

Update

Issue 9
9 June 2010

**Skills
Funding
Agency**

Welcome

Welcome to the ninth edition of Update, our round up of business critical information to Skills Funding Agency providers. If you have any feedback please get in touch by emailing: update@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk.

All back copies and the latest version of Update are available on the Skills Funding Agency website: <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/funding/allthelatest/providerupdate/>.

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Extension of Employability Skills Programme (ESP) contracts from August 2010 to end March 2011

Action

As you will be aware, ESP contracts are due to expire at the end of July 2010. These will now be extended from 1 August 2010 to end March 2011, while the policy position on skills training for the unemployed is clarified.

Changes to the funding rates for adult basic skills qualifications within ESP were announced in the April [Guidance notes](#), issue three, paragraphs 55 and 56. Basic Skills delivery within ESP, attracts the highest Agency funding rate for like-for-like delivery.

Demand for ESP remains high and pressure on the finite ESP budget is therefore significant. The Agency will revisit the current delivery requirement to maximise the number of customers who can be supported during the next contracting period.

Providers should address any queries on this contract extension to their Account Manager.

Qualification and Credit Framework

Information

As part of the funding approval process the Agency has developed a set of technical funding parameters to support Sector Skills Councils, Standard Setting Bodies, Sector Bodies and their awarding organisations in making appropriate and relevant recommendations for funding of vocational QCF qualifications.

Two documents have been published; one offers general guidance applicable across delivery programmes, and the other identifies specific guidance for vocational qualifications in the Adult Learner Responsive offer. Both documents can be found here:

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

Changes to citizenship requirements by the Home Office

Information

The Home Office changed elements of the language requirements for those individuals applying for settlement or naturalisation as a British citizen in April 2010. To support providers offering English for Speakers of Other Languages provision for this purpose, a fact sheet has been published which sets out the new Home Office requirements and how providers should now confirm a learners' achievement of the relevant English language skills. This can be found [here](#):

Delivering value for money through infrastructural change

Information

We thought that you would be interested to know that a report by KPMG, The Delivering Value for Money through Infrastructural Change report, has been published. This was commissioned by the former LSC, and inherited by the Skills Funding Agency in April 2010. Its purpose was to review, with the sector, current delivery models and identify potential new ways of shaping the delivery infrastructure to provide better value for money.

The full report is available on the Skills Funding Agency [website](#):

Skills accounts trial up-date

Information

Trials of skills accounts are taking place throughout the 2009/2010 academic year, prior to roll-out across England, from August 2010. Skills accounts are designed to empower individuals by providing access to relevant information and advice to help them to make the right choices about the skills they need to progress in work and life.

Nearly 80,000 adults have registered for an account to date, with the support of over a hundred learning providers. Surveys of skills accounts holders have found that around eighty

percent of respondents said that having a skills account would encourage them to take part in future learning.

For further information about the future of skills accounts, please refer to: [Fuelling Potential: A blueprint for skills accounts and the integrated adult careers service \(April 2010\)](#).

Useful telephone numbers and websites Information

- Employers (up to 5000 employees) - Train to Gain - 0845 600 9 006 or www.businesslink.gov.uk/traintogain
- Employers (5000+ employees) - National Employer Service - 024 7682 5815 or <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/employers/>
- Learners/individuals – Careers Advice Service - 0800 100 900 or www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk
- National Apprenticeship Service - Employers call 08000 150 600 or visit <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers.aspx>
- National Apprenticeship Service - Learners should visit <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Be-An-Apprentice.aspx>
- Skills Pledge - 0845 600 900 6 or www.businesslink.gov.uk/skillspledge
- Skills Funding Agency enquiries - Switchboard - 0845 377 5000 or www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk
- The Data Service - 0870 267 0001 or www.thedataservice.org.uk

The Skills Funding Agency funds and regulates adult further education and skills in England.

An agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

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