a
Post-16 specialist education: essential information for anyone new to the FE sector (day two)	23/09/2021	18	n/a
Setting up supported internship programmes	23/09/2021	13	n/a
Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement in the RARPA process (session one)	30/09/2021	14	n/a
Safeguarding Network	01/10/2021	34	n/a
Ofsted Stakeholder Update – Autumn 2021	01/10/2021	32	n/a
New to the ILR? Getting it right first time	05/10/2021	26	n/a
Natspec Employment Forum	06/10/2021	33	n/a
Voice control for accessibility	06/10/2021	4	n/a
Peer support and empowering young people in their career choice	06/10/2021	2	35
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session two)	07/10/2021	23	n/a
The ILR Drop-in and Q&A session	07/10/2021	4	n/a

Event	Date	Delegates	YouTube views
Learner Voice workshop	07/10/2021	14	n/a
Natspec principals' forum	12/10/2021	50	n/a
Securing employer engagement for work-based learning programmes	12/10/2021	10	n/a
Supporting learners' Assistive Technology at all stages of their college journey	13/10/2021	2	n/a
Learner voice practitioner network	14/10/2021	20	n/a
Read&Write: literacy support	19/10/2021	5	83
Improving mental health through community links: from dog-walking to meal deliveries	20/10/2021	5	35
Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement in the RARPA process (session two) (full)	21/10/2021	15	n/a
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session one)	09/11/2021	23	n/a
Finance managers network	09/11/2021	28	n/a
TechAbility Conference 2021: Focus on Learners	10/11/2021	120	n/a
Natspec Care Forum	10/11/2021	13	n/a
The ILR in practice	11/11/2021	13	n/a
Introduction to job coaching	11/11/2021	24	n/a
Quality assuring supported internships and work-based learning programmes	16/11/2021	20	n/a
ILR Drop-in Q&A Session	16/11/2021	7	n/a
Improving life chances with an inter-disciplinary approach	17/11/2021	3	113
Natspec HR forum (incl. employment law update)	18/11/2021	23	n/a
Developing RARPA CPD with your team	23/11/2021	13	n/a
Publicity Officers Network	23/11/2021	10	n/a
Captions for video	23/11/2021	5	94
Introduction to implementing RARPA effectively	25/11/2021	24	n/a
Natspec Student Parliament	25/11/2021	200	n/a
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session two)	30/11/2021	23	n/a
Cross-college forum for learners with complex disabilities	01/12/2021	4	11
Safeguarding Network	03/12/2021	19	n/a
Inspection under Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework: learning from your peers	03/12/2021	56	n/a
Emerging technologies for accessibility	07/12/2021	2	n/a
Arranging and conducting an internal review of your RARPA provision	08/12/2021	16	n/a
SpeakUnique	14/12/2021	12	104
New to ILR	11/01/2022	10	n/a
Technology and leadership	12/01/2022	11	n/a
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session one)	13/01/2022	18	n/a
Introduction to implementing RARPA effectively	18/01/2022	21	n/a
ILR Drop-in Q&A Session	18/01/2022	6	n/a
Becoming a trauma informed college	19/01/2022	5	n/a

Event	Date	Delegates	YouTube views
Finance managers network	19/01/2022	26	n/a
Introduction to job coaching	20/01/2022	20	n/a
Natspec HR forum (incl. employment law update)	20/01/2022	28	n/a
Natspec Peer Exchange Week	24/01- 27/01/2022	218	n/a
Developing RARPA CPD with your team	01/02/2022	10	n/a
The ILR in practice	02/02/2022	10	n/a
10 practical steps to include more learners	02/02/2022	2	n/a
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session two)	03/02/2022	14	n/a
Grid 3: symbol vocabularies	08/02/2022	9	62
Making the most of learning support assistants	09/02/2022	25	n/a
Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement in the RARPA process (session one)	10/02/2022	6	n/a
Accessible photography	22/02/2022	7	82
Securing employer engagement for work-based learning programmes	01/03/2022	12	n/a
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session one)	02/03/2022	14	n/a
Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement in the RARPA process (session one)	03/03/2022	6	n/a
Demystifying business continuity planning	09/03/2022	12	18
Introduction to implementing RARPA effectively	10/03/2022	16	n/a
Good governance in specialist colleges	11/03/2022	19	n/a
Introduction to job coaching	15/03/2022	14	n/a
Funding for Assistive Technology	15/03/2022	16	48
Learner voice practitioner network	17/03/2022	18	n/a
Arranging and conducting an internal review of your RARPA provision	17/03/2022	10	n/a
Quality assuring supported internships and work-based learning programmes	22/03/2022	6	n/a
Publicity officers network	22/03/2022	15	n/a
Specialist FE: essential information	24/03/2022	30	n/a
Setting up supported internship programmes	24/03/2022	9	n/a
Supporting learners' Assistive Technology at all stages of their college journey	30/03/2022	6	n/a
Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and support for learners with SEND (session two)	31/03/2022	12	n/a