

Train to Gain capacity building fund

Guidance Notes

Context

The capacity building fund will provide pump-priming support that will enable colleges and training providers to develop their employer responsive provision.

The funds will be allocated and paid directly to colleges and training providers as a grant.

They will be entitled to retain the allocated capacity building funding if their Train to Gain delivery increases by 50% by 2010/11 when compared to their performance in 2007/08.

The capacity building fund is intended to complement the support available through the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) *World Class Skills – developing responsive provision* programme¹.

Colleges and training providers should ensure that they have made maximum use of the support available through the *World Class Skills* programme and any improvement support being offered by their regional LSC before commissioning any additional in-house support.

The *World Class Skills* programme can also support colleges and training providers to draw up plans to make best use of this additional capacity building fund.

Eligibility and distribution criteria

The fund will be available to all current Train to gain contract holders, including TTG responsive funded, however colleges and training providers must meet minimum quality and performance criteria. The LSC will reserve the right to withhold the grant payment where we have significant concerns around the quality and/or performance of provision. In such cases the LSC will contact those colleges and training providers directly to confirm that they are ineligible to receive the grant at this time, outlining the areas of concern.

The amount of money made available to each college and training provider, subject to performance and quality thresholds, will be based on their level of Train to Gain delivery for 2007/08. This will be measured by starts including those from FE-funded NVQs.

The payments will be made as a separate grant by the LSC in February 2009. Grants will be between £20,000 and £200,000; the distribution will be based on activity levels as follows:

- Colleges and training providers delivering 50 or more Train to Gain starts (including FE-funded NVQs) in 2007/08 will be eligible to receive a minimum amount of £20,000
- Colleges and training providers delivering 1,000 or more starts at Level 2, Level 3 and Skills for Life (including FE-funded NVQs) in 2007/08 will be eligible to receive a maximum amount of £200,000.

Colleges and training providers can accept some or all of the money offered subject to a minimum of £20,000.

Any monies not taken up from the initial offer will be offered in a second round to:

- Smaller training providers
- Those new to the market
- Those whose grant has been 'capped' at £200,000.

We are aware that some colleges and training providers may not meet these requirements. A detailed process giving such organisations the opportunity to present a case for receipt of funds is being developed and will be available early in the New Year. For example, they may only recently have become a Train to Gain contract holder in their own right and were previously in a consortia arrangement.

Conditions for retention of grant

Colleges and training providers who have increased their delivery of starts by 50% by 2010/11 when compared to 2007/08, and maintained a satisfactory level of quality in the provision will retain the full grant amount.

Those colleges or training providers who do not achieve this level of growth may be required to repay the original grant either in full or part.

The repayment will be proportionate to the shortfall in delivery increase and will be interest free. Before accepting this funding, colleges and training providers will need to ensure that there are financial plans and contingencies in place to meet any repayment requirements.

Grant usage

Recipients of the grant will be expected to have a plan for the expenditure. These plans will not be required for submission as part of the grant approval process but must be available for review by the LSC's Partnership Teams.

The grant is intended to contribute to one-off capacity building costs, particularly regarding staffing profile and responding to the new flexibilities for priority employer groups. It is recognised that priorities will vary for organisations. It is important that these funds are used to focus on the key issues that are relevant to and the organisation and to help to increase capacity to deliver Train to Gain activity. Areas can include but are not restricted to:

- Gearing up to respond to changing employer demand in the economic downturn and from new sectors
- Staff recruitment, retraining, and restructuring
- Assessor training and preparation to achieve the Training Quality Standard
- Promotion of the basic skills offer to employers and employees
- Cost of equipment, software, client management system upgrades etc.

It is expected that the funding provided will support the Government's priority actions for small and medium sized employers (announced on 21/10/08²). This means that colleges and training providers' plans for spending their allocated funding should be focused on how they can most effectively:

- Deliver eligible units of qualifications
- Support groups of employers in specific locations, e.g. business parks
- Focus their activity on small and medium sized employers
- Link to other priority Government action for those at risk of redundancy; being made redundant and seeking re-employment or employment. This is to ensure that training, once started, continues, irrespective of changing employment conditions of an individual.

Usage of the grant needs to complement other capacity building already available through the LSIS *World Class Skills* programme and where it exists, the LSC's regional infrastructure support.

College and training provider plans should address how the support available from these other sources will be used first in describing how the grant funds will be applied.

Further guidance will be sent, along with a copy of the grant letter, in January 2009.

If you have any queries please contact ***the regional TTG Team***.

Notes:

1. More information about the programme can be found at <http://wcs.excellence.qia.org.uk> or you can email: wcsenquiries@kpmg.co.uk

or phone: 0800 32 86 075. To book online go to
<http://wcs.excellence.qia.org.uk/booking>.

2. Information on the latest flexibilities can be found on: [Train to Gain Additional Flexibilities 08/09](#)