



Department
for Education

Skills Advisory Panels

**Analytical Toolkit for Local Skills
Analysis**

December 2018

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Analytical Toolkit for Local Skills Analysis

Skills Advisory Panels aim to bring together local employers and skills providers to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, and to work together to understand and address key local challenges. This includes both immediate needs and challenges and looking at what is required to help local areas adapt to future labour market changes and to grasp future opportunities. This will help colleges, universities and other providers deliver the skills required by employers, now and in the future.

Skills Advisory Panels aim to strengthen the capabilities of Local Enterprise Partnerships and Mayoral Combined Authorities¹, or local areas from hereafter, to carry out high quality analysis which will be used to identify their skills and employment needs and priorities, as well as inform their skills agenda, and improve their economic outcomes. This will assist local areas to develop action plans to address skills issues which, in turn can give more people in the local community access to high quality skills provision that leads to good jobs. The analysis produced will underpin the 'People' element of their Local Industrial Strategy².

¹ References to Mayoral Combined Authorities in this toolkit, also include and apply to the Greater London Authority (GLA).

² [Industrial Strategy White Paper](#)

1. Overview

The Department for Education's Skills Advisory Panels programme team, or we from hereafter, have developed this toolkit to improve consistency and support local areas to produce robust evidence to inform local decision-making on skills needs and priorities.

This toolkit includes a detailed framework and methodology to ensure the analytical outputs produced by local areas meet the standards set out in this document. The structure of this toolkit is as follows:

- a) **Actions for Quality Outcomes** (page 3) – actions to support effective follow-up of the identified skills and employment priorities.
- b) **Standards** (page 4) – indicators to ensure high quality local skills analysis incorporates full consideration of skills landscape and labour market thinking.
- c) **Analytical Framework and Methodology** (page 4) – 5-stage model indicating areas of consideration to enable an in-depth understanding and analysis of local skills systems.

This document includes a glossary of key terms the reader can refer to for the definition of some key terms and concepts we use throughout this toolkit. A supplementary document 'Skills Advisory Panels: Data Sources' is available³. This document lists publically available data sources that may assist local areas when using this toolkit.

This toolkit has been designed in partnership with the Cities and Local Growth Unit⁴, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). In developing Skills Advisory Panels, we have worked with seven areas (Greater Manchester and West Midlands Combined Authorities, as well as Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Greater Lincolnshire, Lancashire, Leeds City Region and Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnerships). In developing this toolkit, we have also sought the views of all Local Enterprise Partnerships and Mayoral Combined Authorities. Alongside this analytical toolkit, we have published governance guidance⁵ which sets out how the government will support Skills Advisory Panels, and its expectations as to their role, structure and governance.

³ Skills Advisory Panels data sources: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-advisory-panels-analytical-toolkit/skills-advisory-panels-data-sources>

⁴ A partnership between the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

⁵ Skills Advisory Panels role and governance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-advisory-panels-saps-role-and-governance>

2. Actions for Quality Outcomes

To enable local areas to effectively act on their identified skills and employment priorities, we recommend the following actions:

- **Assess** the labour market and skills system of the local areas and identify skills and employment priorities.
- **Manage** relationships with policy leads within the local area and the Skills Advisory Panel by presenting analysis and its implications clearly, and disseminate information effectively to ensure common understanding.
- **Deliver** skills and employment priorities through effective plans and efficient routes, and enable delivery through engagement with the local area's Skills Advisory Panel and other stakeholders. These relationships should facilitate a more efficient allocation of resources in local areas.
- **Evaluate** the impact of implemented actions to deal with skills and employment priorities. Monitor whether the priorities identified and acted upon are effective in assisting sustainable growth and development in economic performance.

Regular reviews of the skills system in relation to the labour market are encouraged. This will allow local areas to reflect on the changing landscape of the labour market and skills systems. Timescales to produce high quality analysis will differ between local areas, however we advise annually, or when circumstances change, as a minimum. We will seek evidence from local areas to demonstrate continuous evaluation of skills priorities.

