2006/07 Education Maintenance Allowance Communications and Marketing Guidance

Summary

This document contains guidance for providers who are involved in delivering FE provision to 16-19 year old learners and will therefore be involved in administering the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) scheme. This guidance sets out what marketing support is available to providers and identifies ways in which providers should raise awareness of EMA. It should be read in conjunction with the EMASYS Operating Manual; EMA training and accompanying support materials; and the FE Funding Guidance 2006/07.

This document is of interest to post-16 providers, local LSCs, Connexions staff and other institutions involved in 16-19 FE provision.

Issued by Greg Burke, Head of the EMA Unit

June 2006
Introduction

1. The success of EMA depends heavily on how the programme is publicised to young people and their families as well as how the programme is managed and operated. As a result, this document focuses on raising awareness of EMA and the role each key partner needs to play.

Raising awareness

2. The promotion of EMA is not the responsibility of one partner alone. It is dependant on a collaborative approach. A short overview of the various roles follows.

National Learning and Skills Council

3. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will continue to promote EMA at a national level. This includes ongoing responsibility for:

   - managing a national media and PR campaign to promote EMA, including key messages (see Annex 1)
   - producing branding guidelines and national marketing materials
   - co-ordinating EMA marketing campaigns, for example, TV adverts, radio broadcasts, press adverts, and so on
   - raising awareness of EMA with national partners and organisations who support learners and parents.

4. The LSC will also continue to develop a range of materials to equip partners with the necessary information to support young people and their parents through the EMA application process; see paragraphs 12 to 23 for more information.

Local Learning and Skills Council

5. Local LSCs are responsible for leading local partners in their delivery of EMA and helping embed EMA in their activities. The key contact within the local
LSC is the EMA Co-ordinator. Please see the guidance document ‘Requirements of Local LSCs’ for more information on the local LSC role.

Local Partnerships

6. Each Local LSC area has an EMA Local Partnership in place. Although membership will differ in each local area, in general key partners include the Local LSC; Local Authorities; Connexions Service; Schools and Colleges; Citizens Advice Bureaux; Jobcentre Plus; Learning Provider representation and other relevant groups, for example, voluntary organisations such as Gingerbread.

7. Local Partnerships know their areas best and should plan and target awareness-raising activities that effectively serve their local communities. Local partners need to communicate and market to groups of young people themselves, but also engage with people who may influence young people’s choices.

8. Each Local Partnership will need to consider which partner should target which group, for example, the Connexions Personal Advisors (PAs) are well placed to target the ‘Not in Education, Employment or Training’ (NEET) group.

Groups include:

- young people
- parents and other carers
- other influencers.

Young people includes:

- years 8, 9, 10 and 11 in all secondary schools. Working with younger learners is particularly valuable in shaping choices
- disengaged young people - NEETs
- vulnerable groups, for example, teenage parents, young carers, homeless young people.
Parents and other carers includes, for example, parents, foster parents, grandparents and adoptive parents of the young people listed above

Other influencers

Local partners will need to work with a range of local council service areas and voluntary and community groups to reach some young people. The list is extensive. Examples include:

- Local authority contacts: Youth, community care, social services, children’s services or Trust representatives (exact contacts will vary from council to council)
- Youth Service
- Faith Groups
- Voluntary and Community Sector organisations that work with young people
- Youth Offending Service, Offender Learning Teams
- Citizens Advice Centre.

9. Raising awareness of EMA and encouraging young people to stay in learning is a broad and complex task. Local Partnerships will be best placed to determine the most appropriate local solutions. Some examples could be:

- Connexions PAs promoting EMA, along with other available financial support, to all eligible young people at careers events and in one-to-one sessions (see Annex 1 for key messages)

- Local partners establishing systems that ensure EMA promotional materials are distributed to all year 11 learners in their area. Local Partners should also ensure that young people know how to get an application form, that is, through their school, or through the Assessment and Payment Body helpline or website; they may set up a specific local mechanism
Local Partnerships ensuring EMA promotional material is distributed to key local partners who can reach parents, for example, advice centres, CABs, doctors’ surgeries and/or antenatal clinics

the provision of extra support to some groups of young people and their parents, outreach information sessions for example. Local partners are best placed to decide where young people and their parents or carers can best be reached

evaluating effective ways in which EMA is being administered, where LAs have responsibility for auditing school sixth-forms. This would be related to any assessment of attendance monitoring systems and of pastoral support.

