INSTRUCTIONS

Copy and paste each of the following scenarios onto a piece of card. One scenario card should be given to each group to discuss. The notes below each scenario are for the facilitator’s information only. The notes are intended to give the facilitator some indication of the solutions that Brokers may give. It is not an exhaustive list – there are no right or wrong answers and Brokers should be encouraged to be as creative as possible.
The employer should be offered a choice of three providers if possible so that the employer can state a preferred choice (as is currently practiced in Train to Gain).

SCENARIO 1

The employer has always used private provision in the past and is unwilling to use an FE college, even though they are the only local provider able to respond to the employer’s training needs. The college holds the Training Quality Standard.

How would you reassure the employer?

Possible solutions for Scenario 1

The Broker should reassure the employer that:

- The local FE college holds the Training Quality Standard. Brokers should explain the Training Quality Standard to the employer and what it means to them, especially in terms of their responsiveness to business.
- Because the provider has achieved this standard they have demonstrated competence in working well with employers. The Broker may suggest that they could show the employer case studies of similar employers who received good service from the FE College.
- The needs of the employer have been matched to the provider’s offer and they appear able to best meet the employer’s needs locally.
- The college may be able to conduct training in the workplace.
- The provider is an industry-recognised training body (through a trade association or SSC).
SCENARIO 2

An employer has received a poor service from local providers in the past and needs assuring that things will be different this time. They are particularly worried about the standard of information and advice provided and the speed at which they receive answers.

How would you ensure the employer was referred to an appropriate provider?

Possible solutions for Scenario 2

• Initial discussions between the employer and provider, facilitated by the Broker, should help to prevent the problems that occurred in the past
• The Broker should explain the differences between quality initiatives that relate to employer responsiveness (Training Quality Standard, Customer First, A4BC and emSkills) and suggest that employers look for them as a guide to more responsive provision
• The Broker should also mention that other indicators could be used, such as OFSTED/ALI grades
SCENARIO 3

An employer needs to be referred to a local provider for a specific training need. There are four local providers able to perform the training (see below).

How would you advise the employer about which one to choose?

- Provider 1 – Is a FE college which holds the A4BC initiative and has been awarded Beacon Status
- Provider 2 – Is a FE college which holds IiP, Matrix and CoVE status (though not in the same sector as the training requirement)
- Provider 3 – Is a private provider which holds IiP but no other standards
- Provider 4 – Is a private provider which holds Customer First and Matrix

Possible solutions for Scenario 3

This scenario allows for a much wider set of potential answers:

Follow the process outlined during the workshop:

- Broker would expect to have an initial discussion with the employer and cover some of the questions covered in Stage 1 - ’Establishing the Employer’s Training Needs’
- The Broker may then talk to certain providers to establish the provider’s offer. This would narrow down the list
- Further sources of information could include EGTP, SSCs, professional bodies, trade associations and personal networks using knowledge from Stage 4 - ’Take other Information into Account’, including the information on Quality Initiatives

Or

Answers may relate to the providers and their initiatives:

- Provider 1 may be recommended to the employer as it has a quality initiative related to working with employers and has been awarded Beacon Status
- Provider 2 may not be as suitable because it does not hold any quality initiatives directly related to working with employers (the CoVE status is a red herring because it is not in the same area as the training which is required)
- Brokers probably won’t suggest provider 3 because it only holds IiP status which is not directly applicable to working with employers. However they may view it as a good provider for other reasons such as:
  - EGTP suggestions
  - Personal knowledge
• Recommendation

Provider 4 may be considered suitable because they hold Customer First. Customer First is a generic customer service standard and it is more geared up to working with employers than other generic standards (such as ISO 9000 or Investors in Excellence). They also hold Matrix which should ensure the quality of information, advice and guidance.
SCENARIO 4

A provider is complaining that employers are not coming to them for training despite having IiP status (but no other Quality Standards).

1. How would you explain to them the reasons why employers may be choosing other providers?

2. What would you suggest the provider do in order to raise the interest of employers?

(This scenario should be answered in the context of standards)

Possible solutions for Scenario 4

How would you explain to them the reasons why employers may be choosing other providers?

- If this question is answered purely in the context of quality initiatives then it will focus on suggesting that the provider achieve a quality initiative that focuses on working with employers
- The provider could be advised to access support through the QIA support programme
- The principle suggestion should be the Training Quality Standard because this is the most recent standard developed by the LSC with major input from employers. However, Brokers may suggest Customer First, Action for Business Colleges or emSkills. If this is the case it should be pointed out that the Training Quality Standard may be a more suitable suggestion as it may eventually replace Action for Business Colleges, Customer First and emSkills
- Brokers may also suggest using a development tool such as PROBE to help providers working towards the Training Quality Standard

What would you suggest the provider do in order to raise the interest of employers?

- Brokers may query whether it is their position to advise the provider how to improve. Brokers should not get distracted by this issue. If the problem arises, suggest that this exercise is to get them to apply knowledge of quality initiatives and that a decision to advise a provider in this way should be discussed with their manager if the situation ever arose.