

117 Plumbing - Final Report on Review



This paper sets out a summary of the findings of the review of delivery models, activity levels and activity costs for the Plumbing frameworks

Background

The review of activity costs is based on a standard methodology and modelling tools that are being applied consistently across all sectors in scope.

The approach is based on:

- Access to LSC data to inform the review
- Dialogue with the sector body on apprenticeship issues
- Interviews with effective providers (i.e. those providers with good or above average inspection grades and apprenticeship success rates) to establish activity levels
- An expert panel meeting to review data and evidence on activity levels
- Modelling of activity costs against provider data and panel advice
- Consultation with the sector on the panel advice and issues emerging
- Moderation of panel advice by an LSC project group

LSC Data

LSC data from 2004/05 ILR data used to inform the review were:

Numbers in Learning

	Starts (Monthly Average 2005)			In Learning (July 2005)
	16 - 19	19+	Total	Total
Apprenticeship	74%	26%	163	5,358
Advanced	46%	54%	72	3,192

Source: ILR 2004/2005

*Average taken from quarterly reports (January/April/July/October 2005)

Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Success Rates

	Framework	NVQ
Apprenticeship	30%	15%
Advanced	23%	20%

Source: ILR 2004/2005 Period 12

Average Length of Stay in Months

	Non completion	Framework	NVQ Only
Apprenticeship	13.0	25.8	26.6
Advanced	19.7	35.0	35.7

Source: ILR 2004/2005 Period 12 and LSC Data

Provider Interviews

A sample of effective providers was identified in discussion with the Summit Skills.

These providers were interviewed during the period from November 2005 to January 2006 through a series of visits to provider locations. Further provider interviews took place in October 2006 and November 2006.

A completed survey form was shared with each provider to review and update. A summary of the activities and issues emerging was shared with the providers in the interview sample for comment and feedback.

Models of Delivery

The model of delivery that emerges from provider interviews is based on a 4 year programme of activities offered as three pathways:

Pathway A; Apprenticeship programme with NVQ 2, Certificate in Plumbing Studies and Key Skills units		Pathway C; Advanced apprenticeship with NVQ 3, Certificate in Domestic Plumbing and Key Skills units	
Pathway E; Advanced apprenticeship with NVQ 2 & NVQ 3, Certificate in Domestic Plumbing as combined certificates and Key Skills units			
Year1	Year2	Year 3	Year 4

Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Activities to deliver the plumbing apprenticeship include:

- Entry programmes of 1:1 time for interview and assessment with work based and induction and a group based induction programmes
- Group based programmes for knowledge and skills development
- Assessment activities including:
 - a. Workshop assessment in small group sizes
 - b. Work based assessment through 1:1 time on assessor visits
 - c. External assessments at NVQ 3
- Work based learner support and advice
- Work based regular review
- Key skills activities including group based sessions and 1:1 support
- A programme of Internal Verification

Emerging Evidence on Activity Levels

The emerging evidence on activity levels suggests that:

<p>Pathway A;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entry programme of 1.5 days plus 14 hours of group based activities - Group based sessions of about 470 hours - Workshop assessment time of 45 hours - Work based visits every 6 weeks to see about 3 learners per day and complete further assessment, learner support and regular review - Key skills activities – 60 hours group based 	<p>Pathway C;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entry programme of 1.0 day plus 7 hours of group based - Group based sessions of about 240 hours - Workshop assessment time of 30 hours - External assessments - Work based visits every 6 weeks to see about 3 learners per day and complete further assessment, learner support and regular review - Key skills activities – 60 hours group based
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Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Pathway E;

- Entry programme of 1.5 days plus 21 hours of group based activities
- Group based sessions of about 470 + 240 hours
- Workshop assessment time of 45 + 30 hours
- External assessments
- Work based visits every 6 weeks to see about 3 learners per day and complete further assessment, learner support and regular review
- Key skills activities – 60 hours group based

Expert Panel

Summit Skills convened an expert panel with representatives from:

- Summit Skills
- Awarding body representatives
- A sample of FE College and Independent providers
- The consultant to the project

The Adult Learning Inspectorate nomination was not able to attend the meeting but sent detailed comments to be included as part of the panel discussions.

The panel met on 19 January 2006 to review the data and evidence from provider interviews and the LSC. The panel made some comments but were unable to confirm the assessment activity levels and panel advice was postponed pending a further review.

