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Title: Merseyside Phasing-In Area – Training In-Company Mentors to Support Employee Retention

Reference: NW/EMPLOYER/S36

Aim
This tender supports the post-employment phase of the Skills for Jobs Framework.

The aim of this tender specification is to seek providers to deliver a comprehensive package of training and development to potential mentoring staff in the workplace. This package will enable employers to provide their own in-house support for newly recruited employees, particularly long term unemployed.

Service requirement
Background

The LSC’s Skills For Jobs Framework aims to deliver an integrated employment and skills system (please refer to the document: Introduction and Guidance to Skills for Jobs, September 2008). As part of the framework, the LSC has recently procured a suite of activity which provides pre-employment training for workless individuals with the aim of securing a permanent job. Once a job is secured, 1:1 support is offered directly to these new employees to enable them to sustain their employment. This support is delivered via an external contracted provider.

This specification is aimed at supporting employers to provide their own in-house support as part of their recruitment and retention strategy. There is evidence that such support can increase new staff retention rates. For example, the Ofsted Good Practice Database highlights the 'British Gas' 'buddy' mentoring system as a successful retention scheme, in operation since 1997, which has also been adapted for use in employer pilot programmes for long-term unemployed adults and those facing redundancy.

It is recognised that people who have previously been out of work may find it difficult to adapt to working life and may need additional support in the workplace. The objective of this specification is to provide a comprehensive package of training and development that can be flexibly delivered to nominated existing employees in the workplace. Through the programme, these nominated employees will gain the skills to enable them to support new entrants and give them the knowledge of how to work effectively alongside the existing provider led support services already available to the individual.

Training Package

A partnership approach may be required in order to deliver a programme combining the two essential elements: element 1 will develop individual skills; element 2 will develop underpinning knowledge. Where possible, delivery should be contextualised to meet the sector routeway specific to the needs of the employer.

Element 1: Skill Building

It is essential that the individual has the necessary skills to support others in the workplace. Although not prescriptive, the package of training may include:

- Mentoring and coaching skills
Team working skills  
Building confidence  
Working with stakeholders  
Developing induction programmes

Element 2: Knowledge Building

It is essential that the employer is given an understanding of many of the issues facing those entering the workplace from a period of reliance on benefits and the knowledge of where to signpost individuals for specific elements of support. As a minimum, we would expect the applicant to be able to demonstrate how they will incorporate into the programme an overview of:

- job-focused pre-employment provision
- LSC funded workplace provision and how mentoring will complement/enhance this
- IAG (Information, Advice & Guidance) services
- welfare benefits system including return to work benefits
- the potential characteristics and barriers faced by work returners
- local support services (e.g., childcare; transport; debt; caring responsibilities; drug rehabilitation)
- Equality and diversity issues within the North West including working with ex-offenders, BME and other groups.

Flexibility in delivery

In order to ensure delivery of a programme which meets the needs of employers and employees, tenders must describe how delivery will be flexible around learners’ working hours or dependant support activity (i.e., children or carer activity) and with the full cooperation of employers.

Marketing the programme

Applicants must outline how they will liaise with providers of job-focused pre-employment training programmes in order to effectively market this provision to receptive employers recruiting for vacancies via these routes. This could include:

- Job Centre Plus providers
- Employers signed up to a Job Centre Plus Local Employment Partnership
- LSC Skills for Jobs providers
- LSC SEP Providers
- Local Authority programmes
- City Employment Strategy (or equivalent) programmes
- NWDA programmes

Applicants will also be required to outline how they will market their services to employers not previously engaged in such activity and should also outline how they will work with Business Link North West to offer this programme as part of the Train to Gain service for employers.

Selection of learners

Applicants must outline how they will ensure potential learners, as part of an initial assessment, are ready to become ‘workplace mentors’ and are:

- competent and experienced in the occupational job roles they will be supporting;
- good at motivating and encouraging people;
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- interested in helping people develop;
- able to relate to staff at all levels;
- willing to engage with external support agencies.
- Willing to work with union learning representative’s where appropriate

Learners must have access to newly recruited employees to support. The tender must outline how this will be achieved.

