Welcome to the pilot-specific edition of the July e-bulletin from the LSC’s Learner Support Directorate. The e-bulletin provides information about the changes to the ways in which the LSC’s different Learner Support schemes are administered.

This is an additional supplement for those of you in the two pilot areas that have been testing the new application systems: the South West and South Yorkshire.

If you are not in a pilot area you may find it helpful to also read the main stakeholder e-bulletin available at [www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/lss](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/lss). In this month’s edition we tell you about the next phase of our transition to the Learning Provider Portal which will replace EMASYS. Also, for the first time we have included an ‘actions’ section at item 7 to make it easier to understand the actions you may need to take over the coming month.

If you would like your name added to our distribution list please send us an email at [learnersupportupdate@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:learnersupportupdate@lsc.gov.uk).

In July’s stakeholder e-bulletin:
1. Ensuring Learners have access to an application form
2. Transition to the new Learning Provider Portal
3. Learner Support programme guidance 08/09
4. Returning Learners
5. EMA national campaign – coming soon
6. Training events – slides now available
7. Actions you may need to take
8. Helpline numbers for Learning Providers and Learners
9. Keeping you informed
1. Ensuring Learners have access to an application form

In the June e-bulletin we informed you about a delay to the online application system (Learner Portal) and explained a number of contingency actions we are taking to ensure that all Learners have access to an application form. Our contingency plan was to:

   I. Make paper application forms available in the pilot areas

   II. Write to all 16 year-olds in the pilot areas

We are pleased to let you know that significant progress has been made on both of these actions

I. Making paper application forms available

As soon as the decision was taken to cancel the pilots, we immediately lifted the restrictions on ordering paper application forms from LSC Publications (also known as Prolog). All Learning Providers, regardless of their region, now have full access to paper application packs.

In addition, we have also sent a small stock of application packs to all Learning Providers in the pilot regions who had previously placed an order for EMA or ALG application forms.

During July, we have sent forms to more than 260 EMA and 160 ALG Learning Providers.

You can order application forms and marketing materials by calling Prolog on 0845 602 2260. Please remember to quote the publication number when placing your order. Publication numbers can be found at www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn.

II. Writing to all 16 year-olds in the pilot regions

We have committed to writing to all 16 year-olds (i.e. school leavers) in the pilot areas, to tell them about EMA and give them an application pack.

EMA application packs have now been sent to all 16 year-olds in South Yorkshire. In total more than 18,000 forms have been distributed in the region.

In the South West, plans are in progress to deliver more than 65,000 EMA application packs to 16 year-olds in time for GCSE results day. We are
working with Connexions to organise the distribution processes and will update you in the next e-bulletin.

Our approach obviously means that young people who do not intend to enter courses that are eligible for EMA or who live in households with incomes above the eligibility level will be sent an application pack. However, this blanket approach means that no one should miss out on the opportunity to apply.

We hope that this direct approach may boost take-up in these regions. We will continue to monitor the volume of applications and use the information to inform our planning for next year.

2. Transition to the Learning Provider Portal

In the last edition of this e-bulletin we explained that we are moving towards the new Learning Provider Portal (LPP) over the summer.

First Step

The first step is a temporary attendance monitoring and payment service for EMA Learning Providers who needed to register and make payments to new Learners from July. This involves completing and returning spreadsheets and is currently in use by Providers.

Second Step

We are now preparing the second step of the transition. The spreadsheets will be replaced with the first online version of the Learning Provider Portal.

You will be able to access the Interim LPP over the internet. It won’t have the full LPP functionality, however, information you enter on the interim LPP will be stored and you will not need to re-enter it.

We will be writing to EMASYS superusers in the next couple of weeks to inform them of the interim LPP and explain how to access and use the system.

Over the following weeks we will make further updates to include functionality to cover third party interfaces and the ability to record end of learning.