This review took place during the period from September 2006 to November 2006 and a further expert group meeting took place on 10 November 2006. Members of the expert group included:

- Summit Skills
- The lead external verifier from an awarding body
- The consultant to the project

Apologies were received from ALI and a nominated representative from an FE College.

Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Expert Panel Advice for Apprenticeship Delivery – Pathway A

The expert panel set out their advice as a basis for establishing the costs of a model 'of effective delivery. *This is not intended to be a 'recipe' that providers should follow.*

Activity	Panel Advice 2006	Notes and Comments
Planned Time to Complete	27 months	Estimated time for effective delivery based on provider interviews and LSC data
Group based knowledge and skills	480 hours	Based on a two year day release programme of 36 weeks of 7 ½ hours per day making a total group based time of 540 hours with a notional 60 hours allocated to key skills units and a separate 5 day induction programme.
Work based knowledge and skills	0 days	Around 6 site observations of 1/2 day per session leading to around 3 days of 1:1 time on site for assessment. With a further 50 hours of workshop assessment time in groups of around 4 learners leading to the equivalent of about 2 days of 1:1 time per learner for assessment of the technical certificate.
NVQ assessment and support	5 days	
NVQ quality assurance	2.25 days	Lead internal verifier time per learner for joint assessor visits, portfolio sampling and moderation meetings and activities
Group based key skills	60 hours	Group based sessions as part of the block release programme of activity
Work based key skills	0 days	
Regular review	2..25 days	The programme of regular review in the workplace should include at least 9 visits of ¼ day per visits for review with the learner and the employer with further time allocated for learner support and advice through visits or other provider resources
Learner support	1.5 days	
Entry activities 1:1	1.5 days	An entry programme to include: an interview (1/2 day), assessment (1/2 day) and a work based induction (1/2 day) all 1:1 time with an assessor
Group based induction	35 hours	A five day induction programme at the start of the block release programme
Registration Certification	£ 268	Based on costs of NVQ, Key Skills and sector body certificate

Note: Workshop assessments take place in small groups with dedicated assessors apportioning their time across the group to complete assessment activities.

Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

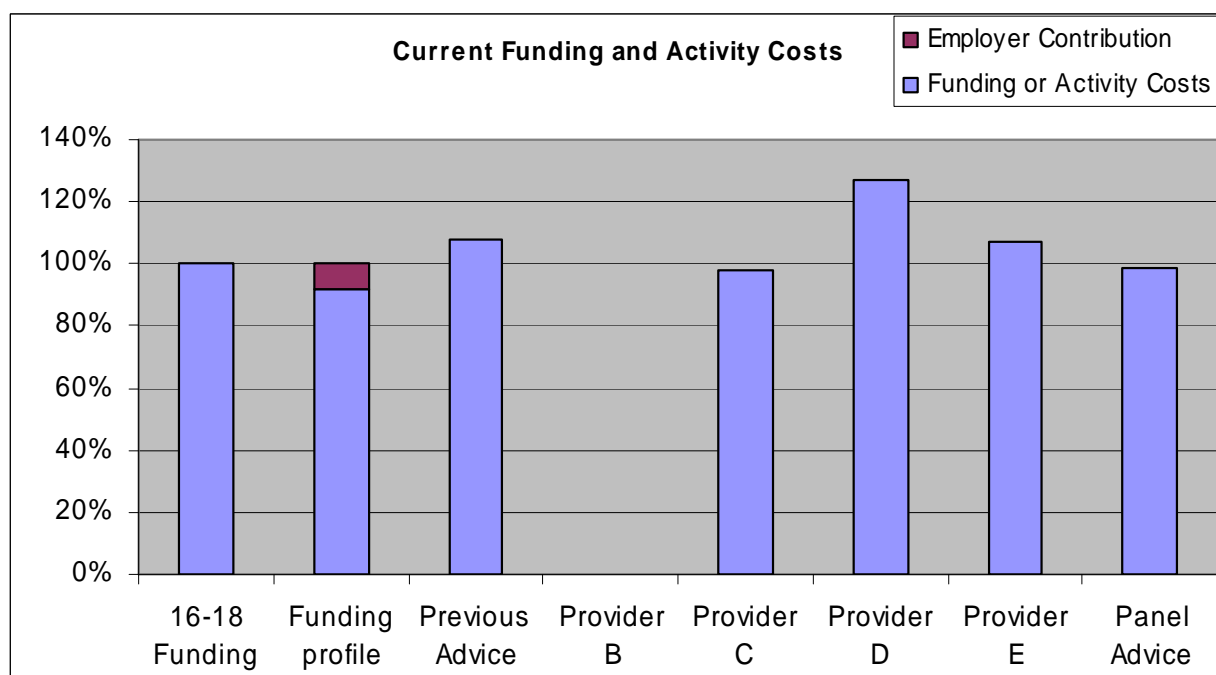
Activity Costs for Apprenticeship Delivery – Pathway A