**Quality**

Applicants must demonstrate in their tenders how they will provide training to the required quality, as detailed below.

- Providers will need to demonstrate they have a track record of delivering high quality provision to employers and employees. Evidence of inspection grades of 3 or above or external quality assurance such as Training Quality Standard accreditation or application made to become accredited, awarding bodies’ external verification reports, ISO9000 accreditation and Investor in People status will serve to support providers’ applications.
- Providers should note that the direction of travel for the LSC is that the preferred external accredited standard is the Training Quality Standard.
- Providers will need to show appropriate completion rates for each sector in which they wish to deliver. Previous and planned completion rates will be an important aspect in the assessment of bids.

Information about the Training Quality Standard may be obtained from http://www.newstandard.co.uk.

**Employer Unique Reference Number (URN)**

Successful providers will be required to access the Employer Data Service (EDS) database to obtain the employer’s URN which must be entered on each learner’s Individual Learner Record (ILR). Providers must also ensure that they have appropriate management information systems in place to collect and submit data to the Learning and Skills Council on a monthly basis.

**Target groups & priority**

Employers based in the North West, in any sector including the voluntary and community sector.

Participants must either be a resident in or work (both paid and unpaid) in an organisation which is based in the geographic locations identified for this tender specification. ESF regulations for Priority 2 stipulate that volunteers may only be supported where they are recruited onto the programme through targeting a wider employed workforce.

Training to support low skilled public sector workers to gain basic skills and level 2 qualifications is eligible. This is because the benefits of training at this level primarily benefit the individuals concerned and promote career development and mobility.

Additionally, the Learning and Skills Council would like to see providers demonstrate in their tenders that they are making linkages with employers actively engaged in recruitment
via Job Centre Plus and/or Skills for Jobs Framework Programmes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geography / area of delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The service should be available across the whole of the Merseyside Phasing-In Area (Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The minimum outputs to be delivered are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A programme of support (one per contract)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 360 Employee starts on a programme of training and development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The minimum results to be delivered are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 250 Employee completions on a programme of training and development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 72 NCFE Certificate in Work Based Support &amp; Mentoring and/or provider certification for non-accredited bespoke programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 150 Employers engaged in the programme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Successful applicants will be required to submit six monthly performance and evaluation reports providing details of employers engaged in the programme with case studies to demonstrate impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best practice from providers will be collected and communicated to all involved in the programme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total ESF funding for this programme is £213,260.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is anticipated that the average unit cost (from ESF) would be no greater than £592 per beneficiary and indeed we expect that for many it will be a lot less. We therefore expect applications that can demonstrate value for money comparable to the client group targeted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts that are awarded under this Tender Specification will have to follow State Aid regulations. State Aid is defined as any aid to a commercial under taking through 'state resources' that distorts or threatens to distort competition within the European Union. In practice this means that any co-financed (ESF) funding support given to enterprises that could be construed as giving them a competitive advantage over other enterprises in the European Union will fall under European rules regarding State Aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important to note that State Aid can apply to public and private sector organisations and also charities if they are producing or selling products or services that can compete in a commercial environment (whether for profit or not).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance will be provided on State Aid to the successful applicant(s), however it is important to note the LSC will initially be operating De Minimis. Successful providers will need to ensure that employers have not breached the £138,000 ceiling over 3 fiscal years. If this ceiling is breached then the following limits will be applied for SME and Large...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enterprises that are benefiting from State Aid (training resulting from this Tender Specification) under the State Aid General Block Exemption. Above these limits cash or where agreed with the LSC, in-kind contributions must be sought from the employer.

