

The Skills Enhancement Fund

PROVIDER ROUTE GUIDANCE

VERSION 8

The following guidance is designed to help you with your application to the Skills Enhancement Fund for funding to support training. Please note that this is an application process and no funding is guaranteed.

The published timescales show the turn around time for processing applications however please note that applications can be referred to a Policy Group if further levels of scrutiny are required, for example where there have been multiple applications by a company or the application is for an area that is no longer a priority for funding or the costs are considered high, in this case you would be notified of the delay.

The Skills Enhancement Fund is subject to change however we will always endeavour to give as much notice as possible of these changes.

Co-financed by

**Skills
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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Skills Enhancement Fund. This project, funded through the European Social Fund and Yorkshire Forward, has been established to engage employers within Yorkshire & Humber in skills development and, through this, to increase the skills base within the region.

The following guidance is designed to help you with your application to the Skills Enhancement Fund for funding to support training. Please note that this is an application process and no funding is guaranteed. Please note that applications can be referred to a Policy Group if further levels of scrutiny are required, for example where there have been multiple applications by a Training Provider or the application is for an area that is no longer a priority for funding or the costs are considered high, in this case you would be notified of the delay.

The Skills Enhancement Fund Provider Route is designed to support applications from Training Providers who are currently working with a cohort of identified businesses with an identified training need(s). The Provider Route is particularly responsive to the needs of a small cohort of businesses, which often are not able to fit into provision developed to support large sectoral projects.

Training Providers are invited to apply for funding to support training and development needs of identified businesses. The Skills Enhancement Fund can provide a subsidy towards the cost of training.

The following guidance notes set out the eligibility criteria, levels of support available and how to apply for support through the fund. Please read these notes carefully as any applications failing to comply with the application requirements cannot be accepted.

The Skills Enhancement Fund is subject to change however we will always endeavour to give as much notice as possible of these changes which will be posted on the Skills Enhancement Fund website <http://www.enhancementfund.co.uk>

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Section1 Overview of Provider Route Process

1. Training Provider identifies a small cohort of companies requiring training.
2. Training Provider has early discussion with a Commissioning Advisor (CA) to check eligibility of the proposed training.
3. If necessary Training Provider submits a Pre Qualification Questionnaire to the Skills Enhancement Fund.
4. Training Provider completes the provider route application form.
5. Training Provider e-mails the completed application form to the CA.
6. CA checks the application and e-mails the Training Provider to confirm registration of the application. A registration number is allocated. If the application cannot be registered the CA will feedback in the e-mail.
7. Training Provider submits the application form electronically to info@enhancementfund.co.uk and sends a hard copy to the Skills Enhancement Fund at Calderdale College.
8. Skills Enhancement Fund confirms receipt of both the electronic and hard copy application form by e-mail to the Training Provider.
9. The application is appraised by the Skills Enhancement Fund appraisal panel.
10. Skills Enhancement Fund notifies the Training Provider of approval or rejection of the application.
11. Training Provider is invited to a Contracting Meeting with a Skills Enhancement Fund Contracting Officer.
12. Skills Enhancement Fund issues the Contract to the Training Provider for signing.
13. Training Provider returns the Contract for counter signing.
14. The project commences.

Section 2 Who is Eligible to Apply?

Training Providers, Colleges and other delivery intermediary organisations may access these resources to support small groups of businesses in meeting their training needs (businesses that may be supported include voluntary and community sector organisations). Applications made directly by a business will not be considered. The Single Business Route of the Skills Enhancement Fund can respond to individual business training needs (for more details of this route please see relevant section of the Skills Enhancement Fund website or contact Business Link Yorkshire).

