

# WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY

## SKILLS PROGRAMMES FUNDING RULES 2023/2024

(For the funding year 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024)  
Version 2

This document sets out the funding rules that apply to all providers of education and training who receive skills programmes funding, including but not limited to Adult Education Budget funding, Free Courses for Jobs (FCJ) funding, Multiply, National Skills Fund Technical Bootcamp and/or Traineeships funding for residents, residing in the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) area. Additional guidance on these programmes will be given in their own documents listed in [Annex D](#). Providers must read these in conjunction with the Skills Programmes Funding Rules.

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## ***WMCA Skills programmes Funding Rules. Key Changes for 2023/24***

| <b>Area</b>           | <b>Link</b>                                | <b>Overview of change</b>   | <b>Version changed</b> |
|-----------------------|--|---|------------------------|
| Residency Eligibility | <a href="#">Eligibility</a>                | Residency Eligibility – we have amended and clarified a number of areas in the residency eligibility section to ensure compliance with updates to legislation | 1                      |
| Qualifying Days       | <a href="#">Qualifying Days</a>            | We have clarified the requirements around 1-day withdrawals, where these are below the recommended GLH.   | 1                      |
| GLH                   | <a href="#">Qualifying GLH for funding</a> | WMCA has introduced rules in relation to the delivery of aims in line with GLH hours.   | 1                      |

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Skills Programmes Funding Contributions       | <a href="#">Eligibility criteria for fully funded learning</a> | We have simplified the eligibility criteria for full funding to be based on annual income and age.   | 1 |
| Income Threshold                              | <a href="#">Residents in receipt of low wage</a>               | We have increased the low wage income threshold to £30,000 per annum.  | 1 |
| Control systems                               | <a href="#">Control systems</a>                                | We have clarified evidence requirements and the maintenance of an audit trail.   | 1 |
| Whistleblowing and complaint policy           | <a href="#">Whistleblowing and complaints guidance</a>         | Clarification around the submission of Whistleblowing and Complaints for Skills programmes.  | 1 |
| Quality Assurance Framework                   | <a href="#">Quality Assurance Framework</a>                    | Introduction of a Quality Assurance Framework which sets out how WMCA will monitor and grade Quality Assurance.  | 1 |
| FCFJ  | <a href="#">FCFJ</a>   | Clarification on category codes and funding for 19–23-year-olds  | 1 |
| Learning in the workplace                     | <a href="#">Workplace learning</a>                             | WMCA have amended the rule around learning in the workplace  | 1 |
| Community Learning                            | <a href="#">Community learning objectives</a>                  | We have updated the delivery strands which link to the community learning objectives, now in annex C.  | 1 |
| Job outcome/13-week sustainment evidence      | <a href="#">Evidence</a>                                       | WMCA has clarified guidance around evidence of job outcome and 13-week sustainment collection  | 1 |
| Into Employment programmes job outcomes       | <a href="#">Into Employment programmes job outcomes</a>        | For SWAP, we have reduced the number of GLH that can support the employability non-regulated offer.  | 2 |
| Into Employment programmes                    | <a href="#">Into Employment programmes job outcomes</a>        | Introduction of our new I into-employment programmes, which will replace SWAP, Sector Gateway, and Construction Gateway.   | 2 |
| Economically inactive learners' clarification | <a href="#">Unemployed</a>                                     | WMCA has clarified our rule for Economically inactive residents as below.<br><br>The WMCA considers economically inactive residents to be unemployed and therefore will be fully funded. We define economically inactive residents who are not currently employed and/or are not claiming an active benefit. | 2 |
| Work experience/placement clarification       |  | A placement/experience with an employer either in a workplace setting or simulated. Work placement/experience should give residents the opportunity to get hands on experience into what it would be like working in specific sectors and company.   | 2 |
| Branding and privacy                          |  | WMCA have clarified that evidence must be made available that residents have been made award of WMCA funding and provided with the privacy notice relevant to their provision.   | 2 |

| Funding Stream         | Programmes  |
|------------------------|---|
| Adult Education Budget | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Functional Skills (English, Mathematics)</li> <li>- Basic Digital Skills (including digital entitlement)</li> <li>- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)</li> <li>- Vocational Qualifications and non-regulated provision</li> <li>- Community Learning</li> <li>- Into Employment Programmes (Sector-based Work Academy Programmes, Sector Gateway, and Construction Gateway)</li> <li>- Pre-Apprenticeships</li> <li>- Traineeships</li> </ul> |
| Free Courses for Jobs  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level 3 Qualifications</li> </ul>  |
| Multiply               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Numeracy Programmes</li> </ul>   |
| National Skills Fund   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bootcamps</li> </ul>   |

## ***Section 1. Introduction and purpose of the document***

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This document sets out the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Skills Programmes Funding Rules (Funding Rules) for the 2023 to 2024 funding year (1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024). The Funding Rules consist of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) funding rules, the Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) funding rules, Multiply funding rules, and the National Skills Fund (NSF) Technical Bootcamps funding rules.
- 1.2. Additional guidance on the delivery of programmes funded through the above-mentioned streams may be given in programme-specific documents listed in [Annex D](#). Providers must read these in conjunction with these Funding Rules.
- 1.3. These Funding Rules apply to all providers of education and training who receive either devolved AEB funding or delegated FCFJ or NSF Technical Bootcamp funding from the WMCA.
- 1.4. These Funding Rules do not apply to apprenticeships, advanced learner loans or to 19 to 24 traineeship programmes that began before 31 July 2023.
  - 1.4.1. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will continue to fund apprenticeships, and advanced resident loans for WMCA residents – You can access these separate funding rules on the [GOV.UK website](#)
- 1.5. This document forms part of the terms and conditions of WMCA funding and you must read and comply with them in conjunction with your funding agreement.
- 1.6. You must operate within the terms and conditions of the funding agreement, these funding rules, the [Performance Management Framework](#), and the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#), and the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) specification. If you do not, you are in breach of your funding agreement with WMCA.
- 1.7. All information, including any hyperlinks, are correct at the time of publishing. During the 2023/2024 funding year, this document will be kept under review to reflect how WMCA may need to respond to the changing economic context.
- 1.8. The WMCA reserves the right to make changes to these funding rules and will publish any updated versions on the WMCA website. It is your responsibility to ensure that you regularly visit the WMCA website and comply with the current version of these funding rules.

### **2. Understanding the terminology**

- 2.1. The terms 'WMCA', "Our" "Us", and "We" refer to the West Midlands Combined Authority.

- 2.2. When WMCA refers to 'You', "Your" or 'Providers', this includes but is not limited to Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges, independent training providers (ITPs), voluntary community sector providers and Local Authorities who receive funding from Us to deliver adult education and training to WMCA residents.
- 2.3. WMCA will use the generic terms 'You', "Your" or 'Provider' unless the requirements only apply to a specific provider type.
- 2.4. We use the term 'Agreements' to include:
  - 2.4.1. conditions of funding (grant).
  - 2.4.2. grant funding agreement/grant agreement.
  - 2.4.3. contract for services
- 2.5. We use the terms 'resident' and 'learner' to cover the individuals who are receiving services funded by Us.
- 2.6. If We refer to qualifications, these will either be from the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) or will be an Access to Higher Education Diploma recognised and regulated by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).
- 2.7. If We refer to 'learning aims', We mean a single episode of learning which could be a regulated qualification, a component of a regulated qualification or non-regulated learning.
- 2.8. If We refer to 'programmes', We mean a coherent package of learning which may include regulated qualifications, components of regulated qualifications or non-regulated learning with clearly stated aims to support agreed outcomes.
- 2.9. Key definitions used and a full glossary of terms is included in [Annex A](#).

### **3. Contacting us**

- 3.1. You can contact us through our query mailbox at [skills.programmes@wmca.org.uk](mailto:skills.programmes@wmca.org.uk)
- 3.2. You can also contact your assigned Skills Delivery Officer.
- 3.3. For Multiply queries use mailbox [UKSPF@wmca.org.uk](mailto:UKSPF@wmca.org.uk)
- 3.4. For data queries, You can contact [aebdatareturns@wmca.org.uk](mailto:aebdatareturns@wmca.org.uk)



## ***Section 2. Skills Programmes Learner Eligibility***

### **4. WMCA Skills Programmes ‘Who We Fund’**

- 4.1. Providers **must** make sure an individual is eligible before claiming funding. It is Your responsibility to check the eligibility of the resident at the start of each adult learning aim, and only claim funding for eligible residents.
- 4.2. To be funded by the WMCA, residents must meet the following criteria:
  - 4.2.1. On the first day of learning, a resident must be aged 19 or older on 31 August within the 2023 to 2024 funding year, reside in a dwelling with a WMCA postcode and meet the conditions of funding set out in the [Eligibility section](#) of this document.
- 4.3. Residents that do not have an eligible WMCA postcode will not be funded by the WMCA. This does not however mean that they may not be eligible for funding from the Combined/Local Authority area in which they reside should You have a contract in those areas.
- 4.4. The WMCA recognises that a resident (from outside) of the WMCA who is unaware of the funding changes due to the devolution of the Skills Programmes, may wish to undertake learning in the WMCA. Most grant providers will have an AEB allocation from the Department for Education (DfE) for non-devolved areas.
  - 4.4.1. Where a grant provider does not have an allocation from the DfE then We will discuss directly with the Provider if the resident can be supported. We expect these cases to be minimal but will keep this under review and seek feedback from You during the year.
- 4.5. To support in identifying which postcodes fall under WMCA funding the ESFA postcode checker can be found [here](#).
- 4.6. The age of the learner on 31 August in the funding year determines whether the learner is funded through WMCA’s Skills Programmes methodology (for individuals aged 19 and over), or the EFSA’s [16 to 19-year-olds funding methodology](#) (for individuals aged 16 to 19 and those aged 19 to 24 with an Education and Health Care Plan).
- 4.7. All individuals aged 19 or over on 31 August who are continuing a programme they began aged 16 to 18 (‘19+ continuers’) will be funded through the ESFA [16 to 19-year-olds funding methodology](#).
- 4.8. Where the WMCA refers to a resident’s age being 19, this relates to the resident being aged 19 on the 31 August within the funding year they start a learning aim. For all other purposes, the age of the resident is taken at the start of each learning aim.
- 4.9. Residents will be eligible for funding for the whole of the learning aim or learning programme if they are eligible for funding at the start, even if the

duration is for over one year. You must reassess the resident's eligibility for funding for any further learning they start.

- 4.10. If an individual starts a learning aim or programme and is not eligible for funding, WMCA will not fund their learning while they remain ineligible.
- 4.11. When We refer to the Employment Status of the learner, this relates to the learner's status on the day they begin their programme of learning.
- 4.12. You must not fund a learner who is unable to complete a learning aim or programme of study in the time they have available e.g., those starting work/university. Any learner of any age must be able to achieve the learning aim or programme of study within the time they have available.

### ***Section 3. Skills Programmes Residency eligibility***

#### **5. Overview**

- 5.1. Residents of the WMCA area will be eligible for funding for Skills Programmes if they meet the criteria in the ['who we fund'](#) section, the learning is taking place in England, and they fulfil the residency requirements set out below.
- 5.2. Unless otherwise stated, individuals must be ordinarily resident in the UK on the first day of learning to meet the residency requirements.

#### **6. Learners who live in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland or outside of the WMCA and are enrolled on a Skills Bootcamps programme.**

- 6.1. For learning delivered through Skills Bootcamps funding at an employee's workplace, We will fund individuals whose main employment or normal place of work is in the WMCA area.

#### **7. Temporary residence in the UK for educational purposes**

- 7.1. People who have been resident in the UK solely for the purposes of receiving full-time education would not be deemed ordinarily resident in the UK and are therefore not eligible for funding unless they meet one of the other eligibility criteria.

#### **8. Temporary absences from the UK**

- 8.1. Learners who are temporarily outside of the UK for reasons such as education, employment, or a gap year, but remain settled in the UK, should be considered ordinarily resident in the UK.

- 8.2. British armed forces, Ministry of Defence (MoD) personnel or civil crown servants on postings outside of the UK, or people who are resident in England but work outside England, can also be treated as ordinarily resident in the UK.
- 8.3. Individuals who reside in areas of WMCA and England, and who work outside of England as part of their job, are eligible for WMCA funded Skills Programme funding as long as some of the learning takes place in England. You cannot claim for the additional expense of delivering learning outside of England.

## **9. Learners who have applied for an extension or variation of their immigration permission.**

- 9.1. Any person who has applied for an extension or variation of their current immigration permission in the UK is still treated as if they have that leave. This only applies if the application was made before their current permission expired. Their leave continues until the Home Office decide on their immigration application. Their leave will continue where they have appealed or sought an administrative review of their case within the time allowed to them for doing so.
- 9.2. Therefore, a person is considered to still have the immigration permission that they held when they made their application for an extension, administrative review or appeal, and their eligibility would be based upon this status.
- 9.3. The learner's immigration permission in the UK may have a 'no recourse to public funds' condition. Public funds do not include education or education funding. Therefore, this does not affect a learner's eligibility, which must be decided under the normal eligibility conditions.


## **10. Categories of residency eligibility**

- 10.1. Learners will have an eligible residency status if they meet the conditions laid out in sections 11 to 25 below:

## **11. United Kingdom (UK) nationals and other persons with right of abode**

- 11.1. UK nationals or other persons with a right of abode<sup>1</sup> who have an eligible residency status if they have been ordinarily resident in the UK or the British Overseas Territories, or the Crown Dependencies (Channel Islands and Isle of Man) for at least 3 years preceding the first day of learning.

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<sup>1</sup> Persons with the right of abode have the right to live and work in the UK without any immigration restrictions. Further details can be found here: [Prove you have right of abode in the UK.](#) 

- 11.2. All family members of UK nationals must meet the required residency eligibility criteria in their own right, unless they meet the criteria in the section entitled “UK nationals in the EEA and Switzerland”, or the criteria in the section entitled “Family members of an eligible person of Northern Ireland”.
- 11.3. The British Overseas Territories are listed in [Annex A: eligibility for funding](#)

## **12. UK nationals in the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland**

- 12.1. UK nationals who have resided in the EEA, Switzerland or EU overseas territories have an eligible residency status if they:
  - 12.1.1. resided in the EEA or Switzerland, EU overseas territories or Gibraltar by 31 December 2020 (or resident in the UK, having moved to the UK from the EEA, Switzerland, EU overseas territories or Gibraltar after 31 December 2017), and
  - 12.1.2. resided in the EEA, Switzerland, EU overseas territories, Gibraltar, or the UK for at least the previous 3 years on the first day of learning, and
  - 12.1.3. remained ordinarily resident in the UK, Gibraltar, the EEA, Switzerland, or EU overseas territories between 31 December 2020 and
  - 12.1.4. the course starting before January 2028 <sup>2</sup>
- 12.2. the EEA includes all the countries and territories listed in [Annex A: eligibility for funding](#)
- 12.3. Family members of UK nationals, where both the UK national and the family member have resided in the EEA, Switzerland, or EU overseas territories, have an eligible residency status if:
  - 12.3.1. both the UK national and the family member resided in the EEA, Switzerland, or EU Overseas Territories by 31 December 2020 (or resided in the UK, having moved there from the EEA, Switzerland, or EU Overseas Territories after 31 December 2017), and
  - 12.3.2. both the UK national and the family member remained ordinarily resident in the UK, the EEA, Switzerland or EU Overseas Territories between 31 December 2020 and the start of the course.
  - 12.3.3. the UK national to whom they are a family member has been ordinarily resident in the UK, EEA, Switzerland, or EU Overseas Territories for at least 3 years on the first day of the first academic year of the course.
  - 12.3.4. the course starts before January 2028
- 12.4. A “family member” for these purposes is either:
  - 12.4.1. the husband, wife, civil partner of the UK national (principal) or
  - 12.4.2. the child, grandchild, spouse/civil partner’s child, or spouse/civil partner’s grandchild of the UK national (principal) who is either.

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<sup>2</sup> This refers to the 7-year offer for UK nationals in EEA and Switzerland. More info on the 7-year offer can be found here: [UK nationals in the EEA and Switzerland: access to higher education and 19+ further education](#)

- a) under 21, or
- b) dependent on the principal and/or his/her spouse/civil partner

### **13. EEA and Switzerland nationals in the UK with EU Settlement Scheme**

- 13.1. EEA and Switzerland nationals who have obtained either pre-settled or settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), and have lived continuously in the EEA, Switzerland, Gibraltar, or the UK for at least 3 years preceding the first day of learning.
- 13.2. the EEA includes all the countries and territories listed in [Annex A: eligibility for funding](#)
- 13.3. Although the deadline for most people to apply to EUSS was 30 June 2021, there may be individuals who have reasonable grounds for making a late application to EUSS and there may also be some individuals who have made an EUSS application on time but are still waiting on a final decision on their status from the Home Office, including those that have lodged an appeal. Once a valid application has been made to EUSS (evidenced by receipt of a certificate of application), the applicant will have temporary protection, pending the outcome of that application.

### **14. EEA and Switzerland frontier workers**

- 14.1. An EEA or Switzerland frontier worker is someone who is employed or self-employed in the UK who resides in the EEA or Switzerland and returns to that residence in the EEA or Switzerland at least once a week.
- 14.2. Frontier workers, and their family members, have an eligible residency status if they have been ordinarily resident in the UK, EEA and/or Switzerland for at least the previous 3 years on the first day of learning.
- 14.3. A “family member” of an EEA frontier worker for these purposes is either:
  - 14.3.1. the husband, wife, civil partner of the EEA frontier worker (“principal”) or
  - 14.3.2. the child, grandchild, spouse/civil partner’s child, or spouse/civil partner’s grandchild of the principal who is either:
    - a) under 21, or
    - b) dependant on the principal and/or the principal’s spouse/civil partner, or
    - c) dependent parents or grandparents of the principal and/or the principal’s spouse/civil partner
- 14.4. A “family member” of a Swiss frontier worker for these purposes is either:
  - 14.4.1. the husband, wife, civil partner of the Swiss frontier worker (“principal”) or
  - 14.4.2. the child or spouse/civil partner’s child of the principal
- 14.5. Unlike other categories, a frontier worker or their eligible family member **does not** have to be resident in the UK on the first day of learning in order to have eligible residency status.