It should also be noted that the LSC expects that ALL training delivered under this Tender Specification to be ‘General’ as defined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enterprise Type</th>
<th>Specific Training</th>
<th>General Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large Enterprises</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small and Medium-sized Enterprises</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Definition of General training is: If the training of employees is applicable not only to an employees’ present or future position in the enterprise being assisted because the provision of qualifications provides transferable skills that substantially improve the employability of the employee concerned. Where training leads to the award of National Vocational qualifications and Key Skills Qualifications training will be considered to be general in nature.

Definition of Specific training is: Where training provided is principally applicable to the employee's present or future position in the assisted enterprise and provides qualifications that are not transferable, the maximum aid intensities for specific training will apply.

Where Deminimis has been limits have been exceeded, providers are required to ensure that each beneficiary company must contribute to the total cost of support provided. Therefore this allocation is conditional on the beneficiary company providing the correct contribution to the cost of training they have received. The company contribution can either be financial or in-kind (unless the LSC instructs that financial or in-kind is specifically required). The employer contribution may change in future years. All evidence of employer contributions must be readily available for audit purposes.

It should be noted that the LSC will be applying for the General Block Exemption to be applied to LSC ESF funded activity for the 07/13 ESF programme, but until this application is approved, Deminimis is the only valid exemption.

Providers will be responsible for securing and evidencing the employer contribution, this evidence must be readily available for audit purposes. No claim against the ESF will be valid until the employer contribution has been received by the provider. The provider will be required to complete company information records and state aid documentation for all companies supported through the programme.

**Start and end dates**

Projects must not start activity before 1 December 2009 and must complete all of their activity by 31 July 2011 (including evaluation and dissemination activities).

Projects must not recruit individuals if there is insufficient time available to allow them to achieve the outcomes of the project. The LSC reserves the right to extend the end date of
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individual contracts where necessary.

**Contracting details**
The table below is provided as an example of how a contract award for the full allocation of funding and associated deliverables would look. Providers should use these deliverables to profile their delivery. These deliverables will be used to identify the contribution providers are making to the delivery of the outputs and results required for this Tender Specification. As indicated in the table each key deliverable will be assigned a unit cost and the LSC will pay against this profile of activity. Successful applicants will be required to submit regular learner and performance related information to the LSC and the LSC will normally reconcile contracts on a quarterly basis, which will affect future profile payments, or seek to recover funds where necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable ID</th>
<th>Deliverable Name</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Participant Assessment, Planning and Support</td>
<td>£82</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>£29,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>Employees undertaking non-accredited training and development learning activity</td>
<td>£180</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>£64,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S7</td>
<td>Employees undertaking accredited qualifications at Level 2 or notional Level 2</td>
<td>£180</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>£15,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(NCFE Certificate in Work Based Support &amp; Mentoring). NB These learners are part of the overall 1440 in S2 &amp; S4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S22*</td>
<td>Mid-Point Payments (x2 per learner) based on average length of stay for S4 Starts (6 months). NB. This has been calculated using a flat line drop of rate.</td>
<td>£50</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>£30,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Completion of non-accredited training and development learning activity</td>
<td>£180</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>£45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A10</td>
<td>Employees achieve accredited qualifications at Level 2 or notional Level 2</td>
<td>£180</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>£12,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(NCFE Certificate in Work Based Support &amp; Mentoring). NB These learners are part of the overall 1440 in S2 &amp; S4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>Companies engaged</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>£15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11</td>
<td>Project Evaluation including Case Studies (evaluations to be submitted February and August and Case Studies)</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"NB Providers are asked to set out their programme design for this tender specification. The above deliverables have been based on a 6 month delivery programme per learner, if however the proposed course is different to this, the deliverables will be amended at contract clarification to reflect the average length of stay in the application.

Due to the changing economic and political landscape it may be necessary for the LSC to amend contracts during their lifetime to re-focus this offer to particular target groups, employment sectors, skills needs and geographical hotspots. In such circumstances successful contractors will be expected to adapt their offer accordingly.

The Learning and Skills Council may also choose to invite projects to be retained on a reserve list to enable them to be funded at a later point.

