Accessing a 24+ Advanced Learning Loans Facility with the Skills Funding Agency

August 2015

Introduction

24+ Advanced Learning Loans are available to learners aged 24 and over studying eligible qualifications at Levels 3 and 4. Colleges and training organisations must be in receipt of a loans facility to offer provision funded with a loan.

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) determines which colleges and training organisations are offered a loans facility. We do this through a rigorous and robust assessment process which we set out below.

Colleges and training organisations with an existing adult skills budget (ASB) funding agreement

Colleges and training organisations who hold a direct ASB funding agreement with the SFA can apply for a loans facility, which will give them the ability to offer loans to learners, and receive loans payments from the Student Loans Company (SLC) on behalf of learners.

They can make an application at any time during the 2015 to 2016 funding year, using the 24+ Advanced Learning Loan facility and bursary change request form. We will publish the form for 2015 to 2016 in August 2015.

Once we have received your completed form we will respond to your request within two working days.

You can find more information in the SFA's Operational Performance Management Rules.

Training organisations not in receipt of an adult skills budget funding agreement

Training organisations not in direct receipt of ASB funding from the SFA can apply for a loan facility from mid-November 2015 if they meet **all** of the following criteria. They must confirm that they:

      a. have successfully entered the SFA's Register of Training Organisations (the Register)

      b. have passed the capacity and capability questions associated with their register application, and have identified an interest in offering 24+ Advanced Learning Loans

      c. are in a current subcontracting arrangement with an SFA lead provider for delivery of ASB (apprenticeship or non-apprenticeship) or loans-funded provision in the period 1 August 2015 to 31 August 2016

d. have experience of subcontracted delivery with an SFA lead provider for delivery of ASB (apprenticeship or non-apprenticeship) or loans- funded provision for the period 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015 inclusive and

e. have an SFA financial health assessment of 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'outstanding'

Where providers in a subcontracting relationship are in scope for inspection by Ofsted, and have been inspected in their own right in the last five years, (not as part of any other provider's inspection), they must have achieved an Ofsted grade of 'good' or 'outstanding' in order for us to consider their application for a loan facility.

The SFA will also use at its discretion any information it already holds about a provider, obtains from other government bodies, or which is already in the public domain, as part of its decision-making process.

The timing of the application process for providers meeting these criteria is dependent upon Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data being available from lead providers to validate subcontracted delivery in 2014 to 2015, including qualification completion and achievement rates. This data will be available in late 2015. For this reason the application process will open in mid-November 2015, with completed applications to be returned by mid-December 2015.

The process will involve the completion of an application form to request a loan facility, where providers will be asked to confirm and authenticate the organisation's details including registered name, the UK Provider Reference Number (UKPRN), as it appears on the UK Register of Learning Providers, bank account details, and the amount of loan facility being requested in 2015 to 2016.

If a provider applies and meets all the criteria set out above we will offer them a loan facility for 2015 to 2016. Delivery of provision funded through loans is subject to the SFA's Funding Rules 2015 to 2016.

We will publish further details through Update in late autumn 2015.