We expect Skills Advisory Panels to share analysis and best practice, as widely and transparently as possible, with central government and other Skills Advisory Panels to learn from each other and tackle wider skills challenges.

3. Standards

The role of the standards for Skills Advisory Panels is to ensure that local areas are producing high quality skills analysis which will form a robust evidence base for identifying skills and employment priorities in the short and longer-term.

To determine the suitability of local analytical practices for skills and the quality of the evidence used, we will expect local areas to demonstrate reflection of:

- Key headline outputs which, in relation to the labour market, highlight:
 - the skills currently available and whether they meet demand
 - where skills needs are currently and likely to be in the future
 - whether the local skills system is providing the future workforce with the necessary skills to meet future demand.
- Evidence that demonstrates reflection on a breadth of:
 - high quality data sources on skills, employment and the labour market to build their evidence base
 - national and localised levers (including policy and funding initiatives) to steer skills and employment priorities in the short and longer term.
- Action plans for their strategies in respect of skills and employment priorities within the areas and the underpinning rationale for such proposals.
- Explicit reflection on the potential impacts and effects of issues that affect labour market trends such as digitalisation, globalisation, automation, ageing population, and trade and migration shifts.

We will work with local areas to support their progress in implementing these changes, which we expect to be in place by October 2019. We will review with them their progress in summer 2019 to establish how local areas are on track to successfully embed the toolkit and whether further implementation is required (including further assistance from the Department for Education). This will also inform the basis of an assessment of the adequacy of this toolkit to support local areas and identify areas for improvement which will help the Department for Education to review and develop future versions of the toolkit.

4. Analytical Framework

The analytical framework will support analysts to determine the types of skills and employment priorities needed to improve their economic efficiency. These priorities will differ between local areas, due to the varying economic contexts and structures already in existence.

The framework will ensure that local areas are identifying skills and employment priorities under coherent and consistent objectives, thus establishing a national picture. The framework enables users to retain the flexibility currently available, so that they can identify specific skills priorities that are relevant to their local area.

A common analytical framework for local areas is required to reduce analytical disparities, and ensure consistency in the approach taken to build an evidence base when identifying skills and employment priorities. Primarily, this will enable comparability within and across local areas and improve their analytical capability.

The analytical framework has been designed to assist the review of the skills system with consideration of the labour market context, both locally and nationally. Topics that skills priorities may fall under are outlined in the analytical framework.

Analysts are responsible for reviewing topics in this analytical framework. Analysts should then determine which are of greater relevance and importance to the local areas in improving efficient allocation of local resources, and reducing skills mismatches.

We appreciate that the area of skills is dynamic and that supply and demand of skills are not separate issues. Skills supply and demand impact each other and therefore, whilst the framework has divided them to avoid duplication where possible, the effects may be apparent in multiple stages of the framework and methodology.

The Skills Advisory Panels analytical framework contains 5 key stages:

Stage 1 – Analysis and definition of the local landscape
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Examination of the current economic landscape in the area▪ Determine performance benchmarks within and across multiple geographical levels
Stage 2 – Analysis of skills demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Identification of the strengths and weaknesses in labour markets▪ Exploration of skill needs based on current and future demand▪ Insight into business and employer environments
Stage 3 – Analysis of skills supply
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Determine available skills against those required in the area▪ Identification of potential challenges that may restrict skills supply
Stage 4 – Mapping of demand and supply
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assessment of the types of skills gaps and the causes▪ Ascertain whether learner provision and business development meets demand▪ Assessment of the likelihood in meeting future demand through current supply
Stage 5 – Conclusions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Derive skills priorities for the local area to improve economic efficiency▪ Outline the available or required mechanisms to support the delivery of the skills and employment priorities

5. Analytical Framework Stages

This section provides a more in-depth description of each of the 5 areas of practice relating to local skills analysis. Each area of practice provides questions and objectives to assist the identification of potential priorities in local areas.

To help local areas develop an in-depth and robust evidence base that informs decisions on which skills mismatches between skills supply and employer demand should be prioritised, topics, themes and key questions to consider are also included in section 5.1 and 5.2 respectively. Themes and key questions are not exhaustive, but highlight the main areas for exploration. It is the responsibility of local areas to determine further themes within the topic area that should be prioritised and examined in more detail.

