

Train to Gain Infrastructure Funding

Specification for building capacity for delivering 16-18 Apprenticeships

Background

World-Class Apprenticeships: Unlocking Talent, Building Skills for All published in January 2008 set out the Government's commitment to and ambitions for Apprenticeships, including a target of 1 in 5 young people on an Apprenticeship by 2020.

Preceding '1 in 5' ambition an entitlement to an Apprenticeship place for every suitably qualified young person who wants one will be established by 2013.

Overall investment in Apprenticeships is designed to support continuing and sustained growth in the number of new starts each year and an increasing number of achievements resulting from both higher volumes and improving success rates.

To meet the 2020 target of 1 in 5 young people (16-18 years) on an Apprenticeship we need to see a substantial increase in those young people choosing Apprenticeships as a route into employment and gaining an industry recognised qualification.

Underpinning those expectations is the need to expand the number of employers of all sizes and types to participate, both in recruiting new employees into Apprenticeships and offering Apprenticeships to existing 16-18 year old employees.

To better meet the needs of both employers and learners we will need to improve the range and breadth of Apprenticeship frameworks delivered, particularly at level 3 (Advanced Apprenticeships).

Regional Context

Currently there are approximately 9,000 Apprentices in the East of England aged 16-18, of which 6000 are funded through the regional office. For 2009/10 there is a regional target to grow 16-18 Apprenticeships by around 2000 places.

The number of young people undertaking an Apprenticeship in the East of England represents approximately 5% of the 16-18 cohort, while around 10% of the cohort are in jobs without any structured training.

The Offer

In many cases providers delivering Train to Gain provision are ideally placed to access young people in a job without training through their present or past working relationships with employers.

The Learning & Skills Council (LSC) for the East of England is making £175,000 available through the Train to Gain (TtG) Infrastructure Fund to support providers who have held TtG Type C contracts in 2008-09 to move into 16-18 Apprenticeship delivery.

The funding is to support the development of providers to deliver 16-19 apprenticeships. The proposal must clearly demonstrate the type of activity that will be supported such as:

- Development of wider understanding of Apprenticeships, including the role of Connexions, 14-19 Strategic Planning Groups and the local authorities as commissioners of Apprenticeships
- Familiarisation with the Government and National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) priorities for Apprenticeships
- Developing the capacity for Apprenticeship provision in geographical locations or sectors not currently served in the East of England.
- Development / adaptation of providers' present systems to ensure robust data and management information that is suitable for Apprenticeships
- Organisational change to enable delivery of 16-18 Apprenticeships
- Increases in staff capacity
- Training of staff – developing expertise
- Registration and accreditation to deliver Apprenticeships.
- Relevant marketing activities
- Identification of employers currently engaged that employ 16-18 year olds who would benefit from apprenticeships or who would employ 16-18 year old apprentices.

The list is not exhaustive and proposals may identify additional activity not outlined above.

The funding will be linked to delivery of agreed targets.

Providers will need to be approved for Apprenticeship delivery or seek approval via the Quality Provider Framework (QPF) at the next opportunity in January 2010.

Innovative partnership proposals are welcomed. In partnership proposals such as consortia the lead partner through which the funding will flow must clearly be identified.

Bids from organisations that do not hold a TtG Type C contract are welcome but must show that TtG Type C providers are the beneficiaries of the development funding. Evidence must be demonstrated with named TtG Type C providers that will benefit.

Access to 16–18 Apprenticeship funding is not guaranteed even if the proposal is successful. Priority will be given to those providers who approach the LSC with named employers who are employing 16-18 year olds or intend to employ 16-18 year olds on apprenticeship programmes.

Application Process

Interested parties wishing to apply have two weeks from 23rd October 2009 to prepare and submit proposals using the 'Application for Train to Gain Infrastructure Fund' form. In developing the proposal, it is important that all activity is detailed and clearly outlines methods for measuring activity.

Following the closing date the LSC will establish a selection panel that will assess the proposals. It is intended that a decision will be made by 27th November 2009. All applicants will be informed immediately as to whether their proposal has been successful. Note that the decision taken at this stage will be subject to post tender negotiations between the LSC and the successful applicants.

All applicants intending to submit a proposal must register their interest to Rachel Dawson by email rachel.dawson@apprenticeships.gov.uk at the earliest opportunity.

Proposals must be received by 6th November 2009.

Applications should be addressed to:

Rachel Dawson
Learning and Skills Council Essex
Redwing House
Hedgerows Business Park
Colchester Road
Chelmsford
Essex CM2 5PB

Applications must be submitted in the following formats:

- one paper copy of the proposal
- an electronic copy of the proposal

Applicants should note that proof of posting does not equal proof of receipt.

Applicants may wish to check that their proposal has been received by calling Rachel Dawson on 01245 550146

For points of clarification on the process, please contact Rachel Dawson on 01245 550146.