Welcome to the 5th edition of the Learner Support Partnership Team Update, which aims to tell you more about the work of the LSC’s Learner Support team, including the latest on policy developments, and how you can help to deliver this support to learners.

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**Update on the Learner Support Service**

The Learner Support Service plans to replace their Interim Learning Provider Portal (Interim LPP) with a new system for registering and making payments to learners, in good time for the start of the 2009/10 academic year. The new system will be called the **Learner Assessment and Payment System (LAPS)**.

LAPS will be going live for Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and Adult Learning Grant (ALG) applications for the 2009/10 academic year, and we have set up a series of seminars during June and July to provide an end to end walk through of the new system from a Learning Provider perspective.

Please encourage Providers to attend these seminars as they will give them some very useful information about the future process and plans for the
Learner Support Service from the summer. Please note, however, that places are restricted and so we ask that no Provider sends more than 2 delegates.

You can find out more information on the programme of the seminars and how to register to attend at livegroup.co.uk/LAPS

Providers and stakeholders are being made aware of our plans through our monthly stakeholder e-bulletin, but they may need some support during the transition. Providers can call the helpline on 0845 600 7979 to get more information, or they can contact their local Field Force representative if they have more specific queries about the system (please see Issue 4 for details on how to contact the Field Force).

**Request an EMA and ALG application pack for 2009/10 online**

We are also pleased to let you know that learners can now request an application pack for the 2009/10 academic year, for EMA and ALG, from the ‘How to apply’ section of the EMA and ALG pages on the Directgov website.

When requesting an application pack the learner will be asked to fill out some personal details about themselves, including their name, date of birth and address, and once submitted an application pack will be sent to their home address.

Please let Providers know to encourage learners to use this facility. However, please note that learners who were eligible for, or received, EMA support in 2008/09 are automatically eligible to receive the same amount of support in 2009/10 (except those on an e2e programme who were not income assessed in 2008/09) under the EMA Guarantee. Those with an EMA Guarantee are entitled to receive up to three years of financial support and therefore are not required to submit an application for support in 2009/10. More information about the EMA Guarantee is given later in this Update, or you can visit our website at: [http://ema.lsc.gov.uk/](http://ema.lsc.gov.uk/)

**ACTION:**
- Encourage Providers to register to attend the LAPS training seminars.
- Encourage Providers and learners to use the on-line application request form.
- Read and disseminate the information on the EMA Guarantee.

Updates from the Learner Support Directorate

**Childcare News monthly e-bulletin**
You may be aware that we produced a monthly e-newsletter for the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme. You can view copies of this e-newsletter at

[link]

From the end of this month, this e-newsletter will be changing to become Childcare News, which will be a monthly update on all of Learner Support’s childcare schemes – including Care to Learn, Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work, Sixth Form College Childcare scheme and discretionary Learner Support (20+ childcare).

If you know of any Providers who administer these schemes, and would like to receive regular information, please encourage them to sign up to receive this e-newsletter by emailing Childcare-news@lsc.gov.uk.

**ACTION:**

- Sign up to receive Childcare News.
- Encourage Providers to sign up to receive Childcare News.

**Learner Support guidance documents for 2009/10**

The Learner Support Directorate has produced guidance documents for Providers, to help them to administer the schemes, for the following:

- Adult Learning Grant
- Care to Learn
- Dance and Drama Awards (information for non DaDA Providers)
- Education Maintenance Allowance
- Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work
- Sixth Form College Childcare scheme

All of these documents will be available within the first two weeks of June and will be available to access from the single Money to Learn page of the LSC website. However, these can also be accessed from the individual scheme’s website.

These documents are available by download only, and so we would like to encourage Providers to download and print these documents and to get rid of any other version of the guidance that they might be using. Please also encourage Providers to check the website regularly for any updates to these documents.

**ACTION:**

- Inform Providers that these documents will be available for 2009/10 and encourage them to get rid of any old versions of the guidance they are currently using.

[link]
Learner Support Policy Updates

Career Development Loans (CDLs)
As part of the Government’s *Real Help Now* agenda to provide support for individuals, families and business during the economic downturn, we are making CDLs more attractive to potential learners.

CDLs will be renamed Professional and Career Development Loans to appeal to a wider range of potential learners looking to improve their career prospects by undertaking further study e.g. a second degree or postgraduate course; protect their current career in times of job insecurity; retrain in a new or emerging industry; or change their career.

With a Professional and Career Development Loan learners will be able to borrow up to £10,000 to support the cost of learning and will benefit from a fixed rate interest rate for repayment of the loan that is competitive compared with other commercial unsecured loans.

During June, application packs will be available to order for learners. Leaflets and posters will be available to order to let learners know about the programme and tell them how to apply.

