Welcome to the May e-bulletin from the LSC’s Learner Support Directorate.

In this month’s edition we are pleased to tell you about a new facility to enable learners to request 2009/10 application packs for EMA and ALG online. We also tell you about the feedback from the communications survey we ran in the April e-bulletin as well as updates on the Career Development Loans.

If you would like your name added to the distribution list please email us at learnersupportupdate@lsc.gov.uk

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1. Plans for the future Learner Support Service

As you know, we are working towards introducing the new Learner Assessment and Payment System (LAPS) over the summer. This will be similar to the Interim Learning Provider Portal (Interim LPP) and EMASYS although it will lead to some basic changes to the way in which you register learners and record payment decisions. We will be running a series of regional events and providing training materials to help you learn how to use LAPS. Please see item 2 for more about training.

Processing 09/10 EMA application forms

We are already receiving a steady stream of 2009/10 EMA application forms and we are pleased to tell you that as of Friday 24th May, the LSS has despatched 4,434 2009/10 EMA NoEs to eligible learners.

Requesting an application form online

As part of our development of the learner support service we are pleased to let you know that learners can now request 2009/10 EMA and ALG application packs from the ‘how to apply’ section on the Directgov website.

Learners are asked to fill out some basic information about themselves, including their name, date of birth and address. Once submitted an application pack will be sent to their home address within 10 working days.

Please encourage ALG applicants to request an application pack from direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/FinancialHelpForAdultLearners/Adultlearninggrant/DG_068350

Please encourage EMA applicants to request an application pack from direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/14To19/MoneyToLearn/EMA/DG_066955.

Please remember that under the EMA Guarantee learners who received EMA 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). For more information about the EMA Guarantee please visit our website: http://ema.lsc.gov.uk/

2. LAPS training seminars
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 to provide an end to end walkthrough of the new system from a Learning Provider perspective.

These seminars will focus on outlining the process and plans for the Learner Support Service from the summer, updating you on changes to the EMA application process, running through the LAPS Provider Portal and explaining how the Learner Support Service will continue to support Providers and administrators.

We have already filled well over half of these events and some venues are fully subscribed. However, there are some places left so if you’re interested in attending we would encourage you to book as early as possible. Places are restricted and so we ask that no more than 2 delegates register from any one Provider.

You can find more information on the training seminars and details of how to register to attend these at http://www.livegroup.co.uk/LAPS/

**3. Communications survey results**

In the April edition of this e-bulletin we ran a survey and asked you what you think of our communications. We have received more than 650 responses to this survey and would like to thank everybody who took part.

We are looking through all of the responses and will use comments and suggestions to help us plan our communications to you for the 09/10 academic year.

The findings suggest that overall, you are happy with our communications. However, you would like us to improve our website and make it easier to find the information relevant to you across all of our communications.

We are starting to think about how we can address your comments and will be making changes over the coming weeks and months.

**4. Learner Support Management Information from Individual Learner Record (ILR)**

This week we sent out an email to super users detailing information that we would like them to complete on the Individual Learner Record (ILR) that relate
to Learner Support. Recording this information will give Providers the chance to help shape the policy and application of Learner Support schemes, and contribute to any future enhancements.

Please visit this link to read the full email and find out further information on what we would like Providers to record.

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

5. Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work update

The Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme was launched nationally and began supporting learners from the beginning of April.

We would like you to continue to encourage eligible parents to apply for this scheme and to help them in completing and returning their application packs as soon as possible.

You can order 2008/09 application packs from LSC Publications by calling 0845 602 2260 or emailing lsc@prolog.uk.com and quoting reference LSC-P-NAT-080223.

Leaflets and posters are also available to help you to promote this scheme to learners. These are available to order as above, quoting the following references:

- Leaflet; LSC-P-NAT-090091
- Poster; LSC-P-NAT-090090

You can find out more about the scheme by visiting our website at www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/childcaretraininglearning or calling us on 0845 600 7979.

The Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work e-newsletter will change in June to include information on all the Learner Support Service’s childcare schemes, including Care to Learn. If you would like to receive this new monthly bulletin, please email us at Childcare-news@lsc.gov.uk, stating the type of organisation you work for, to be added to the distribution list.

6. Update on the changes to Professional and Career Development Loans
In April’s e-bulletin we mentioned that Career Development Loans (CDLs) will be re-named Professional and Career Development Loans. This is 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 post-graduate course
- Protect their current career in times of job insecurity
- Retrain in a new or emerging industry
- Change their career.