## **15. Family members of a European (EU) national**

- 15.1. A family member of an EU national is eligible for funding if:
- 15.1.1. where required to do so, they have obtained pre-settled or settled status under EUSS and
  - 15.1.2. the EU national (principal) has obtained pre-settled or settled status under EUSS and has been ordinarily resident in the UK, EEA and/or Switzerland for at least 3 years preceding the first day of learning.
- 15.2. Family members of an EEA or Swiss national can apply to EUSS after 30 June 2021 if they are joining them in the UK on or after 1 April 2021. They have 3 months to apply to EUSS from the date they arrive in the UK. They will have temporary protection and therefore be eligible for funding during those 3 months and pending the outcome of any EUSS application made during that period (and of any appeal). More information on applying to join a family member in the UK can be found on GOV.UK.
- 15.2.1. A “family member” for these purposes is either:
  - 15.2.2. the husband, wife, civil partner of the EU national (principal) or
  - 15.2.3. the child, grandchild, spouse/civil partner’s child, or spouse/civil partner’s grandchild of the EU principal who is either:
    - a) under 21, or
    - b) dependant on the principal and/or his/her spouse/civil partner, or
    - c) the dependant parent or grandparent of the principal or the principal’s spouse/civil partner

## **16. Irish citizens in the United Kingdom (UK) or Ireland**

- 16.1. Irish citizens in the UK or Ireland who have been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands, and/or Ireland for at least 3 years preceding the first day of learning.

## **17. Irish citizens in the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland**

- 17.1. Irish citizens who:
- 17.1.1. resided in the EEA or Switzerland by 31 December 2020 (or resident in the UK, having moved to the UK from EEA or Switzerland after 31 December 2017), and
  - 17.1.2. resided in the EEA, Switzerland, Gibraltar, or the UK for at least 3 years preceding the first day of learning and
  - 17.1.3. remained ordinarily resident in the UK, Gibraltar, the EEA or Switzerland between 31 December 2020 and the start of the course and
  - 17.1.4. the course starting before January 2028
- 17.2. the EEA includes all the countries and territories listed in [Annex A: eligibility for funding](#)

## **18. Other non-UK nationals**

- 18.1. Non-UK nationals who have been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for at least 3 years preceding the first day of learning and:
- 18.1.1. have permission granted by the UK government to live in the UK and such permission is not for educational purposes only, or
  - 18.1.2. have obtained pre-settled or settled status under EUSS.

## **19. Family members of an eligible person of Northern Ireland**

- 19.1. Family members of an eligible person of Northern Ireland<sup>3</sup> have an eligible residency status if:
- 19.1.1. they have been living in the UK by 31 December 2020 and
  - 19.1.2. they have obtained pre-settled or settled status under EUSS, and
  - 19.1.3. the eligible person of Northern Ireland (principal) has been ordinarily resident in the UK by 31 December 2020, for at least 3 years preceding the first day of learning.
- 19.2. A “family member” for these purposes is either:
- 19.2.1. the husband, wife, or civil partner of person of the Northern Ireland (principal) or
  - 19.2.2. the child, grandchild, spouse’s child, or spouse’s grandchild of principal who is either.
    - a) under 21, or
    - b) dependent on the principal and/or his/her spouse, or
    - c) the dependant parent or grandparent of the principal or of the principal’s spouse
  - 19.2.3. the dependant parent or grandparent of the principle or of the principal spouse/civil partner

## **20. Long residence**

- 20.1. A person who, on the first day of learning, has lived in the UK half their life or a period of 20 years or more, has an eligible residency status.
- 20.2. Learners may be able to prove this status via a confirmed entry date from Immigration Control, verified by the Home Office. Alternatively, they may provide evidence that they have been living in the UK for the period in question. This should ideally be from an official and independent source. Examples could include a signed letter on headed paper from someone in a leadership position at the school they attended, a letter from their GP, wage slips or a P45/P60. Providers funding learners under this category should

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<sup>3</sup> Further information, can be found here: [Apply for an EU Settlement Scheme family permit to join family in the UK: Apply if you’re joining a person of Northern Ireland.](#)


obtain enough evidence to assure themselves beyond reasonable doubt that the learner was living in the UK for the necessary period.

## **21. Individuals with certain types of immigration status and their family members including refugees.**

- 21.1. Individuals with any of the statuses listed below, or leave under the listed schemes, has an eligible residency status and are exempt from the 3-year residency requirement rule.
- 21.2. In relation to these categories, You must have seen the learner's immigration permission. This would include the biometric residence permit (BRP) and in some cases an accompanying letter from the Home Office
  - 21.2.1. Refugee status
  - 21.2.2. Discretionary leave to enter or remain.
  - 21.2.3. Exceptional leave to enter or remain.
  - 21.2.4. Indefinite leave to enter or remain <sup>4</sup>
  - 21.2.5. Humanitarian protection
  - 21.2.6. Leave outside the rules.
  - 21.2.7. Ukraine schemes:
    - a) individuals with leave to enter or remain in the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme
    - b) individuals with leave to enter or remain in the UK under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine)
    - c) individuals with leave to enter or remain in the UK under the Ukraine Extension Scheme
  - 21.2.8. The husband, wife, civil partner, or child of any of the above under points 20.2.1 to 20.2.7
  - 21.2.9. Section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 leave <sup>5</sup>
  - 21.2.10. Calais leave to remain <sup>6</sup>
- 21.3. persons granted leave under one of the Afghan schemes:
  - 21.3.1. individuals with leave to enter or remain in the UK under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)
  - 21.3.2. individuals with leave to enter or remain in the UK under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)

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<sup>4</sup> This includes Afghans eligible under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance policy (formally known as Locally Engaged Staff under the intimidation policy). 

<sup>5</sup> A child of a person who has received leave under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 will come under this bullet point where they have been granted "leave in line" by virtue of being a dependent child of such a person. 

<sup>6</sup> A child of a person who has received Calais leave to remain will come under this bullet point where they have been granted "leave in line" by virtue of being a dependent child of such a person.



21.3.3. British Nationals evacuated from Afghanistan under Operation Pitting

21.3.4. British Nationals evacuated from Afghanistan by the UK government before 6 January 2022

21.4. The learner's immigration permission in the UK may have a 'no recourse to public funds' condition. Public funds do not include education or education funding. Therefore, this does not affect a learner's eligibility, which must be decided under the normal eligibility conditions.

## **22. Children of Turkish workers (WMCA residents)**

22.1. A child of a Turkish worker is eligible if both the following apply:

22.1.1. the Turkish worker is ordinarily resident in the UK on or before 31 December 2020 and has Turkish European Community Association Agreement (ECAA) rights or extended ECAA leave and

22.1.2. the child has been ordinarily resident in the UK, EEA and/or Turkey for at least 3 years preceding the first day of learning and is resident in the UK on or before 31 December 2020

## **23. Asylum seekers (WMCA residents)**

23.1. Asylum seekers are eligible to receive funding if they:

23.1.1. have lived in the UK for 6 months or longer while their claim is being considered by the Home Office, and no decision on their claim has been made, or

23.1.2. are receiving local authority support under [section 23C](#) or [section 23CA of the Children Act 1989](#) or the [Care Act 2014](#)

23.2. An individual who has been refused asylum will be eligible if:

23.2.1. they have appealed against a decision made by the UK government against granting refugee status and no decision has been made within 6 months of lodging the appeal, or

23.2.2. they are granted support for themselves under [section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#), or

23.2.3. They are receiving local authority support for themselves under [section 23C](#) or [section 23CA of the Children Act 1989](#)

## **24. Persons granted stateless leave (WMCA residents)**

24.1. A person granted stateless leave is a person who:

24.1.1. has extant leave to remain as a stateless person under the immigration rules (within the meaning given in [section 33\(1\) of the Immigration Act 1971](#)); and

24.1.2. has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands throughout the period since the person was granted such leave.

24.2. Certain family members are also eligible under this category if:

24.2.1. the spouse or civil partner of a person granted stateless leave (and who was the spouse or civil partner of that person on the leave application date), who is

- ordinarily resident in the UK on the first day of the first funding year of the course, and who has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands throughout the 3-year period preceding the first day of the first funding year of the course; or
- 24.2.2. the child of a stateless person or of the stateless person's spouse or civil partner (and who was the child of that stateless person or the child of the stateless person's spouse or civil partner on the leave application date), was under 18 on the leave application date, is ordinarily resident in the UK on the first day of the first funding year of the course, and has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands throughout the 3 year period preceding the first day of the first funding year of the course
- 24.3. "Leave application date" means the date on which a person is granted stateless leave made an application to remain in the UK as a stateless person under the immigration rules (within the meaning given in [section 33\(1\) of the Immigration Act 1971](#)).

## **25. Residents in the armed forces**

- 25.1. The WMCA will fund armed forces personnel, Ministry of Defence (MoD) personnel or civil and crown servants where they are residents within the WMCA area and meet the criteria in '[Section 2 Skills Programme Learner Eligibility](#)'.
- 25.2. Members of other nations' armed forces stationed in WMCA, and their family members, aged 19 and over, set out in the [Section 2 Skills Programme Learner Eligibility](#) section are eligible for funding if the armed forces individual has been ordinarily resident in England for three years.
- 25.3. The WMCA will not fund family members that remain outside of the WMCA area.

## **26. Residents outside of the WMCA**

- 26.1. You must not actively recruit learners who live or work outside of the West Midlands Combined Authority areas.
- 26.2. Residents living in residences that do not have an eligible WMCA postcode will not be funded by the WMCA.
- 26.3. They may be funded via the relevant Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA), Greater London Authority (GLA) or ESFA, provided they meet the appropriate eligibility criteria.
- 26.4. The ESFA postcode checker can be [found here](#).

## **27. Individuals who are not eligible for funding**

- 27.1. You must not claim funding for individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria set out in the [residency eligibility](#) section (from point 5 to point 25).

Examples of individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria include the following. Please note this list is not exhaustive:

- 27.2. those who are here without authority or lawful status.
- 27.3. those who are residents in the UK on a student visa unless they are eligible through meeting any other of the categories described above.
- 27.4. those who are in the UK on holiday, with or without a visa.
- 27.5. those who are a family member of a person granted a student visa, who have been given immigration permission to stay in the UK and have not been ordinarily resident in the UK for the previous 3 years on the first day of learning.
- 27.6. those whose biometric residence permit or residence permit imposes a study prohibition or restriction on the individual.

## **Section 4. Skills Programmes Funding Rules**

### **28. Introduction.**

- 28.1. From 1st August 2019, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) became responsible for certain adult education functions of the Secretary of State under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. This transfer of functions was achieved by way of orders made under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and the West Midlands Combined Authority (Adult Education Functions) Order 2018 (SI 2018/1144)
- 28.2. Ministers have agreed under a Memorandum of Understanding and a Data Sharing Agreement on certain functions and activities that will be undertaken by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on behalf of the WMCA for the 2023/24 funding year.
- 28.3. The WMCA is publishing these Funding Rules, which will apply to providers in receipt of devolved WMCA funding, including but not limited to, Adult Education Budget (AEB), Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ), the National Skills Fund (NSF) Technical Bootcamps and Multiply, funding from 1 August 2023, for delivery to residents in the West Midlands. This excludes apprenticeships or 19 to 24 traineeship programme which began before 1 August 2023.
- 28.4. These skills Funding Rules apply to all residents in the WMCA area starting new learning aims on or after 1 August 2023. The WMCA will also have responsibility for continuing residents who commenced learning in 2022/2023 (except 19 – 24 Traineeships). You must ensure You meet the cost of continuing learners within your WMCA Skills Programmes allocation.

## 29. Principles of funding

- 29.1. WMCA-funded provision, aims to engage adults, and provide the skills and learning they need to progress into, or within, work; or equip them for an apprenticeship or other learning. It enables more flexible tailored programmes of learning to be made available, which may or may not require a qualification, to help eligible learners engage in learning, build confidence, and/or enhance their well-being.
- 29.2. We will fund eligible learners where the WMCA have formally agreed the allocation and delivery plan with the provider.
- 29.3. Contract for Services Providers can only deliver what has been agreed within the Delivery Plan. The WMCA will also monitor Your performance to ensure that the funding You received from the WMCA is delivering high-quality provision for adults within the WMCA area and represents good value for money.
- 29.4. You must hold and retain evidence to assure Us that You are using WMCA funding appropriately. Some evidence will occur naturally from Your normal business process, but if required by the WMCA, additional evidence should be retained. It is a condition of funding that all outcomes for WMCA residents, either directly delivered by You or Your supply chain delivery members, are recorded on the Individualised Learning Record (ILR).
- 29.5. The WMCA Skills funding must only be utilised to fund WMCA residents. Funding cannot be transferred between different budgets, including, where applicable, Your ESFA Adult Education Budget, Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) funding, the National Skills Fund (NSF) Technical Bootcamps, Multiply Apprenticeships, and advanced resident loans.
- 29.6. If the WMCA considers service delivery is not resulting in positive outcomes for adults in the WMCA area and/or the quality of provision is not to the required standard, the WMCA may (following a discussion with You) reduce your allocation or contract value. Equally, if You are finding it difficult to deliver your allocation or have unmet demand, then we want You to tell Us.
- 29.7. Additional information is contained in the [Skills Programmes Provider Payment & Performance Management Framework](#).
- 29.8. The [Skills Programmes Provider Payment & Performance Management Framework](#), should be read alongside your Agreement and the WMCA Funding Rules, as they all form part of Your contractual relationship with the WMCA.
- 29.9. You must provide accurate unique learner number (ULN) information to awarding organisations and ensure all information You use to register learners for qualifications is correct. You can find more information about the [Personal Learner Record Service](#).

- 29.10. The WMCA may make concessions in the Funding Rules responding to a specific economic event impacting residents e.g., a pandemic, climate event or significant restructuring of a large employer leading to residents at risk of redundancy. This will be agreed upon on a case-by-case basis.
- 29.11. Additional principles of funding for Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) funding can be found [here](#).
- 29.12. Additional principles of funding for National Skills Fund (NSF) Technical Bootcamps can be found [here](#).
- 29.13. Additional principles for funding Multiply can be found [here](#)

### **30. What the WMCA will not fund**

- 30.1. Provision that is not part of a provider's delivery plan or has not been given prior written approval by Us.
- 30.2. Qualifications, units or learning aims that are not listed on [finding a learning](#) aim or on the [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#).
- 30.3. WMCA does not fund provisions for residents in custody. The [Ministry of Justice](#) funds prison education in England, except in the following cases:
  - 30.3.1. You can use your WMCA Skills Programmes to fund individuals released on temporary licence<sup>7</sup>.
  - 30.3.2. Skills Bootcamps are open to serving prisoners, who are due to be released from prison within 6 months following the completion of their Skills Bootcamp, and those on temporary release/licence.
- 30.4. Residents that do not have an eligible WMCA postcode.
  - 30.4.1. It is a provider's responsibility to ensure the relevant funding is secured from the relevant funding body in 2023/24 for their residents.
- 30.5. You must not claim funding for any provision you deliver to a resident whose learning is taking place outside of the WMCA.
- 30.6. You must not claim funding for any part of any resident's learning aim or programme that duplicates provision they have received from any other source.
- 30.7. Training through WMCA funded Skills programmes, where a learner is undertaking or planning to undertake an apprenticeship and where that training will:
  - 30.7.1. replicate vocational and other learning aims covered by the apprenticeship standard or framework, including English and maths.
  - 30.7.2. offer career-related training that conflicts with the apprenticeship aims.

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<sup>7</sup> Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) means being able to leave prison for a short period of time. The Temporary Licence is the permission that allows leave, and the type of Licence indicates the reason the permission was granted.

- 30.7.3. be taking place during the apprentice's working hours. Where an apprentice has more than one job, working hours refers to the hours of the job the apprenticeship is linked to.
- 30.8. The WMCA will not fund a learner to repeat the same regulated qualification where they have previously achieved it unless it is for any GCSE where the learner has not achieved grade C, or grade 4, or higher.
- 30.9. The WMCA will not fund a learner to sit or resit a learning aim assessment or examination where no extra learning takes place.

### **31. Fees and charging**

- 31.1. You must not charge learners a fee related to the direct costs of delivering a learning aim to learners. We fully fund, including those with a legal entitlement to full funding for their learning. Direct costs include any essential activities or materials without which the learner could not complete and achieve their learning.
- 31.2. You must not make compulsory charges, related to the cost of delivering a learning aim/programme to residents who do not complete their training or stopped attending.
- 31.3. If a fully funded learner needs a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to participate in learning, You cannot charge them for this. If the learning is associated with the learner's employment, their employer is responsible for carrying out and paying for this check. Please note, certain Into-employment programmes may have this cost included.
- 31.4. Any fees being charged to a learner, must be communicated before starting the programme. Evidence of this should be held in the evidence pack.
- 31.5. When charging a fee to co-funded learners, the sum of the WMCA contribution and the learner's fee must not exceed the fully funded weighted rate for the learning aim, and the learner should not have to pay more than 50% of the unweighted rate.

### **32. Qualifying days for funding**

- 32.1. A learner must be in learning for a minimum number of days between their learning start date and learning planned end date before you can earn funding, including learning support.
- 32.2. The guidance below sets out the minimum days required for funding.

| <b>Planned length of learning aim</b> | <b>Minimum qualifying days</b> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 168 or more days                      | 42 days                        |
| 14 – 167 days                         | 14 days                        |
| Fewer than 14 days                    | 1 day                          |

- 32.3. WMCA will monitor the volume of day 1 withdrawals, where it is identified this is a high percentage, we will take a full review of the providers' withdrawals.
- 32.4. Where planned learning days are below the recommended GLH and additional needs of the resident, WMCA may seek removal of the funding.
- 32.5. This does not apply where the learner achieves the learning aim.
- 32.6. Please note this does not apply to Lot 8 Digital bootcamps, Skills Bootcamps and/or multiply, which will be based on a different methodology. Please refer to their individual guidance.

### **33. Qualifying GLH for funding**

- 33.1. We will be implementing rules around GLH to ensure delivery is in line with the number stated on the [Find A Learning Aim](#) site.
- 33.2. If we identify that the number of Planned GLH, based on the calculations from the Scheme of Work/Curriculum Plan/timesheet are below the number stated on the [Find A Learning Aim](#) site, we will take the following action;
  - 33.2.1. If the planned GLH are over 70% of the stated hours, no action will be taken.
  - 33.2.2. If the planned GLH are between 50% and 70% of the stated hours, and a reduction of 30% of the learning aim value will be applied for the identified learning aims.
  - 33.2.3. If the planned GLH are below 50% of the stated hours, we will apply a 50% reduction in funding for the identified learning aims.
  - 33.2.4. Providers will be able to submit a [Business case](#), with justification, should they wish to have a variation to the recommended GLH.
  - 33.2.5. GLH will not be counted when they are part of a programme, for example, an into employment programme.
- 33.3. Please note, this doesn't apply to Skills Bootcamps, for which if a resident has completed, we would expect to see at least 80% delivery of the recommended GLH.