Providers’ responses to the tender should indicate the maximum amount of funding expected to be drawn down between 1 December 2009 and 31 July 2011. Initial contracts may be small in size, but will have the potential to be increased subject to performance and budget availability. Contract increases will be both financial and for a proportionate level of volumes. Providers are asked to identify any issues regarding the scaling back of provision.

Subcontracting

If the Contractor wishes to work with a sub-contractor that is not named in the original bid and the value of the sub-contracting arrangement exceeds £10,000, the activity must be competitively tendered for. Where only one provider is available then permission must be sought from the LSC before the sub-contract is agreed. Where the value is £10,000 or below, then, providing they can demonstrate value for money, the Contractor can source specialist providers directly to sub-contract with, without the need for tendering.
Aim
To build additional assessor and verifier capacity in the region to support the expansion of Train to Gain and to develop further in-house training capabilities of employers as part of workforce development.

Service requirement
The requirement is for the delivery of industry relevant trainer development qualifications and Assessor and Verifier qualifications.

Although this tender is aimed at employees (and volunteers and self-employed people), providers may recruit participants who are recently unemployed and who wish to acquire these qualifications in order to gain employment in sectors where there are skills shortages.

Table 1 provides examples of qualifications that the LSC considers applicable for this programme. In addition, industry relevant programmes will be considered where employer demand is evidenced. However, the LSC will not support the delivery of statutory qualifications.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Unit Reference</th>
<th>Old Unit Reference</th>
<th>Unit Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>D32 and D33</td>
<td>Assess candidates using a range of methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>D32</td>
<td>Assess candidates performance through observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V1</td>
<td>D34</td>
<td>Internal verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V2</td>
<td>D35</td>
<td>External verification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Flexibility in delivery
Providers are expected to deliver the qualifications in the workplace and to be flexible in meeting learners’ and employers’ needs. Applicants should explain how they will ensure that delivery is flexible.

Marketing the programme
Applicants must outline how they will engage individuals on the programme, for example by liaising with the skills brokerage service and with other partners and by marketing if appropriate.

Selection of learners
Tenders must outline how they will ensure potential learners as part of initial assessment are ready to become assessors and are:

- competent and experienced in the occupational area they want to assess;
- good at motivating and encouraging people;
• interested in helping people develop;
• able to relate to staff at all levels;
• skilled at writing reports and keeping accurate written records.

Learners must have access to at least two NVQ candidates to assess or employees to train. The tender must outline how this will be achieved.

Information, Advice and Guidance

Effective Information, Advice and Guidance are an important aspect of this programme. Successful providers will either hold the Matrix standard* or will provide an equivalent level of support, for example by sub-contracting this aspect of delivery to partners who are Matrix-accredited. Applicants must state whether they hold the Matrix standard for IAG or are working towards it.

* the Matrix standard is the unique quality framework for the effective delivery of information, advice and/or guidance on learning and work. Further information may be obtained from www.matrixStandard.com

Quality

Applicants must demonstrate in their tenders how they will provide training to the required quality, as detailed below.

• Providers will need to demonstrate they have a track record of delivering high quality provision to employers and employees. Evidence of inspection grades of 3 or above or external quality assurance such as Training Quality Standard accreditation or application made to become accredited, awarding bodies’ external verification reports, ISO9000 accreditation and Investor in People status will serve to support providers’ applications.
• Providers should note that the direction of travel for the LSC is that the preferred external accredited standard is the Training Quality Standard.
• Providers will need to show appropriate completion rates for each sector in which they wish to deliver. Previous and planned completion rates will be an important aspect in the assessment of bids.

Further information

Applicants should refer to the suite of provider guidance documents at http://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/funding-policy/traintogain/ for further information about the delivery of provision in the workplace, SfL support and Information, Advice and Guidance. Information about the Training Quality Standard may be obtained from http://www.newstandard.co.uk.