Like a CDL, a Professional and Career Development Loan is a bank loan to help individuals pay for learning that will improve their skills for work, but the conditions of the loan are being made more attractive for learners. With a Professional and Career Development Loan, learners will:

- Have the option to borrow up to £10,000 to support the cost of learning.
- Benefit from a fixed rate interest rate for the repayment of the loan, that is competitive compared with other commercial unsecured loans.
- The LSC are working with participating banks to finalise the new loan conditions so they will be able to benefit learners this summer.

During June, application packs will be able 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 about how to order leaflets and posters, please sign up to receive our e-newsletter for Professional and Career Development Loans by emailing pcdladvice@lsc.gov.uk.

7. Application forms and marketing materials for 2009/10

EMA

Application packs for the 2009/10 academic year are available to order from LSC Publications (details below). Please quote ref LSC-P-NAT-090013.

The following marketing materials are available to help Learning Providers promote and support EMA:

- EMA My Choice DVD – explains the benefits of EMA and how it has helped five young people stay in learning. Ref: LSC-P-NAT-080004
- EMA leaflet – aimed at learners and contains information on EMA and where to go for more information. Ref: LSC-P-NAT-090004. This leaflet is also available in large print and Braille:
  - Large print version ref: LSC-P-NAT-090004LP
  - Braille version ref: LSC-P-NAT-090004BR
• A5 GCSE envelope – contains a leaflet that explains about options and choices after GCSEs. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-080005**
• EMA resource pack – designed to support you in classroom-based learning and highlight the post-16 options. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-080120**
• A guide to EMA for providers working with young people – assistance in advising young people and their families. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-090006**. You can also download the guide from our 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**

Application packs for the 2009/10 academic year are available to order from LSC Publications. Please quote ref **LSC-P-NAT-090014**.

The following marketing materials are available to help Learning Providers promote and support ALG:

• Business card holder – promotional product with basic eligibility questions and contact information (100 business cards included). Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-090041**
• Business cards – additional business cards as described above. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-090040**
• A4 Laminated card – a quick reference guide to ALG for Providers. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-090042**
• Birthday card – targeting prospective new applicants, individuals turning 19 years old, providing basic scheme and contact information. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-090039**
• Leaflet – provides basic scheme and contact information suitable for distribution by student services. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-090038**
• Poster – references potential maximum grant amount (£30) and contact details for further information. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-090045**

**Care to Learn**

Application packs for the 2009/10 academic year are available to order from the Learner Support Service on **0845 600 7979**.

The following marketing materials are available to help Learning Providers promote and support Care to Learn from LSC Publications (details below):

• Leaflet – aimed at the learner gives basic information about Care to Learn and how to apply. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-090005**
• Poster – for Learning Providers and Childcare Providers to use to inform young parents about Care to Learn. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-080007**
• Code of Practice – aimed at Childcare Providers this gives advice on how they can help young parents. Ref: **LSC-P-NAT-090052**. You can
Sixth Form College Childcare

Application packs for the 2009/10 academic year are available to order from the Learner Support Service on 0845 600 7979.

To order materials from LSC Publications, call 0845 602 2260 or email lsc@prolog.uk.com. Please remember to quote the correct reference number to ensure that you will receive the correct materials.

8. Actions you may need to take

Below is a reminder of the actions to be taken over the next few weeks. Please:

- Inform EMA and ALG learners of the availability to request an application pack on-line from the Directgov website. Please also encourage them to read the information on who should fill in an application form to apply for support in 2009/10 (see Item 1 for details).
- Sign up to attend one of the LAPS training seminars taking place around the country (see Item 2 for more details).
- Read and respond to the information on what we would like you to record on the ILR.
- Encourage eligible parents to apply for the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme and to return their completed application packs as soon as possible.
- Sign up to receive the Childcare e-bulletin telling you about all of our childcare schemes. Email us at Childcare-news@lsc.gov.uk
- Sign up to the Professional and Career Development Loan e-newsletter (see Item 6 for more details).
- Order 2009/10 application forms and marketing materials from LSC Publications or the Learner Support Service.

9. Keeping you informed

We will keep you up-to-date with the Learner Support news via this monthly e-bulletin.
If you would like to find out more about the Learner Support Service or the various Learner Support schemes, including EMA and ALG, please go to http://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn or call us on 0845 600 7979.

If you would like to keep up-to-date on the latest developments in the LSC’s Skills Campaign and how you can get involved, please subscribe to the Skills Update by emailing skillscampaign@lsc.gov.uk.