1. Business Eligibility criteria:-

- a) The fund can support private companies, partnerships, charities and sole traders operating in the Yorkshire and Humber region. Public Sector organisations & their employees are not eligible for support.
- b) Business premises must be located in the Yorkshire and Humber region; eligible businesses are considered to be those who have an autonomous base within the region (i.e. separate accounting function) and the fund is open to staff who are contracted to work from this base.
- c) Priority sectors for receiving support are:
 - o Agriculture, Horticulture & land based Industries
 - o Engineering Manufacturing & Print
 - o Retail Services
 - o Health & Social Care
 - o Ports, Logistics & Distribution
 - o Childcare & Early Years
 - o Construction & the Built Environment
 - o Digital, ICT, Creative & Media
 - o Hospitality, Tourism, Sport & Leisure
 - o Voluntary, Community & Faith

Other sectors can also be supported. Please refer to a Commissioning Advisor if the companies you are working with do not fit within one of the above sectors.

- d) Please note - the Skills Enhancement Fund can only support level 4 qualifications (or units of) for eligible companies with 50 employees or less.

2. Participant Eligibility Criteria:-

- a) All participants must be employed by the company submitting the application and be contracted to work from premises located within the Yorkshire and Humber region.
- b) All participants must be aged 16+ on the first day of training (Providers who are delivering training to young people under 18 or to vulnerable adults will be expected to ensure that the delivery team undergo Criminal Records Bureau checks).
- c) Volunteers are eligible for support as long as they work for an eligible company that employs other paid staff.

If required, further information on participant eligibility can be found within the 'Operational Programme' for the European Social Fund. The Operational Programme can be found on www.esf.gov.uk

Section 3 What Training Is and Is Not Eligible For Support

1. Training eligible for support:-

- a) Accredited Training listed on the Learning Aims Database (LAD)
<http://providers.lsc.gov.uk/LAD/>
 - o Level 1 Qualifications
 - o Level 2 Qualifications and modules of Level 2 Qualifications that are not eligible for support from Train to Gain
 - o Level 3 Qualifications and modules of Level 3 Qualifications that are not eligible for support from Train to Gain
 - o Level 4 Qualifications and part qualifications at Level 4
- b) Training activity supported must be 6 hours minimum per course.

2. Training not eligible for support:-

- a) Training which is considered to be mandatory or is deemed as an employer's duty of care (please check with the Commissioning Advisor if you are unclear)
- b) Training that is not on the LAD.
- c) Statutory training (but preparing for changes in legislation are eligible).
- d) Any training which is eligible for Train to Gain - further details on what can be supported through Train to Gain be found on http://www.traintogain.gov.uk/Helping_Your_Business/eligible/ - updates will be posted on this site, Business Link Advisers and Training Providers should visit the site regularly.
- e) Participants who are eligible for Train to Gain. It the responsibility of the Business Link Adviser/Training Provider to ensure whether the learner is eligible for Train to Gain funding, irrespective as to whether Train to Gain funding is available.
- f) Training that is already publicly funded.
- g) Training that has commenced prior to application & approval of funding.
- h) Training that is not completed before 31st December 2011.
- i) Training that is less than 6 hours per course.
- j) Training where evidence of completion / achievement (e.g. certificates and pass lists) cannot be submitted by 31st March 2012.
- k) Training which is sub contracted.
- l) Applications for business support activity that is not deemed to be training.
- m) Training for businesses and/or their employees who are not based in the Yorkshire & Humberside region.

Information on training that has been commissioned through the Skills Enhancement Fund previously can be obtained via the Skills Enhancement Fund website <http://www.enhancementfund.co.uk> .

Training Providers submitting proposals for training featured on a Framework Route specification will be encouraged to submit their application through the framework. If this is not practicable then value for money considerations at the appraisal stage will be based on the unit rates for the training as specified on the Framework Route specification.