Employer Unique Reference Number (URN)

Successful providers will be required to access the Employer Data Service (EDS) database to obtain the employer’s URN which must be entered on each learner’s Individual Learner Record (ILR). Providers must also ensure that they have appropriate management information systems in place to collect and submit data to the Learning and Skills Council on a monthly basis.
Target groups & priority

Employees aged 19 years or older in any sector (including the public and third sector). Volunteers are also eligible as part of the organisation’s workforce, as are self-employed people. ESF regulations for Priority 2 stipulate that volunteers may only be supported where they are recruited onto the programme through targeting a wider employed workforce.

Also eligible are participants who are recently unemployed and who wish to acquire these qualifications in order to gain employment in sectors where there are skills shortages.

Participants must be resident in or work in an organisation which is based in the geographic locations identified for this Tender Specification and must not already hold the qualifications described in the Service Requirement. (Note: assessors and verifiers already holding the former D units do not need to re-qualify).

Geography / area of delivery

The provision should be available across Cheshire & Warrington and Lancashire.

Outputs

The minimum outputs which are required are detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cheshire &amp; Warrington</th>
<th>Lancashire</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners engaged</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results

The minimum results which are required are detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cheshire &amp; Warrington</th>
<th>Lancashire</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners achieving A or V qualifications (or industry relevant programmes)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other outcomes

A Performance and Evaluation report to be submitted to the LSC every six months during the contract period and a final evaluation report at the end of the contract.

Funding available

The overall funding available for this Tender Specification is £361,450. This funding is split as follows:

- Cheshire & Warrington - £131,850
- Lancashire - £228,850

The split of funds identified within geographic locations is indicative.

The following unit costs have been calculated purely for comparison purposes, they do not reflect the actual unit cost that the LSC will pay providers for the delivery of the activity specified in this Tender Specification. Applicants are required to identify, as required in
the questionnaire the average unit cost of their activity based on their proposed actual costs.

- Average unit cost of participant - £2,037
- Average unit cost of qualifications achieved - £3,435

Contracts that are awarded under this Tender Specification will have to follow State Aid regulations. State Aid is defined as any aid to a commercial undertaking through ‘state resources’ that distorts or threatens to distort competition within the European Union. In practice this means that any co-financed (ESF) funding support given to enterprises that could be construed as giving them a competitive advantage over other enterprises in the European Union will fall under European rules regarding State Aid.

It is important to note that State Aid can apply to public and private sector organisations and also charities if they are producing or selling products or services that can compete in a commercial environment (whether for profit or not).

Guidance will be provided on State Aid to the successful applicant(s), however it is important to note the following limits to ESF for SME and Large Enterprises that are benefiting from State Aid (training resulting from this Tender Specification) under the State Aid General Block Exemption. Above these limits cash or where agreed with the LSC, in-kind contributions must be sought from the employer.

It should also be noted that the LSC expects that ALL training delivered under this Tender Specification to be ‘General’ as defined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Large Enterprises</th>
<th>Specific Training</th>
<th>General Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intervention Rate</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Small and Medium-sized Enterprises</th>
<th>Specific Training</th>
<th>General Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intervention Rate (rates are for information and relate to minimum state aid requirements, this programme requires an intervention rate of 60% for SMEs)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definition of General training is:** If the training of employees is applicable not only to an employees’ present or future position in the enterprise being assisted because the provision of qualifications provides transferable skills that substantially improve the employability of the employee concerned. Where training leads to the award of National Vocational qualifications and Key Skills Qualifications training will be considered to be general in nature.

**Definition of Specific training is:** Where training provided is principally applicable to the employee’s present or future position in the assisted enterprise and provides qualifications that are not transferable, the maximum aid intensities for specific training will apply.

Each month providers will be expected to submit a monitoring claim and performance
claim to the Learning and Skills Council.

Where Deminimis limits have been exceeded, providers are required to ensure that each beneficiary company must contribute to the total cost of support provided. Therefore this allocation is conditional on the beneficiary company providing the correct contribution to the cost of training they have received. The company contribution can either be financial or in-kind (unless the LSC instructs that financial or in kind is specifically required). The employer contribution may change in future years. All evidence of employer contributions must be readily available for audit purposes.