To find out more, please sign up to receive our e-newsletter for Professional and Career Development Loans by emailing pcdladvise@lsc.gov.uk. Please take the time to read the information in this e-newsletter, and disseminate this information to relevant Providers and stakeholders.

**ACTION:**
- Sign up to the Professional and Career Development Loan e-newsletter by emailing pcdladvise@lsc.gov.uk

Discretionary Learner Support
We are hosting a series of forums during June and July to look at the range of issues impacting on Discretionary Learner Support for both young people and adults. These will bring together LSC Area Partnership Teams, Managers of Student Services and other key players from the Further Education sector to explore the current delivery arrangements (successes and challenges) and recommendations for future policy design.

There will be ample opportunity to network with colleagues from other colleges and the LSC. These events will follow the publication of the 09/10 discretionary Learner Support guidance and the start of the evaluation programme commissioned by the LSC. The forums will concentrate on hardship, 20+ childcare and residential bursary funding. They will provide an
excellent opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to the development of financial support arrangements for learners.

For more information and to book onto any one of these events, please visit sones.info/events/dlsf

We would also like to let you know that the discretionary Learner Support guidance for Providers for the 2009/10 academic year has been released to Area teams. Please can you ensure that you and Area team colleagues have received this guidance and that you let Providers know that this is available to help them to administer the funding in the 2009/10 academic year? Please look out for future communications in the Learner Support Service stakeholder e-bulletin about how to view this document online.

Post-16 Transport Partnership guidance pack 2009/10
The LSC provides guidance to Local Authorities to assist them in meeting their statutory duty to publish Transport Policy Statements setting out how they will support transport needs for learners of sixth form age. The LSC also provides some funding to support Transport Partnerships so that they are able to test strategic and innovative transport solutions for learners of sixth form age. Some of the funding can also be used to support the cost of adult LLDD transport provision and for other purposes.

We would like to let you know that the guidance pack for the 2009/10 academic year is now available on the website. The guidance pack comprises of four elements:

1. Introduction
2. Section 1 – Guidance
3. Section 2 – Post-16 Transport Partnerships

Please can you let Providers who administer transport partnerships with Local Authorities know that this guidance is available?

**ACTION:**
- Please let Providers who administer discretionary Learner Support know about these events and encourage them to attend.
- Please let Providers and colleagues know that the discretionary Learner Support guidance for 2009/10 is available.
- Please let Providers know that the Post-16 Transport Partnership guidance packs for 2009/10 are available from the website.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

EMA Guarantee
For the first time, EMA learners do not need to re-apply for support; this is known as the EMA Guarantee. This means that any learner who has been paid EMA during the 2008/09 academic year (except E2E learners who have
not received a full income assessment in the 2008/09 academic year) is automatically eligible for support at the same level until the end of the academic year in which they turn 19. However, if a learner’s household income has reduced since their previous application, they may wish to re-apply for support at a higher level.

This change is designed to reduce the uncertainty over the level of financial support a learner will receive. The EMA Guarantee will give young people the security to look ahead to completing their learning and progress onto employment or Higher Education.

Learners who received an EMA payment during 2008/09 will have automatically received a Continuing Entitlement letter and an EMA Agreement. Learners should now take this letter to their Learning Provider.

If any learners do not receive a Continuing Entitlement letter by mid-June, they should contact the Learner Support helpline on 0800 121 8989.

More information on the EMA Guarantee is available on the website. Details of how to order 2009/10 application packs is available in the Marketing and support materials section of this Update.

**Individual Learner Records (ILRs)**
A Super User email has been sent out to Providers, detailing key fields that we want them to complete on the Individual Learner Record (ILR). By doing this they can help to shape the policy and application of Learner Support schemes and contribute to any future enhancements.

To read the full information on what we would like them to complete, Please visit the following link lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/lss/superuseremail/

You can also find further information on the ILR at theia.org.uk/downloads/ilrdocuments

**ACTION:**
- Remind Providers about the EMA Guarantee.
- Encourage learners to contact the helpline if they do not receive a Continuing Entitlement letter by mid-June.
- Disseminate the information on the ILR to Providers and encourage them to complete the key fields outlined in the document on the website.

**Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work**

The Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme was launched nationally, and began supporting learners, from April. A number of learners are already receiving payments and we continue to receive a steady stream of applications.
Please encourage Providers to order the associated marketing materials and to distribute the leaflets to eligible parents and encourage them to apply for this scheme (please see Materials to help you section for more details).

There are guidance notes in the application pack to help learners to fill in the application form, and by doing this correctly learners can help us to speed up the assessment process and reduce any delay in them accessing support.

