Introduction

This note is to confirm that the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) now has final Ministerial agreement to complete the loading onto the Learning Aims Database (LAD) of existing Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) qualifications confirmed by Sector Skills Councils, Standard Setting Bodies and Sector Bodies (SSCs/SSBs/SBs) as target bearing (full) Level 2. Ministerial approval of the interim definition for full level 2 in the QCF was confirmed late in October 2009 following an extensive consultation exercise between LSC and SSCs/SSBs/SBs which resulted in the identification of a range of credit values across sectors and sub sectors to confirm minimal occupational competency at level 2 in the QCF in the context of Train to Gain. This note provides an update on the definition, an update on the process going forward to confirm target bearing (full) Level 2 qualifications and to provide a list of all target bearing (full) Level 2 qualifications that have been approved for public funding to date across all LSC funded programmes.

The Interim Definition

In November 2008, the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills announced an interim QCF definition for full Level 2 as being a credit threshold of 13 credits, subject to SSCs being able to vary this threshold up or down.

The LSC then embarked on a significant piece of work with the SSCs to assist them in the process of identifying the credit values they deemed to be appropriate to confer occupational competence/employability at Level 2 within the sub-sector/occupations in their sector footprint. Further information about this process is detailed in the guidance issued by LSC to SSCs/SSBs/SBs, available on the LSC website at the link below:


The results of this consultation were collated, moderated and challenged where required by the LSC, resulting in an approved list of credit values by occupational role that the SSCs suggested were required for occupational competence/employability within a role at Level 2. These credit values were then submitted to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and subsequently agreed by ministers.

SSCs were also asked to identify to the LSC those existing QCF qualifications within their footprint that they considered were fit for purpose and would offer occupational competence and matched the credit value identified. The LSC then reviewed this list alongside all the legacy QCF Level 2 qualifications that were already on the Learning Aims Database (LAD) and flagged for funding, from test and trials and earlier QCF implementation work.
The list was reviewed for compliance against the parameters laid out in the guidance, including occupational credit value and meeting the appropriate Of Qual purpose field. Given the transitional phase that we are in and recognising the fact that awarding organisations (AOs) will have been developing qualifications before the credit values were set, the LSC set a tolerance threshold for the stated occupational threshold and have allowed a number of qualifications identified as priority by SSCs to be approved for funding for an interim period until March 2010, to allow the AO time to redevelop the qualification in liaison with their SSC to meet the required parameters. The decision criteria used to determine whether a qualification should be funded are detailed in the attached “Funding Decision Criteria” document.

A list of the current target bearing (full) Level 2 qualifications that have been approved by this process is available on request and will be published as part of the November QCF Policy Update (which will be available at http://qfr.lsc.gov.uk/ukvqrp/support). They are also visible on LAD as we are now loading these qualifications in order to ensure delivery can take place. We have initially prioritised Train to Gain provision for funding approvals, but will publish a list of full Level 2 qualifications approved for funding within the Adult Learner responsive model in January. The LSC are also currently going through a similar process to confirm target bearing (full) QCF Level 3 qualifications, which should be available to view on LAD by early December.

Going forward, new QCF qualifications will be considered by the Skills Funding Agency (the LSC’s successor organisation from 1 April 2010) for funding approval once they have been accredited by Of Qual and recommended by an SSC. The LSC are developing a new funding approvals process that aims to minimise the time it takes from a qualification being approved onto the QCF to the decision as to whether it should be funded and its subsequent upload onto LAD to allow the market for qualifications to be as responsive as possible to changes in demand. It is intended that the SFA Delivery Plan to be published in January will contain a comprehensive list of target bearing (full) QCF Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications across all programmes.

For more information

If there are further questions you have on Level 2 qualifications or on other aspects of the QCF programme, please contact the dedicated LSC QCF Service Desk on:

Telephone: 0870 267 0054
(Weekdays between 8am-6pm, excluding bank holidays in England)
Email: qcfservicedesk@lsc.gov.uk