Purpose

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

2. This protocol also sets out the relationship and responsibilities between Proskills, the Proskills employer engagement team and the regional brokerage services in the delivery of the Proskills sector compact.

3. Through the agreement in the sector compact, the Train to Gain offer to employers in Proskills’s footprint is enhanced to include:
   - First and additional NVQ level 2 and 3 focussed on SSC priority qualifications (See targets in Annex A)
   - All age Apprenticeships.
   - Skills for Life e.g. literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).
   - Management & Leadership. (Companies with 10 – 250 employees plus further support from SME Flexibilities)
   - Making a National Skills Pledge and Sustainable Workforce Pledge

General Principles

4. This protocol will be supported and reinforced by a wider range of protocols between the regional LSC, Proskills and other key regional partners including specialist provider network and employer networks

5. 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.

6. 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 and other sources of information as appropriate to employer needs.

7. Proskills will not make direct employer referrals to providers without the knowledge of the brokerage services. This agreed approach will reinforce the concept of a single point of contact between providers and the wider brokerage network.

8. The brokerage services and Proskills will work together to ensure that employer engagement activity is aligned to avoid unnecessary duplication.

9. The role of the NSA in supporting the outcomes of the compact will be set out clearly and a protocol agreed between the NSA and Proskills.
10. 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 Proskills.

11. A 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 2006-2007 LSC data.

Detailed Working arrangements - Roles and Responsibilities

The Skills Broker and Proskills Employer Engagement Team will work with the Regional brokerage service in the following key areas:

12. Data and management information

- Use the relevant reporting platform managed by the Regional Brokerage Services, where possible. Where this is not possible, different arrangements will be documented and agreed.
- Utilise Unique Reference Numbers (URN) identified from the Blue Sheep database.
- Share data with the regional brokerage services and the LSC regarding regional employer engagements made (reports to be agreed regionally).
- Use the process for exchange of data specified by the LSC.
- Capture a minimum, nationally required, data set from employers as agreed with the LSC and regional brokerage services.
- Capture additional employer performance data including data on skills gaps and identified employer needs to help to inform future provision planning.

13. Employer Engagement

- 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
- Communicate the core sector offer with the regional brokerage service.
- Develop a broader regional offer built around the national core, to include for example ESF projects.
- Agree referral arrangements in line with the agreed national customer journey (Annex D), including referrals to the broader areas of business support.
- Agree a set of appropriate diagnostic tools including Proskills ProFile tool.

14. Sourcing Provision

- To ensure that all provider referrals will be made by Regional Brokerage services.
- Support the development of provider capability and capacity to deliver in line with regional delivery profiles.
- Ensure the regional brokerage services are regularly updated on the status of providers working in the region against accreditation standards.
- Help increase the number of training providers that meet the overall quality standards.
15. Support the exchange of sector knowledge and understanding between Proskills and the Skills Brokers

- Develop the knowledge of regional brokerage service staff with regards to the sector offer and needs of the sector and associated learner entitlement. This includes information on:
  - business and skills issues, solutions and priorities for the sector,
  - training in detail on the diagnostic tools utilised by Proskills (this to take place within the first three months of the compact),
  - and update on key changes in the sector at least annually.

- Ensure that the Proskills employer engagement team:
  - present the full range of support available though Train to Gain including the National Skills Pledge and wider business support, and any employer contribution
  - are assessed as capable against the National Brokerage standard by the first anniversary of the compact

16. Marketing and Promotion

- Developing and agreeing a marketing and promotion strategy and approach with the regional brokerage service, in line with the National Marketing Campaign.
- Promoting the sector offer in Train to Gain to include the National Skills Pledge and broader business support

17. Monitoring Arrangements

- Nominate a lead link person to work with the brokerage service for each region (Annex F)
- Agree regional reviews and monitoring arrangements with the regional brokerage service and the LSC. This will include initially monthly and subsequently quarterly meetings to review performance against regional targets.

The Regional Brokerage Service work with Proskills to:

18. Data and management information

- Work with the LSC in each region to agree how Proskills data can be captured and reported to the LSC through the XML / Broker Contract Management System (BCMS). This will include
  - Agreeing access for identified Proskills staff to the regional reporting platform
  - Training for identified Proskills staff in the use of reporting platforms
  - Report to LSC through the XML / BCMS system on performance relating to the compact
- Capture a minimum, nationally required, data set from employers as agreed with the LSC and Proskills
- Share available data with Proskills regarding all employer engagements resulting from promotion of the compact or making use of the compact flexibilities.
19. Employer engagement

- 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

- Communicate the core sector offer with the regional brokerage service
- Develop a broader regional offer built around the national core, to include for example ESF projects
- Agree referral arrangements in line with the agreed national customer journey (Annex D), including referrals to the broader areas of business support
- Agree a set of appropriate diagnostic tools including Proskills ProFile Tool.
- Develop employer engagement strategies including joint work in identifying target employers (see Annex C)

20. Support the exchange of sector knowledge and understanding between Proskills and the Skills Brokers

- Develop the knowledge of Proskills employer engagement team with regards to the flexible arrangements and other regional issues related to the needs of the sector. This includes information on learner and employer eligibility in Train to Gain.