Stage 1: Analysis and definition of the local landscape

What is the labour market and skills performance of the local area?

How does that compare with neighbouring or similar areas, and how does it sit regionally and nationally?

Is there potential for the local area to be comparable to various geographical levels (e.g. international, national, and regional)?

Objectives:

- Increasing awareness of the volume and depth of strengths and weaknesses in the local area
- Understanding the factors that influence labour demand and supply
- Increasing awareness of the volume and depth of strengths and weaknesses in the local area

Stage 2: Analysis of skills demand

What barriers are preventing businesses from securing the labour to meet their skills needs?

Objectives:

- Defining the stock of employment and skills that employers are requesting
- Building a picture of overall business conditions, whilst also examining specific factors for particular sectors and occupations
- Identifying the changes and factors that could impact businesses recognising the wide diversity among businesses (e.g. small employers, large employers, and both private sector and public sector).

Stage 3: Analysis of skills supply

Are there provisions in place to ensure the labour force will have skills for current and future demand?

What are the reasons that may prevent this?

Objectives:

- Determining the characteristics of the current workforce
- Defining skill stocks
- Outlining the challenges that restrict the local area from providing the labour force with required skills
- Defining potential changes to the local area and labour force that will affect the flow of desired skills for businesses

Stage 4: Mapping of supply and demand

How responsive is the skills system?

Do the labour force supply the skills to meet current and future demand?

Where does the skill supply fail to meet the demand at different levels (e.g. sectoral and occupational)?

Is there significant demand for the current and future supply? Does the demand provide opportunity to fully exploit the supply of skills available now and in the future?

Objectives:

- Ascertaining issues that may exist with the offer available from education providers and the effect of underutilisation of skills on businesses
- Understanding the factors that could increase fragility to labour supply and business demand
- Identifying barriers that prevent the skills system adjusting to changing business demand

Stage 5: Conclusions

What are the main skills priorities?

What current policy levers and initiatives, at both local and national level, can help deliver the priorities?

Are new policy levers or initiatives required to ensure the skills and employment priorities are achieved?

Objectives:

- Understanding current and future skills and employment priorities which will have greater impact on the local area
- Outlining the actions needed locally and nationally to address skills and employment priorities
- Understanding how actions will achieve economic efficiency and a reduction in skills mismatches

5.1 Themes

This section provides themes that we encourage local areas to consider when using the analytical framework. This is not an exhaustive list.

Stage 1: Analysis and definition of the local landscape	Stage 2: Analysis of skills demand	Stage 3: Analysis of skills supply	Stage 4: Mapping of skills demand and supply
Skills and Labour Supply			
Demographics Labour market activity Workforce participation Sector and occupational employment Specialised / transferrable skills Locally offered provisions External and local providers of learning Migration and geographical mobility	Occupation and sector demand Workforce skills needs Specialist skills Learning provider provisions Stock of employment Workforce share	Provider participation rates Qualifications Higher Education and Further Education course provision Education leaver preparedness Learner starts Further Education (Level 4 and 5) outcomes Graduate destinations Migration Movement of workforce between jobs	Skill shortages Skill mismatches Provider responsiveness Mismatches and underutilisation Labour force participation rates Further Education outcomes Travel to education Demographics

Stage 1: Analysis and definition of the local landscape	Stage 2: Analysis of skills demand	Stage 3: Analysis of skills supply	Stage 4: Mapping of skills demand and supply
Economy and Labour Demand			
Productivity Growth Job and business creation Wages Workforce conditions and patterns Labour market structure	Business growth Recruitment Vacancies Employment prospects and fragility Redundancies Wages and benefits	Business growth and decline Sector growth and decline	Declining industries and sectors Innovation and new industrial demands Public and private funding
Cross-cutting			
Geography Housing Transport Poverty Vulnerability Inequalities (including social mobility and deprivation) EU exit	Barriers to training and employment Employer investment in training Market strategies Technological change (e.g. automation, innovation)	Higher Education, Further Education, informal and non-regulated provision uptake and financial costs Barriers to accessing training and employment Travel to work EU exit	Job mobility Underutilisation Travel to work Learner behaviour and destinations Migration and EU exit