Section 4 Levels of Support Available

1. The proportion of project costs (both indirect & direct training costs) that will be reimbursed by the Skills Enhancement Fund via the Provider Route varies depending on the type and level of training programme to be undertaken.
2. Currently the Skills Enhancement Fund will support the project costs as follows:
 - Up to a maximum of 50% for accredited training listed on the Learning Aims Database (LAD) at levels 1 to 4.
3. The maximum value of Skills Enhancement Fund support for any one application is £60,000. Multiple applications will not be accepted within one funding round. Applications must evidence suitable progress towards completion of training prior to any further funding being approved.
4. A maximum value of Skills Enhancement Fund support for any one individual may be applied:-
 - £3,000 for training at level 4
 - £1,200 for accredited training below level 4
5. There is no minimum value of application but the provider must be able to name all the businesses who will be taking part in the training (5% substitution of named demand is acceptable post-contracting).

Section 5 Key Dates

1. The Skills Enhancement Fund is a rolling programme and applications for support will be received until funding has been fully allocated. There are maximum levels of funds available for each output. Commissioning Advisors will have up to date information on the fund.
2. It is important that you plan carefully to ensure that you leave sufficient time for the checking and approval stages of your application.
 - Applications must be approved by fund managers **BEFORE THE TRAINING STARTS**; applications for retrospective funding of training will **NOT** be accepted.
 - The training programme must start within 2 months of the contract being issued otherwise the funding will be withdrawn.
 - All training approved **MUST** complete by 31st December 2011 and evidence for reimbursement **MUST** be received by 31st March 2012.
3. Appraisal Panels will meet on average every 2-3 weeks according to the volume of applications, to ensure that applications for funding receive decisions in a timely manner.
4. All applications will be treated fairly and will be scored based on appropriate criteria for assessment. The criteria will include the intended benefit/impact on the business, value for money, expertise, ability and capacity to deliver the outputs.
5. It is important to allow a minimum of 6 weeks after submission of hard copy and electronic copy application before delivering any training. Training must not commence prior to approval being received.
6. Any training which may commence prior to the contract been signed by both the provider and Calderdale College is at the provider's own risk.

Section 6 Submitting an Application

Please note: Before submitting an application to provide training through the Provider Route, the training provider must have a Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) accepted by the Skills Enhancement Fund. Please see PQQ guidance notes for more information.

Applications must be submitted electronically and hard copy using the *Provider Route Application Form*. Please ensure that you download the correct version of the application form which can be found at: <http://www.enhancementfund.co.uk/provider-route/provider-route-overview.asp>

This section explains the information you will need to provide on the application, the requirement to send your application to a Commissioning Advisor for checking and confirmation of registration, and how to submit an application. These instructions are designed to ensure that all organisations are given fair and equal consideration.

1. General principles

- a) Applicants should ensure they provide all the information asked for in the format and order specified.
- b) Applicants must not alter the documentation. Incomplete responses will not be considered. Applications will be marked on what has been submitted within the application, failure to answer all questions fully will render applications incomplete.
- c) Documents are in Microsoft Word and must be returned in this format.
- d) A minimum font size of 11 should be used when completing the application form.
- e) Please do not submit any other supporting information unless specifically requested, as it will not be considered in the appraisal of your bid.
- f) Please ensure that you do not exceed any specified word limit. The limit for each section is clearly stated in the application form. Any words that exceed the limit will not be considered by the panel.
- g) All sections which require signatures must be originals in ink & dated.
- h) All applications for funding **MUST BE MADE IN ADVANCE OF TRAINING UNDERTAKEN**. No applications for retrospective funding of training will be accepted.
- i) The Skills Enhancement Fund reserves the right to alter & change guidance and application forms throughout the programme, up to date guidance can be found on <http://www.enhancementfund.co.uk>
- j) Please read pages 7-8 of this guide carefully to ensure that the proposed training is eligible for funding through the Skills Enhancement Fund Provider route and that the Business and individual trainees are eligible for funding.
- k) Please also note that any applications that contain inaccuracies will be rejected or may be subject to repayment of claimed funds at a later date.
- l) Applicants wishing to alter rejected applications will have to submit a new application from the start of the process and submit to a Commissioning Advisor for a new registration

number. This new application will be subject to any changes to the Fund announced between submission dates.