### **34. Requirements for delivery**

- 34.1. For your direct delivery, and any subcontracted delivery, You (and where relevant, Your supply chain delivery member(s)) must have a valid UKPRN, direct centre approval and where appropriate, direct qualification approval from the respective awarding organisation for the regulated qualifications You are offering. Please note that organisations (with separate legal entities) within the same company group are classed as supply chain delivery members/sub-contractors.
- 34.2. Delivery of the qualification (including resident registration with the awarding organisation) for direct delivery and any delivery by your supply chain member(s) must be in line with the qualification specification and guidance set out by the relevant awarding organisation.

### **35. Recognition of prior learning**

- 35.1. A resident could have prior learning that has been previously accredited by an awarding organisation or could be formally recognised and count towards a qualification. If this is the case, you must:
  - 35.1.1. reduce the funding amount claimed for the learning aim by the percentage of learning and assessment the resident does not need. Evidence of this assessment must be held in the evidence file.
  - 35.1.2. follow the policies and procedures set by the awarding organisation for delivery and assessment of the qualification.
  - 35.1.3. ensure You have a robust internal Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy and appropriate resources to deliver RPL.
- 35.2. You must not use prior learning to reduce funding for:
  - 35.2.1. English and maths qualifications up to and including level 2.
  - 35.2.2. Essential digital skills qualifications up to and including level 1.
- 35.3. The WMCA does not set limits on the length of time of either prior learning or previously certificated learning. However, where the individual's learning and/or achievement occurs outside of a five-year period, You must assess whether the learning is still valid and relevant.
- 35.4. If a resident enrolls on an advanced subsidiary (AS) level qualification followed by an A level, You must reduce the funding claimed for the A level to take account of the prior study of the AS level and record this in the 'Funding adjustment for prior learning' field in the ILR. You can access ILR information in the guidance linked [here](#).

### **36. Starting, participating, and achieving**

- 36.1. You can only claim funding for learning activities. Therefore, You cannot claim funding for additional activities, such as enrolment, induction, prior assessment, diagnostic testing, or similar activities.
  - 36.1.1. You can only claim funding for additional activities if this was agreed as part of your Delivery Plan.
- 36.2. You must have evidence that the learning took place. Evidence should ensure that the learning matches the number of guided learning hours expected.
- 36.3. Where the learning is certificated, You must follow the relevant awarding organisation's procedure for claiming the relevant certificate(s) and ensure the resident receives them. You must evidence this has happened in the resident file.
- 36.4. The WMCA will continually review and monitor whether the education and training You provide are delivering positive and agreed outcomes as detailed and agreed by WMCA within your 2023/24 Delivery Plan. If providers are reaching or seem likely to reach the tolerances of their delivery plan, including



legal entitlement, You will need to ensure the WMCA is notified as soon as possible.

### **37. Breaks in learning.**

- 37.1. You can suspend learning while the learner takes an agreed and organised break from learning, where it is known that the intention of the learner is to return.
- 37.2. This allows the learner to continue later with the same eligibility that applied when they first started their learning. Typical examples include for economic reasons, long-term sickness, maternity leave, or religious trips.
- 37.3. You must record the date a learner starts a break in learning and the date they restart their learning in the ILR.
- 37.4. You must have evidence that the learner agrees to return and continue with the same learning aim; otherwise, You must report the learner as withdrawn. When the learner returns to learning, You must re-plan and extend the remaining delivery as required.
- 37.5. Where the resident does not return, you must report the aim/programme as withdrawn from the last date of attendance that You hold evidence for.
- 37.6. Breaks in learning must not be used to 'suspend' learning where contact is lost, or the attendance or academic performance of the resident is poor.
- 37.7. You must not use a break in learning for short-term absences, such as holidays or short-term illness.
- 37.8. The WMCA will not fund a resident during a break in learning.

### **38. Confirmation and signatures**

- 38.1. The learner or employer must confirm all the information recorded in the ILR is correct when it is collected. You must have evidence of this, which can include electronic formats.
- 38.2. The WMCA accepts electronic evidence, including digital signatures, but You must have wider systems and processes in place to ensure that learners exist and are eligible for funding. You must keep effective and reliable evidence.
- 38.3. Both electronic and digital signatures are acceptable, We do not specify which should be used, only that a secure process to obtain and store signatures is followed:
  - 38.3.1. An electronic signature is defined as any electronic symbol or process that is associated with any record or document where there is an intention to sign the document by any party involved.
  - 38.3.2. An electronic signature can be anything from a check box to a signature and/or
  - 38.3.3. A digital signature is where a document with an electronic signature is secured by a process making it non-refutable.

- 38.3.4. It is a digital fingerprint which captures the act of signing by applying security to a document. Usually, documents which have a digital signature embedded are extremely secure and cannot be accessed or amended easily.
- 38.4. Where an electronic or digital signature is being held, from any party for any reason, You must ensure it is non-refutable. This includes the definitions of both wet and dry signatures. Systems and processes must be in place to assure us the original signature has not been altered. Where any document needs to be renewed, and a new signature taken, it must be clear from when the new document takes effect, and both must be held.
- 38.5. You are responsible for making the evidence You hold easily available when the WMCA needs it.

### **39. Self-declarations by residents**

- 39.1. All self-declarations must confirm the resident's details and describe what the resident is confirming, which includes requirements set out in this document.
- 39.2. If a resident self-declares prior attainment, You must check this in the [personal learning record \(PLR\)](#) and query any contradictory information with the resident. The PLR will not necessarily override the resident's self-declaration. Evidence of this assessment must be held in the resident's file and be available for audit.
- 39.3. WMCA-funded residents must also complete a self-declaration form to confirm that they are employed if they are undertaking WMCA flexibilities for those in employment.

### **40. Leaving learning**

- 40.1. You must report the learning actual end date in the ILR for a learner who leaves learning as the last day that You can evidence, they took part in a learning activity.
- 40.2. As a condition of funding, all destinations and/or progression details of WMCA learners are a mandatory requirement, this includes Community Learning.
- 40.3. Providers must limit 'unknown' destination reporting.
- 40.4. Destination and progression must be detailed in the defined fields within the ILR.
- 40.5. All resident postcodes must be accurately recorded at the start of an aim.
- 40.6. It is mandatory to update destination and progression data in the ILR monthly.

### **41. Data Submission - Individualised learner record (ILR) & Course Data**

- 41.1. You must submit ILR data or other agreed formats of learner data from the beginning of the academic year (R01) and then monthly. We expect providers to notify WMCA should You be unable to submit for any reason. The WMCA reserves the right not to make payments if your learner data is not submitted.

- 41.2. You must accurately complete all ILR fields as required in the [2023 to 2024 ILR specification](#) and [Skills Programme Coding Guidance](#), even if they are not required for funding purposes.
- 41.3. You must provide accurate unique learner number (ULN) information to awarding organisations and ensure all information You use to register learners for qualifications is correct. You can find more information in the [Learner Records Service](#) guidance.
- 41.4. The ILR must accurately reflect the learning and support (where applicable) You have identified, planned, and delivered to eligible individuals. You must not report inaccurate information that would result in an overstatement of the funding claimed.
- 41.5. Where your data does not support the funding claimed, we will take action to correct this, and we could recover funds You overstated.
- 41.6. In addition to the information in this section, the [Performance and management](#) rules have been provided, which sets out how You should submit data, how the WMCA will undertake its financial due diligence, make payments, performance management, audit and gain assurance from its providers.
- 41.7. WMCA has provided extra guidance regarding ILR coding; please refer to the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#) for more information.
- 41.8. You should also refer to the [ESFA ILR specification](#) and provider manual for 2023/24, and any other relevant documents referred to in those documents.

## **42. Match funding**

- 42.1. You must not use the payments that We make to you in 2023/24 as match funding for any ESF projects with any co-financing organisation or Managing Authority.
  - 42.1.1. For learners who started before academic year 2023 to 2024, You and Your supply chain must follow the retention of documents, 'publicity' and horizontal themes rules, and provide evidence as detailed in the [ESF: funding and performance management rules 2014 to 2020](#)
  - 42.1.2. You and Your supply chain must follow the evaluation, surveys and annual implementation reporting rules in the ESF: funding and performance management rules 2014 to 2020.
  - 42.1.3. You must keep to the rules of the ESF programme, or You will break the conditions of Your contract, and this could result in Us recovering funds. This includes; the eligibility evidencing rules in the 'evidence pack' section of this document.

## **43. Learning in the workplace**

- 43.1. The WMCA will fund learning in the workplace to support residents achieve an in-work progression such as increased pay, responsibility, or promotion.

This provision should have a flexible delivery to allow all employed residents to participate according to their needs.

- 43.2. The WMCA will also fund learning in the workplace for work experience linked to Into-employment programmes as part of your delivery plan.

#### **44. Job outcome definitions**

44.1. Job outcome payments, linked to standard programmes.

44.1.1. For fully funded learners who are unemployed, We will pay 50% of the achievement payment if they start a job before achieving the learning aim. If the learner then achieves the learning aim, We will pay the remaining achievement payment.

44.2. Job outcome payments linked to Into-employment programmes:

44.2.1. For funding the learner must have met the conditions of funding listed in the specification for that course, this will include a day 1 payment and 13-week sustained employment payment. The specification for payment and costing is found in each programme specification.

44.3. The following conditions apply:

44.3.1. the resident must provide You with evidence through a [declaration](#), that they have a job for 16 hours or more a week for four consecutive weeks. [Universal Credit work allowances](#) may still apply for those residents eligible who become employed and will reduce in time, based on the earnings taper rate.

44.3.2. Where the learner was claiming benefits relating to unemployment, they must also declare that they have stopped claiming these. Please note this does not relate to Universal Credits (UC)

### ***Section 5. – Skills Programmes Funding Contributions***

#### **45. Introduction**

45.1. We have simplified the eligibility criteria to fully fund learners, depending on their age and income. However, it is still mandatory to record learners' employment status to ascertain the impact of our investment in the region for priority groups, such as unemployed and economically inactive residents, and those on low wages.

#### **46. WMCA Skills Programmes funding contribution for 19- to 23-year-old**

46.1. The WMCA will fully fund 19-to-23-year-old learners up to and including Level 3 qualifications.

46.2. Level 4 and above qualifications will be loan funded. However, Level 4 flexibility may apply if agreed through a business case and delivery plan.

#### **47. WMCA Skills Programmes funding contribution for 24+-year-old learners**

47.1. The WMCA will fully fund all learners on English and maths, up to and including level 2 – where a resident has not achieved GCSE grade c/level 4 or above (National policy legal entitlement)

47.2. The WMCA will fully fund all learners on Essential Digital Skills Qualifications up to and including level 1.

47.3. All other programmes up to and including Level 3 will be fully funded for learners aged 24 and above unless the learner is employed **and** earning above the [income threshold](#) set by WMCA.

### ***Section 6. – Skills Programmes Key Definitions***

#### **48. Introduction**

48.1. We recognise that some employed residents might be supported by Universal Credit or on benefits and with low incomes. Therefore, the WMCA will support employed and unemployed residents, whether they are looking for a job or not looking for employment (economically inactive).

#### **49. Employed**

49.1. For 2023/24, the WMCA will continue to use the criterion to confirm whether a resident is employed. The WMCA defines residents as employed if they are in receipt of waged income as a permanent, temporary, or self-employed worker.

49.2. Contracts of employment that define a resident as employed will include part-time, zero-hour and agency contracts.

#### **50. Unemployed & Economically Inactive**

50.1. The WMCA defines a resident as ‘unemployed’ if they are not currently employed and are able to start work or are available for work.

50.2. Providers should ensure that for those unemployed, the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and labour market needs and is recorded in the ILP.

50.3. We define a learner as unemployed if one or more of the following apply. They:

- 50.3.1. receive Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), including those receiving National Insurance credits only.
- 50.3.2. receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- 50.3.3. receive Universal Credit (UC), and their take-home pay as recorded on their UC statement (disregarding UC payments and other benefits) is less than £617 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £988 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner)
- 50.3.4. are released on temporary license, studying outside a prison environment, and not funded by the Ministry of Justice
- 50.3.5. The WMCA will also define economically inactive residents who are not currently employed and/or claiming an active benefit as unemployed.
- 50.4. To support assurance, activity providers should secure self-declarations from residents that can be evidenced to identify employment status set out in [Confirmation and signatures.](#)

## **51. Residents in receipt of low wage.**

- 51.1. You may fully fund residents who are 'Employed' if they:
  - 51.1.1. earn less than £30,000 per annum. You may also fully fund learners who meet the low wage criteria for qualifications included in the [level 3 FCFJ offer.](#)
- 51.2. You must have seen evidence of the resident's gross annual wages in these circumstances. This could be a wage slip within three months of the resident's learning start date, a bank statement showing the paid amount or a current employment contract that states gross monthly/annual wages.
- 51.3. Please note this is not an exhaustive list but must support Your decision to award full funding to an individual who would normally be eligible for co-funding.

## **52. Eligible qualifications**

- 52.1. Where You deliver regulated qualifications and/or their components, You must ensure they are eligible for WMCA Skills Programmes funding, [approved for funding](#) and available on [Find a learning aim.](#)
- 52.2. Where You deliver approved qualifications and/or their components You must ensure that learners are registered for the qualifications and/or components in line with the awarding policies and procedures. You must not pre-register students a significant period in advance of the learner starting the qualification.
- 52.3. We will fund qualifications that are linked to occupational regulation/licence to practise. You can find more information about these qualifications at the [qualifications website.](#)
- 52.4. Before delivering a component, You must check with the awarding organisation that they provide a learner registration facility, and the learner can

achieve it alone or as part of accumulating achievement towards a qualification.

- 52.5. You must provide accurate unique learner number (ULN) information to awarding organisations and ensure all information You use to register learners for qualifications is correct. You can find more information in the [Learner Records Service](#) guidance.

### **53. Supply Chain/Subcontract**

- 53.1. We are seeking greater transparency and closer collaboration in relation to the supply chain delivery and those services provided by third parties in the delivery of Skills Programmes. The supply chain rules and commitments are set out in the [Skills programme Supply Chain Funding Rules 2023/24](#).
- 53.2. Please note that organisations (with separate legal entities) within the same company group are classed as supply chain delivery members/sub-contractors.
- 53.3. The WMCA requires all its providers to have a clear rationale as to why they use a supply chain in the delivery of the Skills Programmes – this includes recruitment, delivery of teaching, learning or assessment and job-finding services. We will require providers to set out rationale at course level as part of the supply chain declaration.
- 53.4. The detailed supply chain arrangements that underpin Your Agreement will need to be agreed upon as part of Your delivery plan. If You do not have an Agreement in place at the beginning of the funding year, You cannot enter into a supply relationship without the express written agreement of the WMCA.
- 53.5. If during the funding year, You wish to make in-year changes to Your agreed supply chain delivery member or arrangement, You must provide a business case with a clear rationale in advance of making any changes to allow for the approval process to be completed. Please note that WMCA reserves the right not to accept any proposed supply chain delivery partner or sub-contractor and will not be liable to the provider as a result of taking such a decision.
- 53.6. This must be approved and agreed with WMCA prior to any additional supply chain delivery procurement activity taking place.
- 53.7. You must not use Your supply chain to meet short-term funding objectives.
- 53.8. The WMCA will be reviewing, using the ILR and its performance management reviews, the contributions of supply chain to Your Delivery Plan.
- 53.9. The WMCA considered whether to set a funding cap on management fees for supply chains that undertake direct delivery on behalf of providers. We have concluded not to at this time, as We feel to prescribe in this way could inadvertently set a market rate. However, the WMCA will expect you to retain evidence to support the levels of management fees You charge for training

delivery. Management fees above 20% will require previous authorisation from WMCA through a formal business case.

- 53.10. The WMCA will implement additional controls related to sub-contracting and associated third-party services provided in the delivery of Skills Programmes. More details can be found in [WMCA's Skills Programmes Supply Chain funding rules](#), but the key changes are as follows:
- 53.10.1. Definition of the sub-contracting to be broadened to supply-chain.
  - 53.10.2. Supply chain intent to be set out through declaration.
  - 53.10.3. Declaration of course delivery at sub-contractor level
  - 53.10.4. Ofsted inspection outcomes
  - 53.10.5. Requirements for reporting and quality assurance
- 53.11. WMCA reserve the right (a) when approving supply chain delivery to make such approval conditional; and (b) during the term of the Agreement to ask a prime provider to increase/decrease/cease allocations with specific supply chain members. This WMCA will ensure that sufficient cover is achieved across the region and emerging gaps throughout West Midlands are filled. Providers are required to have a clause within their sub-contracts to accommodate such changes.
- 53.12. Where a provider has a supply chain partner that delivers services for them in excess of £1m, the WMCA will risk assess this arrangement and may decide to cap the arrangement at £1m.
- 53.13. WMCA would like to see a reduction in the overall volume of supply chain delivery in the sector. From the 2024-2025 funding year onwards, supply chain in any given funding stream may only be up to 25% of that funding stream, unless the express permission of the WMCA has been sought and granted via a business case or as part of the WMCA commissioning. Local Authorities are exempt from this rule.
- 53.14. From 2023-2024 we are asking providers to review their supply chain approach and reduce their supply chain in order to meet the 25% limit by 2024-2025 and each subsequent year.
- 53.15. This will be reviewed as part of the Performance Management Review (PMR) process to understand the impact. Please note this doesn't include Lot 9 (SWAP Consortium).

## ***Section 7. – Skills Programmes Evidence***

### **54. Evidence**

- 54.1. You need to hold evidence to assure WMCA that You have used funding appropriately and delivered education and training in line with Our Agreement, these Funding Rules and the funding and performance-management rules.
- 54.2. Some evidence will come from specific business processes, and some as part of your day-to-day working. Evidence can be naturally occurring.
- 54.3. You must make sure enrolments for WMCA-funded Adult Education Budget (AEB), Free courses for jobs (FCFJ), National Skills Fund (Bootcamps) and



- Multiply, support Your decision to claim funding and support the individual's case for consideration as a resident in the West Midlands Combined Authority or any exceptions set out in the [Learner Eligibility](#) section.
- 54.4. In line with UK [General Data Protection Regulations](#) (UK GDPR), You must record in the evidence pack what appropriate documentation You have seen, rather than take photocopies to prove eligibility.
  - 54.5. The resident file will continue to be submitted to the WMCA through the ESFA Hub. The resident file must contain evidence to support the funding You wish to claim from the WMCA.
  - 54.6. The evidence pack must contain evidence to support the funding claimed and must be available to Us on request if we need it.
  - 54.7. You must accurately complete all [ILR fields](#) as required in the 2023 to 2024 ILR Specification, published by the ESFA, even if they are not required for funding purposes.
  - 54.8. Evidence in the evidence pack must assure the WMCA that the learner exists.
  - 54.9. The ILR must accurately reflect the learning and support (where applicable) You have identified, planned, and delivered to eligible WMCA residents. You must not report inaccurate information that would result in an inflated claim for funding.
  - 54.10. Where Your data does not support the funding, You have claimed, WMCA will act to get this corrected and could recover funds You have claimed.
  - 54.11. As a condition of funding, all destinations and/or progression details are a mandatory requirement for WMCA residents, this includes Community Learning. Providers must limit 'unknown' destination reporting. Destination and progression must be detailed in the defined fields within the ESFA ILR.
  - 54.12. All resident postcodes must be accurately recorded at the start of an aim.
  - 54.13. All self-declarations must confirm the resident's details and describe what the resident is confirming for requirements set out in this document.
  - 54.14. Providers can accept a reply to an email, text, or team message from a resident as proof of self-declaration for a job/13-week sustainment. The declaration would need to confirm all the detail needed for evidence and would ideally be from the same contact details as on the enrolment form.
  - 54.15. Additionally, WMCA will accept an email from an employer or evidence from DWP that the resident is no longer claiming benefits, providing these confirm the details needed to claim.
  - 54.16. If a resident self-declares prior attainment, You must check this in the personal learning record (PLR) and query any contradictory information with the resident. The PLR will not necessarily override the resident's self-declaration.
  - 54.17. The resident must confirm information they provide is correct when it is collected.
  - 54.18. If the time spent in learning is short, the level of evidence in the resident file would reflect this.
  - 54.19. Where You hold information centrally, You only need to refer to the source.

