

Update

Issue 17
4 August 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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Unique Learner Number (ULN) becomes mandatory

Action

[Changes to the ILR specification for 2010/11](#) came into effect on 1 August. The specification includes important changes to the requirements for the Unique Learner Number (ULN). [Details of this are available online](#) along with [information on all 2010/11 ILR changes](#).

Programmes for the unemployed – provider guidance

Action

Provider guidance has been revised to reflect changes in respect of delivery for learners who start from 1 August 2010 for the following programmes:

Training offer for those unemployed for 6 months;
Routes into work;
Work focused training;
Employability Skills programme.

Details can be found via [Programmes for the unemployed – updates](#). Providers should raise any queries with your Account Manager.

Programmes for the unemployed – change to ILR coding

Action

Providers delivering programmes for the unemployed are reminded that alongside other changes to ILR field coding for learner starts from 1 August 2010, the entry in funding stream field A10 will change from the input of 80 to 81. [Further information is available online](#).

Next Step single service for customers

Action

On 2 August the new Next Step telephone and face-to-face services were integrated into a single service to provide a better customer service experience.

A new [Next Step careers website](#) will soon be introduced as part of the single service. In the meantime customers can continue to access online services through the [Careers Advice](#) and [Skills Accounts](#) sites.

These two websites carry some new content and promotional information, promote the face-to-face service, and highlight the 0800 100 900 telephone number. We particularly want providers to continue to register people for Skills Accounts.

A course search facility will be available through the [Careers Advice](#) website and we will still require providers to update their course information.

Next Step Course Directory service desk

Information

Hotcourses will continue to support providers until 31 August 2010, when the Data Service team will take on providing support for the Next Step Course Directory. The new service desk will offer help and support such as accessing and activating the Course Directory system, password issues, training and support in how to submit course data into the Next Step Directory. From 1 September the Service Desk can be contacted on 0870 267 0001 or by [email](#).

Qualifications and Credit Framework: Policy Update Information

The latest policy update on the [Qualifications and Credit Framework](#) (QCF) is now available. This is the fifth in a series of communications from the QCF Implementation team. This latest update provides information on QCF implementation, funding and performance, as well as other useful information.

Key Skills in Adult Learner Responsive (ALR) Information

At the recent ALP conference, John Hayes, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, confirmed that Key Skills in Apprenticeship Frameworks will be extended until March 2011. This will enable dual running of functional skills or key skills until 31 March 2011.

In respect of key skills funded through Adult Learner Responsive, these will not be funded by the Skills Funding Agency from 1 September 2010. Only continuing learners who enrolled before 1 September 2010 will be funded to complete their qualification up to the certification end date of 31 August 2012. Further information can be obtained by [email](#).

Funding requirements documents for Apprenticeships and Train to Gain Information

Funding requirements documents for [Apprenticeships](#) and [Train to Gain](#) have been published on the Skills Funding Agency website. These set out the way in which the Skills Funding Agency will fund Apprenticeships and Train to Gain within the Employer Responsive provision for 2010/11. They build on previous funding guidance from the Learning and Skills Council.

***information authority* annual awareness and perception survey Information**

The *information authority* is conducting its third annual [awareness and perception survey](#). You are encouraged to take part and asked to forward to colleagues including other learning providers, data users and policy makers. Feedback will help the *information authority* become more effective in setting and regulating data standards and collections.

2011/12 ILR change request consultation

Information

The *information authority* secretariat has liaised with policy teams to scope and assess 38 requests for changes to the 2011/12 ILR. The [consultation process](#) is now underway. A [full list of changes](#), comprising detailed proposals and progress summaries, is now available.

Learner Responsive Qualification Success Rate methodology 2009/10 published

Information

The [Learner Responsive Qualification Success Rates methodology](#) for the academic year 2009/10 are now available. Please note that Annex A (Mastertrim fields) and Annex B (SQL code) will be added in late autumn 2010. If you have any queries please contact the service desk on 0870 267 0001 or [email](#).

Regional Growth Fund consultation

Information

As part of a series of consultation documents, the Government is [currently consulting on the Regional Growth Fund](#). The Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, has invited comment on how the fund should operate. The Government will create a Regional Growth Fund in 2011/12 and 2012/13. It was announced on 29 June that the fund would be worth £1bn. Providers are encouraged to read the consultation and respond via the BIS website before 6 September.

Health and Safety – learner incident management system

Information

The Skills Funding Agency will continue to request reportable learner incidents in line with the current skills funding contractual requirements. The type of information has changed slightly and if the form is completed correctly, the need for also sending the F2508 is no longer required. Guidance on requirements for learner incidents has also been updated. The new forms can be found on the [Safe Learner website](#).

The Safe Learner Blueprint (introduced by the LSC) has been adopted by the Skills Funding Agency, and the Be Safe booklet has been updated to be inline with this Blueprint. Both will be available on the Safe Learner website by the end of August.

Adult Safeguarded (ASL) funding circular for local authorities – Certification of the use of funds

Information

[New guidance aimed at local authorities](#) in the preparation of a funding and expenditure statement showing their spending of the former LSC, now the Skills Funding Agency,

allocations of Adult Safeguarded Learning (ASL) and associated funding for the contract year ending 31 July 2010, been published.

ASL includes Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL); Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities; Family Literacy; Language and Numeracy; and Wider Family Learning. In addition to the Safeguard, a funding and expenditure statement will be required for First Steps provision and Family Learning Impact Funding.

The local authority's chief finance officer must sign the statement at Section A of Annex A and the local authority should then arrange for the statement (where applicable) to be sent to their Skills Funding Agency Account Manager by 30 September 2010. The statement should be either a signed original or a copy with original signatures.

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

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

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