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SOUTH WEST REGION - TRAIN TO GAIN PROVIDER UPDATE

September 2008 – Update 1/09

Dear Provider


As information comes through from National Office on changes to policies and procedures the Train to Gain team will keep you up-to-date using Provider Updates. To do this effectively, will you please ensure that all relevant Train to Gain contact details/email addresses are fully accurate and up to date? Please ensure that all relevant contacts within your organisation receive a copy, including skills for life, business development, and perhaps marketing teams.

1 Period 1 returns

At the end of period 1 only 47% of providers had submitted a return which was disappointing. We understand that there have been issues with WINNPICS but it is critical that data is submitted by the 4th working day of each month – September's data should be submitted by Monday 6th October. Will you please ensure that all data is submitted by the correct date?

Please remember that you can input data throughout the month rather than at the period end, thereby avoiding a bulk input ahead of the upload deadline.

2 Eligibility of Local Government employees

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This is to clarify that Local Government employees including support staff in schools are eligible for Train to Gain. The LSC is currently working with Local Authorities to set up and co-ordinate a Joint Investment Framework (JIF) – similar to the existing SW Strategic Health Authority JIF. This presents opportunities with immediate effect, to maximise offers now available through the Train to Gain flexibilities, support Local/Multi Area Agreements (LAA/MAAs), and deliver responsive training. The Local Authority JIF is in its early development phase and, we have agreed that Skills Brokers will lead the development and implementation of co-funded workforce development plans with individual local authorities. Providers should work closely and collaboratively with the skills brokerage service to maximise opportunities presented through this work.

3 Delivery outside the South West Region

It has just been announced that, in preparation for National contracts in 2009/10 providers are now able to deliver in any region across the country under their existing South West contract, in response to employer demand and need and provided there is sufficient funding within their contract to do so. However, Providers should manage their local delivery as a priority and ensure that any out of region activity does not adversely affect their SW performance by stretching themselves too thinly. Any provider with the capacity and funding to deliver outside of the region should have a discussion with their Partnership Manager to investigate the proposed volumes, location and mix of the intended new regional activity. Partnership Teams will record this information and send to the Regional Train to Gain team for onward circulation to the other regions.

4 Skills for Life (SfL)

Please find attached **Skills for Life Fact sheet 12 – Skills for Life in Train to Gain**. This document aims to support providers involved in SfL and Train to Gain, pulling together existing guidance that sets out the new flexibilities in Skills for Life provision through Train to Gain and confirms eligibility for funding.



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Also attached is some important information about the QIA Skills for Life Improvement Programme which has been set up to assist in improving the quality of provision across provider organisations. With the 2008/09 requirement for all providers to deliver SfL, the programmes will help to develop a whole organisation approach to embedding SfL. Providers who took part in the Improvement Programme in previous years have told us that a whole organisation approach to embedding Skills for Life has led to:

- improved learner retention
- better success rates
- staff teams are more confident in developing learners' skills
- learners gaining skills and confidence and who are better prepared for life and work.

Please take the opportunity to access the programmes on offer.



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5 Employer Agreement

The Employer Agreement is no longer required by the skills brokerage service as providers are now able to access the Employer Data Registration Service (EDRS) to obtain the employer identification number. The document no longer has an audit value; therefore, unless providers have found it to be a useful document and wish to continue using it, there is no longer a requirement to complete the Employer Agreement.

6 Training Quality Standard

The number of South West providers registering for the Training Quality Standard (TQS) is rising healthily. Congratulations to the following providers that have achieved the standard:

- Cornwall College (part A and part B in ICT)
- South Devon College (part A and part B in construction)
- City of Bristol College (part A)
- City College Plymouth (part A)
- Truro College (part A)

A recent provider used the employer ratings from the Employer Guide to Training as supporting evidence of the impact of training and to show employer satisfaction. The TQS assessors received this extremely favourably with positive results.

Framework for Excellence – Reminder:

Achievement of TQS Part A exempts providers from the Framework for Excellence - employer responsive assessment. Any provider who achieves TQS Part A will be awarded an automatic grade of 'outstanding' against this indicator.


7 Employer Guide to Training – www.whattraining.co.uk

There are now 1,607 registered training providers in the South West region that have actively updated their course details to help employers and skills brokers find suitable training.

Of those providers registered, the independent sector is still leading the way with employer ratings; however there are 6 FE Colleges that are now attracting ratings, Bournemouth & Poole, Cornwall, North Devon, Stroud, Truro and Wiltshire Colleges.

Congratulations to:

Acacia Training	- 389 ratings
Truro College	- 218 ratings

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It's still not too late to start, and the offer of intensive support is still available, particularly in the Gloucestershire and Wiltshire areas. Whether you are starting from scratch or want help to increase your ratings, please contact Anjie Winter on 01452 450048 or anjie.winter@lsc.gov.uk to support you with this.

8 Provider Events

Thank you to all the providers who attended the event at St Mellion Golf Club, and for all of your input and questions – hopefully you found it a useful day. Just a reminder that we are holding 2 further events in the region covering the Additional Flexibilities for 2008/09 and other aspects of the Train to Gain contract. The dates and venues are:

Thursday 2nd October at Gloucester Rugby Club

Thursday 9th October at Bournemouth Football Club

Please take the opportunity to ensure that you are up to date with the requirements for 2008/09. If you have not yet done so, please reserve your place by contacting Chloe Moorhead, chloe.moorhead@lsc.gov.uk.

Last booking date for the Gloucester event is Monday 29th September.
Last booking date for the Bournemouth event is Monday 6th October.

Train to Gain Team
22/09/2008