## 55. Evidence pack

- 55.1. You must hold evidence which confirms the following:
- 55.1.1. that the learner exists,
  - 55.1.2. that the learner is eligible for funding and at the rate of funding being claimed,
  - 55.1.3. that the education and training being delivered is eligible for funding,
  - 55.1.4. that the learning activity is taking place or has taken place,
  - 55.1.5. that the achievement of learning aims is certified, if applicable (that is, a certificate has been issued by an awarding organisation), and
  - 55.1.6. why other funding has been claimed, such as progressions into employment or further training.
  - 55.1.7. that resident has been informed that funding has been part or full funded by WMCA
  - 55.1.8. that resident has been made aware and provided the privacy notice relevant to their provision
  - 55.1.9. All information reported to the ESFA for WMCA residents in the ILR and the WMCA Earnings Adjustment Statement (EAS), and if it applies, the supporting evidence for the data You report for each resident.
  - 55.1.10. Your assessment and evidence of eligibility for funding and a record of what evidence the resident has provided including:
    - a) All initial basic skills and diagnostic assessments undertaken to determine a learner's requirements.
    - b) Information on prior learning that affects the learning or WMCA funding of any of the learning aims or programmes.
    - c) For 'personalised learning programmes', for example, learning not regulated by a qualification, full details of all the aspects of the learning to be carried out, including supporting evidence of the number of planned hours reported in the ILR.
    - d) A description of how You will deliver the learning and skills and how the resident will achieve their outcomes related to further progression e.g., employment, apprenticeship and/or further learning.
    - e) The supporting evidence about why You have claimed funding and the level of funding for a resident, including details of any resident or employer contribution.
    - f) Support needs identified, including how You will meet these needs and the evidence of that.
    - g) Details of any learner or employer contribution
  - 55.1.11. You must have evidence to show the learning is taking or has taken place. This will depend on the methods You use and could for example include registers, reviews, and online software. Attendance at a location, such as a classroom or training centre, is not sufficient on its own to evidence learning has taken place. Attendance/participation records are available, matching planned [Guided Learning Hours](#) and start and end dates.
  - 55.1.12. A resident's self-declaration as to what state benefits, they claim.
  - 55.1.13. A resident's self-declaration on their status relating to gaining a job.

- 55.2. All records and evidence of achievement of learning aims or learning programme. This must be available within three months of You reporting it in the ESFA ILR for WMCA residents.
- 55.3. If a learner withdraws from learning without achieving their learning aim, You must only claim funding up to the last date where You have evidence that the learner was still in learning.
- 55.4. You should only make claims for delivery through the ILR and supplementary data where the required contractual evidence is in place prior to submission.
- 55.5. You must keep evidence that the resident is eligible for funding. Where the resident is unemployed, this must include a record of what You have agreed with them, including the relevance of the learning to their employment prospects and the labour market needs.  
Where Your supply chain delivers any provision to the resident, it must clearly identify who it is. This must match the information reported to Us in the ESFA ILR for WMCA residents.

## **56. Control systems**

The WMCA regulations require that the funding You receive is 'regular and legal' which means that You and We must maintain an audit trail for the funding You receive and the participant activity. You must maintain the evidence for each deliverable and make that available for audit. Failure to maintain the audit trail will lead to funding being recovered. Your control systems will be an essential element in the management of your audit trail.

- 56.1. You must put in place adequate control systems to ensure that the ILR and Supplementary Data submissions You make to Us are accurate, complete and have a complete audit trail to justify them. Your control systems must allow You to recover evidence for audit quickly and accurately. Your control systems must extend to Your supply chain.
- 56.2. You must regularly test your control systems and Your supply chain's control systems and the learner evidence that they maintain and provide evidence to Us that Your systems operate correctly.

## **57. Whistleblowing and Complaints Guidance**

- 57.1. Providers, and where appropriate sub-contractors and/or supply chain members, must ensure that all applicants, learners, and staff are aware of the DFE's [Whistleblowing and Complaints](#) policies and processes for Skills Bootcamp and Multiply delivery.
- 57.2. Whistleblowing for Skills Bootcamps and Multiply should be made through the 'whistleblowing' [webform](#).

- 57.3. Whistleblowing entries must be clearly marked as the programme type (e.g., Skills Bootcamp/Multiply) and will be escalated to the relevant policy team.
- 57.4. Provider should ensure this information is passed onto residents.
- 57.5. For all Skills programmes, providers should additionally submit a Whistleblowing complaint via the [WMCA portal](#).

## **58. Quality Assurance**

- 58.1. As part of our assurance work, the WMCA will be monitoring the data you submit to the ESFA from the ILR and the EAS.
- 58.2. In order to gain assurance, the WMCA will undertake regular compliance reviews of all providers in line with the [Quality Assurance Framework](#).
- 58.3. The compliance reviews will include, but not be limited to:
  - 58.3.1. Systems and processes
  - 58.3.2. ILR Data
  - 58.3.3. EAS submission
  - 58.3.4. Sample check of learner files
  - 58.3.5. Sub-contracting arrangements
  - 58.3.6. Other contractual requirements
- 58.4. To provide further assurance, the WMCA may use the services of external suppliers to undertake field-based activity as part of our annual assurance programme of work, comprising funding compliance audits and targeted thematic funding assurance reviews.

### ***Section 8. – Adult Education Budget Specific Funding Rules***

- 58.5. WMCA have set out our Adult Education Budget strategy for 2022-25 which can be found [here](#).

### ***Section 9. – Adult Education Budget Support Funds***

## **59. Support funding**

WMCA's over-arching aim is to support as many eligible adult learners as possible to access learning. Some learners will need additional support to start or stay in learning.

Where You identify that a learner has a learning difficulty or disability, or a financial barrier, Your Skills programme allocation (where approved) enables You to claim learning support and/or learner support funding to meet the additional needs of learners.

Access to learning support funds can be granted, but this must form part of Your delivery plan allocation and you must demonstrate that the investment in learning/learner support leads to good outcomes for learners.

## **60. Support funding**

- 60.1. Learning support is available to meet the cost of putting in place a reasonable adjustment, as set out in the [Equality Act 2010](#), for residents who have an identified learning difficulty or disability, to achieve their learning goal.
- 60.2. Learning support must not be used to deal with everyday difficulties that are not directly associated with a resident's learning on their programme.
- 60.3. You must:
  - 60.3.1. carry out a thorough assessment to identify the support the resident needs.
  - 60.3.2. agree and record the outcome of Your assessment in the resident file.
  - 60.3.3. record all outcomes on the resident file and keep all evidence of the assessment of the needs, planned and actual delivery.
  - 60.3.4. report in the ESFA ILR that a WMCA resident has a learning support need associated with an identified learning aim, by entering code LSF1 in the 'Learning Delivery Funding and Monitoring' field and entering the corresponding dates in the 'Date applies from' and 'Date applies to' fields.
- 60.4. All learning support claims must be reported in the ILR. To claim any costs that exceed the fixed monthly rate You must also use the earnings adjustment statement (EAS).
- 60.5. You must use the WMCA EAS if Your costs exceed this monthly rate, and You must keep evidence of these costs. You must only record the excess amount on the EAS, not the whole learning support cost. You can find details of how to make a claim in the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#).
- 60.6. You can claim learning support if learning continues past the planned end date and the resident needs continued support.

## **61. Exceptional learning support claims above £19,000**

If a learner needs significant levels of support to start or continue learning and has support costs of more than £19,000 in a funding year, You can claim exceptional learning support (ELS).

Learners aged 19 to 24 who require significant levels of support should have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) provided by their local authority and, therefore, would access funding from their local authority.

- 61.1. Claims should be submitted via a business case in a timely manner and will need formal approval before submitting a claim via Earnings Adjustment Statement (EAS)

- 61.2. You must submit ELS claims at the beginning of the resident's programme, or when You identify the resident requires support costs of more than £19,000 in a funding year, by completing and sending the [ELS claims document](#).
- 61.3. To claim exceptional learning support for a resident aged 19 to 24 You must confirm why the individual does not have an EHC plan. This should be a letter or email from the resident's local authority stating the reason(s) why the individual does not need an EHC plan.
- 61.4. When You claim exceptional learning support You must explain why you have claimed the amount You have, which would be linked to the learner's assessment and planned learning support claim. You must only claim amounts for Your costs of providing the support to the learner and not include any indirect costs or overheads.
- 61.5. ELS will be funded from within your Skills Programme allocation.

## **62. Learner Support included in Skills Programmes allocation (under review)**

- 62.1. The Learner Support Fund is currently under review. All changes to its purpose, process to claim and any other associated elements will be communicated to providers in an update to these funding rules.
- 62.2. Learner support is available to provide financial support for residents with a specific financial hardship preventing them from taking part / continuing in learning. Before You award support to a resident, identify their needs within the following categories:
  - 62.2.1. Hardship funding – general financial support for vulnerable and financially disadvantaged residents to support participation learning.
  - 62.2.2. 20+ childcare funding – for residents aged 20 or older on the first day of learning who are at risk of not starting or continuing learning because of childcare costs.
  - 62.2.3. Residential Access funding – to support WMCA-funded Skills Programmes residents where they need to live away from home.
- 62.3. You must not claim more than 5% of your total Learner Support final claim as administration expenditure. You must document your process for managing Your administration costs over the current funding year and record, report and retain evidence on spending for each of the categories.
- 62.4. If You do not have a Learner Support allocation, You must follow these Funding Rules and claim learner support using the earnings adjustment statement (EAS). Approval for claims must be submitted via a business case in a timely manner and will need formal approval before submitting a claim via EAS. Additional overview must be submitted to WMCA monthly, please refer to the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#) for more support.
- 62.5. You must:
  - 62.5.1. have criteria for how You will administer and distribute Your funds; these must reflect the principles of equality and diversity and be available to residents and to Us on request.
  - 62.5.2. assess and record the resident's needs, demonstrating the need for support.

- 62.5.3. report the appropriate Resident Support Reason codes in the 'Resident Funding and Monitoring' fields in the ILR. You do not need to report this for non-formula community learning.
- 62.5.4. Report Your expenditure via the mid-year funding forecast, End of year forecast and final funding claims.
- 62.5.5. consider the availability of other support for residents, for example from Jobcentre Plus
- 62.5.6. make it clear to residents it is their responsibility to tell the Department for Work and Pensions about any resident support they are receiving from You, as resident support payments may affect their eligibility for state benefits.
- 62.6. You must not use resident support funds for any of the following:
  - 62.6.1. essential equipment or facilities if the learner is eligible for full funding except for the items covered in the first clause of the [hardship section](#) and the flexibilities in [ICT devices and connectivity section](#)
  - 62.6.2. A resident in custody or released on temporary licence.
  - 62.6.3. A resident carrying out a higher education course or learning aims fully funded from other sources.
  - 62.6.4. To pay weekly attendance allowances or achievement and attendance bonuses

### **63. Hardship**

- 63.1. You can use hardship funds for any of the following:
  - 63.1.1. Course-related costs, including course trips, books, and equipment (where costs are not included in the funding rate)
  - 63.1.2. Support with domestic emergencies and emergency accommodation provided by others, or by providing items or services or cash direct to the learner, this can be in the form of a grant or repayable loan provided by You.
  - 63.1.3. Transport costs (but not a block contribution to post-16 transport partnerships or routinely funded transport costs covered in the Local Authority's legal duty for residents of sixth-form age)
  - 63.1.4. Examination fees
  - 63.1.5. Accreditation fees, professional membership fees and any fees or charges due to external bodies
  - 63.1.6. Your exam registration fees.
  - 63.1.7. Support provided by others, or by providing items, services, or cash direct to the resident. This can be a grant or a repayable loan.
- 63.2. In exceptional circumstances, You can use hardship funds with course fees for residents who need financial support to start or stay in learning. WMCA permission will be needed prior to the submission of any claim.
- 63.3. If an asylum seeker is eligible for provision, You may provide resident support in the form of course-related books, equipment, or a travel pass.

### **64. 20+ childcare**

- 64.1. You can only use childcare funding to pay for childcare with a childminder, provider, or childminder agency, registered with Ofsted.

- 64.2. You must not use childcare funding to:
  - 64.2.1. fund informal childcare, such as that provided by a relative
  - 64.2.2. set up childcare places or to make a financial contribution to the costs of a crèche.
  - 64.2.3. fund childcare for residents aged under 20 on the first day of learning; instead You must direct them to the ESFA's ['Care to Learn programme'](#)
- 64.3. You must not use childcare for those aged 20 years or older to top up childcare payments for those receiving 'Care to Learn' payments.

## **65. Residential Access funding**

- 65.1. You can use residential access funding to support WMCA funded Skills Programmes learners who meet eligibility criteria, where they need to live away from home, for example, to access specialist provision which involves a residential element, or to support learners who cannot access provision locally.
- 65.2. You must:
  - 65.2.1. set out the criteria and procedures for considering and agreeing applications for support from Your residential access funds.
  - 65.2.2. only pay for travel costs for learners who are awarded residential access funding in exceptional circumstances.
  - 65.2.3. only claim residential access funding for the period the learner is resident, this could be in accommodation You own or manage or other accommodation which You have agreed to fund in line with your criteria.
  - 65.2.4. ensure costs claimed represent value for money for the local area.
  - 65.2.5. Where You have Your own residential facilities, You must publish your rates.

## **66. ICT devices and connectivity**

- 66.1. You can support disadvantaged learners who are undertaking classroom or blended learning to continue to participate via online learning where the learner:
  - 66.1.1. does not have internet access at home, and/or
  - 66.1.2. does not have a suitable device, i.e., laptop or tablet, to complete the necessary online course work.
- 66.2. You must secure value for money when purchasing IT devices and/or internet access including:
  - 66.2.1. deploying any unused devices before You purchase new ones.
  - 66.2.2. exploring options to access low-cost second-hand or recycled devices.
  - 66.2.3. avoiding entering long-term contract arrangements
  - 66.2.4. holding a record of actual costs for any IT devices and/or internet access bought for this purpose and making this available to Us, if asked
- 66.3. IT devices You purchase must only be loaned out to learners and returned at the end of their learning aim to allow them to be re-used by other learners. Learners must sign a declaration, confirming:
  - 66.3.1. they will return the device when their online learning aim(s) complete, or if they leave before completing their learning.
  - 66.3.2. they will return the device in the same condition in which they received it.



- 66.3.3. You must maintain an up-to-date record of the loan and return of devices to learners.
- 66.3.4. You must record the following evidence in the learner's evidence pack:
- a) the outcome of the assessment undertaken to identify the learner's individual needs.

## ***Section 9. Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) additional Funding Rules***

Please note: this policy is subject to potential further amendments and clarifications.

### **67. Introduction**

- 67.1. This section sets out additional funding eligibility rules for learners funded through Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ). Eligibility rules set out in the Eligibility section of this document are also applicable to learners funded through FCFJ.
- 67.2. Free courses for jobs (FCFJ) are a targeted level 3 offer to support adults without an existing full level 3 qualification and adults who meet the definition of 'low wage' or 'unemployed'.
- 67.3. The offer includes:
- 67.3.1. level 3 qualifications which will support the development of new skills for adult learners and improve the prospects of eligible adults in the labour market. Eligible adults aged 24+ can now access fully funded level 3 provision from the list of level 3 FCFJ qualifications available via the DfE list of qualifications approved for funding.
  - 67.3.2. additional level 3 qualifications for 19 to 23-year-olds that are not included in the legal entitlements.
  - 67.3.3. support funding
  - 67.3.4. the ability for eligible learners to take one short qualification (identified by category code 49) without exhausting their eligibility. We expect this flexibility to be used where a learner could benefit from a more substantial qualification once they have completed a short qualification.
  - 67.3.5. WMCA will also fund additional qualifications as listed below through Free Courses for Jobs. Please note these are only available to fund via WMCA funding.

### **68. Principles of Funding**

- 68.1. We will fund eligible learners where the WMCA have formally agreed the allocation and qualifications with the provider.
- 68.1.1. Please note 19–23-year-old funding will be paid through AEB, a provider must have access to AEB funding, prior to enrolling residents who are 19–23-year-old.

- 68.2. Providers must make sure an individual is eligible for FCFJ funding before claiming funding for them. It is Your responsibility to check the eligibility of the resident at the start of each adult learning aim, and only claim funding for eligible residents.
- 68.3. An uplift is payable at 2 different rates and follows the earnings methodology set out in the [funding rates and formula document](#). This uplift should be used to support delivery of the level 3 FCFJ offer.
- 68.4. Only level 3 qualifications included in this offer will attract an uplift. There may be additions to the list to ensure it meets the needs of the economy; we encourage providers to check funding validity regularly. Valid qualifications will have category codes 45, 46, 48 or 49 on [find a learning aim](#). Please ensure you refer to the category codes rather than the funding stream on [find a learning aim](#)
- 68.5. When qualifications are added to the list of qualifications included in this offer, they will become eligible for funding from that publication date and will not be backdated.
- 68.6. Please note this policy is subject to potential further amendments and clarifications.
- 68.7. You must not claim for ESFA AEB funding where learners are already being funded through an advanced learner loan (ALL), or a [Skills bootcamp](#) (where applicable), for qualifications that are in the FCFJ offer. The criteria for ALL can be found in the [Advanced Learner Loans funding rules](#).
- 68.8. Once a learner has been funded by FCFJ in line with the paragraphs above, they will have exhausted their eligibility for the offer and can no longer access FCFJ funding. Learners accessing the low-wage and unemployment flexibilities cannot be funded if they have previously been funded via FCFJ.
- 68.9. It is important that providers continue to ensure they work within the performance parameters for FCFJ and that 70% of funding is focused on Diploma delivery.
- 68.10. From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023, the WMCA approved FCFJ will be subject to a 10% uplift, in the same way it has been applied to AEB provision. This will not apply to the National approved list, which already has an uplift applied.

