

Questions and Answers

LSC ESF Co-financing ITT Workshop - Convergence

Alverton Manor, Truro
21 November 2008

CONTRACTING AND PROJECT ACTIVITY

- Q What is the funding model? Is it output-related?
- A This would be developed during the pre-contract clarification, but would be output / outcome-related. Projects are funded on a profile basis, ie regular payments based on the profile agreed with the contract manager.
- Q What if what has been agreed in pre-contract clarification changes later, ie after discussions are had with learners in the Spring Term?
- A We do not envisage that any material change will be needed to the actual framework, but details may be varied as the individual needs of the young people become clear, ie how you will go about personalising the activity etc.
- Q Who would manage the contract after 2010 – when the LSC is disbanded?
- A As far as we are aware at the present time the Skills Funding Agency will be the accountable body for ESF co-financing contracts.

SPECIFICATION - THE BEST START FOR YOUNG PEOPLE CONVERGENCE PROJECT

- Q If you are working to academic years, will you be tracking them through to the 13 week stage?
- A Yes, we would expect the successful provider to work with the responsible authority to track the progress of young people up to 13 weeks for evaluation purposes.
- Q Do you class jobs without training as positive outcomes?
- A Jobs without training are not expected to be classes as positive outcomes although we would consider for certain individuals as the immediate outcome with an expectation that these arrangements would develop into Apprenticeships or Train to Gain once the young person and employer have worked through the initial probationary period.
- Q £3,500 per head from Schools – is that above the £10,000 ESF?
- A Yes, the funding assumptions are based on a School or equivalent contribution to the overall programme.
- Q Group educated out of school – how would that be counted? How would schools contribute – would that be on an equal footing?
- A Yes – we would expect the Local Authority to contribute where young people are educated out of School but it doesn't have to. We expect young people educated either in or out of school to have equality of access to this programme.

- Q The specification mentions young people from BME groups – BME groups are under-represented in the NEET group in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly – shouldn't the demographics reflect the Cornwall population?
- A You will need to reflect in your application on the evidence available and provide an explanation for your analysis of the local demographic. The targets in the specification are Convergence ESF Framework targets across the whole programme.
- Q The table specifying percentage for each group has been taken out of the spec?
- A Yes, we expect applications to reflect on cohort demographics.
- Q In our application we are asked to list partners and subcontractors – do you want the list of schools we will engage with, ie do schools count as partners?
- A No, they are not partners in the context of the application, therefore they can be negotiated with at project start, rather than at the application stage.
- Q There is only one school on the Isles of Scilly, do you expect them to be engaged?
- A We would expect the same offer to be extended to any young person on the Isles of Scilly who would benefit from this programme of support. However, it may be more appropriate to link up with the dedicated projects on the Islands.
- Q Are you looking at this as a complete replacement for school learning? Or would it be something like 5 hours per week etc? Is there a minimum / maximum number of hours expected?
- A Based on the evaluation of the My Futures pilot projects, Freestyle and other similar investments we do not wish to restrict the personalisation opportunities available to young people. Therefore we would consider provision appropriate to the needs of the cohort. It needs to be as flexible as possible to meet individual needs. This is beneficial when dealing with young people at risk of becoming NEET as it helps them to realise that the support you are offering is being tailored to their needs. Young people may engage with this programme on a full time basis if appropriate.
- Q What is youngest age at which a young person can enter this programme?
- A Young people have to be aged 14 and over to be eligible for Convergence funding.

FUTURE FUNDING

- Q LSC Bravo site has PQQs to be completed – is there likely to be more allocation of funding being released?
- A We are looking at focusing funding to reflect the economic downturn.