- m) There should be no assumption that subsequent applications from the same training provider will be automatically approved.

2. Notes on Information Needed to Complete the Application

We would strongly suggest that you contact a Commissioning Advisor for a discussion before beginning the application process.

Section A

- o Complete full Provider details including postcode, telephone number & email address. Please sign and date the application, the signatory should be a senior member of the organisation with authority to enter into a contract. Please note electronic signatures are not eligible.

Questions 1-8

- o Please follow the guidance as described within each question on the application form.
- o Please ensure that the maximum word limits are adhered to.
- o Please fully answer each question.
- o Please ensure that all companies are named in section 3 of the application. Speculative demand (i.e. unnamed companies) cannot be supported.
- o Please confirm that the companies you will be supporting will be able to provide proof that they are currently trading in the form of Companies House registration, copy of Tax Return or a copy of a utilities bill in the company name (this must not be more than 3 months old).
- o Please see panels below for definitions of Sole Trader and Self Employed Person that the Skills Enhancement Fund uses.

Definition of a Sole Trader

A type of business or proprietorship which an individual runs, and all revenue payments are incorporated within the individual's personal finance and tax affairs. In other words all debts of the business are debts of the owner. The person who sets up the company has sole responsibility for the company's debts. It is a "sole" proprietorship in the sense that the owner has no partners and is likely to be doing business in his or her own name and in which there is only one owner. A sole proprietorship is not a corporation; it does not pay corporate taxes but the owner of the business pays personal income taxes.

A sole trader may also use a trading name other than his or her legal name.

Definition of a Self Employed person

Self-employment is where a person works for themselves rather than an employer. Self-employed people can also be referred to as a person who works for himself/herself instead of an employer, but drawing income from a trade or business that they operate personally.

A self-employed person can operate as a sole trader or as an incorporated limited liability company. It is also possible for someone to form a business that is run only part-time or concurrently while holding down a full time job.

- You will be asked to confirm the qualification status of the trainers you intend to use in the training programme in question 6. Please note that from 2010, anyone in receipt of government funding to deliver training, either in a classroom or at a business premises is required to hold a teaching qualification or a PTLLS (Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector) certificate as a minimum qualification. We will expect any training company in receipt of Skills Enhancement Fund support to ensure that the trainers used to deliver the programme hold a PTLLS or equivalent qualification as a minimum standard.

Question 9

- Please complete the table in full.
- Please ensure that you attach evidence of current awarding body approval to deliver **the specific qualifications listed** to your application (e.g. letter / certificate from awarding body confirming approval to deliver qualification, screenshots from awarding body database naming your organisation & qualification or latest EV report from awarding body), certificates showing general awarding body centre approvals are not sufficient. If you do not have awarding body approval to deliver the qualifications listed at the time of the application, please explain why and give timescales for gaining the necessary approvals.

Question 10

- Please complete the expenditure breakdown table in full listing all associated costs with the delivery. Please add budget headings into the table where applicable.
- A full breakdown of project costs is required:
 - **Non direct training costs:** These are the costs that incurred by the provider by entering into a contract with Calderdale College as the accountable body for the Skills Enhancement Fund. Costs may include meetings with Officers from the Skills Enhancement Fund, management of training within timescales of project and monitoring and administration to meet Skills Enhancement Fund evidence requirements.
 - **Direct training costs:** This should include the costs associated with the direct delivery of this training. Please provide adequate detail for the Skills Enhancement Fund to understand how you have calculated your costs. This should include an hourly rate for tutor costs, and room hire, etc. If your application includes a

number of different courses, it may be useful to include a breakdown of costs for each course.

