

## **Important information on the matrix Standard**

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is working with the Skills Funding Agency and matrix practitioners to explore interim options, for supporting the standard from 1 August 2010.

It is important to note that:

- BIS and the Skills Funding Agency are committed to the **matrix** Standard
- BIS intends to re-start the procurement process to put in place long term arrangements for the management and support of the **matrix** Standard; and
- There will be a period between the end of July 2010 when the current contract for the management and support of the matrix Standard ends and the start of the new contract begins. During this time all enquiries in relation to the **matrix** Standard will be handled by BIS.

The **matrix** Standard is an important part of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills strategy to ensure the delivery of high quality careers information and advice services. As you know it is a contractual commitment that Next Step prime contractors and sub contractors hold or are committed to working towards the **matrix** Standard. There are also obligations on OLASS and Train to Gain providers seeking to deliver information, advice and services under Skills Funding Agency contracts in respect of the Standard. These will continue. More details about the arrangements that will be in place from 1 August 2010 will be communicated through the Provider Update as soon as possible.

We also recognise that many organisations also seek accreditation not because of contractual obligations, but because they value the approach and rigour the Standard brings and we want this to continue.

BIS and the Skills Funding Agency are committed to the review of the **matrix** Standard and where possible to implement necessary changes to strengthen the Standard. The current work has reached the stage where, following consultations with providers and practitioners, key changes have been proposed. These changes are intended to strengthen the criteria related to outcomes, competence of staff, continuous improvement, information technology advances

and strengthen the links with other quality standards and inspection frameworks.

**What do I need to do?**

Firstly we appreciate your patience regarding this matter. You should continue to retain evidence for the **matrix** Standard as usual.

More details about the arrangements that will be in place from 1 August 2010 will be communicated through the Provider Update as soon as possible.

In the meantime any urgent queries can be sent to [jenny.wallis@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jenny.wallis@bis.gsi.gov.uk)

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