

**Qualifications
Funding Confirmation
Process - Frequently
Asked Questions**

December 2011

Purpose

The Skills Investment Statement 2011-2014: Investing in a World Class Skills System (1 December 2011) announced that as “the funding transition to the QCF is complete, and in order to minimise the differentiation in the qualifications offer pre and post 19, more of the QCF will be opened up for public funding”.

Following the announcement, the Skills Funding Agency (the Agency) will commence a review of the funding confirmation process and will be seeking to discuss the review and the implications of opening up more of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) for public funding with key stakeholders early in January 2012.

This document outlines some frequently asked questions regarding the review the Agency will be undertaking and will be of interest to Learning Providers, Sector Skills Councils and Awarding Organisations.

Agency Review of Funding Confirmation Process

1. When will the review of the current funding confirmation process take place?

The Agency will undertake a review of the current funding confirmation process in January 2012.

2. Which stakeholders will be involved in the review of the current funding confirmation process?

The Agency will seek feedback from Sector Skills Councils, Awarding Organisations and Learning Providers.

3. When will the outcomes of the review of the current funding confirmation process be announced?

The outcomes of the review will be announced at the end of January 2012.

4. Will Sector Lead Bodies continue to provide recommendations of which qualifications should be confirmed for public funding for adults?

The role of Sector Lead Bodies in the funding confirmation process and other aspects of the process such as funding parameters linked to size and purpose will be subject to review as part of implementing a new process.

5. For qualifications to be publicly funded in the future, will they still be required to meet the National Occupational Standards (NOS)?

The Agency continues to support vocational qualifications within the QCF which reflect up-to-date employer standards. However, as outlined in *New Challenges, New Chances* (December 2011)¹ National Occupational Standards will be reviewed and the outcomes of this review will be taken into consideration.

¹ *New Challenges, New Chances - Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan: Building a World Class Skills System* (December 2011)

Implications on what is publicly funded for adults

6. Currently a qualification that (I would like to deliver/my centres would like to deliver) is not publicly funded, will this be available for public funding now as the “QCF will be opened up for public funding”?

As part of the review the Agency will undertake an impact assessment to assess the implications of opening up the QCF for public funding on all qualifications within the QCF. Following the review and impact assessment an updated list of QCF qualifications that have been confirmed for funding will be published at the end of January 2012.

7. Does “QCF will be opened up for public funding” mean that all units will be available for public funding?

For the 2011/12 academic year, only certain units have been made available for delivery in the following context:

- as part of the skills training offer for individuals who are unemployed and need help to enter work in 2011/12²
- for providers who have been confirmed as being involved in the unit delivery trials³.

We do not anticipate that a unit offer outside the above contexts will be available for public funding.

8. What are the implications of the announcement for NQF vocational qualifications?

New Challenges, New Chances (December 2011), supports the role of QCF vocational qualifications for learners aged 19 and above. Therefore the Agency will continue to focus public funding on qualifications within the QCF.

9. Will Skills for Life Adult Literacy and Numeracy, Skills for Life ESOL, GCSES, A Levels continue to be publicly funded for adults?

Yes, these categories will continue to be eligible for public funding within the NQF⁴. These are only published on Learning Aim Reference Application (LARA) and are not identified on the list of QCF qualifications confirmed for public funding.

² Please see the list of units on the website <http://qcf.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/qcf-funding/confirmationfunding/>

³ <http://qcf.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/qcf-funding/unitdelivery/>

⁴ Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Access to Higher Education qualifications will continue to be confirmed for public funding outside of a regulated framework.

Innovation Code

10. What is the innovation code?

The innovation code is intended to supporting providers in being able to respond to local employment and skills needs. It allows providers to access funding for agreed provision whilst they are working with awarding organisations to develop that provision as new and innovative qualifications in the QCF. Further information about the code will be available by April 2012.

11. When can I use the innovation code from?

The innovation code will be available for use from the 2012/13 academic year. Further information in regards to this will be available by April 2012.

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Business Innovation & Skill

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