More information about this scheme, and information on how to order application packs for 2008/09, is available on the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work website: lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/childcaretraininglearning

ACTION:
• Encourage Providers to let eligible parents know about the scheme and to encourage them to apply for support.
• Encourage Providers to order marketing materials to promote the scheme.

Materials to help you

Application packs for 2009/10
Care to Learn and Sixth Form College Childcare schemes’ 2009/10 application packs are available to order from the Learner Support Service, by calling 0845 600 7979.

EMA and ALG 2009/10 application packs are available to order from LSC Publications by calling 0845 602 2260 or emailing lsc@prolog.uk.com. Please remember to quote the correct reference number:
• EMA – ref LSC-P-NAT-090013
• ALG – ref LSC-P-NAT-090014

Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work 2009/10 application packs will soon be available. Please check the website regularly for updates and information on these. However, learners and Providers can order 2008/09 application packs for support from LSC Publications; please quote the reference LSC-P-NAT-080223.

Marketing materials
The following marketing materials are available for Providers to order, to help to promote the Learner Support schemes. They can also find information on these and details of how to order copies from the schemes’ websites.

- **EMA My Choice DVD** – explains the benefits of EMA and how it has helped five young people stay in learning. Reference LSC-P-NAT-080004
- **EMA leaflet** – aimed at learners and contains information on EMA and where to go for more information. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090004. This leaflet is also available in Large Print (reference LSC-P-NAT-090004LP) and Braille (LSC-P-NAT-090004BR).
- **A5 GCSE Envelope** – contains a leaflet that explains about options and choices after GCSEs. Reference LSC-P-NAT-080005
- **EMA resource pack** – designed to support you in classroom-based learning and highlight the post-16 options. Reference LSC-P-NAT-080120
- **A guide to providers working with young people** – assistance in advising young people and their families, aimed at Providers. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090006. This is also available for download from the website at [http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/Practitioners_guide_09-10.pdf](http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/Practitioners_guide_09-10.pdf)


- **ALG Business card holder** – promotional product with basic eligibility questions and contact information (100 business cards included). Reference LSC-P-NAT-090041
- **Business cards** – as described above, additional business cards are available to order. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090040
- **A4 laminated card** – a quick reference guide to ALG for Providers. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090042
- **Birthday card** – targeting prospective new ALG applicants providing basic scheme and contact information. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090039
- **Leaflet** – provides basic scheme and contact information suitable for distribution by student services. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090038
- **Poster** – references potential maximum grant (£30) and contact details for further information. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090045

Care to Learn – [http://caretolearn.lsc.gov.uk](http://caretolearn.lsc.gov.uk)

- **Leaflet** – aimed at the learner gives basic information about Care to Learn and how to apply. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090005
- **Poster** – for Learning Providers and Childcare Providers to use to inform young parents about Care to Learn. Reference LSC-P-NAT-080007
- **Code of Practice** – aimed at Childcare Providers this gives advice on how they can help young parents. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090052. This is also available for download from the Care to Learn website.

*Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work* – [www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/childcaretraininglearning](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/childcaretraininglearning)
• **Leaflet** – aimed at learners provides basic information on the scheme and how to apply. Reference **LSC-P-NAT-090091**

• **Poster** – for Learning Providers and Childcare Providers to display provides basic information on the scheme. Reference **LSC-P-NAT-090090**

**Sign up for more information**

If you are not already subscribed to this **Partnership Team Update**, but would like to receive this regularly, email us at learnersupportupdate@lsc.gov.uk, stating the name of this publication in the subject of the email.

We produce a number of regular bulletins that give information on Learner Support for interested stakeholders and partners. Please sign up to these and encourage Providers to request to be added to the distribution lists so that they receive the most up-to-date information on Learner Support.

• The **Learner Support Service stakeholder e-bulletin** is a monthly update, distributed at the end of each month, for stakeholders and colleagues providing useful information on the Learner Support Service. If you would like to receive these updates please email us at learnersupportupdate@lsc.gov.uk. Previous copies of this are available to view on the Learner Support Service website.

• **Childcare News** is a new monthly e-bulletin, distributed at the end of each month, for stakeholders and colleagues providing useful information on all of Learner Support’s childcare schemes; please note that this now replaces the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work e-newsletter. If you would like to receive these updates please email us at Childcare-news@lsc.gov.uk. Copies of the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work are available to view on the scheme’s website.

• **Professional and Career Development Loans e-newsletter** is a new monthly e-bulletin providing useful information and updates about the Professional and Career Development Loan scheme. If you would like to receive these updates please email us at pdcladvice@lsc.gov.uk.

To keep up-to-date on the latest developments in the Skills Campaign from the LSC and how Providers can get involved, you might want to subscribe to the **Skills Update**. You can do this by emailing skillscampaign@lsc.gov.uk. Please also encourage any interested Providers to sign up to receive these updates.