Stage 1: Analysis and definition of the local landscape	Stage 2: Analysis of skills demand	Stage 3: Analysis of skills supply	Stage 4: Mapping of skills demand and supply
Policy⁶			
<u>Growth and City Deals</u> <u>Welfare reforms (e.g. Universal Credit, National Living Wage)</u> <u>Sector deals and Grand Challenges</u> Income and corporation tax trends Infrastructure projects (e.g. HS2) <u>Enterprise Zones</u> <u>Northern Powerhouse⁷ / Midlands Engine⁸</u>	National Retraining scheme <u>Local Digital Skills Partnerships</u> <u>Work and Health Programme</u> <u>Disability Employment Gap Commitment</u> <u>Fuller Working Lives</u> <u>Enterprise Zones</u> <u>Opportunity Areas</u> Careers Hubs, Enterprise Co-ordinators and Advisers	<u>Apprenticeships and Traineeships</u> <u>T Levels</u> <u>Level 4 and 5</u> <u>Adult Education Budget</u> Higher level skills (including <u>Advanced Learner Loans</u>)	National Retraining Scheme <u>Adult Education Budget</u> Higher level skills (including <u>Advanced Learner Loans</u>) <u>Digital Skills Partnerships</u> Careers and employment engagement in skills and work <u>Work and Health Programme</u>

⁶ More information about these policies can be found at www.gov.uk

⁷ <https://northernpowerhouse.gov.uk/>

⁸ <https://www.midlandsengine.org/>

5.2 Key Questions

This section provides exemplar questions that we encourage local areas to consider when using the analytical framework. These questions should assist analysts in producing an in-depth evidence base, to support the skills priority decisions. The list of questions is not exhaustive, but it indicates the main areas for exploration. It is the responsibility of local areas to determine questions that are most relevant to them.

Stage 1: Analysis and definition of local landscape

Skills and Labour Supply
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What are the key sectors / occupations of employment?▪ What is the demographic structure (by size and age) of the overall and working populations?▪ Who are the key education providers (by type incl. informal / non-regulated; size and Ofsted ratings) in the local area and where are they situated?▪ What is the proportion of individuals who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)? How many NEET would like to be in employment, education or training?▪ What proportion of people move employment within the local area? What are the reasons for employee movement (e.g. wages, progression opportunities)?
Economy and Labour Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What is the level of productivity and economic activity (overall and by sector / occupation)?▪ What are the levels of employment, unemployment and inactivity? What are the levels of underemployment?▪ What proportion of jobs are low paid? Which occupations / sectors are these in (e.g. public sector)? What proportion of low paid employees move to higher paid work over time?▪ What is the coverage of 'atypical work' and how stable is the working environment?▪ What is the rate of job and business creation (overall and by sector / occupation)?▪ What does the dispersion / distribution in employment (e.g. business type and size) and wages look like?

Cross-cutting

- What are the levels of inequality in your area (e.g. deprivation, social mobility, gender pay gap)?
- What proportion of workers commute into and out of the local area for work?
- What is the qualification level of the labour force that migrate into the local area for employment? Is this a result of domestic or international migration?
- How affordable is housing in your area compared with neighbouring areas?
- What proportion of individuals are in receipt of government payments (e.g. Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit)?

Policy

- Is there a distinct difference in your local area or regional landscape compared with others?
- What has been the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit and National Minimum Wage?
- Is job creation or business growth within Enterprise Zone locations?

Stage 2: Analysis of skills demand

Skills and Labour Supply

- What skills are employers demanding? Are these skills transferrable or specialist?
- How are these skills likely to change in the next 5 – 10 years?
- What are the sectors and occupations with the largest proportion of new vacancies? Do these require a specific qualification level or course?
- Which sectors and occupations are expanding?
- What are the new emerging and growing sectors and occupations?

