LSC Regional and Cogent Compact Protocol

Purpose

1. The purpose of this protocol is to outline joint working principles and arrangements between Cogent and the Learning and Skills Council regional skills teams to ensure that the shared aims of the Cogent sector compact are delivered and that the skills requirements of employers within Cogent’s footprint are met through Train to Gain. The anticipated outputs agreed within the compact are set out in Annex A.

2. This protocol sets out the relationship and responsibilities between Cogent and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) regional skills teams in the delivery of the Cogent sector compact.

General Principles

3. This protocol will be supported and reinforced by a wider range of protocols between both parties and other key partners including the regional brokerage services and providers.

4. Delivery of the compact will complement and align with existing regional skills brokerage arrangements. Where this is not possible, different arrangements will be documented and agreed.

5. All provider referrals resulting from the arrangements within Train to Gain agreed in the compact will be made by the brokerage services (utilising existing provider databases) or by the Academy (either Nuclear or Process Academy as appropriate, hereafter referred to as the Academy representative) in partnership with the brokerage service.

6. Academies may inform employers about accredited and other providers at the request of an employer where sector specific training is required.

7. The LSC and Cogent will agree working arrangements covering regional partners including specialist provider network and employer networks. The Cogent and Academy Regional Managers and Broker representatives will liaise with the appropriate groups within each region.

8. The role of the NSAs in supporting the outcomes of the compact will be set out clearly and a protocol agreed between the NSAs and Cogent.
9. Promotion and marketing of Train to Gain in support of the objectives of the compact will be jointly planned, agreed and branded both Train to Gain and Cogent.

10. An agreed baseline will be set for employer engagement, learner starts and the range of outcomes agreed in the compact based on available performance information for the sector from 2007-2008 LSC data. The Heads of Agreement determines the absolute values for learner starts and the range of outcomes agreed in the compact.

Roles and Responsibilities

Cogent

11. Cogent will:

11.1. Fulfil the actions detailed in the Cogent / Regional Engagement Team protocol.

11.2. Establish the Regional Engagement Team of Cogent Regional Manager, Academy Representative and Broker Representative to work with the LSC in each region.

11.3. Agree review and monitoring arrangements with the LSC and the brokerage service. This will include initial monthly and then subsequently quarterly meetings to review performance against targets and identification of areas for further development / action. These will review regional compact performance against targets.

11.4. Work with the regional LSC to agree an engagement strategy for working with existing networks including providers for completion in the first quarter.

11.5. Work with the LSC to agree and deliver a provider communications plan (updated within the first quarter of each year of the compact).

11.6. Work with the Regional Engagement Teams to develop a regional employer engagement strategy and inform the LSC of its progress at the review meetings. (This should be updated within the first quarter of each year of the compact). It will take into account:

- company size, sub-sector and location
- regional and local priorities for example critical industries and those with potential for growth current penetration rates for employer engagements and
- learner starts vs potential
11.7. Work with the regional LSC and brokerage services within the first quarter of each year of the compact to develop and agree a regional employer engagement plan to include:
   - employer targeting strategy
   - baseline and progress figures
   - regional marcomms strategy roles and responsibilities of both SSC and LSC in delivering this plan

Engaging Employers and Driving up Demand

12. Ensure that the Cogent and/or Academy employer engagement teams:
   - Stimulate demand and generate leads in order to drive up demand.
   - Present the full range of support available through Train to Gain including the Skills Pledge and wider business support, and any employer contribution.

The Learning and Skills Council

13. The LSC will:

   13.1. Fulfil the actions detailed in the Cogent Regional Engagement Team protocol

   13.2. Nominate a lead link person to work with Cogent in each region (See Annex D)

   13.3. Utilise the national marcomms principles and plan to agree a regional marketing and promotion plan strategy and approach with Cogent which will promote the Train to Gain sector offer agreed with Cogent. To include:
      13.3.1.1. Train to Gain
      13.3.1.2. The Skills Pledge
      13.3.1.3. Broader business support

   13.4. Agree regional review and monitoring arrangements with Cogent and the regional brokerage service. This may include initially monthly and then subsequently quarterly meetings to review performance against regional targets.

   13.5. Work with regional brokerage services to agree how Cogent data can be captured and reported through XML / Broker Contract Management System (BCMS) and the Skills Pledge extranet. These arrangements will be documented.
Measures of Success / Targets for the Compact

14. National Employer Skills Survey (NESS) will be used to gain an understanding of each of the following within the employer engagement strategy and monitoring baselines:
   Recruitment activity (this will give an indication of skills shortages)
   Skills gaps
   Companies engaged in training their employees

15. LSC will report on the impact of the compact using information collected nationally / regionally through LSC National Broker Contract Management System (BCMS) and ILR systems. Information collected will include:

   15.1. Total number of employers in the footprint engaged in training indicating penetration rates;
   15.2. Learner starts and completions, first and additional, at level 2, 3 and 4 by priority aim, Skills for Life achievements, Leadership and Management Development grants and apprenticeships. This will also indicate penetration rates;
   15.3. Number of providers engaged and delivering (a provider is defined as a contract holder who is delivering provision)
   15.4. Skills Pledges signed by employers in the Cogent footprint to be measured as a cumulative figure and change from September 2008

16. Cogent will report on the impact of the employer engagement team using information collated nationally / regionally: this should include the number of companies engaged in which Cogent were involved. This should indicate new and repeat engagements.

LSC/ Cogent
January 2009
Annex A

Anticipated Outputs of the compact (over 3 years)

- 1500 referrals to skills brokers
- 10,500 learners achieving ‘full’ L2 qualifications of which 7,350 are first and 3,150 are repeat based on a ratio of 70% : 30%.
- 5215 learners achieving ‘full’ L3 qualifications of which 3,650 are first and 1,565 are repeat based on a ratio of 70% : 30%.
- 1500 skills pledge commitments
- 3000 management & leadership outcomes
- 6000 apprenticeships starts
- 1500 Skills for Life outcomes