## **69. Learner Eligibility**

- 69.1. We will fully fund individuals as part of this offer where they:
  - 69.1.1. are aged 19 to 23 on 31 August within the 2023 to 2024 funding year: and
  - 69.1.2. have not achieved a full level 3 qualification, or above, irrespective of their income.

- 69.1.3. enrol on the level 3 FCFJ qualifications approved for funding. Please note this will be funded through AEB, so you must have access to an AEB allocation.
- 69.2. We will fund eligible learners to take one 'short' qualification without exhausting their eligibility, followed by one further qualification in the level 3 FCFJ offer. 'Short' qualifications are identified by category code 49 which can be found in the level 3 FCFJ offer – short qualification within [find a learning aim](#).
- 69.3. We will also fund individuals who are 24+ and enrol on the level 3 FCFJ qualifications approved for funding.
  - 69.3.1. for their first level 3
  - 69.3.2. where they are [unemployed](#), or they meet the [low wage criteria](#), including individuals who already have a level 3 qualifications or higher.

## **70. Data Submission**

- 70.1. You must accurately complete all ILR fields as required in the ILR specification, even if they are not required for funding purposes.
- 70.2. The ILR must accurately reflect the learning and support (where applicable) You have identified, planned, and delivered to eligible individuals. You must not report inaccurate information that would result in an overstatement of the funding claimed.
- 70.3. Where Your data does not support the funding claimed, We will take action to correct this, and We could recover funds You overstated.
- 70.4. In addition to the information in this section, the [Performance and management rules](#) have been provided, which sets out how You should submit data and how the WMCA will undertake its financial due diligence, make payments, performance manage, audit and gain assurance from its providers.
- 70.5. WMCA has provided extra guidance regarding ILR coding please refer to the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#) for more information.

## **71. Additional FCFJ approved qualifications for delivery.**

- 71.1. In addition to the [national Free Courses for Jobs qualifications](#), WMCA will also fund additional qualifications as listed below in line with the Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) funding eligibility.
- 71.2. You must ensure you use LDM code 378 when recording these learners on the ILR (and LDM code 382 when recording learners who meet the low wage eligibility) and record the employment status of learners accessing the offer in the ILR.
- 71.3. Please note: These qualifications will not attract the FCFJ national uplift, however, will receive the 10% WMCA uplift.

| Aim Reference | Aim Title  |
|---------------|--|
| 40006669      | Access to Higher Education Diploma: Midwifery                  |
| 40008265      | Access to HE Diploma (Computer Science)                        |
| 40008393      | Access to HE Diploma (Health Professions)                      |
| 40008848      | Access to HE Diploma (Science)                                 |
| 40008873      | Access to HE Diploma (Social Science and Humanities)           |
| 40009609      | Access to HE Diploma (Public Sector Services and Policing)     |
| 40009749      | Access to HE Diploma (Health Professions)                      |
| 40010351      | Access to HE Diploma (Business and Law)                        |
| 40010363      | Access to HE Diploma (Business and Management)                 |
| 40010387      | Access to HE Diploma (Education)                               |
| 40010399      | Access to HE Diploma (Engineering)                             |
| 40010417      | Access to HE Diploma (Health Science)                          |
| 40010430      | Access to HE Diploma (Land Based Studies)                      |
| 40010879      | Access to HE Diploma (Business)                                |
| 40010892      | Access to HE Diploma (Computing)                               |
| 40010910      | Access to HE Diploma (Education)                               |
| 40010922      | Access to HE Diploma (Engineering Science)                     |
| 40010958      | Access to HE Diploma (Health and Social Care)                  |
| 40010995      | Access to HE Diploma (Law)                                     |
| 40011082      | Access to HE Diploma (Science)                                 |
| 40011094      | Access to HE Diploma (Social Science)                          |
| 40011100      | Access to HE Diploma (Sports Science)                          |
| 40012360      | Access to HE Diploma (Radiography)                             |
| 40012384      | Access to HE Diploma (Health and Social Care)                  |
| 40012414      | Access to HE Diploma (Humanities and Social Science)           |
| 40012529      | Access to HE Diploma (Health Professionals)                    |
| 40012530      | Access to HE Diploma (Midwifery)                               |
| 40012542      | Access to HE Diploma (Nursing)                                 |
| 40012554      | Access to HE Diploma (Social Science)                          |
| 40012566      | Access to HE Diploma (Social Science and Health)               |
| 40012578      | Access to HE Diploma (Social Work)                             |
| 40012785      | Access to HE Diploma (Early Years)                             |
| 40012876      | Access to HE Diploma (Health Science Professions)              |
| 40012888      | Access to HE Diploma (Humanities and Social Sciences)          |
| 40012906      | Access to HE Diploma (Science)                                 |
| 40012931      | Access to HE Diploma (Art and Design)                          |
| 00295237      | Air Source Heat Pumps  |
| 50099899      | Diploma in Accident Repair Paint Principles                    |
| 60312750      | Award in Inspection and Testing                                |
| 60324983      | Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning                |
| 60054992      | Diploma in Electrical Installations (Buildings and Structures) |
| 6032496X      | NCFE Diploma in Supporting Teaching and Learning Level 3       |
| Z0009726      | Electric Vehicle - Level 3                                     |
| 60101027      | Diploma in Coaching and Mentoring                              |
| 60166071      | NVQ Diploma in Business Improvement Techniques                 |

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 60165546 | Advanced Diploma in Accounting - Level 3                             |
| 60106852 | BTEC Award in Education and Training                                 |
| 60347259 | Diploma in Fitness Instructing and Personal Training                 |
| 50102771 | Diploma in ICT Systems and Principles for IT Professionals           |
| 60014829 | Diploma in Women's Hairdressing                                      |
| 60173488 | Advanced Technical Diploma in Hairdressing (540)                     |
| 60139651 | Diploma in Business Administration                                   |
| 6100263X | Certificate in Cyber Security Principles                             |
| 40010739 | Access to HE Diploma (Accountancy; Finance and Banking)              |
| 60170748 | Certificate in Principles of Business Administration (VRQ) 60170748  |
| 60169692 | Learning & Development   |
| 60139742 | Customer Service   |
| 61005678 | L3 Diploma in Business Administration                                |
| 40009269 | Access to HE Diploma in Business - Reference: 40009269               |
| 60174079 | Advice & Guidance  |
| 60326748 | L3 Diploma in Adult Care   |
| 60352048 | NVQ Diploma in Occupational Work Supervision (Construction) 60352048 |
| 6031610X | Certificate in Cyber Security Principles                             |

## **Section 10. National Skills Fund Technical Bootcamps additional Funding Rules**

### **72. Introduction**

- 72.1. This section sets out additional funding eligibility rules for learners funded through NSF Technical Bootcamps. Eligibility rules set out in the [Eligibility section](#) of this document are also applicable to learners funded through NSF Technical Bootcamps.
- 72.2. Skills Bootcamps offer free, flexible courses of up to 16 weeks, with a guaranteed job interview (where a candidate is being recruited to a new job or new opportunities), which equip adults with technical skills that enable them to access in-demand jobs, apprenticeships, and new opportunities (including for the self-employed)
- 72.3. They give people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and fast-track to an interview with an employer.
- 72.4. Skills Bootcamps are developed in partnership with employers, colleges, training providers and local authorities. They help people in England develop the skills that are in demand in their local area and get a better job.
- 72.5. Skills Bootcamps offer a range of courses, such as:
  - 72.5.1. digital skills, including marketing, coding, or data analysis.
  - 72.5.2. technical training in areas such as engineering, construction, or logistics (HGV driving)
  - 72.5.3. green skills, for instance, solar energy or agriculture technology

### **73. Principles of Funding**

- 73.1. Providers must make sure an individual is eligible for NSF Technical Bootcamp funding before claiming funding for them. It is Your responsibility to check the eligibility of the resident at the start of each adult learning aim, and only claim funding for eligible residents.
- 73.2. Skills Bootcamps must be delivered at Level 3-5 or equivalent, with the exception of Skills Bootcamps in Construction, Green Skills and HGV Driving which may be delivered at Level 2 or equivalent.
- 73.3. All training must either be accredited, aligned to occupational standards managed by the Institute for Apprenticeship & Technical Education or utilise a recognised standard for representing attainment (e.g., Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA), Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA) – Where the third pathway is chosen, We would expect a higher standard of evidence for employer engagement.

- 73.4. Bootcamps are fully funded for learners, however, where these are being delivered/led by an employer, We ask for a 30% contribution from large employers or a 10% contribution from SMEs<sup>8</sup>.

## 74. Learner Eligibility

- 74.1. To be funded by the WMCA, residents must meet the following criteria:
- 74.1.1. aged 19+ will reach their 19th birthday on or by the 31st of August within the 2023 to 2024 funding year (defined for the purposes of eligibility as 01 August – 31 July)
  - 74.1.2. have the right to work in the UK. This can be checked on [gov.uk/view-right-to-work](https://gov.uk/view-right-to-work)
  - 74.1.3. meet residency requirements. Providers should refer to the [Residency Eligibility section](#) before accepting an individual onto a Skills Bootcamp and
  - 74.1.4. live in England, further detail is provided below. You must not actively recruit learners who live or work outside of England.
- 74.2. As the Bootcamps are a national grant the guidance from DfE is that this funding can be used to fund any learner in England, therefore you would not be restricted to funding learners within the prescribed WMCA devolved postcode area.
- 74.3. We are keen to ensure that this funding benefits both residents and businesses within the West Midlands, therefore, are offering some guidance: You can recruit learners who are in the West Midlands but do not fall into the postcode list previously supplied (this opens it up to learners who sit outside the AEB postcode parameters) this means you can deliver bootcamps to anyone in England however, the expectation is they?
- a) Are either a West Midlands resident and/or
  - b) Move into a role within the West Midlands
- 74.4. We will fund an individual who does not live in England if specialist skills training is only available in England and the individual intends to work in England as a result of the Skills Bootcamp. We do not expect these numbers to be significant.
- 74.5. Skills Bootcamps are designed for individuals that are closer to the labour market and the assumption is that the majority of participants will have been away from the labour market less than 12 months. A Provider may only deliver a Skills Bootcamp to support adults who have not been in work for

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<sup>8</sup> Any organisation that has fewer than 250 employees and a turnover of less than €50 million or a balance sheet total less than €43 million

- longer than 12 months if they judge that a Skills Bootcamp will support them effectively into a job outcome.
- 74.6. No prior attainment is required unless specifically prescribed by an employer and/or specifically related to the job and sector within which the vacancies offered are situated. However, Providers may have defined selection processes and/or assessments as part of their approach to recruitment of learners.
- 74.7. An adult may generally only undertake one Skills Bootcamp per funding year (1 April to 31 March) and must not be on more than one Skills Bootcamp at any one time. Providers have an obligation to ask prospective learners whether they have already undertaken a Skills Bootcamp in that funding year.
- 74.8. However, where an individual starts a Skills Bootcamp and then realises that it is not suitable for them for whatever reason, they may start, and be funded for, another Skills Bootcamp so long as only the first milestone payment (or less) has been reached (limited to two per funding year).
- 74.9. Where an individual starts a Skills Bootcamp in one funding year, and for some reason does not complete it until the next funding year, the start date will determine whether they are eligible to undertake another Skills Bootcamp.
- 74.10. Skills Bootcamps should be designed to encourage the participation of underrepresented groups, such as those with protected characteristics and those who might face barriers to employment e.g., veterans.
- 74.11. Skills Bootcamps are also open to serving prisoners due to be released within 6 months of completing a Skills Bootcamp, and those on temporary release.

## **75. Course length**

- 75.1. The Provider must offer Skills Bootcamps of a minimum of 60 Guided Learning Hours (GLH) over a maximum of 16 weeks. GLH are the time a Learner spends being taught or instructed by, or otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, whether online or in person. Pre-recorded content does not count towards GLHs.

## **76. Course Content & Flexibility**

- 76.1. The Provider must ensure that the Skills Bootcamps:
- 76.1.1. can be reasonably delivered to a Learner concurrently employed in either a full-time or part-time role or around other commitments.
- 76.1.2. are accessible to Learners.
- 76.1.3. training Providers must make reasonable adjustments, as appropriate for those Learners with Protected Characteristics (as defined by the Equalities Act (2010)).
- 76.1.4. We will not fund any part of any learner's learning aim or programme that duplicates provision they have received from any other source.



- 76.2. The Provider must deliver a 'wraparound service' of Learner support (for example, using a coaching and mentoring approach, from programme application stage, during, and post programme, to move people into jobs/new roles and opportunities. This should include upfront screening of applicants, soft skills (or work readiness) training to support the occupational skills training, vacancy/role/opportunity identification, providing pastoral services to help participants complete the Skills Bootcamp and follow-up services to participants and employers to support job placement mentorship, pastoral support) and high-quality advice and guidance to support the learner into a positive employment outcome (for example, CV writing support, mock interviews).
- 76.3. We expect all Learners to progress on to a guaranteed job interview upon the completion of the Skills Bootcamp, in the case of a new job.
- 76.4. The Provider may deliver Skills Bootcamps remotely, online or face to face or through a blended approach.

## **77. Data Submission**

- 77.1. You must accurately complete all ILR fields as required in the ILR specification, even if they are not required for funding purposes.
- 77.2. In addition, providers are asked to complete a spreadsheet monthly, which should be returned in line with the data submission timetable which you will find in the [DfE Wave 4 Bootcamp Guidance](#).
- 77.3. Please note, if You deliver multiple Skills Bootcamp, then a separate return is required for each Skills Bootcamp.
- 77.4. Multiple cohorts of the same Skills Bootcamp delivered by a single provider must be captured on the same data return.
- 77.5. Where Your data does not support the funding claimed, We will take action to correct this, and We could recover funds You overstated.
- 77.6. In addition to the information in this section, the [Performance and management rules](#) have been provided, which sets out how You should submit data returns and how the WMCA will undertake its financial due diligence, make payments, performance manage, audit and gain assurance from its providers.
- 77.7. WMCA has provided extra guidance regarding ILR coding please refer to the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#) for more information. Providers will also have been issued with the [DfE Wave 4 Bootcamp Guidance](#).
- 77.8. Data must be reported in a timely manner, outcomes can be achieved up to 6 months from the end of the Skills Bootcamp, however, please note for Wave 3 the cut-off date will be 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

## **78. Employer Co-Funded Learners**

- 78.1. Skills Bootcamps must be co-funded at 30% of the agreed unit rate by the employer where the employer is training their own existing employees (defined as someone directly employed by the employer, not a worker, sub-contractor, or freelancer).
- 78.2. This is reduced to 10% where the employer is a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) (defined as an employer with less than 250 employees).
- 78.3. The entirety of the cash co-funding contribution must be from the employer.
- 78.4. Courses are fully funded by the WMCA for individuals not being co-funded by their employer, and for the self-employed.
- 78.5. Providers are free to agree further funding contributions from employers should they want to spend more on delivering the Skills Bootcamps.
- 78.6. Individual learners **must not** be charged.

## **79. Evidence requirements**

- 79.1. The DfE and WMCA will conduct random sampling checks of learner and employer evidence throughout the duration of the Agreement aligned to reporting periods. We reserve the right to vary the volume and frequency of checks over the lifetime of the contract.
- 79.2. At the specified submission points, You will receive a random sample based on the learner data included within the data returns. This will be presented in a table and sent to You to complete as You collate the required evidence.
- 79.3. It is therefore imperative that You have access to learner evidence for 100% of learners who are participating in the Skills Bootcamps.
- 79.4. The evidence checks are retrospective by default and do not impact Our ability to authorise payment claims. However, if any issues arise from any part of the process relating to data returns, payment claims or previous evidence checks, We reserve the right to conduct evidence checks in advance of releasing payment.
- 79.5. Providers must ensure that residents meet the eligibility as set out in this document.
- 79.6. Evidence overview can be found in [DfE Wave 4 Bootcamp Guidance](#).

## **Section 11 – Multiply additional Funding Rules**

### **80. Introduction**

- 80.1. This section sets out additional funding eligibility rules for learners funded through Multiply. Eligibility rules set out in the Eligibility section of this document are also applicable to learners funded through Multiply.

- 80.2. The overall objective of Multiply is to increase the levels of functional numeracy in the adult population (aged 19 years and above) across the UK, as identified by the following success measures:
- 80.2.1. More adults achieving maths qualifications courses (up to, and including, Level 2 –with GCSEs and FSQs as the qualifications of choice in England – or equivalent).
  - 80.2.2. Improved labour market outcomes e.g., fewer numeracy skills gaps reported by employers, and an increase in the proportion of adults that progress into sustained employment and / or education; and
  - 80.2.3. Increased adult numeracy across the population – this overall impact, which goes beyond achieving certificates or qualifications, will track both the perceived and actual difference taking part in the programme makes in supporting learners to improve their understanding and use of maths in their daily lives, at home and at work - and to feel more confident when doing so.
- 80.3. WMCA's strategic priority for Multiply Funding will be primarily focused on those in-work within our Region helping adults find employment, progress at work, and improve their earnings and labour market outcomes. The WMCA's aim is to reduce the number of residents with no or low qualifications across our region.

## **81. Principles of Funding**

- 81.1. We will fund eligible learners where We have formally agreed the allocation and business case (delivery plan) with a provider.
- 81.2. Providers must make sure an individual is eligible for Multiply funding before including them in their claim. It is Your responsibility to check the eligibility of the resident at the start of each adult learning aim, and only include eligible residents in Your claim.
- 81.3. It is Your responsibility to ensure that an individual meets the requirements of the funding and target groups outlined in Your Business Case schedule, issued as part of Your Agreement.
  - 81.3.1. A condition that Multiplies funds will only be provided where learners are engaged in safe and appropriate learning environments.
  - 81.3.2. A condition that Multiply funds will only be provided where learners are protected from extremism and the provider complies with the 'Prevent' Duty guidance:<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>)
  - 81.3.3. A requirement that arrangements exist for the appropriate handling and protection of Multiply learner data; and
  - 81.3.4. A requirement of equal treatment and access to provision for Multiply funded learners and relevant adjustments under the Equality Act 2010: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

## **82. Learner Eligibility**

- 82.1. To be funded by the WMCA, residents must meet the following criteria:
- 82.1.1. aged 19 or above on 31 August, on the first day of learning within the 2023 to 2024 funding year.
  - 82.1.2. do not already hold a Level 2 maths qualification/certification.