21. Sourcing Provision

- Identify suitable providers to meet identified employer needs
- Make provider referrals utilising existing provider databases to meet employers’ needs
- Utilise the Train to Gain responsive fund where an employer has expressed a wish to work with a particular provider
- Work with Proskills and NSAMPS to maintain an awareness of regional provider capability and accreditation

22. Marketing and Promotion

- Develop and agree a marketing and promotion strategy and approach with Proskills in line with the National Campaign
- Promote the sector offer agreed with Proskills to include Train to Gain, the National Skills Pledge and broader business support

Monitoring Arrangements

- Nominate a lead link person to work with Proskills for the region
- Agree regional review and monitoring arrangements with Proskills and the LSC. This will include, initially monthly and subsequently quarterly meetings to review performance against regional targets
Measures of Success / Targets for the compact

23. Referrals between Proskills employer engagement staff and regional brokerage services in both directions can count as engagements for both organisations provided value is being added. This is documented in Annex E. The organisation making initial contact must be identified in the CRM. This will allow brokers to count the following outcomes against contractual targets:

- Joint visits to active employers to enable an understanding of additional flexibilities under the compact
- Referrals from Proskills to source training provision following a diagnostic
- Repeat engagements, subject to regional contractual arrangements, to previously engaged employers who will benefit from compact flexibilities
- Referrals from Proskills for training requirements outside their area of specialism

24. The following will be gathered both nationally and regionally through LSC BCMS and ILR systems and used to assess the strategic success of the compact:

24.1. 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;
24.2. National Skills Pledges signed by employers in the Proskills footprint to be measured as a cumulative figure.
24.3. Total number of employers in the footprint engaged in training indicating penetration rates;

25. National Employer Skills Survey (NESS) will be used to gain an understanding of each of the following:

- Recruitment activity (this will give an indication of skills shortages)
- Skills gaps
- Companies engaged in training their employees

26. The following will be gathered, on a national and regional basis, with respect to interventions carried out by Proskills employer engagement teams:

- Number of companies engaged to include those led by Proskills and those in which Proskills were involved. This should indicate new and repeat engagements;
- Business to Skills diagnostics conducted
- Referrals to regional brokerage service including those which Proskills have led or had involvement in;
- Learner starts and completions, first and additional, at NVQ level 2, 3 and 4 by priority aim,
- Skills for Life achievements, Leadership and Management Development Grants and Apprenticeships.
- Referrals to other regional partners as relevant and regional Business Link
- Employer investment in skills
27. In addition:

27.1. Proskills will also develop measures to assess the impact on productivity and profitability by the first anniversary of the compact.

27.2. LSC will commission additional evaluation on the compact as part of Train to Gain employer satisfaction evaluation.

23rd February 2009
ANNEX A

Anticipated Outputs of the compact (over three years)

- 1500 employer engagements, which will include sector specific support for Train to Gain skills brokers
- 20,623 full Level 2 qualifications, comprising 70% (14,436, 1st L2’s) & 30% (6,187, 2nd L2’s)
- 7,981 full Level 3 qualifications, comprising 70% (5,587, 1st L3’s) & 30% (2,394 2nd L3’s)
- 1500 National Skills Pledge commitments; 100 (Y1), 400 (Y2) and 1000 (Y3).
- 900 management & leadership outcomes.
- 6000 apprenticeships starts, existing frameworks 3000, new frameworks 3000.
- 1455 Skills for Life achievements over three years.

For monitoring purposes, the Compact start date is 25th June 2008.
ANNEX B

Train to Gain – The service

The core Train to Gain service available to employers is an independent and impartial brokerage service which will diagnose business needs and source appropriate training provision.

Through Train to Gain Proskills and the regional brokerage service will provide:

- A comprehensive analysis of training needs and will propose solutions to those needs. Solutions which will identify clearly which elements attract government funding and those for which the employer will have to pay, in part or in full;
- Easy access to relevant and flexible, high quality training delivered mostly in the workplace and using increasingly an assess train, assess model which will enable the employee’s prior learning and experience to be taken into account;
- Access to LSC fully funded programmes, for example Skills for Life, Level 2 provision and Apprenticeships;
- Information and support from a Skills Broker, working to national standards, providing access to a wide range of training packages including higher level qualifications and training that is not qualification-based;
- Information and advice to employers and employees on qualifications and training, local/regional skills shortages and priorities as well as eligibility for funding;
- Support to develop ongoing strategies addressing future training needs, which are aligned to business objectives;
- Limited wage subsidies for employers of less than 50 full time equivalent employees;
- Support to help employers agree SMART objectives and impact measures for training and development activities at an organisational, team and individual learner level if required;
- Support to help employers evaluate the impact of training and development on individual, team and organisational performance for all training and development regardless of whether or not it is funded; and
- Ongoing support to help employers to develop strategies to address future skills and training needs, which are aligned to business objectives and embedded in their business processes, including capacity building if required.
ANNEX C

Targeting Strategy

Proskills will work with regional brokerage services to agree a targeting strategy which will minimise the number of employers who are contacted by both organisations to promote general opportunities under Train to Gain and the additional services and flexibilities offered by the compact.

