

North West **News-reader**

Updates and information for North West Learning Providers

The North West Provider Network consists of an amalgamation of the 5 sub regional provider networks in the North West

Welcome to the first of the NWPN newsreader. Over the past few months there have been a number of changes in the way that NWPN works across the NW. You may be aware that following Dawn's departure we no longer have a regional manager and the responsibilities are shared between Stan, Raeleen and Richard. We have also decided to discontinue the NWPN website as it was costly to maintain and there are many other websites with excellent information and updates. We have though introduced the Newsreader and will publish on a monthly basis capturing the key information and news. If other key and urgent information becomes available between additions your sub regional teams will let you know.

Paul Holme
NWPN Board Chair

Dear Members,

At the recent North West Provider Network Board Meeting, the Directors discussed the potential to have a periodic bulletin produced to collect any information that might be relevant to providers. In attempt to address this request, the sub-regional Managers have divided up responsibilities to gather what information might come our way, discovered at meetings, reported or available on a host of websites that might be of interest to yourselves.

With this in mind, please find the first edition of the monthly **North West News-reader** for your perusal. We would also welcome any direction or information from members of interesting websites, available resources etc that we can pass on, in the next edition. The **News-reader** could also offer members an opportunity to communicate with colleagues any useful information that you think they might be interested in.

If you would like to make a contribution or comment on any topic in the News-reader, please contact the relevant Sub Regional manager.

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YPLA funding guidance YPLA funding guidance and presentations published

The YPLA recently published the last few booklets that make up their funding guidance. This includes a document with a link to all the individual booklets, which can be downloaded from:

<http://tinyurl.com/3fbwur3>

-There is also a series of PowerPoint presentations to help explain: Funding regulations, rates and formula: <http://tinyurl.com/3sfeq8r>

-ILR Funding returns: <http://tinyurl.com/3s9frrc>

-Learner eligibility: <http://tinyurl.com/3kcsjy6>

DfE Consultation

On 20th July the Department for Education opened a consultation on Performance Tables and 14 – 16 Qualifications. The consultation will run until the end of September. More information, together with a link to the e-consultation facility, can be found at the following link: <http://www.education.gov.uk/a00192510/performance-table-reform-and-transparency-will-raise-standards-and-end-perverse-incentives>

The House of Commons Education Committee report on *Participation by 16-19 Year Olds in Education and Training*, published recently, to read the report click here: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmeduc/850/850i.pdf>

Additional Bursary Funding

YPLA have set out arrangements if a college, school, academy, training provider or local authority requests an addition to the allocation that it received in June 2011 for the 16-19 Bursary Fund. These are outlined in a note, which you can view from the link: <http://www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport/16-19-bursary>

Skills Funding Agency

We were grateful to Andy Fawcett – SFA key account manager in Greater Manchester – who has kindly provided briefing notes within his presentation on what the latest news is relating to Government policy.

Included within this presentation is details of a current Department for Business Innovation and Skills Consultation entitled 'New Challenges: New Chances' that asks for feedback on what the next steps should be in implementing the FE reform programme plus FE Loans and Review of Informal Adult and Community Learning. The NWPN is particularly interested in drafting a response to this key consultation document and would request that considering the deadline is 21st Oct 2011 we would require your responses no later than the 7th Oct 2011. Of course individual organisations may wish to respond in their own right but if you did wish to contribute to a NWPN response on behalf of all members then please send your comments through to Richard.n@gmlpn.co.uk by the 7th October. The link to the consultation is <http://www.bis.gov.uk/Consultations/fe-and-skills-new-challenges-new-chances?cat=open>



SFA Andy Fawcett
presentation.ppt

Adult Skills Budget Update

The GMLPN held an informative session on the 26th August on the Adult Skills Budget. This meeting was an opportunity to give providers who have not had a flexible Adult Skills Budget before and in particular will not have delivered Adult Learner Responsive qualifications additional support. We were very fortunate indeed to have Mike MacLoughlin from the SFA provide a strategic overview of the ASB (as well as some of the funding intricacies); and also to have Joanne Taylor, Head of Student Records at The Manchester College deliver an informative presentation on The Manchester College perspective of delivering Adult Learner Responsive at an operational level. Both of their presentations are attached.

Mike will soon be departing the Greater Manchester fabric and will be heading for SFA Staffordshire pastures and we wish him well.



SFA Mike
MacLoughlin presentat



Manc College -
Joanne Taylor present

Learner Eligibility and Contribution Rules and Adult Skills

Budget Funding Requirements Information On Thursday 11 August the Learner Eligibility and Contribution Rules and Adult Skills Budget Funding Requirements documents were reissued. They were previously published on 29 July 2011. This will include clarification on changes to fee remission for the current academic year 2011/12 and will be published on our website:

<http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/providers/programmes/>

National Apprenticeship Service

Government Launches £25 Million Higher Apprenticeships Fund (England)

The Government has announced details of a new apprenticeship programme that will see £25 million support for up to 10,000 advanced and higher apprenticeships in industries including manufacturing, IT and engineering. The scheme will promote the development of apprenticeships up to degree equivalent in companies where there is unmet demand for the higher level skills that are crucial for job creation and growth. The scheme will be called 'The Higher Apprenticeships Fund' and is open to bids from employers; Sector Skills Councils; Professional Bodies; National Skills Academies; Employer groups; Learning Providers, including independents; and FE colleges and HE institutions. **The closing date for applications is Friday 16 September 2011.**

<http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers/the-basics/higher-apprenticeships.aspx>

To support organisations who wish to submit proposals for the Higher Apprenticeship Fund, there were two briefing events held in August 2011.

All events were fully booked. NAS were asked by the North West Networks if slides from the events could be circulated or any feedback. National Office sent the following comment.

