Employer Views Surveys
The uploading activity of employer details by providers has now finished, with hundreds of providers making use of the opportunity to review and amend their records. Over the next fortnight there will be some intense activity to ensure that all survey questionnaires are processed accurately, and providers are advised to refer to the Employer Views Survey Guidance, which outlines the survey process, and note the following key dates:

- **Friday, 7 November** - the distribution of survey questionnaires will start, with providers that have elected to administer the distribution of them to their employers receiving a pack containing all of the relevant survey documents; providers that have elected for Ipsos MORI to distribute the survey will not be required to take any additional action.

- **Friday, 5 December** - the end of the survey collection period: providers are advised to monitor the Surveys section of the Framework for Excellence website regularly to check for any updates.

LSIS Workshops
During November, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) Support for Excellence programme is running a series of free workshops on embedding the Framework for Excellence within self-assessment - for further details on dates, venues and locations, please visit the online booking system at Self-assessment – Embedding the Framework for Excellence. These workshops are free of charge and are offered to all colleges and work-based learning providers that are in scope of the Framework in 2008/09.

Self-Assessment Modelling Tool
Self-Assessment Modelling Tool is being developed to support providers in assessing their own performance against the Framework for Excellence. In particular, it aims to help providers develop their understanding of how the Framework will work in 2008/09 and model how planned quality improvements might impact on their overall assessment by enabling them to calculate their performance-measure scores and derive their own Framework ratings. The Self-Assessment Modelling Tool is currently being tested and will be available to providers from next week, together with a related guidance document.

Association of Colleges Conference – 18-20 November 2008
The Framework for Excellence is hosting a break-out seminar session at the AoC’s Annual Conference at the ICC, Birmingham on Wednesday, 19 November. The session will focus on the development of the Framework, including the implementation of Phase 1 and progress of the Pilot: Phase 2.
Learner Views Survey
To establish the likely number of LSC-funded priority learners from whom completed survey responses are required, please refer to the online Calculator available in the Guide for Colleges and Providers. The figure obtained should be used only as a guide: colleges and providers are encouraged to exceed this figure and consider the best way to give as many LSC-funded priority learners as possible the opportunity to participate in the survey, which will ensure the completion of more than the minimum number of surveys.

To undertake online testing of the survey, colleges and providers will shortly receive a letter with log-in details to the Surveys section of the Framework for Excellence website. In December 2008, each college and provider will receive a statement through the website outlining the likely minimum number of returned, completed questionnaires required to provide a reliable measure of learners’ views, based on projections from their 2007/08 learner records (the LSC is unable to share this information beforehand because it is based on the ILR data return later this month).

Financial Health
Further to the guidance published in the Framework for Excellence Provider Guide 2008/09 (September), any provider that has an LSC contract value of less than £50,000 is exempt from the Financial Health Performance Indicator.

The exemption applies to all providers in scope for the Framework for Excellence in 2008/09, and is in alignment with the Financial Health Assessment of Non-college Providers statement in March 2007. For further information, please contact your Regional Audit Manager.

Learner Views Survey and the LSC’s National Learner Satisfaction Survey
As the first stage of the National Learner Satisfaction Survey (NLSS) for 2009 will be starting soon, this is a good opportunity to update you on its purpose and how it sits with the Framework’s Learner Views Survey:

- The Framework’s Learner Views Survey is a web-based, provider-level survey, based on a set of core questions developed to capture learners’ views. All colleges and providers in scope for the Framework for Excellence in 2008/09 will be required to participate in the survey. The results from the survey will generate a provider-level performance rating, which will enable providers to compare their results against the national standard.

- The NLSS is a telephone survey of 25,000 learners participating in LSC-funded provision – including further education (FE), work-based learning (WBL) and personal and community development learning (PCDL). Train to Gain learners are surveyed in a separate evaluation. The LSC has contracted with Ipsos MORI to undertake the NLSS in 2009, and Ipsos MORI will be calling learners directly from February to June 2009. The development work for the survey will take place in November and December 2008, with some learner consultation.

For further details, please refer to the National Learner Satisfaction Survey (NLSS) website.

Financial Management and Control Evaluation - DEADLINE
Links to the new FMCE documents, to be completed by all colleges and providers that are in scope for Phase 1 of the Framework for Excellence, are available on the Framework’s website. The FMCE documents comprise a guidance note and three annexes targeted at different provider types: colleges and providers are required to complete the relevant annex and return to the LSC by 12 December 2008 – please direct any questions that you may have regarding the Financial Management and Control process to your Regional Audit Manager.
Feedback
Thank you for the overwhelming response and your positive feedback to the first edition of the Framework Bulletin last month. Your views on any issue relating the Framework for Excellence are extremely welcome. Please email us at: frameworkforexcellence@lsc.gov.uk.

Subscription
If you would like to receive the Framework Bulletin by email each month, please forward your contact details to frameworkforexcellence@lsc.gov.uk and mark with the subject heading ‘Bulletin’.

Diary Dates
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