It should be noted that the LSC will be applying for the General Block Exemption to be applied to LSC ESF funded activity for the 07/13 ESF programme, but until this application is approved, Deminimis is the only valid exemption.

**Start and end dates**

The project should commence on 1 December 2009 and be completed by 31 July 2011. Projects must not recruit individuals if there is insufficient time available to allow them to achieve the outcomes of the project. The LSC reserves the right to extend the end date of individual contracts where necessary.

**Contracting details**

The table below is provided as an example of how a contract award for the full allocation of funding and associated deliverables would look. Providers should use these deliverables to profile their delivery. These deliverables will be used to identify the contribution providers are making to the delivery of the outputs and results required for this Tender Specification. As indicated in the table each key deliverable will be assigned a unit cost and the LSC will pay against this profile of activity. Successful applicants will be required to submit regular learner and performance related information to the LSC and the LSC will normally reconcile contracts on a quarterly basis, which will affect future profile payments, or seek to recover funds where necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable ID</th>
<th>Deliverable Name</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Participant Assessment, Planning and Support</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>£17,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8</td>
<td>Participants undertaking qualification at Level 3 or Notional Level 3 (A or V Qualifications)</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>£79,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S21</td>
<td>Beneficiary retention payment (learners will claim 2 retention payments and the overall volumes for these are calculated using a straight line drop off rate)</td>
<td>£650</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>£184,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A10</td>
<td>Full achievement of a Qualification at Level 3 or notional Level 3 (A or V Qualifications)</td>
<td>£750</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>£78,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11</td>
<td>Project Evaluation including Case</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contracts may be awarded on a sub-regional basis or for both sub-regions.

Providers’ responses to the tender should indicate the maximum amount of funding expected to be drawn down between 1 December 2009 and 31 July 2011. Initial contracts may be small in size, but will have the potential to be increased subject to performance and budget availability. Contract increases will be both financial and for a proportionate level of volumes. Providers are asked to identify any issues regarding the scaling back of provision.

Due to the changing economic and political landscape it may be necessary for the LSC to amend contracts during their lifetime to re-focus this offer to particular target groups, employment sectors, skills needs and geographical hotspots. In such circumstances successful contractors will be expected to adapt their offer accordingly.

The Learning and Skills Council may also choose to invite projects to be retained on a reserve list to enable them to be funded at a later point.

**Subcontracting**

If the Contractor wishes to work with a sub-contractor that is not named in the original bid and the value of the sub-contracting arrangement exceeds £10,000, the activity must be competitively tendered for. Where only one provider is available then permission must be sought from the LSC before the sub-contract is agreed. Where the value is £10,000 or below, then, providing they can demonstrate value for money, the Contractor can source specialist providers directly to sub-contract with, without the need for tendering.
Published for information purposes only. Speculative Proposals will not be accepted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title: North West including the Merseyside Phasing-In Area - Supporting the growth in Apprenticeships for Adults</th>
<th>Reference: NW/EMPLOYER/S38</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Aim**

The document *World-class Apprenticeships: Unlocking Talent, Building Skills for All* clearly outlined the Government’s commitment to expanding and strengthening the Apprenticeships programme including significant growth in Apprenticeships for those aged 25 or over.

The aim of this tender specification is to support the growth in Apprenticeships for Adults in the **North West** region by providing part ESF funding and part Apprenticeship funding to fund Apprentices aged 25 and over employed in either:

- Public Sector,
- The voluntary sector/third sector, or
- BME employers, or
- A framework area which is not commonly delivered and which we are seeking to expand capacity. Table 1 below outlines those framework areas which are **excluded** and are not fundable through this tender, all other framework areas not listed on this table are fundable through this tender;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 - Top 10 Frameworks – not fundable through this tender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairdressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality and Catering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Care Learning and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Maintenance and Repair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Social Care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Service requirement**

An Apprenticeship contains the following mandatory elements.