## **83. Data Submission**

- 83.1. Data submissions for Multiply will be processed in 2 ways: through the Individual Learner Record (ILR) and through completion of the WMCA Multiply Monitoring Sheet. These must be submitted in line with the guidance provided in the Operational Plan within Your Agreement.
- 83.2. You must accurately complete all ILR fields as required in the ILR specification, even if they are not required for funding purposes.
- 83.3. The ILR must accurately reflect the learning and support (where applicable) You have identified, planned, and delivered to eligible individuals. You must not report inaccurate information that would result in an overstatement of the funding claimed.
- 83.4. Where Your data does not support the funding claimed, We will take action to correct this, and We could recover funds You overstated.
- 83.5. In addition to the information in this section, the Multiply Operational Plan has been provided with Your Agreement, which sets out how You should submit data and how the WMCA will undertake its financial due diligence, make payments, performance management, audit, and gain assurance from its providers.
- 83.6. WMCA has provided extra guidance regarding ILR coding please refer to the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#) for more information.
- 83.7. You should also refer to the [ESFA ILR specification and provider manual for 2023/24](#), and any other relevant documents referred to in those documents.
- 83.8. You must:
- 83.8.1. Use funding model 99 and LDM code 385 to identify learners undertaking Multiply funded provision which is adult numeracy up to L2.
  - 83.8.2. Record the employment status of learners accessing the offer in the ILR and in the WMCA Multiply Monitoring Sheet.
  - 83.8.3. Multiply specific non-regulated learning aims that are available to be used can be found in the coding guidance.
  - 83.8.4. Learners participating in regulated numeracy courses through Multiply should be recorded on the existing regulated learning aims.

## 84. Evidence requirements

- 84.1. The DfE and WMCA will conduct random sampling checks of learner and employer evidence throughout the duration of the Agreement aligned to reporting periods. We reserve the right to vary the volume and frequency of checks over the lifetime of the Agreement.
- 84.2. At the specified submission points, You will receive a random sample based on the learner data included within the data returns. This will be presented in a table and sent to You to complete as You collate the required evidence.
- 84.3. It is therefore imperative that You have access to learner evidence for 100% of learners who are participating on Multiply programmes.
- 84.4. The evidence checks are retrospective by default and do not impact Our ability to authorise payment claims. However, if any issues arise from any part of the process relating to data returns, payment claims or previous evidence checks, We reserve the right to conduct evidence checks in advance of releasing payment.
- 84.5. Evidence that You hold for learners should include but is not limited to the documents listed in Your Operational Plan.
- 84.6. Given the varied nature of Multiply courses, evidence of successfully completing a training course will be agreed between WMCA and the provider but must include evidence of passing any assessments for regulated qualifications.

## Section 12. – AEB Legal entitlements

### 85. Legal Entitlements

The WMCA AEB supports 4 legal entitlements to full funding for eligible adult learners.

Note: The legal entitlements for level 2 and level 3 follow the definition of fullness below. A learner can only be fully funded for one vocational qualification from the entitlement qualifications list when exercising their legal entitlement. Appropriate information, advice and guidance should be given to a learner and the learner should be made aware of their entitlement rights and progression routes on completing an entitlement qualification.

These entitlements are set out in the [Apprenticeships, Skills and Children Learning Act 2009](#), and enable eligible learners to be fully funded for the following qualifications:

- English and maths, up to and including level 2, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have not previously attained a GCSE grade 4 (C), or higher, and/or
- first full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23, and/or

- first full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23 and 24+ as part of WMCA flexibilities.
- Information technology ('digital') skills, up to and including level 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1.

- 85.1. If an individual meets the legal entitlement eligibility criteria, You must not charge them any course fees.
- 85.2. Eligible learners exercising their legal entitlement must be enrolled on approved qualifications for funding through the relevant entitlement. For the funding year 2022 to 2023, providers can find the approved qualifications in the [ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding](#), for the following entitlement offers:
- 85.2.1. level 2 and level 3 and/or
  - 85.2.2. English and Maths and/or
  - 85.2.3. essential digital skills qualifications

## **86. WMCA flexibility and legal entitlements**

- 86.1. We are supporting innovative delivery that creates impact to services being delivered through AEB. To enable Us to do this it is important that We work proactively, collaboratively, and be open and transparent. Providers may have specific flexibilities over and above those agreed as part of their delivery plan and We want to hear from providers with their ideas around further flexibilities.
- 86.2. The additional flexibilities available are:
- 86.2.1. Extension of full funding for 24+ unemployed or employed but earning less than £30,000 per annum to undertake a level 3 qualification.
  - 86.2.2. Testing of full funding for level 3 non-legal entitlement qualifications
  - 86.2.3. Testing the partial or full funding of economically valuable Level 4+ qualifications and units

## **Section 13. – AEB Programme Elements**

87. Programme eligibility and definitions can be defined as below:

### **88. English and maths for those aged 19 or older**

- 88.1. WMCA will fully fund individuals, including individuals who are employed, aged 19 or older, who have not previously attained a GCSE grade A\* to C or grade 4, or higher, in English and maths, as part of their legal entitlement on the day they start the following qualifications:
- 88.1.1. GCSE English language or maths.
  - 88.1.2. Functional Skills English or maths from Entry to level 2.

- 88.1.3. Stepping-stone qualifications (including components, where applicable) in English or maths approved by the Department for Education and ESFA.
- 88.2. If a resident wants to 'retake' their GCSE English and maths qualification because they did not achieve a Grade 4 or higher (C or higher), WMCA will not fund the resident to only resit the exam.
- 88.3. You must not enrol individuals on qualifications which are not necessary for progressing towards a GCSE or Functional Skill level 2.
- 88.4. You must not fund an apprentice for English or maths from the WMCA AEB.
- 88.5. All English and maths are funded as part of the statutory entitlement. Therefore, all courses funded as part of the entitlement can be found [here](#)
- 88.6. **Courses:**
- 88.7. All English and maths are funded as part of the statutory entitlement. Therefore, all courses funded as part of the entitlement can be found [here](#)
- 88.8. **You must:**
- 88.8.1. carry out a thorough initial assessment to determine an individual's current level using current assessment tools based on the national literacy and numeracy standards and core curricula.
- 88.8.2. carry out an appropriate diagnostic assessment to inform and structure a resident file to use as a basis for a programme of study.
- 88.8.3. enrol the resident on a level above that at which they were assessed and be able to provide evidence of this.
- 88.8.4. deliver ongoing assessments to support learning.
- 88.8.5. record the evidence of all assessment outcomes in the resident file.
- 88.8.6. The assessments must place a resident's current skill levels within the level descriptors used for the RQF.

## **89. Individuals aged 24 or older (excluding English, maths and ESOL)**

- 89.1. The WMCA will fully fund individuals aged 24 or older on the day they start the following.
- 89.1.1. provision up to, and including, a level 3, if they are [unemployed](#)
- 89.1.2. provision up to, and including, a level 3, if they are [employed and earn less than £30,000 per annum.](#)

## **90. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

- 90.1. The WMCA will fully fund individuals aged 19 and over on the day they start their ESOL learning aim where they are [unemployed](#) and meet the [eligibility criteria set.](#) Where residents are employed, the low wage flexibility applies.
- 90.2. Providers offering ESOL qualifications may need to deliver additional learning to individual residents that incurs additional costs above the qualification rate. You can access information on this in AEB funding rates and formula 2023 to 2024 guidance.
- 90.3. **The Offer**

- 90.4. Our intent is to fund a high-quality adult offer that enables residents to develop English language communication skills to support both their own personal health and well-being, secure work, or support in-work progression.
- 90.5. WMCA wants to see ESOL become embedded within the delivery of occupational training or programmes of study. To support people into work providers can establish a non-regulated offer in ESOL contextualised in line with the language expected within the sector e.g., care, retail, and construction.
- 90.6. WMCA also want to see the development of online delivery to make ESOL training more accessible to residents, following a robust Initial Assessment to ensure they have the required digital skills to engage.
- 90.7. For all ESOL training either accredited or non-regulated it is important to Us that individuals are clear on what they can progress to following successful completion of their learning.
- 90.8. WMCA has set clear expectations from Grant Providers that 25% of ESOL delivered should be vocational ESOL. WMCA will continue to support providers in reaching this target by 2025 in line with our investment plans.
  - 90.8.1. Identification of Vocational ESOL will be through a DAM code as referenced in the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#).
- 90.9. **Role of providers**
  - 90.9.1. Community learning plays a significant role in engaging those residents isolated in communities who need to develop their English communication skills to support both their own personal health and well-being and secure work through ESOL.
  - 90.9.2. We expect community learning providers to have offers of regulated provision (across the levels) and non-regulated ESOL to support residents' progression to further learning and work. In addition, We expect community learning providers to establish online learning related to ESOL, which could be through collaborative working.
  - 90.9.3. Our expectation is that colleges and ITPs will also develop contextualised ESOL embedded within wider occupational skills development to support residents into work.
- 90.10. Supporting Our inclusive growth agenda, We expect to see an improvement in progression to further learning and work through the development of essential English communication skills for our communities.

## **91. Digital entitlement for those aged 19 or older**

This section is currently under review, updates to follow.

- 91.1. Digital skills are as important to employability and participation in society as English and Maths, yet an estimated one in five adults lack basic digital skills.
- 91.2. To address this, the Department for Education has introduced an entitlement to fully fund digital qualifications at level 1, alongside the existing legal entitlements to English and Maths,



- 91.3. Non-regulated digital skills provision must be aligned with the [national standards for essential digital skills](#) and must not be a non-regulated version of a regulated qualification. In these circumstances, you must:
- 91.3.1. carry out an initial assessment using current assessment tools based on the national standards for essential digital skills.
  - 91.3.2. carry out an appropriate diagnostic assessment to inform and structure a learner file to use as a basis for a programme of study.
  - 91.3.3. enrol the learner on a level above that at which they were assessed and be able to provide evidence of this.
  - 91.3.4. deliver ongoing assessment to support learning.
  - 91.3.5. record the evidence of all assessment outcomes in the evidence pack.
  - 91.3.6. The assessments must place a learner's current skills levels within the level descriptors used for the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).
- 91.4. **Role of providers**
- 91.5. We expect the community learning offer in each of the 7 MET areas to deliver an offer that meets the essential digital skills framework for residents. This should support both employed and non-employed residents who are at risk of being digitally excluded. We expect this offer to be at Entry and level 1, with a range of delivery mechanisms including through family learning.
- 91.6. We expect colleges and ITPs to focus primarily on the essential digital skills for work at level 1, 2 and above. SWAP including digital content should be including essential digital skills for work at Level 2 as a minimum.
- 91.7. [The Digital entitlement list](#) sets out the courses that the WMCA will fund as part of the digital entitlement.

## 92. Full level 2

- 92.1. The WMCA values provision at level 2 as it provides individuals with the opportunity to develop core occupational skills. In addition, it provides the opportunity for progression to level 3 technical qualifications, which are key to supporting productivity and economic growth. We will focus on ensuring that provision funded at level 2 enables progression to further learning and provides the opportunity to move to better-paid jobs.
- 92.2. Full level 2 is the level of attainment which is demonstrated by:
- 92.2.1. a General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in 5 subjects, each at grade 4 (C) or above, or
  - 92.2.2. a Technical Certificate at level 2 which meets the requirements for the 16 to 19 performance tables.
- 92.3. If a resident aged 19 to 23 has achieved a level 2 qualification that was, at the time they started, or still is classed as a full level 2, any subsequent level 2 qualifications will be fully funded if they meet the definition of [unemployed](#) or meet the eligibility criteria for learners in receipt of [low wage](#).
- 92.3.1. Please refer to [Qualification Downloads - List of Qualifications approved for funding \(education.gov.uk\)](#).

#### 92.4. Statement of Intent – Level 2 Uplift

- 92.4.1. To support individuals with the opportunity to develop core occupational skills, WMCA has provided a 10% uplift to full level 2 qualifications which align with sector propositions for Health & Social Care and level 2 qualifications aligned to sector plans in Construction from the academic year 2022/23 and will continue into the 2023/24 funding year.
- 92.4.2. By mapping clear vocational routes into entry points for working in these sectors, We aim to support more people to progress into work or within work. There is a Health & Social Care Plan for the health sector and the construction pathways are in place, and We are looking to collaborate with the sectors and our providers to map out further sector plans and set out the vocational routes to points of entry into work for Digital, Business & Professional and Engineering & Manufacturing.
- 92.4.3. We want to encourage increased delivery of high-value level 2 provision aligned with sector plans and relevance to employers, to support learners into sustainable employment. To do so, We are providing a 10% uplift to level 2 qualifications which align with sector propositions for Health & Social Care and Construction.
- 92.4.4. For Construction, We will only fund Level 2 provision on the Construction Level 2 uplift list, as these qualifications have been identified in collaboration with the sector as aligned with current skills needs. Any additional requests will be reviewed through the business case process.
- 92.4.5. We want to continue collaborating with employers and Colleges to ensure We can align provision in other sectors (business & professional, engineering & manufacturing, etc) to employer needs and vocational entry points and extend the Level 2 uplift to other sectors.
- 92.4.6. The list of qualifications which will receive an uplift is listed under course information. We will review any additional requests for the list throughout the year.

#### 93. Outcomes

- 93.1. We expect to see an increase in participation at level 2 in course areas that add value through up-skilling and progression. In addition, We anticipate that We will see more progression into level 3. We also expect to see a reduction in low-value qualifications that are delivered at scale with little progression or economic return for residents.

#### 94. Courses

- 94.1. Trade Unions studies provision is deemed as a priority and falls under Subject Sector Area (SSA) 15.3.
- 94.2. In addition, WMCA will provide an uplift to the level 2 qualification as listed below, in line with the Statement of Intent – Level 2 Uplift.

94.3. WMCA will automatically apply the uplift to these courses and no additional coding will be required by the provider.

## 95. Level 2 Health & Social Care uplift qualification list

| Learning Aim  | Learning aim reference |
|---|------------------------|
| Extended Diploma in Health and Social Care                            | 60188558               |
| Technical Certificate in Healthcare, Care and Childcare               | 60302963               |
| Diploma in Care (RQF)   | 60325549               |
| Diploma in Care   | 60326116               |
| BTEC Diploma in Care (England)  | 60327625               |
| Diploma in Care (RQF)   | 60328253               |
| Certificate in Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care                 | 50115868               |
| Certificate in Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care                 | 60000478               |
| Certificate in Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care (RQF)           | 60038251               |
| Certificate in Understanding Working in the Health Sector             | 60141281               |
| Certificate in Common Health Conditions                               | 6014306X               |
| Certificate in Customer Service for Health and Social Care Settings   | 60304832               |
| Certificate in Common Health Conditions (RQF)                         | 60330053               |
| Certificate in Introducing Caring for Children and Young People (RQF) | 60330089               |
| Award in Customer Service for Health and Social Care Settings         | 60339949               |
| BTEC First Extended Certificate in Health and Social Care             | 60063129               |

## 96. Level 2 Construction uplift qualification list

| Learning Aim   | Award Type |
|--|------------|
| Brickwork Diploma Level 2  | Diploma    |
| Carpentry & Joinery Diploma Level 2  | Diploma    |
| Carpentry (Site) Diploma – Level 2   | Diploma    |
| Ceramic Wall & Floor Tiling Diploma Level 2                                    | Diploma    |
| Building Maintenance Operations Level 2  | Diploma    |
| Interior Systems NVQ   | NVQ        |
| Painting & Decorating Diploma Level 2  | Diploma    |
| Plastering Diploma Level 2   | Diploma    |
| Construction Industry Scaffolders Scheme (CISRS) Part 2 (Tube & Fitting)       | License    |
| Scaffolding NVQ Level 2  | NVQ        |
| Roof Slating and Tiling Level 2  | Standard   |
| Groundworks  | NVQ        |
| Cable Avoidance (Cat and Genny) NPORS  | NPORS      |
| Installing, Testing and Maintaining Air Conditioning Diploma (6187-01) Level 2 | Diploma    |
| Refrigeration Maintaining Systems Diploma (6187-02) Level 2                    | Diploma    |
| F-Gases for Refrigeration and Air Conditioning City & Guilds Level 2           | C & G      |
| Electrical Installation (2365) Diploma Level 2                                 | Diploma    |

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Electrical Installations Diploma Level 2             | Diploma     |
| Smart Metering - Dual Fuel (7428-23) Diploma Level 2 | Diploma     |
| F-Gas and ODS Category 1 Regulations Award Level 2   | Certificate |
| Heating & Ventilating Diploma Level 2                | Diploma     |
| Plumbing Diploma Level 2                             | Diploma     |
| Unvented Hot Water Level 2                           | Certificate |
| Pipework Systems Mechanical Engineering Level 2      | Diploma     |

## 97. Full level 3

- 97.1. It is key that We build the right skills in our workforce to deliver improved productivity and prosperity - enabling all groups to access jobs. While qualification levels are improving, significant shortfalls remain at level 3 impacting on productivity, competitiveness and inward investment which hold back growth of the regional economy. In addition, low skills also impact on earnings and household income for residents in securing sustainable employment in higher-skilled job roles.
- 97.2. Full Level 3 is the level of attainment which is demonstrated by a:
- 97.2.1. General Certificate of Education at the advanced level in 2 subjects
  - 97.2.2. General Certificate of Education at the AS level in 4 subjects
  - 97.2.3. QAA Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma at level 3
  - 97.2.4. Technical, or applied general qualification at level 3, which meets the requirements for the 16 to 19 performance tables.
  - 97.2.5. Core maths at level 3
- 97.3. Please contact [aeb.enquiries@wmca.org.uk](mailto:aeb.enquiries@wmca.org.uk) if you need advice on a previous qualification's designation.
- 97.4. For new linear AS and A levels, where a resident enrolls on an AS qualification and continues with further study to take the A level qualification in the same subject, You must record both the AS and A level in the ESFA ILR. The AS learning aim will be funded separately to the A-level learning aim.

## 98. The Offer

- 98.1. We are clear that We want to establish an adult offer at level 3 to meet Our regional skills plan priorities. We expect to see entitlement qualifications and Our priorities reflected in course portfolios at level 3 and will continue to use Our funding flexibilities to support residents.

## 99. Courses

- 99.1. The WMCA will provide partial or full funding Level 3 qualifications and units where they support progression in work or career changes through re-training. This will be agreed as part of your delivery plan with agreed levels of contribution in line with RSP priorities.
- 99.2. Providers must submit a business case for changes to their delivery plan.
- 99.3. WMCA have agreed a standard set of flexibilities defined in [here](#).

## **100. Full level 4+**

- 100.1. West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is continuing a local flexibility in 2023/24 academic year to support local skills needs at Level 4+.
- 100.2. Providers wishing to offer level 4+ qualifications must have these agreed as part of their approved Delivery Plan with the WMCA prior to any delivery commencing.
- 100.3. These can be full or modular level 4+ qualifications either available from Learning AIM or a locally agreed qualification.