Economy and Labour Demand

- What do current recruitment practices and retention rates look like? How does this differ by sector, geography and skills levels?
- How do these trends are likely to differ in the next years?
- What is the distribution of wages in the sectors / occupations where there are skills gaps?
- Which sector, occupations and localities have seen the biggest growth in jobs filled and/or in unmet demand?
- Which sectors / occupations have the highest staff and talent retention? What factors influence retention (e.g. pay, working conditions)?

Cross-cutting

- What proportion of employees have higher qualification level or skills than those required in their current jobs?
- What is the rate of employer investment in skills? Which sectors / occupations are investing in their workforce and at what skills levels?
- For employers who are not investing in skills training, what are the reasons?
- How large is training investment? What are the main barriers to skills development?
- What proportion of jobs are susceptible to technological changes (e.g. automation) and in what sectors / occupations?

Policy

- What opportunities are there to a) upskill the ageing population who wish to continue working and b) reskill those in jobs susceptible to technological change (e.g. automation)?
- What programmes are there to support access, identification and take-up of training?
- What proportion of the workforce take part in government's employment initiatives?
- What incentives encourage sustained employment?

Stage 3: Analysis of skills supply

Skills and Labour Supply

- What courses and training provisions are on offer? Do these provide the current and future skills to satisfy the demand from employers?
- What are the barriers to take up courses and other training provisions?
- Is the local population over or under qualified?
- What qualifications and skills do the population hold? Are they sector / occupational specific?
- How has the demographic profile of the local area changed over the past 5 years? How will this impact future labour supply?
- What qualifications do the active workforce hold in comparison to the inactive?
- Which skills do the commuting workforce bring to the local area?
- Which skills do the commuting workforce bring to the local area?
- What proportion of school leavers go into Further Education or university?

Economy and Labour Demand

- What is the proportion of education leavers start in high growth sectors / occupations?
- What are the current working patterns (by demographic factors and hours worked)? Do you expect these to change?
- What attracts graduates to the area?
- What is the rate of retirement? Does this differ or compare in sectors/occupations?

Cross-cutting

- Is Higher Education / Further Education course uptake concentrated in particular subjects?
- Do education providers offer the courses that the workforce require and where demand outstrips supply?
- For training providers are there enough people in the workforce to incentivise training investments? Are training providers (education and employers) providing the labour force sufficient opportunities to reskill?
- What impact would a restriction on EU migration have on labour supply? How would this differ by sector and occupation?
- What is the average commuter distance and time? How do these journeys differ by locality?

Policy

- What impact will the initial T Levels have on the distribution of qualifications and learner outcomes? Will there be sufficient placements in sectors / occupations?
- Do apprenticeships lead to employment?
- How have advanced learner loans increased uptake of level 3 to 5 qualifications?
- Are local areas maximising the potential of wider employment support measures?

Stage 4: Mapping of skills demand and supply

Skills and Labour Supply
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What evidence is there of skills issues, now or in the future (skills shortages, mismatches and underutilisation)?▪ Which sectors and occupations do the local area population favour? Are these low or high skilled roles?▪ Are education providers delivering courses to meet employer demand?▪ Are people employed in a sector / occupation that is aligned with their formal qualifications?▪ What is the proportion of overqualified and underqualified workers and the impact on the labour market? How has learner behaviour changed? Are application rates changing? Do learners move to other areas following study?
Economy and Labour Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Is there a shift of labour to sectors / industries and occupations that are larger? Is this due to competing sectors / occupations?▪ How many jobs are impacted by automation / digitalisation? What are the future skills needed and do the labour force have these?▪ Are employers investing in upskilling to reduce fragility?▪ What is the labour market participation rate? Are those that are inactive able to enter with the skills required?▪ Is there wage growth in lower paid sector / occupations?
Cross-cutting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Are learners choosing the courses that supply the training for skills in demand? What information, advice and guidance are learners being provided?▪ Are employees changing jobs to ascertain greater benefits (e.g. wages)?▪ Are employers dependent on workers from outside the local area to meet demand?▪ Is there enough demand in sectors / occupations for the supply that exists?▪ Do learners remain where they studied for employment? Do learners return to the local area after studying elsewhere?