Schools with pre-16 students

10. Schools play a vital role in communicating the availability of EMA to their pupils. Raising awareness of EMA amongst younger learners and their families is particularly valuable in influencing choices and in creating a culture in which remaining in learning is seen as a viable option. Some examples could be:

- actively promoting EMA through on-going discussion with pupils and their parents in years 8, 9, 10 and 11. This could be, for example, via parents’ evenings or careers events (see Annex 1 for key messages)
- distributing marketing materials and application forms to their pupils (see paragraphs 12 to 23 for more information)
- actively promoting EMA within careers education and guidance, PHSE and financial management planning lessons. A ‘Teachers’ Resource Pack’ is available to support this (see paragraphs 12 to 23 for more information)
- working with the Connexions PAs for the school to give balanced advice on EMA and other financial support, especially to students and their parents who are less likely to consider progressing to post-16 education
- working with young people to develop financial management skills including setting up bank accounts
- providing advice and assistance to pupils and their families during the EMA
application process (see paragraphs 12 to 23 for more information)

- directing pupils and their parents to the EMA website (www.direct.gov.uk/ema).

**Schools with 6th forms, colleges and learning providers with post-16 students**

11. Schools with 6th forms, colleges and learning providers are responsible for ensuring that learners who are undertaking post-16 courses at their establishments are aware of EMA and other financial support that is available to them. Some examples of how they might approach this could be:

- actively promoting EMA through discussions with young people and their families. This could be, for example, via Open Evenings (see Annex 1 for key messages)
- displaying leaflets and posters and encouraging young people to take them home to discuss with their families (see paragraphs 12 to 23 for more information)
- promoting EMA, and other financial support in prospectuses
- promoting EMA and Learner Support Funds whilst discussing choice of courses with potential learners
- providing young people with an Application Pack (if they do not already have one) and, when appropriate, offering to help young people or families through the application process (see paragraphs 12 to 23 for more information)
- advising young people of who else can give advice on financial support
- referring young people and their parents to the EMA website: www.direct.gov.uk/ema

**Resources to help you**

12. There is a range of marketing materials to help promote EMA and also a
range of resources to support key partners as they help and advise young people and their families.

13. A short description of the available materials follows. Annex 2 details how these can be accessed.

**EMA website**

14. The EMA website ([www.direct.gov.uk/ema](http://www.direct.gov.uk/ema)) contains up-to-date information about EMA for both young people and their families and partners involved in delivering EMA. It is also the main repository of all marketing, publicity and support materials.

**EMA publicity materials**

15. To follow are products to help partners promote EMA:

**EMA Leaflet – get in the know**

16. These leaflets are aimed at young people and parents. They explain: what EMA is all about; eligibility criteria; how to claim EMA; frequently asked questions; and provide sources of additional help and advice. The leaflets are available in various formats and languages.

**EMA Posters – get in the know**

17. These A3 posters use simple messages to promote EMA. Two versions are available: one using a male image, and one with a female image.

**Branding Guidelines**

18. The LSC campaign resource website ([lsc.gov.uk/campaignresources](http://lsc.gov.uk/campaignresources)) provides access to EMA logos, template advertisements and a range of photographic images for local use.
EMA Application Packs

19. EMA Application Packs comprise an application form and application form guidance notes. The purpose of the guidance notes is to provide detailed help and advice on how to complete an EMA application form.

Support materials

20. To follow are products to help partners advise young people and their families on EMA and how to make a successful application:

Aide – Mémoire for Practitioners Working with Young People

21. The purpose of this A4 leaflet is to help partners advise young people and their families on how EMA might support young people who remain in or return to learning at the end of their compulsory schooling in England. It includes: an explanation of EMA; eligibility criteria; how and when young people should apply for EMA; and information on how to avoid common mistakes when completing an EMA application form.

Application Form Resource Pack

22. The purpose of this document is to provide practical advice on the completion of an EMA application form and is designed to help partners support young people and their families through the application process. It includes: information on which EMA application form should be completed; a walkthrough of the application form; an explanation of each of the main four types of evidence to prove income (for example, P60); and the top five reasons why application forms are returned as incorrect.

