This paper sets out a summary of the findings of the review of delivery models, activity levels and activity costs for the Amenity Horticulture frameworks.

Background

The review of activity costs is based on a standard methodology and modelling tools that are being applied consistently across all sectors in scope.

The approach is based on:

- Access to LSC data to inform the review
- Dialogue with the sector body on apprenticeship issues
- Interviews with effective providers (i.e. those providers with good or above average inspection grades and apprenticeship success rates) to establish activity levels
- An expert panel meeting to review data and evidence on activity levels
- Modelling of activity costs against provider data and panel advice
- Consultation with the sector on the panel advice and issues emerging
- Moderation of panel advice by an LSC project group

LSC Data

LSC data from 2004/05 ILR data used to inform the review were:

Numbers in Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Starts (Monthly Average 2005)*</th>
<th>In Learning (July 2005)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 - 19</td>
<td>19+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ILR 2004/2005

*Average taken from quarterly reports (January/April/July/October 2005)
Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Success Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Framework</th>
<th>NVQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ILR 2004/2005 Period 12

Average Length of Stay in Months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non completion</th>
<th>Framework</th>
<th>NVQ Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ILR 2004/2005 Period 12 and LSC Data

Provider Interviews

A sample of effective providers was identified in discussion with LANTRA.

These providers were interviewed between May and August 2006 through a series of visits to provider locations.

A completed survey form was shared with each provider to review and update. A summary of the activities and issues emerging was shared with the providers in the interview sample for comment and feedback.

Models of Delivery

The models of delivery identified through the sample of providers interviewed were:

- Entry to an apprenticeship programme mainly for 16-18 learners in employed status
- A small proportion of learners progressing to an advanced apprenticeship – often after some period of skills and responsibility development in the workplace
- Programmes of group based knowledge and skills including key skills through day release or block release arrangements
- Many learners having to travel some distance to ‘county based’ centres for knowledge and skills development
- Work based assessment and further skills development in sites that were often located some distance from the provider base
- An innovative programme based on the use of hired training facilities and further group based sessions at working farm locations through arrangements with employers
Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship

Activity Levels

Reported activity levels were:

- Time to complete between 15 to 18 months and up to 24 months
- Group based between 70 and 150 hours with one provider offering up to 230 hours
- A programme of regular visits to the work place based on monthly or six week cycles
- Work based assessment and support with caseloads ranging from 1:20 up to 1:40

Advanced Apprenticeship

Activity Levels

Reported activity levels were:

- Time to complete between 24 months and 30 months
- Limited group based activity of about 90 hours with significant work based support for underpinning knowledge and skills or up to 300 hours of group based with less work based visits and support
- A programme of regular visits to the work place based on monthly or six week cycles
- Assessor caseloads at 1:20 for the work based model and up to 1:40 for the group based model

Expert Panel

LANTRA convened an expert panel with representatives from:

- LANTRA
- Adult Learning Inspectorate
- Awarding bodies
- The FE Colleges network
- The LANTRA Industry Chair for Amenity Horticulture
The consultant to the project

The panel met on 17 October 2006 and reviewed the data and evidence from the LSC and provider surveys. The panel used this evidence to formulate advice on activity levels for effective delivery.

The panel discussed the apprenticeship options and suggested that there were two distinct pathways within amenity horticulture with slightly different models of delivery:

- Green keepers—where employers tend to be aware of and committed to the NVQ approach to learning and assessment. Learners are mainly based at the same location for assessment and support. Effectively this group have no optional units.

- Landscapers (Landscape Gardeners, Landscapers inc. Hard, Soft and Contract Landscapers, Parks Operatives and Gardeners) - often small employers who are less aware of the NVQ approach. Learners in the Landscape industry will be working at sites across the geographical area making work based visits difficult to plan. Candidates select from the optional units in the Landscape section offered by the awarding body to suit their interests and the training opportunities offered by the employer.

The panel noted that there was no data and evidence from the surveys to differentiate these pathways in terms of activities required for delivery.

The panel agreed to provide advice on a generic model of delivery and activities to inform a common funding rate for the sector and the apprenticeship pathways.