“The e-tendering portal of Bravo can be accessed in the first instance by going to <https://skillsfundingagency.bravosolution.co.uk> where individuals will be able to register and obtain a user name and password, if they are not already registered. They will then be able, by using this user name and password, to access “ITTs Open to all Suppliers” where they will find the relevant documents and can view the Q & A and post questions.”

Work Programme Update / Offender Learning and Skills Service...

Need help understanding more about what the Work Programme is? We thought you might.....so

please enjoy reading a briefing of the work programme attached



the-work-programme
.pdf

You may already know much of what is contained within this document but we think it helps give that overview that all of us need from time to time.

Other news...

In a post-riots speech on Tuesday Nick Clegg announced that the Work Programme would start working with offenders from day one of their release. Currently ex-offenders on JSA can have optional early entry to the Work Programme from month 3 of their JSA claim and anecdotal feedback from several job brokers indicates that larger-than-expected numbers of ex-offenders are now entering the WP via this route.

The Work Programme ITT indicated that Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) were looking at enhancing the Work Programme to better accommodate this customer group and an agreement between DWP, MoJ and the primes (via ERSA) about day one WP entry for offenders has been rumoured for a few months. All primes in two as-yet-unidentified contract package areas will pilot these new arrangements from March 2012. The text of Clegg's speech is here, last two paras say a limited amount about Work Programme and offenders: <http://www.dpm.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/news/speech-community-payback>

While the primes are keen on this development, there are lots still to agree. I gather that as of last week, no agreement had been reached about the payment model (primes seeking something more akin to the ESF payment model, not 100% payment by results); it's not clear whether day one access will apply only to those serving under 12 months or to all prisoners; and there are concerns over the ability of the agencies involved to share client data in the timescales proposed. However there is an assumption that this will see MoJ investing in the Work Programme - if so, they will be the first Whitehall department outside DWP to do so.

At the same time MoJ are inviting proposals for payment by results innovation pilots (<http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/guidance/prison-probation-and-rehabilitation/payment-by-results/innovation-pilot-slides.ppt#448,1>), while the SFA will soon put out a new tender for its offender learning and skills services (OLASS), provision to start in April 2012 - clearly links between these services and other activity for this cohort will be important if the proposed changes to the Work Programme to accommodate those leaving prison are to be effective.

Job Centre Plus Update

Skills Conditionality

From 1 August, 2011 Jobcentre Plus began to implement skills conditionality in England. Skills conditionality involves Jobcentre Plus referring claimants to a skills training provider, Further Education College or Next Step adviser with potential benefit sanctions for non-participation.

The training will include vocational, basic skills, employability training as well as support with softer skills such as motivation and confidence building. It is hoped that Skills conditionality will allow active benefit claimants to get the skills they need to enter the labour market quickly. To support this,

Jobcentre Plus has produced a Skills Conditionality Toolkit for those colleges and training organisations with an interest in this area.

To download a copy of the Skills Conditionality Toolkit please visit: [Skills Conditionality Toolkit August 2011](#)

Provider Support

JISC RSC Northwest

JISC Regional Support Centres - 'regional access to a national service'.

JISC Advance is a resource for the HE and FE and Skills sectors which combines specialist services of JISC with a regional support structure which is UK-wide.

The JISC Regional Support Centres provide support and guidance to their supported learning providers in the effective deployment of technologies. The appropriate use of technologies enables Learning Providers to operate both effectively and efficiently in lean economic times and to give their learners skills which will enable lifelong learning and enhance their opportunities for work and career progression.

JISC Advance describes the role of RSCs as follows:

"The use of technology to enhance learning and improve business processes in the UK Further Education and Skills sectors has changed beyond recognition in the last 10 years. This is due in no small part to the work of the Regional Support Centres (RSCs) in moving both individual learning providers and the sector as a whole forward. Offering a variety of free services and low cost events, the local RSC is a central point of contact for impartial advice on implementing the use of technology and e-Learning". *JISC ADVANCE : Regional Focus-UK Impact - October 2010*

JISC RSC Northwest provides free support in the form of strategic visits, on-line resources, workshops and events, and advises on subjects including e-safety, safeguarding, equality & diversity, assessment, sustainability, accessibility, mobile technology, video communication, and free software.

In partnership with NWPB, JISC RSC Northwest is planning a range of activities for the coming year for the Work Based Learning sector and will work through NWPB, with sub-regional groupings, and with individual Learning Providers.

The contact adviser for Work Based Learning is Colin Gallacher. For support please ring 01524 510067 or e-mail cg@rsc-northwest.ac.uk

LSIS Re-structure

LSIS have recently undergone a re-structure due to a reduction in funding. LSIS now offers 38 strands rather than 55.

The **five new LSIS platforms** under which the LSIS offer will be categorised are:

- **Accelerating improved teaching and learning** – inspiring practice, improving effectiveness.
- **Reinvigorating curriculum design** by building further capability and capacity for innovative and effective development of learning programmes.
- **Enhancing leadership, governance and management** for improvement, innovation and change.
- **Energising improvement** through new ways of working, innovation and efficiency.
- **Supporting the sector to influence the future** – using policy analysis, research and strategic intelligence, locally and nationally.

LSIS Accounts

LSIS accounts have now changed to academic year and will end by 31st August 11.

The new academic year will start on 1st September 2011 and run until 31st August 2012. Providers will be issued amounts depending on their Skills Funding Agency allocation. If a provider's allocation is up to £500,000 they will get £1,000 in their LSIS account, between £500,000 and £5 million they will get £2,000 and over £5 million they will get £3,000.

LSIS Teaching & Learning Conferences

North West Provider Network members had asked if the Teaching and Learning conferences that were held in London could come up to the North West. After lobbying by the network, the LSIS event next year will be held in Manchester.