- **PLEASE INCLUDE THE COSTS OF VAT IF IT IS NON RECOVERABLE BY THE TRAINING PROVIDER**
- The appropriate employer contribution is automatically calculated along with the funding required from the Skills Enhancement Fund. **The Employer contribution is towards the whole project costs (indirect & direct training costs).**
- The training provider is not entitled to claim from the Skills Enhancement Fund any costs or expenses which may be incurred in the preparation of the application.
- Please ensure the total Company Cash contribution and total Skills Enhancement Fund contribution equal the total amounts in section 9.

Question 11

- Please state the intended start date of the training and the completion date. Please note all activity must have started within 2 months of the contract being issued and all activity must be completed by 31 December 2011 and evidence for final payment must be received by 31st March 2012.

Section 7 Assessment of Applications

1. There is no set closing date for the submission of Provider Route applications; this is an ongoing rolling programme.
2. All applications must be submitted to the relevant Commissioning Advisor. The Commissioning Advisor will check the application and issue a registration number once the Commissioning Advisor is happy that the application meets the Skills Enhancement Fund's requirements. Applications will not progress to appraisal stage if they do not have a registration number.
3. Applications are checked for eligibility once submitted and the presence of ineligible training elements within the proposed programme may lead to the rejection of the application or delay approval of the eligible elements until the next appraisal date.
4. The training provider will be informed of registration and approval via e-mail to the contact name given in the application.
5. During the approval process the Skills Enhancement Fund Team may request further information to support the application.

Section 8 If Successful

1. Successful applicants will be notified of approval by email. **Training must not start until the approval email has been received.**
2. The Training Provider will be invited to attend a contracting meeting. At this meeting the following will be confirmed/provided:
 - Clarification on any issues raised by the Appraisal Panel
 - Confirmation of training and costs
 - Confirmation of location of supported businesses within the Yorkshire and Humberside region
 - Provided with paper and electronic copies of all documentation and information required during the term of the contract
 - Guidance on completion of evidence requirements
 - Delivery plan to be completed by the Training Provider

Please note: Final approval may be subject to satisfactory clarification of issues raised by the panel at this contracting meeting.

3. The Training Provider will receive a contract with Calderdale College (as Accountable Body for the Skills Enhancement Fund). The contract must be signed by the Training Provider and countersigned by Calderdale College. Please note that approval of the application is subject to the signing of a Contract by both parties.
4. Payment to the Training Provider is dependent upon an ongoing review of satisfactory performance. A Payment Profile is agreed with the Training Provider at the point of contract and this document is an important part of the contract. Payment to the Training Provider is made on learner starts and achievements. Please note that individuals who do not complete the training will not be considered as eligible for reimbursement.
5. The Skills Enhancement Fund will only support training as detailed in the contract. Any changes to the training programme that alters the terms of the contract must be requested in advance of the proposed training (by email to the Deputy Enhancement Fund Contract Manager (info@enhancementfund.co.uk)). Failure to do this may mean that we are unable to refund training costs to the level you were expecting as retrospective changes will not be accepted.
6. To comply with European Regulations on State Aid, employers are required to contribute at least 40% towards the training cost. The Skills Enhancement Fund will require providers to collect and submit details of companies whose employees participate in Skills Enhancement Fund provision, using the 'Training Aid Company Data Capture form'. All providers must provide evidence to substantiate the appropriate employer cash contribution prior to release of any Skills Enhancement Fund money.
7. Once the contract has been agreed, the provider can only substitute 5% of companies if a named company no longer wishes to pursue the training.
8. Please note that the Skills Enhancement Fund cannot support training which is sub contracted by the provider.
9. The Provider should deliver to profile; any variations should be discussed with your Contracting Officer in advance of delivery.

Section 9 Application Process - Step by Step Guide

The Step by Step guide below shows the steps to be taken to submit an application. Please use this 'Step by Step' guide in conjunction with the full Guidance notes.



