

Update

Issue 15
21 July 2010

**Skills
Funding
Agency**

Welcome

Update is our round up of business critical and useful 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 current issue of Update are available on the Skills Funding Agency website: <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/funding/allthelatest/providerupdate/>.

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Imprisonment for fraud

Information

In order to ensure that public money is used to provide the maximum amount of learning possible, the Skills Funding Agency (like the LSC before it) takes a very tough stance on fraud. Where audit reveals inappropriate provider actions and there are suspicions of fraudulent activity, the Skills Funding Agency has wide ranging powers of investigation, with a dedicated investigations team who work in conjunction with the Police to bring about prosecutions.

In recent months, one particular case has come to court and a number of individuals who had been charged with a variety of offences under the Theft Act, including corruption, money laundering and gaining a pecuniary advantage, have received sentences ranging from four and a half years imprisonment to a 12 month suspended sentence.

In this case the charges arose as the result of unlawful action in the tendering, bidding and awarding of contracts. Where prosecutions arise and convictions take place, the Skills Funding Agency will use both criminal and civil law to recover funds.

All matters relating to suspected financial misdealing should be raised with an Account Manager in the first instance.

Future scenarios letter to Chairs of college governing bodies

Information

Following the recent letter to colleges from John Hayes, Minister for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, which set out new freedoms and flexibilities for the sector, David Hughes, National Director of Provider Services, has [written to Chairs of college governing bodies](#) offering a Skills Funding Agency presentation that analyses how these challenges may impact upon individual colleges.

The purpose of the presentation will be to inform and support colleges with planning and to facilitate best practice. You are encouraged to contact your Skills Funding Agency Account Manager to identify opportunities for discussion. The Skills Funding Agency also plans to hold regional events for college governors later this year. Providers will be kept informed through Update.

ACTOR to replace the QPF

Information

The Skills Funding Agency is introducing an Approved College and Training Organisation Register (ACTOR) through its e-tendering portal (BRAVO) from October 2010 as part of its procurement of education and vocational training services. ACTOR will replace the current Qualified Provider Framework (QPF) in October 2010.

For further information on what action training providers need to take, please [click here](#).

Sixth form college childcare scheme changes

Information

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has decided to close the sixth form college childcare scheme from 2010/11. There will be new arrangements in place from the new academic 2010/11 year for learners to be supported with discretionary 20+ childcare.

Further details are available from the [YPLA website](#).

Employer Responsive – large employer rate factor and MOD provision

Information

Action

The large employer rate is being applied to all MOD provision in 2010/11. This means that the Gap Analysis reduction applied to rates in 2009/10 through identifying MOD provision in ILR filed A02 will be discontinued in 2010/11. Additionally, in order to simplify the arrangements with the MOD, the following Employer Reference Numbers (ERN) should be used for all MOD provision regardless of locations or whether through a direct contract, or delivered to the MOD by a college or training organisation in 2010/11. This includes both new starts in 2010/11 and carry over learners from 2009/10. Providers must ensure that ILR data is changed in 2010/11 to reflect this.

The ERN numbers to use are:

Army	154231517
Royal Navy	900523387
Royal Air Force	155146343

Exceptional Additional Learning Support (eALS)

Information

Action

Exceptional Additional Learning Support (eALS) funding is available for ALS amounts over £19,000 from a separate nationally held budget that Adult Learner Responsive providers can claim from, for learners whose support costs exceed the threshold for High Level ALS (£5,500 - £19,000).

Following the establishment of the Skills Funding Agency there has been a need to update our process for administering eALS. The overall approach still follows the LSC Additional Learning Support guidance in [LSC Funding Guidance 2008/09: Principles Rules Regulations](#) (Chapter 12: Additional Learning Support: Learner-responsive model – funding arrangements). The High Level ALS claim form has been modified slightly for Skills Funding Agency use, and should be used for all eALS claims.

For 2009/10, claims need to be submitted to Account Managers following the end of learners' programmes, but by 22 November 2010. Providers should use the new High and Exceptional ALS claim form for claiming amounts over £19,000. A copy of the form is available [here](#).

For learners with very high learning support needs who will be enrolling in 2010/11, further guidance will be issued shortly. If providers have any queries in the meantime, please contact your Account Manager.

Skills Funding Agency website

Information

As you will have read in last week's [Update](#), our communications team have restructured the [Skills Funding Agency website](#), to make it easier for you to find the information you need. The new structure went live at the end of last week, with a dedicated [provider area](#). In this section you will find information on [how we work with you](#), [latest news](#) and [updates](#), [logos and design guidance](#), [quality](#) and [finance](#).

There is also an area dedicated to [our programmes](#), where you will find all the information, updates and guidance relevant to the programmes you work with. We also have an online [newsroom](#) with our latest press releases and announcements, and a [publications](#) area with a facility to search documents on both the Skills Funding Agency website and also archived documents from the Learning and Skills Council.

The [Web Alerts service](#) allows you to be alerted when a new document or news item becomes available on the website. [Existing subscribers](#) to our Web Alerts will need to update their alert options due to website restructure.

We are interested to hear your thoughts on the new [website](#) and welcome your [feedback](#).

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

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

The Skills Funding Agency complies with The Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998 and information on our Privacy Policy can be found at: <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/privacy.htm>.