## **101. The Offer**

- 101.1. Provision at level 4+ will be developed exclusively against Our priorities as set out in the WMCA Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). We will consider either full or unitised delivery against published courses.
- 101.2. We are also keen to explore providers putting together an adult offer of learning at Level 4 where qualifications don't currently exist e.g., new emerging sectors or to meet the needs of residents.
- 101.3. We want an offer that people can access independently of their employer like the old 'night school' concept but offered in flexible ways – modes, times, and locations. It's also important to Us that individuals are clear on what they can move onto and progress to, following successful completion of their learning.

## **102. Into employment programmes**

This section is currently under review, updates to follow.

These programmes are designed to support unemployed and underemployed residents, including those in part-time contracts, zero-hour contracts, self-employed and inactive.

## **103. The Offer**

- 103.1. The new WMCA into employment programme funding methodology has been designed to replace SWAP/SG/CG delivery, with the aim to drive better outcomes for learners in bespoke provision that moves them into employment.
- 103.2. This model will be expanding the into employment programmes beyond the relatively small proportion of the population who are unemployed and out to the economically inactive, those in work without basic skills, and sections of the community who suffer from inequality in the workplace, for example, disabled residents.
- 103.3. Development of our wider 'into Employment' offer, will follow. This model will expand our delivery to support those who may wish to make a career change by offering up-skilling and re-skilling provisions up to level 3.

- 103.4. Into-employment programmes will continue to be co-created with employers which are designed to move residents into employment and to upskill and support the progression of those in low-paid jobs.

#### 104. Phase 1

- 104.1. To ensure consistency of provision with real value for money, effective curriculum design and a transparent funding methodology we have established two phase 1 programmes as an indicative measure, these include.
- 104.1.1. up to 2-week programme and
  - 104.1.2. up to 4-week programme.
- 104.2. All Into Employment programmes will include.
- 104.2.1. Occupational-specific training related to the job opportunity.
  - 104.2.2. Relevant work experience related to the job role.
  - 104.2.3. Job interview at the end of the programme
- 104.3. Wrap-around support funding will be available to cover the full live cycle of the learner's journey, including progression and tracking.
- 104.4. All Into Employment programmes will attract a Day-1 job outcome payment and a Week 13 sustained employment payment.
- 104.5. The WMCA will pay the cost of a license where it is an occupational requirement (e.g., SIA, FLT licence, CSCS) up to £500. In exceptional cases, the WMCA may agree additional payment where the cost is above £500.
- 104.6. For performance, we will set a benchmark based on sustainable employment at the 13-weeks of 65%
- 104.7. **Courses**
- 104.8. Providers can develop SWAP programmes, or 'Into employment' programmes in line with what is set out earlier but must be occupationally specific.
- 104.9. Phase 1 delivery codes will be set out for both 2- and 4-week programmes linked to SSA. The full coding is provided in the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#)
- 104.10. Residents who are economically inactive, will have the option of 2 or 4-week programmes, however, the delivery will typically have a stronger engagement activity through partnership working with community groups and the voluntary sector. In addition, delivery may be enhanced to support basic skills provision.
- 104.11. Into employment programmes for those who suffer from inequality in the workplace or have additional challenges due to ill health or disability, will also have the option of a short or long programme, however, there will be an option for extended wrap-around for up to 6 weeks. WMCA will also increase the maximum value of Wrap around support to £1,500 for an up to 2-week programme and £2,500 for an up to 6-week programme.

#### 105. Non-regulated learning

- 105.1. Where You deliver non-regulated learning, You must ensure it is eligible for funding. Such learning could include:

- 105.2. independent living skills or engagement learning, supporting adults to operate confidently and effectively in life and work.
- 105.3. locally commissioned and/or locally developed basic knowledge and skills needed to access technical qualifications.
- 105.4. employability and labour market re-entry
- 105.5. locally commissioned and/or locally devised technical education short courses (also known as taster sessions)
- 105.6. Community learning courses
- 105.7. The eligibility principles the WMCA applies to non-regulated learning are as follows:
  - 105.7.1. It must not be provision linked to UK visa requirements.
  - 105.7.2. It must not be provision linked to statutory employer requirements (including a licence to practise) unless there is an agreed concession in place.
  - 105.7.3. It must not be vendor-specific provision, linked to a particular employer or commercial system unless this has been agreed as a flexibility.
  - 105.7.4. It must not be learning, for example, 'induction to college', that should be part of a resident's experience.
  - 105.7.5. It must not be a non-regulated version of a regulated qualification.
  - 105.7.6. It must not be above notional level 2 (that is, at notional levels 3 or 4). At notional level 2, it must focus on technical provision.
- 105.8. Where You are delivering non-regulated learning, You must ensure You have appropriate and robust quality assurance processes in place. For instance, 'The Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) Cycle'. [Further information on RARPA](#) is available from the Learning and Work Institute.
- 105.9. It is the intention of the WMCA to use the RARPA model to monitor, review and measure the quality and outcomes from non-regulated provision in 2023/24. Non-regulated learning should have clear achievement aims for the residents and identified progression outcomes prior to commencement of learning.

## **106. Community Learning**

- 106.1. This section only applies to providers with a non-formula community learning allocation included in their Agreement.
- 106.2. The purpose of community learning is to develop the skills, confidence, motivation, and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to:
  - 106.2.1. progress towards formal learning or employment and/or
  - 106.2.2. improve their health and well-being, including mental health and/or
  - 106.2.3. develop stronger communities.
- 106.3. The community learning objectives, set out in annex C, ask You to widen participation and transform people's destinies by supporting progression relevant to personal circumstances. We would expect You to encourage and support all learners to progress onto new or more stretching provision to help them into more formal learning or employment. We would not expect to see

multiple enrolments on similar level courses, or a repeat of similar learning aims where this does not benefit the learner's development.

- 106.4. Community learning courses are delivered and reported on the ILR under the following 7 delivery strands which link to the Community Learning objectives at [Annex C](#)
- 106.4.1. Engaging and/or building confidence
  - 106.4.2. Preparation for further learning
  - 106.4.3. Preparation for employment
  - 106.4.4. Improving essential skills (English, including English for Speakers of Other Languages, maths, and digital provision)
  - 106.4.5. Equipping parents/carers to support children's learning.
  - 106.4.6. Health and well-being
  - 106.4.7. Developing stronger communities
- 106.5. Please note, non-formula Community Learning funding follows funding model 10.

## **107. Non-formula community learning funding**

- 107.1. Where applicable, Your WMCA funded AEB allocation will include an amount of non-formula community learning funding. We state this value in Your Agreement.
- 107.2. You must deliver non-formula funded community learning provision in line with the existing community learning objectives set out in annex C, Community learning objectives, up to this maximum amount.
- 107.3. Non-formula community learning funding will be reconciled against the community learning allocation line at the end of the funding year. You must repay funding that has not been used for community learning or where its use cannot be evidenced.
- 107.4. You must attribute costs for eligible learners, up to the value of Your non-formula community learning allocation. This must include the use of Your non-formula community learning funding to cover learning and learner support costs. If You do, You must:
- 107.5. claim for learning and learner costs through the final funding claim and follow the policy in line with the support funding section.
- 107.6. record these costs in the learner's evidence pack and maintain evidence that support the costs for audit purposes.
- 107.7. We will monitor community learning provision through the ILR and claim submissions and may require You to provide information on Your delivery where it does not represent value for money.
- 107.8. If We fund You through a grant or financial memorandum, You have the flexibility to use all, or some, of your non-formula community learning funding in line with the AEB formula-funded methodology (funding model 35), to meet local demand. This flexibility works one way, You cannot use Your WMCA formula funded AEB to fund additional community learning and We will not fund above value in Your Agreement.
- 107.9. You can use this amount of non-formula community learning funding to deliver non-regulated provision that may be similar to community learning, and/or



regulated qualifications to meet local demand. If You do deliver regulated and non-regulated qualifications, You must:

- 107.9.1. follow ESFA funded AEB formula-funded methodology and submit ILR data under funding model 35 for the delivery and support.
- 107.9.2. enrol learners following WMCA funded AEB eligibility requirements. You must not use Your non-formula community learning local fee remission policy.
- 107.9.3. if We fund your organisation through a Contract for Services, You do not have this flexibility, and We will reclaim unspent non-formula community learning funding at year-end.
- 107.10. You can support learners aged under 19 if they meet both of the following, they are:
  - 107.10.1. a parent, carer or guardian attending provision delivered through family learning.
  - 107.10.2. funded through non-formula community learning using funding model 10 in the funding model field (refer to ILR guidance for more information)
  - 107.10.3. You must not use non-formula community learning funding for learning that is eligible for funding through an advanced learner loan.

## 108. Prince's Trust

- 108.1. In order to deliver the team programme, You must get approval from the [Prince's Trust](#). and the WMCA.
- 108.2. For eligible WMCA residents aged 19 to 25, the WMCA will fund the team programme through the WMCA's adult funding methodology. Please also refer to the Princes Trust section in the [AEB funding rates and formula](#) guidance.
- 108.3. For eligible learners aged 16 to 19, the team programme is funded through the ESFA's 16 to 19 funding methodology, with further information available in the [rates and formula document](#).

## 109. Construction Gateway

The core focus of the Construction Gateway is to provide residents with the skills and knowledge required through the industry-standard outcomes e.g., Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS), and work with employers who will both shape the training content and provide the job vacancies for residents to be matched into.

- 109.1. Our intent is to establish an adult offer that will provide the training required for residents to both enter the construction sector and develop further skills to support in-work progression to better-paid job roles.
- 109.2. We will achieve this through integrating a successful Construction Gateway into AEB to provide sustainability for this programme. Previously, this programme was established through short term funding sourced through the Department for Education.
- 109.3. **The Offer**

109.4. The WMCA through its AEB will fund the Construction Gateway to meet the needs of its unemployed residents in securing employment in a range of construction-based occupations including:

a) Plant operative roles

- 109.4.2. Logistics roles
- 109.4.3. Health and safety roles
- 109.4.4. Dry Lining
- 109.4.5. Civil Engineering
- 109.4.6. Rail Sector

109.5. The mandatory requirements for construction gateway provision are as follows:

- 109.5.1. Provision must be in line with CSCS, CPCS or equivalent industry carding scheme requirements to ensure on completion of the programme the resident holds CSCS and an appropriate industry accredited card e.g., CPCS.
- 109.5.2. A guaranteed job interview on completion of the programme
- 109.5.3. Content of the delivery should be influenced by employers to enable the progression into employment.

109.6. For each resident they should be linked to a real job vacancy that they will have the opportunity to be matched against through an interview.

109.7. Bidders must have a clear plan to engage with employers, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Job Centre Plus (JC+), Prospects (National Careers service), Local Authorities and Third Sector organisations and residents.

109.8. To support retention and progression, bidders must have a clear approach for initial advice and guidance, career tracking and destination monitoring at pre, during and post programme delivery.

109.9. A minimum of 65% of completers progressing to employment. WMCA will also monitor sustainment figures.

109.10. To claim full funding for claimants referred to in the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#)

## 110. Courses

110.1. For more information on the specification for Construction Gateway Programme please refer to the [Specification: Construction Gateway](#)

## 111. Digital Bootcamps

The core focus of the Digital Bootcamps is to help unemployed, economically inactive and career change residents in the WMCA administrative area to enter digital roles beyond entry-level. These bootcamps can also be used to support employed residents to gain the skills required to secure more digital responsibility or promotion within existing employment.

The mandatory requirements for digital bootcamp provision are as follows:

- A guaranteed job interview for a genuine digital vacancy or
- An increase in digital responsibility within current employment
- A change of job role
- The participant declared themselves as self-employed.

- Certificate of achievement
- Although We are not stipulating that specific vendor qualifications or accredited qualifications are delivered, these can be included where it is deemed necessary to secure a positive outcome

111.1. The focus of the Digital Retraining bootcamps was designed to help unemployed, economically inactive and career change residents in the WMCA administrative area to enter digital roles beyond entry-level. These Bootcamps can also be used to support employed residents to gain the skills required to secure more digital responsibility or promotion within existing employment.

111.2. The payment for Bootcamps follows a different method to that of the traditional AEB and are set out as below:

- 111.2.1. Start – Paid on start.
- 111.2.2. On programme – Paid at the midpoint of planned end date.
- 111.2.3. Completion – Paid on evidence of job outcome or progression in work.

111.3. For more information on delivery phases and payments please refer to the [Skills Programme Coding guidance](#)

## 112. The Offer

112.1. The core focus of the Digital Bootcamps is to help unemployed, economically inactive and career-change residents in the WMCA administrative area to enter digital roles beyond entry-level. These bootcamps can also be used to support employed residents to gain the skills required to secure more digital responsibility or a promotion within existing employment.

112.2. The WMCA has identified, based upon employer demand, the vacancies and skills training shortages across the region from the current contracted activity. This covers both unemployed skills training, those requiring re-skilling and employed skill development.

112.3. Skills training shortages identified for new provision.

- 112.3.1. Cyber
- 112.3.2. Data
- 112.3.3. Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- 112.3.4. Coding
- 112.3.5. Digital Marketing
- 112.3.6. UX Design/Experience

112.4. Digital Bootcamp programmes developed so far can be accessed via the Digital Bootcamp Guidance, linked below.

112.5. Digital bootcamp programmes developed so far can be accessed [here](#)

## ***Annex A: eligibility for funding***

This Annex sets out the countries falling within the below categories as referenced in the [residency eligibility](#) section.

## **British Overseas Territories**

- Anguilla
- Bermuda
- British Antarctic Territory
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Cayman Islands
- Falkland Islands
- Gibraltar
- Montserrat
- Pitcairn, Henderson Island, Ducie and Oeno Islands
- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Isles
- St Helena and its dependencies (Ascension and Tristan da Cunha)
- Turks and Caicos Islands

## **Economic European Area (EEA)**

The EEA comprises of the following countries:

- All Member States of the European Union

You can access a list of member states on the [EU website](#).

- with respect to EEA nationality, note that any Cypriot national living on any part of the island qualifies for EU residency and is considered an EU national.
- Iceland
- Lichtenstein
- Norway

[Table 3](#) lists territories that are categorised as being within the EU and or territories that are categorised as being part of the listed countries such that they satisfy our residency requirements for the purposes of the Skills programme funding rules.

### **Table 1:**

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Denmark     | The following is part of Denmark: Greenland, Faroe Islands   |
| Finland     | The following is part of Finland and the EU: Aland islands   |
| France      | The following is part of France and the EU: the French Overseas Department (DOMS) (Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana (Guyana), Reunion and Saint-Pierre et Miquelon) The following is part of France: New Caledonia and its dependencies, French Polynesia, Saint Barthélemy |
| Germany     | The following is part of Germany and the EU: Tax-free port of Heligoland   |
| Netherlands | The following is part of the Netherlands: Antilles (Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, St Eustatius, and St Maarten), Aruba   |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Portugal | The following is part of Portugal and the EU: Madeira, The Azores                                   |
| Spain    | The following is part of Spain and the EU: the Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands, Ceuta, Melilla |

## Annex B – Glossary

| Term                                    | Description   |
|---|---|
| 20+ childcare                           | A category of learner support to assist learners aged over the age of 20 who are at risk of not starting learning or leaving learning due to issues in obtaining childcare.   |
| Advanced learner loan                   | <a href="#">Advanced learner loans are available for individuals aged 19 or above to undertake approved qualifications at levels 3 to level 6, at an approved provider in England. Advanced learner loans give individuals access to financial support for tuition costs similar to that available in higher education and are administered by Student Loans Company.</a>   |
| Annual gross salary                     | Gross salary is the total income before any deductions are removed from that amount. This total income is usually described as an annual salary, and it is the total amount an employee will receive for work completed before tax and national insurance contributions are deducted.   |
| Break in learning                       | When a learner is not continuing with their learning but has told You beforehand that they intend to resume their learning in the future.   |
| Brokerage                               | By brokers, We mean where a third-party match, for a fee, a provider with an unused allocation with a provider that can secure enrolments of learners to utilise it.  |
| Care to learn                           | A Department for Education scheme to assist young parents under the age of 20 with the childcare costs that may form a barrier to them continuing in education.   |
| Community Learning                      | Helps people of different ages and backgrounds gain a new skill, reconnect with learning, pursue an interest, and learn how to support their children better, or prepare for progression to more formal courses/employment.   |
| Components of regulated qualification   | A subset of a qualification, which could be a unit.   |
| Continuing learners                     | Learners who commenced learning in a previous funding year and remain in learning as of 1 August 2023.  |
| Devolution of adult education functions | The devolution of adult education functions refers to the transfer of certain Secretary of State functions in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to specified Mayoral Combined Authorities by way of Orders made under section 105A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, and the delegation of those functions to the Mayor of London under section 39A of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, in relation to their areas. |
| Digital Entitlement                     | The study of Essential Digital Skills (EDS) qualifications for learners who have digital skills assessed at below level 1. Qualifications that are designated up to and including level 1 are Essential Digital Skills Qualifications.  |

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| Direct costs of learning                       | Any costs for items without which it would be impossible for the learner to complete their learning aim. This can include the costs of registration, examination or any other activities or materials without which the learner cannot achieve their programme of study.  |
| Earnings adjustment statement (EAS)            | The form providers need to fill in to claim funding that cannot be claimed through the Individualised Learner Record (ILR).   |
| Education Health and care (EHC) plan           | An EHC plan replaces statements of special educational needs and learning difficulty assessments for children and young people with special educational needs. The local authority has the legal duty to 'secure' the educational provision specified in the EHC plan, that is, to ensure that the provision is delivered.  |
| Employment status (formerly employed)          | <a href="#">The main types of employment status are worker, employee, self-employed and contractor, director, and office holder. More information on employment status is available.</a>  |
| English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) | The study of English by speakers of other languages.  |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                   | The European Economic Area, abbreviated as EEA, consists of the Member States of the European Union (EU) and 3 countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway; excluding Switzerland). The Agreement on the EEA entered into force on 1 January 1994. Please refer to Annex A for more information.  |
| European social fund (ESF)                     | The ESF is a structural fund from the European Union (EU). It improves the skills of the workforce and helps people who have difficulties finding work.   |
| European Union                                 | A list of member states is available on the EU website  |
| Evidence pack                                  | A collection of documents and information is brought together to form a single point of reference relating to learning that is taking place. This must provide evidence to prove the learner exists, is eligible for funding, the planned learning to be provided, and that learning has been delivered.  |
| Exceptional learning support                   | Learning support funding to meet the costs of putting in place a reasonable adjustment for a learner who requires more than £19,000 in a funding year.  |
| Find a learning aim                            | <a href="#">Find a learning aim provides online services to find the latest information on available qualifications, apprenticeship standards, T Levels, and units. Standards will show You information on funding, dates, and common components. Qualifications and units show You funding streams for courses and the last date learners can start.</a>   |
| Full level 2                                   | The following qualifications are designated full at level 2: General Certificate of Secondary Education in 5 subjects, each at grade C or above or grade 4 or above or a Technical Certificate at level 2 which meets or has previously met the requirements for 16 to 19 performance tables  |
| Full level 3                                   | The following qualifications are designated full at level 3: General Certificate of Education at the advanced level in 2 subjects, General Certificate of Education at the advanced level in 2 subjects, General Certificate of Education at the advanced level in 2 subjects, General Certificate of Education at the AS level in 4 subjects, Technical or applied general qualification, at level 3 which meets or has previously met the requirements for 16 to 19 performance tables, QAA Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma at level 3, Core maths qualification at level 3 |