The activity costs model has been set up to compare the LSC funding in 2005/06 to the reported activity levels with the following costs assumptions:

- Group based classroom activity weighted at factor C¹
- Assessor employment costs weighted at factor D² based on independent research on salary rates and employments costs
- Registration and Certification costs of £ 268 based on information collected from awarding bodies

The model includes a factor for success rates and this is based on the reported 2004/05 success rates of 30% uplifted to a minimum level of 50% to reflect improvement in success rates by 2007/08.

The activity costs emerging from the review were:



This suggests that activity costs for *effective delivery* are around the current funding rates based on an effective model of delivery with minimum work based assessment.

¹ This is based on the LSC programme weighting factors for guided learning hours

² A separate report on employment costs provides more details of the bands and methodology used to map sectors to employment bands

Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Expert Panel Advice for Advanced Apprenticeship – Progression from an Apprenticeship Programme – Pathway C

The expert panel set out their advice as a basis for establishing the costs of a model 'of effective delivery. *This is not intended to be a 'recipe' that providers should follow.*

Activity	Panel Advice 2006	Notes and Comments
Planned Time to Complete	21 months	Estimated time for effective delivery based on provider interviews and LSC data and progression from a level 2 programme
Group based knowledge and skills	380 hours	A further programme of day release sessions with 380 hours for technical certificate activities and a notional 60 hours for key skills
Work based knowledge and skills	0 days	Four ½ day assessments in the work place along with the external assessments to meet the requirements of the NVQ and 27 hours of workshop assessments for central heating installation and un-vented hot water assessed in group sizes of 1:4 so around 1 day of 1:1 time for workshop based assessment
NVQ assessment and support	3.0 days	
NVQ quality assurance	1.75 days	
Group based key skills	60 hours	Group based sessions as part of the block release programme of activity
Work based key skills	0 hours	
Regular review	1.75 days	The programme of regular review in the workplace should include at least 7 visits of ¼ day per visits for review with the learner and the employer with further time allocated for learner support and advice
Learner support	1.0 days	
Entry activities 1:1	1.0 days	An further entry programme: an interview (1/4day), assessment (1/4 day) and a work based induction (1/2 day) all 1:1 time with an assessor
Group based induction	14 hours	A further 2 day induction session for a progression programme
Registration Certification	£ 315	Based on costs of NVQ, Key Skills and sector body certificate

Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

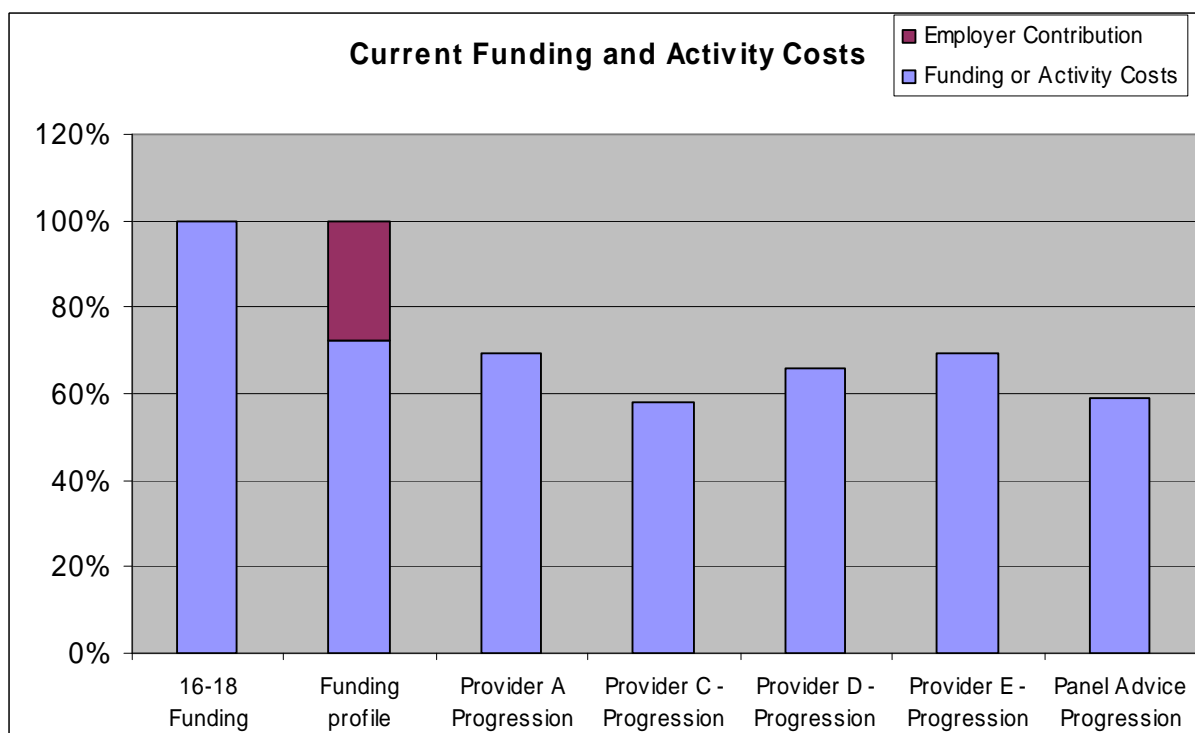
Activity Costs for Advanced Apprenticeship – Pathway C