Teachers Resource Pack

23. This resource comprises a series of lesson plans and a video or DVD for use with year 11 pupils. The aims are: to increase awareness of the benefits of
staying on in learning; to be aware what support is available through EMA; to enable learners to plan for their personal and economical well-being; and to develop and apply financial literacy skills. Please note that this product is available to order now, however it is currently under review and an updated version will be available by the beginning of September 2006.
Annex 1

Key EMA messages

1. Why stay in learning?
   - The main reason young people drop out of education and training at 16 is money.
   - Without a minimum of five good GCSEs (A* to C) or their equivalent like an NVQ level 2, young people are 10 per cent more likely to be unemployed.
   - By 2010, fewer jobs will be open to people without at least five good GCSEs or their equivalent.
   - Staying in learning at 16 is a springboard to getting good training, better qualifications and a decent job.
   - The more qualifications you have, the more choice and earning potential you will have when you are looking for a job.

2. What is EMA?
   - EMA is a weekly payment of £10, £20 or £30 per week for eligible learners who are 16, 17 or 18 and are about to leave, or have already left, compulsory education.
   - EMA is income assessed with weekly payments dependent upon household income.
   - Young people can also get bonus payments if they do well on their course or learning programme, and meet certain targets.
   - EMA support is available for three full academic years if needed and the learner remains eligible.
   - EMA is not affected by any money earned by a young person from a part-time job.
   - EMA is paid in addition to other support and benefits provided by the Government, including Child Benefit, Income Support and Tax Credits.
• EMA payments are earned – a contract is signed setting out what is expected of the young person in terms of attendance, and progression. EMA is a ‘something for something’ regime.

3. Messages – Making an application for EMA

• Application Packs are available from Schools, Colleges, Learning Providers and Connexions Personal Advisors. Young people can also order Application Packs online at www.direct.gov.uk/ema or by calling the EMA helpline on 0808 10 16219.

• Young people don’t need to know which course they want to do or even where they want to study in order to apply.

• Eligibility depends on enrolling on valid programmes of learning and meeting EMA residency criteria.

• Young people need to open a basic bank account (one that accepts BACS payments) in order to apply for EMA.

• Young people should be encouraged to apply for EMA at an early stage.
  o Young people undertaking a further education course at school 6th form or college must apply for EMA by the end of August 2006.
  o Young people undertaking an LSC-funded Entry to Employment Programme or a Programme-led Pathway should apply as soon as possible.

• School 6th forms, colleges and learning providers should encourage learners to present their Notice of Entitlement at the earliest opportunity.

• Existing EMA learners do not need to request an application form. The Assessment and Payment Body will send application forms to all existing EMA recipients.
Annex 2

How to order publicity and support materials

The table below details how to access the various publicity and support materials referred to in this guidance.

Most materials are available to download from the EMA website (www.direct.gov.uk/ema). If you require printed versions they can be ordered from LSC Publications, quoting the publication number listed, from the following address:

LSC Publications
PO box 5050
Sherwood Park
Annesley
Nottingham
NG15 ODJ
Telephone 0845 602 2260
Fax 0845 603 3360
Minicom 0845 605 5560
Email: lsc@prolog.uk.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tr>
<td>EMA Leaflet – be in the know</td>
<td>LSC-P-NAT-060002</td>
<td>LSC Publications</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMA Leaflet – be in the know (Braille)</td>
<td>LSC-P-NAT-060083BR</td>
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<tr>
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<td>LSC-P-NAT-060083LP</td>
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<td>EMA Leaflet – be in the know (Urdu)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMA Poster (male image)</td>
<td>LSC-P-NAT-060046</td>
<td>LSC Publications</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMA Poster (female image)</td>
<td>LSC-P-NAT-060024</td>
<td>LSC Publications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aide-Memoir for Practitioners Working with Young People</td>
<td>LSC-P-NAT-060056</td>
<td>LSC Publications</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMA Application Pack</td>
<td>EMA Application Pack 2006/07</td>
<td>LSC Publications; <a href="http://www.direct.gov.uk/ema">www.direct.gov.uk/ema</a>; or LSC Helpline 0808 10 16219</td>
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<td>Application Form Resource Pack</td>
<td>LSC-P-NAT-060054</td>
<td>LSC Publications</td>
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