The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is today urging teachers to order Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) application packs before the summer term ends, to ensure eligible young people can apply for EMA.

One in 10 (13 per cent) schools have not yet ordered EMA application packs so the LSC is reminding schools to order them without delay.

In addition to the application pack, other resources available provide details on the choices open to 16-18 year olds, as well as posters, leaflets and the award winning ‘You Decide’ DVD, including an animated step-by-step guide to the EMA application process.

Teachers will be able to use the resources and the DVD as a basis for discussions that deal with post 16 choices.

The EMA application pack can be ordered from Prolog; by email lsc@prolog.uk.com; telephone 0845 602 2260; or by post, quoting ref EMA Application Pack 2007/08 LSC-P-NAT-070003.

Teachers can encourage young people to apply for EMA and point them to the EMA website www.direct.gov.uk/ema for more information.
Other resources can be found on the website which will give all the relevant information for teachers to enable them to inform eligible young people about EMA and the benefits available, including the ‘You Decide’ DVD.

Bronwyn Nelson, Director of Development and Delivery, Learner Support at the Learning and Skills Council said:

“Our latest figures show that 87 per cent of schools have already ordered the application packs, which is great news. But we’re urging the remaining 16 per cent of schools to order the application forms and other resources to help eligible young people understand the range of options open to them and apply for their EMA payments in the future.”

ENDS

Notes for editors – EMA Applications for 2007/8 Year

What are the key features of EMA?

- Weekly payment bands of £30, £20 and £10 per week, depending on household income.
- Intermittent bonus payments depending on the programme of learning.
- Available for both academic and vocational study, up to level 3, which can include courses such as basic skills GCSE retakes, GNVQs, NVQs, as well as AS and A2s.
- No other household benefits are affected.
- Young people can still have a part-time job.

Who is eligible?

- Young people are eligible to receive or to continue receiving EMA in the EMA year 2007/08 providing:
  - They will already be 16, 17, 18 or 19 on the 1st September 2007;
  - Are from a household with a combined income of up to £30,810;
  - They are participating in full-time further education (as defined in EMA guidance) up to and including Level 3, or LSC funded e2e or a Programme led Apprenticeship

- They must be:
  - a person who is ‘settled’ in the UK, and been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least the three years prior to the start of his learning programme; or
• a national of any European Union (EU) country or the spouse or civil partner or child of an EU national, and been ordinarily resident in the European Economic Area (EEA) for at least the three years prior to the start of his learning programme; or
• an EEA migrant worker or the spouse or civil partner or child of an EEA migrant worker, who is ordinarily resident in the UK at the start of the learning programme and has been ordinarily resident in the EEA throughout the three year period prior to that; or
• recognised as a refugee by the UK Government, or the spouse or civil partner or child of a refugee, have been granted Humanitarian Protection, or have EU Temporary Protection.

• If a young person lives overseas as part of a family serving with HM Forces or the Ministry of Defence in Germany or Cyprus, they should call Service Children’s Education on (0049) 2161 908 2525 for further advice.

Application
Evidence of an applicant’s household income for the previous tax year 2006/2007 and proof of the individual’s operational bank account are required.

Eligible applicants will receive a Notice of Entitlement explaining how much they will receive once they have enrolled and started attending their learning programme.

EMA Contract
Once enrolled, the student must attend all course sessions and sign an EMA Contract with their school or college. The contract sets out what is expected in terms of attendance, coursework and progress.

LSC
The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world-class standards. Our vision is that by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

All public enquiries regarding EMA please contact: 0808 10 16219 (some mobile operators may charge for calls made to this number) or visit www.direct.gov.uk/ema.

All public enquiries please contact: LSC Helpdesk: 0870 900 6800

All media enquiries please contact:

LSC Press Office, T: 024 7682 3515
Suzie Barrett, Band & Brown Communications, T: 020 7419 8618, E: suzie.barrett@bbpr.com, M: 07813 203 423