The activity costs model has been set up to compare the LSC funding in 2005/06 to the reported activity levels with the following costs assumptions:

- Group based classroom activity weighted at factor C³
- Assessor employment costs weighted at factor D⁴ based on independent research on salary rates and employments costs
- Registration and Certification costs of £ 266 based on information collected from awarding bodies
- External assessment costs estimated at £ 1,315 including Gas assessments that some learners may opt not to take

The model includes a factor for success rates and this is based on the reported 2004/05 success rates of 23% uplifted to a minimum level of 50% to reflect improvement in success rates by 2007/08.

The activity costs emerging from the review were:



This suggests that activity costs for *effective delivery* for a progression pathway are around 60% of the current rates for a direct entry to an advanced apprenticeship programme.

³ This is based on the LSC programme weighting factors for guided learning hours

⁴ A separate report on employment costs provides more details of the bands and methodology used to map sectors to employment bands

Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Expert Panel Advice for Advanced Apprenticeship Delivery – Direct Entry – Pathway E

The expert panel set out their advice as a basis for establishing the costs of a model 'of effective delivery. *This is not intended to be a 'recipe' that providers should follow.*

Activity	Panel Advice 2006	Notes and Comments
Planned Time to Complete	48 months	Estimated time for effective delivery based on a combined apprenticeship and advanced progression programme
Group based knowledge and skills	860 hours	Combined year 1 & 2 (480 hours) plus year 3 & 4 (380) hours
Work based knowledge and skills	0 days	Combined 5 days assessment through the level 2 phase and a further 3 days of assessment through the level 3 phase.
NVQ assessment and support	8 days	
NVQ quality assurance	4.0 days	Lead internal verifier time per learner for joint assessor visits, portfolio sampling and moderation meetings and activities
Group based key skills	60 hours	Group based sessions as part of the block release programme of activity
Work based key skills	0 hours	
Regular review	4.0 days	The programme of regular review in the workplace should include at least 16 visits of ¼ day per visits for review with the learner and the employer with further time allocated for learner support and advice
Learner support	2.5 days	
Entry activities 1:1	1.5 days	An entry programme: an interview (1/2 day), assessment (1/2 day) and a work based induction (1/2 day) all 1:1 time with an assessor
Group based induction	35 hours	A five day induction programme at the start of the block release programme
Registration Certification	£ 315	Based on costs of NVQ, Key Skills and sector body certificate

Note: There was limited provider data and evidence on the direct entry model of delivery and activity levels. Panel advice is based on a combined apprenticeship and advanced progression programme.

Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

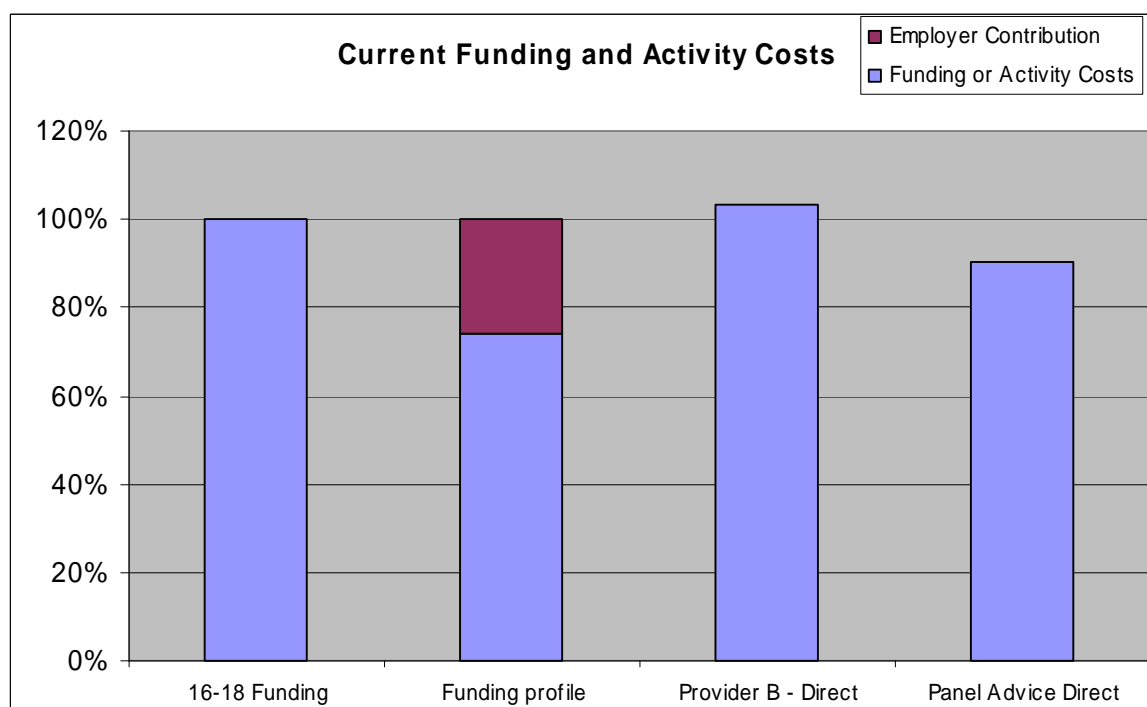
Activity Costs for Advanced Apprenticeship - Pathway E

The activity costs model has been set up to compare the LSC funding in 2005/06 to the reported activity levels with the following costs assumptions:

- Group based classroom activity weighted at factor C⁵
- Assessor employment costs weighted at factor E⁶ based on independent research on salary rates and employments costs
- Registration and Certification costs of £ 457 based on information collected from awarding bodies and including the costs of technical certificates at level 2 & level 3
- External assessment costs estimated at £ 1,315 including Gas assessments that some learners may opt not to take

The model includes a factor for success rates and this is based on the reported 2004/05 success rates of 31% uplifted to a minimum level of 50% to reflect improvement in success rates by 2007/08.

The activity costs emerging from the review were:



This suggests that activity costs for *effective delivery* for a direct pathway are around 90% of the current rates for an advanced apprenticeship.

⁵ This is based on the LSC programme weighting factors for guided learning hours

⁶ A separate report on employment costs provides more details of the bands and methodology used to map sectors to employment bands

Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Moderation and LSC Data Modelling

The LSC has established a moderation group with representation from the Association of Learning Providers to review panel advice and activity costs

The advice from Summit Skills was reviewed at the moderation meeting in December 2006. The panel advice on activities was used to model the activity costs and the funding rates for the apprenticeship and the advanced apprenticeship.

Funding Rate Changes

The LSC is implementing changes to the funding rates based on the review and the advice on activity levels and activity costs and the decisions of the moderation group.

The changes are:

Apprenticeship

- A reduction of 1.9% in the NVQ2 rate phased over 2 years
- This is consistent with the sector body advice on activity levels and activity costs

Advanced Apprenticeship – Direct Entry – Pathway E

- A reduction of 7.1% in the NVQ3 rate phased over 2 years
- This is equivalent to around a 5% reduction in the overall framework rate

Advanced Apprenticeship – Progression from an Apprenticeship – Pathway C

- A reduction in the NVQ3 rate of 80% of the NVQ2 rate

External Assessment Costs

Providers will also need to be aware of the funding impact of opting out of the ACS Gas Award in the advanced framework.