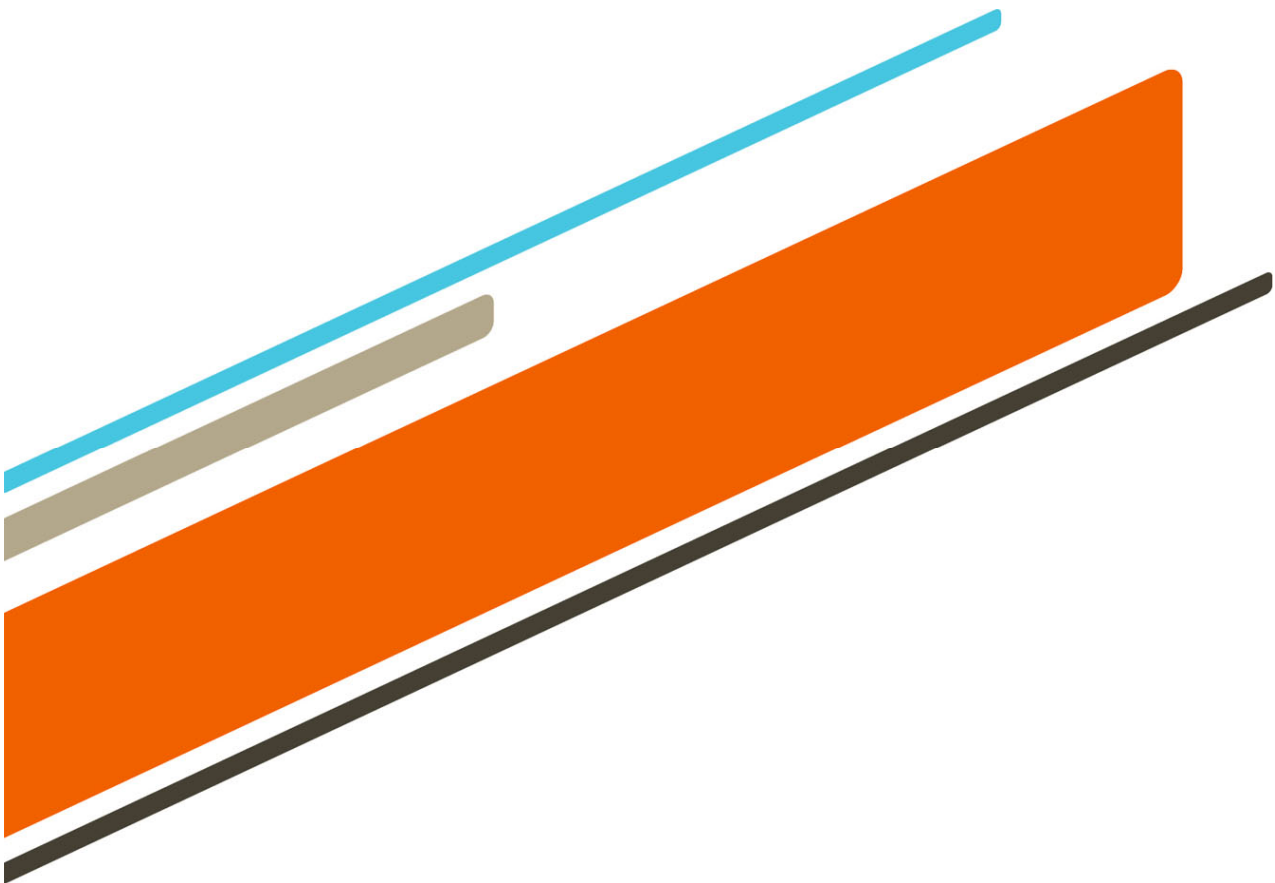


**NATIONAL GUIDANCE ON
REGIONAL RESPONSE
PROVISION**
2006/07




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Introduction

1. Employer-responsiveness must be at the heart of the Train to Gain service. At the beginning of each year Regions will hold back at least 20% of the Train to Gain budget for use as the Regional Response Fund to respond to new needs and new employers identified during the year. Due the late release of this fund in 2006/7, Regions that are unable to deploy the full 20%, may transfer funds from Regional Response into mainstream (Type B) Train to Gain provision by arrangement with National Office.
2. Accepting that demand is infinite but resource finite Regions can state their priorities for use of Regional Response funds on the Train to Gain provider website.

Identification of need

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3. New demand identified directly by Employers or by Skills Brokers or Providers will go through a matching process where regions will first seek to meet the skills priorities stated by regions (see 2 above).
 4. Regardless of whether the need is articulated by direct employer contact with the brokerage service or through providers, the Skills Brokerage service will engage with the employer to understand their needs, to confirm the need and will then engage the appropriate Provider(s).
 5. The employer may express a preference to work with a specific Provider that is not currently an approved Provider for Train to Gain. In this case, the Skills Broker will explain to the Employer and Provider the process for approving the Provider (see 10 below).
 6. If there are existing Providers that can meet the need, the Skills Broker will explain this to the Employer who will choose whether to work with an existing Provider or wait to see the outcome of the new Provider's application process.
 7. Where Providers have identified new needs with employers, the Skills Broker will work with the employer to confirm the need and will then engage the appropriate Provider(s). In this situation, Providers start the process by contacting the brokerage service and providing contact details.


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Application Processes

Existing Train to Gain Provider

8. Where an existing Train to Gain Provider is engaged to meet the new need(s), the Application to Access Regional Response Funds (for providers who already hold a Train to Gain Contract) must be completed.
9. Where a provider is successful, Regions will issue a contract variation to cover the additional provision.
10. Where the employer and Skills Broker aim to use another Provider, the Provider will be awarded a Train to Gain contract for that specific activity when they have successfully completed the application process (see below).
11. The Employer and Provider should be informed of the outcome of the application within 4 weeks.

New Provider to Train to Gain

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12. Where the employer and Skills Broker aim to use a new Provider to Train to Gain, the Provider will be awarded a Train to Gain contract for that specific activity when they have successfully completed the application process.
 13. The Skills Broker will explain the process to both the Employer and Provider.
 14. Providers are required to complete the application form Application to Access Regional Response Funds (for providers who do not hold a Train to Gain Contract) and are subject to a financial health check undertaken by the Region's PFA team.
 15. Regions are responsible for processing applications and securing financial health checks within 12 weeks. Regions should ensure relevant assessment and moderation processes are in place for applications. Records of decisions and relevant paperwork must be stored to comply with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. Regions are responsible for responding to all queries from Providers relating to the application process.