Policy

- Where is the Adult Education Budget or Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) provision required to meet demand across sectors and occupations (e.g. by age, gender, qualifications)?
- Are there examples of local areas and organisations working with industry and informal / private sector providers to design and deliver new programmes in response to emerging skills demand? Are there opportunities to do so?
- Do education providers promote courses relating to those in demand sectors or occupations? Or are they changing the content / type of courses according to shifts in skills demand?
- Are education providers engaging with employers to understand these skills needs?
- Are employers engaging with employees to relay skills required and ways to obtain them (through upskilling development)?
- Are individuals wanting to upskill? Is there preference to have lesser paid jobs for greater quality of life? Do 'atypical' jobs reduce the investment of employers in providing training and opportunities to develop / upskill?

Stage 5: Conclusions

Outcomes

- What priorities will decrease the risk or uncertainty to future skills demand and supply?
- Would your priorities provide quick fixes or long term solutions?
- Are these priorities applicable to all of the local area or certain subsets?
- Are your priorities unique or similar to higher geographical levels (e.g. international, national, and regional)?

Mechanisms

- What current policies or initiatives are in place that could best address priorities? Are new policies or initiatives required?
- What previous interventions have assisted improvement to similar priorities? Are these available still or are there alternatives that will provide better outcomes?
- Is there reliance on national levers to deliver priorities? Could priorities be supported through local strategies? How can local areas work together to maximise results?

Glossary

Skills shortage

Where there is a lack of skilled and qualified people for the jobs that are available in the labour market. The skills in demand by employers is not met by the workforce, and makes it harder for employers to introduce new products or services, or adapt with new working practices⁹.

Hard-to-fill vacancies

Vacancies that an employer has and is finding difficult to fill – for any reason¹⁰.

Skills mismatch

Where an individual's level or type of skills does not meet those that are in demand by employers or the labour market¹¹.

Underutilisation

Employment does not incorporate the qualifications or skills that an employee holds.

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

Typically focused on 16-24 year olds. Anybody who is not in any form of education or training and not in employment is considered to be NEET. Consequently, a person identified as NEET will always be either unemployed or economically inactive¹².

Underemployment

A person willing to work more hours, available to do so and worked less than the specified hours of work threshold¹³.

Labour market structure

Characteristics of the labour market that may cause inequalities in employment. Potential areas are wage flexibility, benefits, concentration, market share.

'Atypical' work

Employment that does not fit within the 'typical' standard of full time, regular work for an employer over a period of time. Standard hours and income are guaranteed.

⁹ Source: UKCES <https://ukces.blog.gov.uk/2016/01/29/ukces-explains-skills-shortage-vacancies/>

¹⁰ Source: UKCES <https://ukces.blog.gov.uk/2016/01/29/ukces-explains-skills-shortage-vacancies/>

¹¹ <https://unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=TVETipedia+glossary+A-Z&filt=all&id=568>

¹² ONS

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/bulletins/youngpeoplenotineducationemploymentortrainingneet/march2018>

¹³ ONS

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/underemploymentandoveremploymenttemp16>

Atypical work covers part-time work, temporary/fixed-term work, casual and seasonal work, self-employed people and homeworkers. A recent addition to atypical work is zero hour contracts.

Employment fragility

Jobs that are at risk of poorer prospects and that are at risk of reduction or depletion. These jobs are vulnerable to emerging trends and labour market challenges (e.g. digitalisation, globalisation, automation, ageing population, trade and migration shifts).

Transferable skills¹⁴

Transferable skills are skills that the majority types of study, work and career have in common and they can serve as a bridge from study to work and from one career to another.

Transferable skills include, among others, team working, communication/presentation skills, both written and oral, communication/dialogue with non-technical audiences (public engagement), project and time management skills, problem solving and creativity and the ability for abstract thought.

¹⁴ ESF (European Science Foundation) (2009), *Research Careers in Europe: Landscape and Horizons*, A Report by the ESF Member Organisation Forum on Research Careers, ESF, Strasbourg.



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Reference: DFE-00345-2018



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