The panel discussed the profile of learners that joined an advanced apprenticeship programme and suggested that these might include:

- Learners who had completed the apprenticeship programme and, after a period of employment, developed in their job role to a position of responsibility and supervision.

- New entrants to the sector that were making a career change and entering the industry for the first time.

The advice from the panel was circulated to panel members after the meeting for their further comment and approval.
The expert panel set out their advice as a basis for establishing the costs of a model 'of effective delivery. *This is not intended to be a ‘recipe’ that providers should follow.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Panel Advice 2006</th>
<th>Notes and Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planned Time to Complete</td>
<td>18 Months</td>
<td>Estimated time for effective delivery based on provider interviews and LSC data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group based knowledge and skills</td>
<td>120 hours</td>
<td>Based on a series of 20 day release sessions of 6 hours with some additional time allocated to group based work on key skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work based knowledge and skills</td>
<td>3.0 days</td>
<td>A programme of 15 monthly ½ day visits to the work place with most visit time allocated to further knowledge and skills development and work based observation and assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ assessment and support</td>
<td>4.0 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ quality assurance</td>
<td>1.5 days</td>
<td>Lead internal verifier time per learner for joint assessor visits, portfolio sampling and moderation meetings and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group based key skills</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>The panel suggested that a programme of 60 hours of group based time with an additional 1 day of 1:1 support from a <em>key skills specialist</em> should provide a basis for effective delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work based key skills</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular review</td>
<td>1.5 days</td>
<td>Delivered as part of the programme of work based visits and through provider resources for learner support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner support</td>
<td>1.5 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry activities 1:1</td>
<td>1.5 days</td>
<td>An entry programme based on an interview (1/2 day), assessment (1/2 day) and a work based induction (1/2 day) all 1:1 time with an assessor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group based induction</td>
<td>18 hours</td>
<td>A three day induction programme of ERR, Health and Safety, introduction to the sector and NVQ portfolio evidence collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Certification</td>
<td>£168</td>
<td>Based on costs of NVQ, Key Skills and sector body certificate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**

The allocated time for work based assessor activity is equivalent to a full-time assessor caseload of 1:30 with separate staff responsible for entry activities and any key skills support.
Activity Costs for Apprenticeship Delivery

The activity costs model has been set up to compare the LSC funding in 2005/06 to the reported activity levels and the following costs assumptions:

- Group based classroom activity weighted at factor E\(^1\) for Land based provision

- Assessor employment costs weighted at factor B\(^2\) based on independent research on salary rates and employments costs

- Registration and Certification costs of £168 based on information collected from awarding bodies

The model includes a factor for success rates and this is based on the reported 2004/05 success rates of 36% uplifted to a minimum level of 50% to reflect improvement in success rates by 2007/08.

The activity costs emerging from the review were:

This suggests that activity costs for effective delivery are above the current funding rates.

\(^1\) This is based on the LSC programme weighting factors for guided learning hours

\(^2\) A separate report on employment costs provides more details of the bands and methodology used to map sectors to employment bands
## Expert Panel Advice for Advanced Apprenticeship Delivery

The expert panel set out their advice as a basis for establishing the costs of a model 'of effective delivery. *This is not intended to be a ‘recipe’ that providers should follow.*

<table>
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<th>Panel Advice 2006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planned Time to Complete</td>
<td>24 Months</td>
<td>Estimated time for effective delivery based on provider interviews and LSC data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group based knowledge and skills</td>
<td>180 hours</td>
<td>Based on a series of 30 day release sessions of 6 hours with some additional time allocated to group based work on key skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work based knowledge and skills</td>
<td>3.0 days</td>
<td>A programme of 24 monthly ½ day visits to the work place with most visit time allocated to further knowledge and skills development and work based observation and assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ assessment and support</td>
<td>6.0 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ quality assurance</td>
<td>2.0 days</td>
<td>Lead internal verifier time per learner for joint assessor visits, portfolio sampling and moderation meetings and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group based key skills</td>
<td>60 hours</td>
<td>The panel suggested that a programme of 60 hours of group based time with an additional 1 day of 1:1 support from a key skills specialist should provide a basis for effective delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work based key skills</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular review</td>
<td>2.0 days</td>
<td>Delivered as part of the programme of work based visits and through provider resources for learner support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner support</td>
<td>2.0 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1.5 days</td>
<td>An entry programme based on an interview (1/2 day), assessment (1/2 day) and a work based induction (1/2 day) all 1:1 time with an assessor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group based induction</td>
<td>18 hours</td>
<td>A three day induction programme of ERR, Health and Safety, introduction to the sector and NVQ portfolio evidence collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Certification</td>
<td>£ 290</td>
<td>Based on costs of NVQ, Key Skills and sector body certificate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes

The allocated time for work based assessor activity is equivalent to a *full-time* assessor caseload of 1:30 with separate staff responsible for entry activities and any key skills support
Activity Costs for Advanced Apprenticeship Delivery

The activity costs model has been set up to compare the LSC funding in 2005/06 to the reported activity levels and the following costs assumptions:

- Group based classroom activity weighted at factor E\(^3\) for Land based provision
- Assessor employment costs weighted at factor B\(^4\) based on independent research on salary rates and employments costs
- Registration and Certification costs of £290 based on information collected from awarding bodies

The model includes a factor for success rates and this is based on the reported 2004/05 success rates of 20% uplifted to a minimum level of 50% to reflect improvement in success rates by 2007/08.

The activity costs emerging from the review were:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>Current Funding Profile</th>
<th>Provider A</th>
<th>Provider B</th>
<th>Provider C</th>
<th>Provider D</th>
<th>Projected Panel Advice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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This suggests that activity costs for *effective delivery* are around the current funding rates.

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\(^3\) This is based on the LSC programme weighting factors for guided learning hours

\(^4\) A separate report on employment costs provides more details of the bands and methodology used to map sectors to employment bands
**Moderation and LSC Data Modelling**

The LSC has established a moderation group with representation from the Association of Learning Providers to review panel advice and activity costs.

The advice from the LANTRA expert panel was reviewed at the moderation meeting in October 2006. The moderation group noted the significant programmes of group based activity and compared the activity levels with other frameworks in the land based sector. The moderation welcomed the approach to develop a balanced model of delivery but felt that the balance should be adjusted to align more closely with reported activity levels from provider interviews.

The impact of the moderation was to bring the activity costs closer to the reported activity and the current rates.

**Apprenticeship:**

The moderation group took the view on the basis of the evidence provided that:

- the level of work based knowledge and skills should be reduced from 3.0 days to 2.5 days
- the level of NVQ assessment and support reduced from 4.0 days to 3.0 days
- leading to an increase in assessor case loads from 1:30 to 1:35
- the level of group based key skills activity reduced from 60 hours to 30 hours with 1 day of 1:1 support per learner delivered by a key skills specialist

![Current Funding and Activity Costs](chart)

**Assumed Employer Contribution**

**LSC Funding**
Advanced apprenticeship:

The moderation group took the view on the basis of the evidence provided that:

- the level of work based knowledge and skills should be reduced from 3.0 days to 2.0 days
- the level of NVQ assessment and support reduced from 6.0 days to 5.0 days
- leading to an increase in assessor case loads from 1:30 to 1:36
- the level of group based key skills activity reduced from 60 hours to 30 hours with 1 day of 1:1 support per learner delivered by a key skills specialist
Funding Rates for NVQs and Apprenticeships

Funding Rate Changes

The LSC is implementing changes to the funding rates based on the review and the advice on activity levels and activity costs and the decisions of the moderation group.

The changes are:

Apprenticeship

- An increase in funding of 10.6% to the NVQ2 rate phased in over 2 years
- This is equivalent to a 9% increase in the framework funding rate consistent with the moderated panel advice

Advanced Apprenticeship

- A reduction in funding of 15.4% to the NVQ3 rate phased in over 2 years
- This is equivalent to a 12% reduction in the framework funding rate consistent with the moderated panel advice.