Step 1	Training provider identifies that a number of businesses require training.
Step 2	Training provider contacts Commissioning Advisor (CA) to check that proposed training is eligible for funding and, if necessary completes and submits a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire to the Skills Enhancement Fund.
Step 3	Once Commissioning Advisor has confirmed that training is eligible in principle, training provider completes application form and emails completed form to Commissioning Advisor.
Step 4	<p>Commissioning Advisor reviews application. If the application is of sufficient quality to progress to an appraisal panel, the CA will confirm by e-mail that the application has been registered and will allocate a registration number. Otherwise, the CA will feed back comments to the training provider or indicate that the activity cannot be supported by the Skills Enhancement Fund.</p> <p>Applications will not be registered until the CA is satisfied with the application.</p> <p>Please note that all applications are subject to approval by a panel and therefore registration by a CA does not indicate approval.</p>
Step 5	<p>Training provider enters registration number in the box on the bottom of the front page of the application form and submits electronic version of application to info@enhancementfund.co.uk</p> <p>An original signed hard copy of application must also be sent by post to:</p> <p>Skills Enhancement Fund Calderdale College Francis Street Halifax HX1 3UZ</p>
Step 6	<p>Skills Enhancement Fund acknowledges receipt of completed application form to Provider on receipt of both electronic & hard copy. Please note no acknowledgement will be received without receipt of <u>both versions</u>.</p> <p>The Skills Enhancement Fund cannot be held responsible for non receipt of applications.</p>
Step 7	The application will be submitted to the next available appraisal panel. Panels are held every 2 - 3 weeks. Panel assesses application and confirms approval/rejection. Provider notified of panel result by email.
Step 8	If the application is not successful, the Training Provider may e-mail info@enhancementfund.co.uk for feedback.

Step 9	<p>If your application is successful, a Contracting Officer will be allocated to your project and will contact the provider to arrange an initial contracting meeting. At this meeting the following will be confirmed/provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification on any issues raised by the Appraisal Panel • Confirmation of training and costs • Confirmation of location of supported businesses within Yorkshire/Humberside • Provided with paper and electronic copies of all documentation and information required during the term of the contract • Guidance on completion of evidence requirements • Delivery plan to be completed by the Training Provider <p>Please note: Final approval may be subject to satisfactory clarification of issues raised by the panel at this contracting meeting.</p> <p>The Contracting Officer is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the project from the initial contracting meeting to completion of contract.</p>
Step 10	<p>Two copies of the Sub contract incorporating the Delivery Plan with targets and payment rates signed and countersigned.</p>

Section 10

Contact Details

If you require any help to complete and submit the application form or any further information about the Provider Route, please contact

 01422 399339
 Email info@enhancementfund.co.uk
 www.enhancementfund.co.uk

The Provider Route is supported by a number of Commissioning Advisors located across the region. All applications must be checked by a Commissioning Advisor prior to submission to the Fund. Please remember to contact the appropriate Commissioning Advisor before submitting an application.

Sector	Commissioning Advisor	Email
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ports & Logistics • Engineering & Manufacturing • Mining & Extraction • Food, Drink & Tobacco • Textiles & Clothing • Metals & Minerals • Chemicals • Transport & Communication • Public Administration & Defence • Advanced Energy & Metals • Construction & the Built Environment • Utilities • Environmental Technology 	Graham Fullwood	grahamf@calderdale.ac.uk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare & Early Years • Health & Social Care • Voluntary, Community & Faith • Leadership & Management • Generic • Health & Education Services 	Nicola Hudson	nicolahu@calderdale.ac.uk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture, Horticulture & Land based Industries • Print • Digital, ICT, Creative & Media • Banking & Business Services 	Jas Hayre	jash@calderdale.ac.uk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality, Tourism, Sport & Leisure • Retail Services • Distribution & Hotels • Professional Services • Travel & Tourism • Financial Services 	Jeremy Boye	jeremyb@calderdale.ac.uk