



European Union
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Investing in jobs and skills

LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL NORTH WEST
ESF PROVIDER BRIEFING EVENTS - MAY/JUNE 2008



Leading learning and skills

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Cheshire & Warrington and Greater Merseyside Provider Briefing Event – 28th May 2008

Question	Answer
Why is it important that spend targets for September 2009 are met when projects are running through to 2010?	The 2007-13 ESF Programme has N+2 targets which need to be achieved; the first of these targets is set for September 2009. Achieving these spend targets impacts releases performance reserve funding to the ESF Programme.
Where can I get a copy of the National Deliverables Catalogue?	The National Deliverables Catalogue is an internal LSC document which lists all of the outputs and results that the LSC can pay providers against.
Reporting of Actuals - capping of individual starts, could you continue to recruiting to achieve outcomes ie to take into account any early leavers?	Yes this would be possible in order to achieve original outcomes. However, each Tender Specification assumed a percentage drop out and if actual delivery reported a higher drop out rate, then the LSC would need to discuss this with the contractor.
Skillworks programme is moving to payments against starts and outcomes, who is determining the payment rate?	Payments are made based on unit costs for accredited or non accredited learning. The LSC will continue to use Appendix B to monitor actual costs, payments will then be either held or released.
Audit – why we can't providers provide a fax or email confirming job outcomes?	Nationally, it has been agreed that for evidence purposes the evidence must be an original, however, this may be reviewed.
PCR – will there be a form that the LSC requires providers to complete as per Jobcentre Plus?	No, there will not be a separate form that providers need to complete. The LSC will collect all of the information it requires for PCR purposes throughout the lifetime of the contracts via the SoD and ILR information submitted to the LSC or via the case study information and regular evaluation/progress reports that providers will submit.
Auditing appears to be focused on data, will any financial audits take place?	The LSC audit visits focus on the achievement of outputs and results, however, providers will be required to submit annual accounts to the LSC to enable us to undertake financial health assessments.
Additional form required for reporting of incidents.	LIR Form required for reporting of Health and Safety incidents. RIDDOR F2508 Form required to provide copy to LSC along with the LSC's form. HSE can complete this on your behalf, then you provide a copy of this to the LSC.

Question	Answer
Care to Learn	Partner's income not taken into account if not leaving in same house as learner.
EMA starts prior to 1 st August 2008	New starts prior to 1 st August 2008, should use the 08/09 EMA form

Cumbria and Lancashire Provider Briefing Event – 29th May 2008

Question	Answer
Will new ESF Records being going through LIS?	ILR information will validate as per current arrangements, new fields won't be validated by LIS only discover any failure after. Eligibility checking via CMA not LIS responsibility by provider gateway.
Should the new ILR be used for old projects	No, the new ILR should only be used for the new ESF projects, any old ESF projects should continue to use the 07/08 form.
What system – external validation of data over and above LIS?	CMA will take places plus LIS.
ESF and EMA	Entitlement for ESF EMA is means tested.
Will WBL providers be automatically be out on EMA payment arrangements	Please contact Partnership teams.

Greater Manchester Provider Briefing Event – 2nd June 2008

Question	Answer
Q: Is the employer contribution mandatory?	It is an assumed contribution not cash contribution (however state aid rules will apply and therefore when the new super block exemption is introduced there may a requirement for a cash contribution. The new exemption is due in June and details will be forwarded to providers ASAP)
Can providers use their own forms rather than LSC forms	Yes, as long as it captures all the required information and contains the appropriate logos and statements.
Can ILR's for the North West be input before August 08. The provider asking the question had contracts in other areas where they were unable to input	Yes. There is an interim SR form for starts between now and 01/08/08. This is on the 07/08 section of the ILR website. For providers using the full ILR, continue to use the current form. All starts after 01/08/08 must use the 08/09 paperwork. Additionally, there is an interim solution for submitting volume actuals which will be issued at the end of June

Question	Answer
What happens if a beneficiary starts and then drops off and then returns?	Participants could return to the project, however, only 1 start payment will be made.
ILR/SR to be completed for Employer Specs	Full ILR is required for the Employer Specifications, where this was identified in the tender specification.
Query relating to the Employer Reference No.	The LSC has issued guidance on getting the reference number
Can more starts be recruited in order to maximise achievements?	Yes, more starts than those profiled can be recruited in order to maximise the contract but will not be funded. The LSC will also expect that the achievement rate is not significantly below that originally contracted
Electronic Storage of information	Electronic storage of information will be confirmed towards the end of contracts
Provider believed that electronic information could only be stored for 7 years where as the LSC has stated information to be stored until 2022.	The contractual date for keeping records is at least December 2020. All ESF records must be retained until 3 years after the final payment is made to the UK Government from the Commission under the programme. Providers must ask the LSC or its successor body before any documentation is destroyed after December 2020.
Learner Support – Is there support for Carers?	There is support for carers of parents-the answer is that are eligible for EMA-the question was around mode of attendance for the carer. This would have to be agreed on a case by case basis
ESF and EMA	The model for administering EMA is the FE model and that is mean tested unlike E2E. I have checked with Learner Support Service and this is to remain the case for the foreseeable future. However ,because the ESF projects are deemed FE Short courses then the bonuses can be paid on the incremental model i.e. £5 per week.
Can photocopies of qualifications be used as evidence instead of the actual certificates?	Yes, as long as they are certified to be true copies of the original, signed by the provider
Skills for Jobs: what is new definition for in work with training?	The training is to be LSC funded provision, the primary option should be Train to Gain, however other LSC funding is permitted such as ESF (i.e. Pathways to NVQ Level 2, or training provision funded through Skills for Jobs ESF)

Question	Answer
What evidence is needed to demonstrate a beneficiary is in employment?	Evidence will be specific to the contracts
Further clarification on the Health and Safety Training available to providers	It's a network of providers that has been set up rather than training for providers
Can parts of the ILR common to all beneficiaries be pre-printed?	Yes, those elements that aren't going to change can be pre-printed