- A knowledge-based element (the theoretical knowledge underpinning a job in a certain occupation and industry, (typically certified via a Technical Certificate).
- A competence-based element (the ability to discharge the functions of a certain occupation, typically certified via work-based assessed (Normally a national vocational qualification (NVQs)).
- Transferable or ‘functional skills’ (literacy and numeracy plus wider key skills as designated by the relevant SSC).
- Employment rights and responsibilities.

This tender specification is for **partial ESF funding** of the competence-based element of
the delivery (the NVQ) and full ESF funding of the knowledge based element, the transferable or ‘functional skills’ element and the employment rights and responsibilities element. This is not a specification for the delivery of full Apprenticeship frameworks and following progression to the Apprenticeship funding stream providers will be expected to discount any funds earned through ESF through the A51 ILR field.

Applications are welcomed from providers who do not currently hold an Apprenticeship contract as well as those who do. Providers must also explain how they would work in partnership with other providers (where necessary) to ensure that progression to Apprenticeship funding is managed effectively.

**Employer engagement**

Successful providers will need to both generate their own employer leads for the delivery of this activity and to work with the National Apprenticeship Service and Business Link North West to meet the needs of employers referred through these routes. Applicants should explain how they will engage employers, whether through existing relationships with employers or through the engagement of new employers.

**Quality**

Applicants must demonstrate in their tenders how they will provide training to the required quality, as detailed below.

- Providers will need to demonstrate they have a track record of delivering high quality provision to employers and employees. Evidence of inspection grades of 3 or above or external quality assurance such as Training Quality Standard accreditation or application made to become accredited, awarding bodies’ external verification reports, ISO9000 accreditation and Investor in People status will serve to support providers’ applications.
- Providers should note that the direction of travel for the LSC is that the preferred external accredited standard is the Training Quality Standard.
- Providers will need to show appropriate completion rates for each sector in which they wish to deliver. Previous and planned completion rates will be an important aspect in the assessment of bids.

**Apprentice Engagement in Programme Delivery**

Applicants are required to demonstrate their commitment to the Apprenticeship programme therefore your response should clearly outline how Apprentices or trainees will be engaged in the delivery of the contract. This information will be utilised in the evaluation of your submission.

**Employer Unique Reference Number (URN)**

Successful providers will be required to access the Employer Data Service (EDS) database to obtain the employer’s URN which must be entered on each learner’s Individual Learner Record (ILR). Providers must also ensure that they have appropriate management information systems in place to collect and submit data to the Learning and Skills Council on a monthly basis.

**Target groups and priority sectors**

This tender specification seeks to provide entry and progression routes into
Apprenticeships for employed adults aged 25+ progressing from ESF funded provision.

Participants must either be a resident of, or employed in an organisation based in the geographical locations identified for this Tender Specification.

ESF regulations identify that training to support low skilled public sector workers to gain basic skills and level 2 qualifications is eligible; this is because the benefits of training at this level primarily benefit the individuals concerned and promote career development and mobility. However, the training of public sector workers at level 3 and above is ineligible.

Applications that will be given the strongest consideration will be those that provide clear evidence of demand from employers.

### Geography / area of delivery
The provision should be available across the whole of the Northwest including the Merseyside Phasing-In Area (Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral).

Providers should identify the proposed volumes of starts for each Technical Certificate and sub-region.

### Outputs
The volumes of outputs required by this tender specification will vary depending on the NVQ being delivered, however through this tender specification we seek to purchase:
- Participants receiving training for technical certificates at level 2 which forms part of an Apprenticeship framework
- Participants receiving training for technical certificates at level 3 which forms part of an Apprenticeship framework

In addition, the following should be delivered:
- Key Skills and Employment Rights and Responsibilities elements delivered as required
- Initial assessment including identification of SfL needs where appropriate
- Production of an individual learning plan for each learner reflecting the outcome of information, advice and guidance.