Keep checking our website at www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/lss/learning-provider-portal for the latest information on the transition to the final LPP.
3. Learner Support programme guidance 08/09

The 2008/09 Learner Support programme guidance is now available.

The guidance is intended for use by stakeholders delivering Learner Support. It contains advice and information on administering Learner Support and outlines the main aspects of policy.

We will continue to update guidance as and when policy changes are made so please check the website regularly to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.

To access the guidance please select the relevant link below.

- Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) Guidance 2008/09

- Adult Learning Grant (ALG) Guidance 2008/09
  http://alg.lsc.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-08-09

- Care to Learn (C2L) Guidance 2008/09
  http://caretolearn.lsc.gov.uk/guidance-2008-09

- Sixth Form College Childcare Guidance 2008/09

- Dance and Drama Awards (DaDA) 2008/09
  http://danceanddrama.lsc.gov.uk/non-DaDA-providers

- Residential Support Guidance for Colleges 2008/09
  http://studyingaway.lsc.gov.uk/rss-guidance

- Local Authority Transport Support Guidance 2008/09
  http://16-19transport.lsc.gov.uk/

- Discretionary Support Funds: Hardship, 20+ Childcare and Residential Bursaries
  http://lsf.lsc.gov.uk/fundingguidance/
4. Returning Learners

We have written to Learners returning to EMA and ALG courses for 2008/09. Learners with the potential to return to EMA courses should have received a pre-populated application form by the end of June.

Learners with the potential to return to ALG courses should receive a letter and application form by the end of July.

Any returning learners who have not received an application form by the end of July should call the Learner helpline on 0800 121 8989.

5. EMA national campaign – coming soon

During August the second phase of the EMA national advertising campaign will be launched. The campaign features the ‘walking hands’ and will appear on a wide range of media including; TV, radio, magazines, newspapers, cinema and bus interiors and sides.

The TV campaign will start on the 18th of August and will:

- Target 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training as well as parents and teachers.
- Inform viewers that young people can receive up to £30 a week with EMA.
- Encourage people to apply for EMA by searching ‘EMA’ online or calling the helpline.

If you would like to view and download the latest advertising please visit www.lsc.gov.uk/campaignresources.

6. Training events – slide pack now available

As you may know, we held a number of training events for Learning Providers during June and July to explain the operation of the Learner Portal and the Learning Provider Portal.

These events have been well attended and we’d like to thank everybody for their participation.
A number of attendees have asked for a copy of the training slides which are now available on our website at www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/lss/events.

We are currently gathering the questions and answers from these sessions and will make them available on our website as soon as possible.

7. Actions you may need to take

This section explains the actions that Learning Providers may need to be taking over the next month.

Please check each action carefully to see if it applies to you.

- Look out for the super-user email explaining the Interim LPP. You can find the latest information on the transition to the final LPP on our website at www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn/lss/learning-provider-portal
- Continue to encourage Learners to apply for Learner Support schemes. Application forms are available from schools, colleges, local Connexions services and by calling the Learner Helpline on 0800 121 8989.
- Order application forms and marketing materials by calling LSC Publications (also known as Prolog) on 0845 602 2260. Please remember to quote the publication number when placing your order. Publication numbers can be found at www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn.

8. Helpline numbers for learning providers and learners

There are specific telephone helplines for learning providers and learners. Please note that the numbers differ depending on the academic year.

Learning Provider helpline

- 2008/09 applications: 0845 600 7979
- 2007/08 applications: If you have any queries or payment issues about applications being made in the current academic year, please continue to call the existing number 0800 056 2811
**Learner helpline**

- for 2008/09 EMA applications: 0800 121 8989
- for 2007/08 EMA queries (i.e. current academic year): 0808 101 6219

**9. Keeping you informed**

If you would like to know more about the Learner Support Service or Learner Support schemes which include the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and Adult Learning Grant (ALG) please go to: [http://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneystolearn](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneystolearn). You can also view all previous e-bulletins at this address.