Principles for this are given below;

- Proskills will promote this offer only to those employers within their footprint
- The compact includes an agreement that Proskills will work with the largest 40 companies in its footprint. These will be identified on a regional basis and their details shared with the regional LSC and brokerage service
- Large companies (more than 5,000 employees) with a presence in more than 1 region will be targeted by Proskills who will work jointly with the LSC’s National Employer Service (NES)
- In the case of companies who are already working with Proskills or the regional brokerage service to plan or implement training delivery under Train to Gain the flexibilities under the compact will be promoted by the current lead organisation. If necessary or requested by the employer additional support will be provided by Proskills or the regional brokerage service
- Proskills will work with the regional brokerage service to establish the use of Train to Gain by their employers in the region;
- If an employer is active Proskills will liaise with the regional brokerage service to determine whether
  o Joint contact or visit is made to the employer
  or
  o Proskills or the brokerage service contact the employer alone
- If an employer is inactive Proskills will promote the sector offer
- In order to avoid companies being targeted by both Proskills and the regional brokerage service agreements will be reached on a regional basis on how to segment employers not currently active on Train to Gain. This will take the company size, sub-sector and location into consideration into account.
- In all cases above both Proskills and the regional brokerage service can count the engagement subject to value being added
Annex E

Measuring Employer Engagement in Train to Gain

Arrangements for Skills Brokers working with SSC Employer Engagement Team

1. Principles

1.1. Employer engagement in Train to Gain must be delivered according to an agreed plan between the LSC region and the SSC to ensure clear targeting of resource.

1.2. For employers counted as contributing to the targets in Train to Gain agreed within the sector compact, 50% of those generated by the SSC must be employers new to Train to Gain.

1.3. An employer can be counted as new to Train to Gain providing that:
   - an ONA has not taken place at any point in the last three months
   - a training proposal has not been made at any point in the last three months

1.4. A mapping between the Proskills and skills brokers ONA must have been completed and in place in each region to ensure any duplication is removed

1.5. Referrals to Proskills (from new employers engaged by Skills Brokers) must account for no more than 25% of employers engaged by Proskills against their employer engagement target.

1.6. The numbers of employers engaged by Proskills who sign the National Skills Pledge is a key indicator of the success of Proskills employer engagement.

1.7. All third party organisations must refer employers into the skills brokerage service. The criteria set out below then apply.
Annex E continued…

2. Measuring successful engagement

a. Employer Engagement Measurement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Type</th>
<th>Proskills</th>
<th>Skills Brokerage Service</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Proskills engage a new employer from their own first contact</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>URN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As evidenced by the URN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Proskills refer an existing contact without a completed Proskills</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>URN plus any referral documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diagnostic to Skills Brokers</td>
<td></td>
<td>If / When referral</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>made to solutions</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>provider or proposal is</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>signed or carries out</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ONA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Proskills refer an existing contact without a completed Proskills</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>URN plus any referral documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diagnostic across skills brokers for broader support from other</td>
<td></td>
<td>If / When referral</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>organisations</td>
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<td>made to solutions</td>
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<td>ONA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Skills Brokers engage a new employer from their own first contact and</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>URN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete an ONA and/or refer to solutions provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Skills Brokers refer an existing contact with or without a completed</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>URN plus any referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONA and/or refer to solutions provider to Proskills for sector specific</td>
<td>(cannot be</td>
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<td>support</td>
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<td>engaged)</td>
<td>engaged)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Skills Brokers refer an existing contact without a completed ONA and/or</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>URN plus any referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refer to solutions provider across for broader support from other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>documenta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organisations</td>
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<td>tion</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Annex E continued…

**b. Employer National Skills Pledge**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pledge Type</th>
<th>Proskills</th>
<th>Skills Brokerage Service</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Proskills influence a new employer from their own first contact to make National Skills Pledge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>URN on Extranet or if Employer triggered via Web, letter or email confirmed from employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Proskills influence an existing contact to make National Skills Pledge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>URN on Extranet or if Employer triggered via Web, letter or email confirmed from employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Skills Broker influence a new employer from their own first contact to make National Skills Pledge</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>URN on Extranet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Skills Broker influence an existing contact to make National Skills Pledge</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>URN on Extranet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex F

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