### Results
The volumes of results required by this tender specification will vary depending on the NVQ being delivered, however through this tender specification we seek to purchase:
- Participants completing a technical certificate at level 2
- Participants completing a technical certificate at level 3

### Other Outcomes
The volumes of outcomes required by this tender specification will vary depending on the NVQ being delivered, however through this tender specification we seek to purchase:
- Additional Apprenticeship starts

Providers will be required to produce a 6 monthly performance and evaluation report. In addition to details about the delivery of Technical certificate, Key Skills and Employment Rights and Responsibilities, the report should also detail the progression of learners onto
Apprenticeships and thereby completing full Apprenticeship frameworks.

Funding available
There is a total of £3,823,431 available for this programme, of which £3,383,334 is available for the North West (excluding the Halton area) and £440,097 is available for the Merseyside Phasing-In Area.

Identified below is a split of funding available at Level 2 and Level 3 for each of the sub-regions, the split per sub-region is indicative; the exception to this is the allocation for Merseyside Phasing-In Area which is exclusively available for that area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheshire &amp; Warrington</td>
<td>£182,685</td>
<td>£385,085</td>
<td>£567,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumbria</td>
<td>£118,190</td>
<td>£199,300</td>
<td>£317,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Manchester</td>
<td>£547,588</td>
<td>£1,017,814</td>
<td>£1,565,402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halton</td>
<td>£29,664</td>
<td>£13,049</td>
<td>£42,713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancashire</td>
<td>£304,826</td>
<td>£585,133</td>
<td>£889,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merseyside</td>
<td>£300,125</td>
<td>£139,972</td>
<td>£440,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merseyside Phasing-In Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>£1,483,078</td>
<td>£2,340,353</td>
<td>£3,823,431</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contracts that are awarded under this Tender Specification do not need to follow State Aid regulations as the Adult Apprenticeship programme is a universal offer.

Start and end dates
Delivery should commence on 1 December 2009 and be completed by 31 December 2011.

Individuals must not be recruited if there is insufficient time available to allow them to achieve their learning outcomes. The LSC reserves the right to extend the end date of individual contracts where necessary.

Contracting details
The table below is provided as an example of how a contract award for the full allocation of funding and associated deliverables would look based on the contract delivery of NVQ 3 in Retail Finance Services. These deliverables will be used to identify the contribution providers are making to the delivery of the outputs and results required for this Tender Specification. As indicated in the table each key deliverable will be assigned a unit cost and the LSC will pay against this profile of activity. Successful applicants will be required to submit regular learner and performance related information to the LSC and the LSC will normally reconcile contracts on a quarterly basis, which will affect future profile payments, or seek to recover funds where necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable ID</th>
<th>Deliverable Name</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Contracts may be awarded on a sub-regional basis, across multiple sub-regions or across the whole of the North West. Where providers seek to deliver activity in both the Merseyside Phasing-In Area and other areas of the North West it may be necessary for the LSC to enter into 2 separate contracts for this activity.

Providers’ responses to the tender should indicate the maximum amount of funding expected to be drawn down between 1 December 2009 and 31 December 2011. Initial contracts may be small in size, but will have the potential to be increased subject to performance and budget availability. Contract increases will be both financial and for a proportionate level of volumes. Providers are asked to identify any issues regarding the scaling back of provision.

Due to the changing economic and political landscape it may be necessary for the LSC to amend contracts during their lifetime to re-focus this offer to particular target groups, employment sectors, skills needs and geographical hotspots. In such circumstances successful contractors will be expected to adapt their offer accordingly.

The Learning and Skills Council may also choose to invite projects to be retained on a reserve list to enable them to be funded at a later point.

Subcontracting
If the Contractor wishes to work with a sub-contractor that is not named in the original bid and the value of the sub-contracting arrangement exceeds £10,000, the activity must be competitively tendered for. Where only one provider is available then permission must be sought from the LSC before the sub-contract is agreed. Where the value is £10,000 or below, then, providing they can demonstrate value for money, the Contractor can source specialist providers directly to sub-contract with, without the need for tendering.