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| Full or co-funding Indicator (FFI)  | Indicates whether a learning aim is fully funded or co-funded in Adult Skills or Other Adult Funding.   |
| Functional skills                   | Applied practical skills in English, maths and ICT that provide the learner with the essential knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to operate effectively and independently in life and work.  |
| Funding agreement                   | The agreement between the Secretary of State for Education acting through the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and providers who receive funding for education and skills training.  |
| Funding model (10 and 35)           | Identifies the funding methodology We apply to submission of finalised ILR data. For Skills Programmes funding, Funding Model 10 (Community Learning) and 35 (Adult Skills) are used, noting model 10 is non-formula funded (meaning ILR data does not generate a funding rate and is paid on monthly profile) and model 35 is formula funded. More information is available in the <a href="#">2023 to 2024 ILR Specification</a> .  |
| Funding year                        | The ESFA's adult funding system operates on a funding year basis, which starts on 1 August and finishes on 31 July.   |
| General Data Protection Regulation  | The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a Europe-wide law that replaced the Data Protection Act 1998 in the UK. It is part of the wider package of reform to the data protection landscape that includes the Data Protection Act 2018. The GDPR sets out requirements for how organisations have to handle personal data.  |
| Guided Learning                     | As defined by Ofqual: "The activity of the learner in being taught or instructed by – otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training. For these purposes, the activity of 'participating in education and training' shall be treated as including the activity of being assessed if the assessment takes place under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training." You can find more information in the Ofqual Handbook |
| Hardship                            | Within learner support, a category of support to assist vulnerable and disadvantaged learners to remove barriers to education and training.   |
| ILR specification                   | <a href="#">The ILR Specification is the technical documents, guidance, and requirements to help providers collect, return, and check ILR and other learner data.</a>   |
| Individualised learner record (ILR) | The primary data collection requested from learning providers for further education and work-based learning in England. The government uses this data to monitor policy implementation and the performance of the sector. It is also used by organisations that allocate funding for further education.   |
| Job outcome payments                | Payments made for learners who are unemployed at the start of learning who cease learning to take up a job or find work as part of our pre-employment programmes  |

We use the term 'resident' or 'residence' in this document for different purposes. Residence in the UK, EU and EEA has specific definitions in education law, and this is set out in the 'residency eligibility' section. Following the devolution of adult education functions, there is a new emphasis on residence in England, in determining and evidencing eligibility for ESFA-funded AEB - see 'who we fund' and 'evidence' sections. This means the permanent residency of an individual in England (meaning, not a temporary address for duration of learning taking place), immediately prior to enrolment determines eligibility for WMCA funded AEB.

Learner residency

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| Learner support                        | Funding to enable providers to support learners with a specific financial hardship that might prevent them from being able to start or complete their learning.  |
| Learning aim                           | Statements that describe the overarching intentions of a course.   |
| Learning aim reference number          | The unique eight-character code used to identify a specific learning aim.  |
| Learning delivery monitoring (LDM)     | A code used as part of the ILR to indicate participation in programmes or initiatives  |
| Learning planned end date              | The date entered onto the individualised learner record (ILR) when the learner is expected to complete their learning.   |
| Learning support                       | <a href="#">Funding to enable providers to put in place a reasonable adjustment, set out in the Equality Act 2010, for learners with an identified learning difficulty and/or disability to achieve their learning goal.</a>   |
| Legal entitlement                      | <a href="#">The legal entitlement to education and training allows learners to be fully funded who are aged: 19 and over, who have not achieved a grade 4 (legacy grade C), or higher, and study for a qualification in English or maths up to and including level 2, and/or 19 to 23, if they study for a first qualification at level 2, and/or level 3 and 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1.</a>  |
| Local flexibility                      | <a href="#">Regulated qualifications, and/or their components, and non-regulated learning that the ESFA funds, which is not part of the English and maths, or level 2 or level 3 legal entitlement offer. All regulated and non-regulated learning that is available for funding through the flexible local offer is listed on find a learning aim.</a>  |
| Low wage threshold                     | The threshold is £30,000 for the funding year 2023/24  |
| Multiply                               | Multiply is the new adult numeracy programme being delivered, in 2022 to 2023 and 2024 to 2025.  |
| Non-formula community learning funding | <a href="#">Where applicable, providers receive a non-formula-funded community learning allocation' as part of their AEB which is paid on a monthly profile. Submission of ILR data does not generate a funding value for the learning aim/s a learner participates on. Instead, providers attribute costs up to the value of their non-formula community learning allocation. Providers submit community learning data through funding model 10. More information is available in the 2023 to 2024 ILR Specification.</a> |
| Non-regulated learning                 | Learning which is not subject to awarding organisation external accreditation in the form of a regulated qualification. It may be designed, delivered, and certificated by a provider or another organisation. This could include - independent living skills and engagement learning, employability and work skills, labour market re-entry, technical education tasters, basic digital skills, community learning  |



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| Not in employment, education, and training (NEET)          | A young person aged 16 to 24 who is no longer in the education system and who is not working or being trained for work   |
| Occupational Standard                                      | <a href="#">The requirements for competence in the duties of an occupation which are approved and published by the IATE. They include knowledge, skills, and behaviours.</a>   |
| Ofqual   | <a href="#">The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation, which regulates qualifications, examinations, and assessments in England.</a>  |
| Personal learning record (PLR)                             | A database that allows individual learners access to their past and current achievement records. These can be shared with schools, colleges, further education training providers, universities, or employers.   |
| Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) | The Learning and Work Institute have published <a href="#">updated RARPA guidance</a> . This comprises a clear framework designed to support learners through the learning process, identifying key outcomes. It provides a robust approach to quality control and improvement of non-regulated provision with a focus on self-assessment that supports standards acceptable to the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted). You can access further information from <a href="#">The Learning and Work Institute</a> . |
| Recognition of prior learning (RPL)                        | An assessment method that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can - meet the outcomes for a qualification or a component of a qualification through knowledge, understanding, or skills they already have and so do not need to undertake a course of learning for that component or qualification   |
| Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)                   | The RQF provides a way of understanding and describing the relative level and size of qualifications. The RQF, operated by Ofqual, is a single regulatory framework containing a range of general, technical, and professional qualifications  |
| Residential Support  | Support provided under learner support to learners receiving specialist provision, which involves a residential element, or to support learners who cannot receive provision locally.  |
| Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP)                 | Sector-based Work Academy Programme is a DWP scheme that offers Into-employment training, work experience placements and a guaranteed job interview for recipients of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Universal Credit (all work-related requirements group) or Employment and Support Allowance.   |
| Self-declaration   | A process where the learner can confirm something through his or her own signature.  |
| Senior responsible person                                  | For example, chief executive, managing director, principal, or their equivalent.   |
| Skills advisory panel (SAP)                                | SAPs aim to bring together local employers and skills providers to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, and to work together to understand and address key local challenges. This includes both immediate needs and challenges and looking at what is required to help local areas adapt to future labour market changes and to grasp future opportunities. This will help colleges, universities and other providers deliver the skills required by employers, now and in the future.                      |
| Skills Bootcamp  | A skills bootcamp is a bespoke employer-led level 3 to 5 programme, designed to meet skills needs within the economy. Following a procurement process, the skills bootcamp programme began in August 2022.   |
| Skills Programmes funding methodology                      | <a href="#">The funding methodology for individuals, aged 19 and over, participating in Skills Programmes learning. You can access AEB funding methodology on GOV.UK.</a>  |

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| Start of learning                  | The date on which learning begins. We do not consider enrolment, induction, diagnostic assessment, or prior assessment to be part of learning.   |
| State benefits                     | State benefits are contributions, both financial and non- financial, made by central and local government to individuals in certain circumstances to meet their day-to-day living needs  |
| Supply chain                       | A separate legal entity that has an agreement with You to deliver any element of the education and training We fund. A separate legal entity includes companies in <u>Your</u> group, other associated companies, and sole traders. It also includes individuals who are self-employed or supplied by an employment agency, unless those individuals are working under <u>Your</u> direction and control, in the same way as <u>Your</u> own employees |
| Take home pay                      | An unemployed learner may also receive an income alongside their benefit claim. In order to be fully funded under the unemployed definition their “take-home pay” (stated on the Universal Credit statement) is less than £617 a month (sole adult in their benefit claim) or less than £988 a month (joint benefit claim with partner).   |
| UK provider reference number       | A unique identifying number given to all providers by the UK register of learning providers.   |
| Unique learner number              | A 10-digit number used to match a learner’s achievement to their personal learning record (PLR).   |
| Virement                           | The process of moving money from one financial account or part of a budget to a different one.   |
| Work placement/Experience          | A placement/experience with an employer either in a workplace setting or simulated. Work placement/experience should give residents the opportunity to get hands on experience into what it would be like working in specific sectors and company.   |
| Young people’s funding methodology | <a href="#">The funding methodology for individuals aged 16 to 19 (and those aged 19 to 24 with an EHC plan). You can access 16 to 19 funding methodology on GOV.UK.</a>   |

## **Annex C – Community learning objectives**

- focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate, including in rural areas and people on low incomes with low skills.
- collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot.
- widen participation and transform people’s destinies by supporting progression relevant to personal circumstances, including:
  - improved confidence and willingness to engage in learning.
  - acquisition of skills preparing people for training, employment, or self-employment
  - improved digital, financial literacy and/or communication skills.
  - parents/carers better equipped to support and encourage their children’s learning.
  - improved/maintained health and/or social well-being.
- develop stronger communities, with more self-sufficient, connected, and pro-active citizens, leading to:
  - increased volunteering, civic engagement, and social integration
  - reduced costs on welfare, health, and anti-social behaviour.

- increased online learning and self-organised learning.
- the lives of our most troubled families being turned around.
- commission, deliver and support learning in ways that contribute directly to these objectives, including:
  - bringing together people from backgrounds, cultures, and income groups, including people who can/cannot afford to pay.
  - using effective local partnerships to bring together key providers and relevant local agencies and services.
  - devolving planning and accountability to neighbourhood/parish level, with local people involved in decisions about the learning offer.
  - involving volunteers and voluntary and community sector groups, shifting long term, 'blocked' classes into learning clubs, growing self-organised learning groups, and encouraging employers to support informal learning in the workplace.
  - supporting the wide use of online information and learning resources
  - minimising overheads, bureaucracy, and administration

## **Annex D – Relevant documents**

[Performance & Management Rules](#)

[Skills Programme Coding Guidance](#)

[DfE Skills Bootcamps Guidance](#)

[Financial Due Diligence and financial health monitoring](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

[Whistleblowing process](#)

[Complaints process](#)

## **Annex E – Summary of main changes since 2022-23**

| <b>Section</b>        | <b>Change</b>  |
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| Residency eligibility | <p>We have amended the areas listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary residence in the UK for educational purposes</li> <li>• Temporary absences from the UK</li> <li>• Learners who have applied for an extension or variation of their immigration permission</li> </ul> |
| Residency eligibility | <p>We have made the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons with stateless leave will now be eligible without meeting the 3-year ordinary residence requirements.</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The rules on Afghanistan schemes have been clarified to confirm that all those granted leave under ARAP or ACRS are eligible.</li> <li>• EEA/Swiss “frontier workers” (those who work in the UK but formally reside in another EU country) will now be eligible.</li> <li>• Non-UK/Non-EU family members of UK nationals who exercised their right of free movement prior to EU exit will now be eligible without meeting the 3-year ordinary residence requirements in their own right, under the same terms as family members of EU nationals who did the same.</li> <li>• Persons with “long residence” in the UK (defined as more than half their life, or at least 20 years) will be eligible.</li> <li>• References to “joining family members” of EU nationals have been removed and these family members are assumed to be included within the rules for family members of EU nationals</li> </ul> |
| <p>Contracting: Match funding requirements relevant to AEB</p> | <p>We have amended this section to reflect that these requirements will not apply for new starts in academic year 2023 to 2024.</p>   |
| <p>Qualifying days for funding</p>                             | <p>We have clarified the requirements around 1-day withdrawals, where these are below the recommended GLH for the programme as below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WMCA will monitor the volume of day 1 withdrawals, where it is identified this is a high percentage, we will take a full review of the providers’ withdrawals.</li> <li>• Where planned learning days are below the recommended GLH and additional needs of the resident, WMCA may seek removal of the funding.</li> <li>• This does not apply where the learner achieves the learning aim.</li> </ul> <p>Please note this does not apply to Lot 8 Digital bootcamps, Skills Bootcamps and/or multiply, which will be based on a different methodology. Please refer to their individual guidance</p>  |
| <p>Qualifying GLH for funding</p>                              | <p>We will be implementing rules around GLH to ensure delivery is in line with the number stated on the Find a Learning Aim site.</p> <p>If we identify that the number of Planned GLH, based on the calculations from the Scheme of Work/Curriculum Plan/timesheet below the number stated on the Find a Learning Aim site, we will take the following action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the planned GLH are over 70% of the stated hours, no action will be taken.</li> </ul>   |

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|                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the planned GLH are between 50% and 70% of the stated hours, a reduction of 30% of the learning aim value will be applied to the identified learning aims.</li> <li>• If the planned GLH are below 50% of the stated hours, we will apply a 50% reduction in funding for the identified learning aims.</li> </ul> <p>Providers will be able to submit a business case, with justification, should they wish to have a variation to the recommended GLH.</p> <p>GLH will not be counted when they are part of a programme, for example, an into employment programme.</p>  |
| Learners in receipt of low wage     | The low wage threshold has been increased, in line with the WMCA consultation. WMCA will now fully fund up to Level 3 qualifications for residents who earn £30,000 per annum and below   |
| Control systems                     | <p>You must maintain the evidence for each deliverable and make that available for audit. Failure to maintain the audit trail will lead to funding being recovered. Your control systems will be an essential element in the management of your audit trail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You must put in place adequate control systems to ensure that the ILR and Supplementary Data submissions You make to Us are accurate, complete and have a complete audit trail to justify them. Your control systems must allow You to recover evidence for audit quickly and accurately. Your control systems must extend to Your supply chain.</li> <li>• You must regularly test your control systems and Your supply chain's control systems and the learner evidence that they maintain and provide evidence to Us that Your systems operate correctly</li> </ul>  |
| Whistleblowing and complaint policy | <p>Clarification around submission of Whistleblowing and Complaints for Skills programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers, and where appropriate sub-contractors and/or supply chain members, must ensure that all applicants, learners, and staff are aware of the DFE's <a href="#">Whistleblowing and Complaints</a> policies and processes for Skills Bootcamp and Multiply delivery.</li> <li>• Whistleblowing for Skills Bootcamps and Multiply should be made through the 'whistleblowing' <a href="#">webform</a>.</li> <li>• Whistleblowing entries must be clearly marked as the programme type (e.g., Skills Bootcamp/Multiply) and will be escalated to the relevant policy team.</li> <li>• Provider should ensure this information is passed onto residents.<br/>For all Skills programmes, providers should additionally submit a Whistleblowing complaint via <a href="#">WMCA portal</a>.</li> </ul> |

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| <p>Quality Assurance Framework</p>              | <p>Introduction of a Quality Assurance Framework which sets out how WMCA will monitor and grade Quality Assurance for Skills programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the Quality Assurance Framework is to minimise financial risks across skills programmes and projects within the Economy, Skills, and Communities directorate and to prevent reputational damage.</li> <li>• Quality assurance largely falls into three areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 1 compliance reviews</li> <li>• Tier 2 quality reviews</li> <li>• Tier 3 external audits</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |
| <p>FCFJ</p>                                     | <p>We have added clarification regarding checking the category code of an aim on 'Find a Learning aim' to confirm whether it is eligible for funding.</p> <p>Clarification that funding for 19–23-year old's will be through AEB, so you must ensure you have access to an AEB allocation before you enrol residents.</p> <p>Additional flexibility for 63 level 3 aims to be funded under FCFJ, please note, while these will not attract the national uplift, they will be entitled to the WMCA AEB uplift.</p>   |
| <p>Learning in the workplace</p>                | <p>We will fund any regulated qualifications and/or learning aims at an employee's workplace where this support residents achieve an in-work progression such as increased pay, responsibility, or promotion. This provision should have a flexible delivery to allow all employed residents to participate according to their needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You must ensure they are approved for <a href="#">AEB funding</a> and available on <a href="#">find a learning aim</a>,</li> <li>• The WMCA will also fund learning in the workplace for work experience linked to Into-employment Programmes as part of your delivery plan</li> </ul> |
| <p>Job outcome/13-week sustainment evidence</p> | <p>To support with destination collection, we have clarified requirements in relation to declarations as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers can accept a reply to an email, text, or team message from a resident as proof of self-declaration for a job/13-week sustainment. The declaration would need to confirm all the detail needed for evidence and would ideally be from the same contact details as on the enrolment form.</li> <li>• Additionally, WMCA will accept an email from an employer or evidence from DWP that the resident is no longer claiming benefits, providing these confirm the details needed to claim.</li> </ul> |

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|                            | All evidence, including self-declarations, must confirm the resident's details and describe what the resident is confirming.   |
| Into employment Programmes | <p>The new WMCA into employment programme funding methodology has been designed to replace SWAP/SG/CG delivery, with the aim to drive better outcomes for learners in bespoke provision that moves them into employment.</p> <p>This model will be expanding the into employment programmes beyond the relatively small proportion of the population who are unemployed and out to the economically inactive, those in work without basic skills, and sections of the community who suffer from inequality in the workplace, for example, disabled residents.</p> <p>Development of our wider 'into Employment offer, will follow. This model will expand our delivery to support those who may wish to make a career change by offering up-skilling and re-skilling provisions up to level 3.</p> |

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| <b>Issue date;</b>          | 1/08/2023     |
| <b>Senior policy owner;</b> | Miguel Silva  |
| <b>Document owner;</b>      | Joanne Galvin |