



Skills Funding
Agency

The European Social Fund Funding Rates and Formula 2016 to 2017

Version 1

This document sets out the details of the 2016 to 2017 funding system used to fund training and skills provision paid for from the European Social Fund (ESF).

March 2016

Of interest to further education and skills training providers.

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Introduction and purpose of the document

- 1 This document sets out the principles behind our funding system and describes the features of the funding system for the European Social Fund (ESF) budget for the 2016 to 2017 funding year.
- 2 For a complete understanding of how the funding system works in practice, read this document together with the following:
 - [ESF Specifications Deliverables Evidence Requirements \(Version 1.5\) – 2014 to 2020 ESF Programme Funding Rules](#)
 - [ILR specification, validation rules and appendices 2016 to 2017](#)

Understanding our terminology

- 3 The term ‘we’ refers to the Skills Funding Agency. When we refer to ‘you’ or ‘providers’, this includes colleges, Higher Education Institutions, training organisations, local authorities and employers that receive funding from us to deliver education and training.

Changes to the funding system from the 2015 to 2016 funding year

- 4 There are no significant changes to the funding calculation in the funding year 2016 to 2017. We will fund all learning aims at the same rate as the funding year 2015 to 2016. If we did not fund the learning aim in the funding year 2015 to 2016, we will use a Single Activity Matrix (SAM) to set rates for all eligible learning activity, including eligible qualifications. This will enable funding of planned activity, based on hours. This is to simplify the system by merging the existing matrices and supports the transition to local commissioning by enabling more flexibility to meet learners’ and employers’ needs locally. Refer to the [ESF Funding Rules](#) for more information on planned activity.

The data we use to calculate funding

- 5 You give us information about learners and their learning using the [Individualised Learner Record](#) (ILR) and the [supplementary data collection](#). Our funding system

uses this information to work out the funding you have earned for delivering this learning.

- 6 The ESF supplementary data collection collects information that we do not gather from the ILR, or we cannot process through our funding calculation. Our funding system uses this information to calculate the funding you have earned for delivering this learning or activity. For more information refer to the [supplementary data collection guidance](#).

- 7 We will pay you on the basis of your actual delivery each month, in arrears. The amount we pay will be within your maximum contract value and the maximum amount for each deliverable in the contract (for more details, refer to paragraph 8). If your contract spans multiple funding years, we will combine the earnings from each year and will pay up to the maximum amount for each deliverable in the contract.

Your contract with us

- 8 Your contract will contain some or all of the following deliverables:
 - a) Learner assessment and planning – to identify learner needs and plan the activities required to achieve the outcome of the specification.

 - b) Regulated learning – to cover all regulated qualifications and units.

 - c) Non-regulated activity – to cover all non-regulated qualifications and non-regulated activity.

 - d) Additional programme cost – to cover any costs incurred for any support the learner might need for attending the learning.

 - e) Actual Costs – to cover actual costs incurred, for example, staff costs. We will collect this information through the supplementary data collection.

- f) Community Grants – there are two Community Grant deliverables, for grants and management costs. We will collect this information through the supplementary data collection.
 - g) Progressions – there are up to six progression deliverables, for example, progression into a job.
 - h) Sustained progressions – there are multiple sustained progression deliverables, for example, sustaining a progression into a job for three months.
 - i) There are up to 10 deliverables designed for activity not covered in the deliverables above which may be defined in an individual specification. We will collect this information through the ESF supplementary data collection.
- 9 Further details about the deliverables described in paragraph 8 are available throughout this document.

The funding system principles

- 10 Our funding system is based on the following four principles:
- i. **Fairness** – it offers learning opportunities to the most disadvantaged and improves learners’ career prospects. The contribution the government makes reflects the relative costs of delivering provision.
 - ii. **Transparency** – it is simple and easy to understand, and works for the benefit of all employers and learners.
 - iii. **Recognising the diverse needs of adults** – it supports activity that provides employability skills and progression to higher-level technical and professional education.
 - iv. **Protecting public funds** – it aims to find a satisfactory compromise between protecting public funds and giving providers the freedom and flexibility to meet the employers’ and learners’ needs.

11 The following sections explain how we calculate your funding for each of the deliverables set out in paragraph 8.

Learning assessment and planning

12 This deliverable is designed for assessment planning and support of the learner. It also records a learner starting ESF-funded activity. For more information, refer to the [Funding Rules](#).

13 The learning assessment must take place on or after the start date of your contract to qualify for funding. You must record the learning aim reference 'ZESF0001' on the ILR to represent the learning assessment. The start date of the assessment must be recorded in the ILR 'Learning Start Date' field.

14 The value of each assessment you earn is based upon the amount recorded in your contract. Funding will be earned when the assessment has been completed and the ILR learning aim has a completion status of 'Completed'. We will only pay for one assessment for each learner on each contract.

15 We assess learning against the eligibility criteria in the specification. For some criteria, such as employment status, we will measure the eligibility criteria on the ILR 'Learning Start Date' of the first completed assessment aim. For more information, refer to the [validation rules](#).

Regulated learning and non-regulated activity

16 Our funding system for regulated learning (using regulated qualifications and units) and non-regulated activity has the following four features, which are set out in more detail throughout this document:

a) **The funding formula**, including uplifts to the rates to account for the extra costs that you may experience when delivering learning to some types of learners and in some locations.

b) **The funding rates** for learning aims and work placements.

c) **The earnings method**, linked to delivery and achievement.

d) **Support funding** where extra help is needed for learners to achieve.

17 The system is designed to have similarities with our mainstream adult skills programme; notably, how we set rates for learning aims and some aspects of how we fund learners. You can find the detailed features of the funding system in the following sections.

Funding rates

Principles

18 The list of regulated qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks eligible for public funding are on the learning aims search on [the Hub](#), which we update regularly. For more information about what is eligible for public funding, refer to the [Funding Rules](#).

19 We fund each learning aim, whether it represents a qualification or other learning activity, at the rate that applies when the learner starts that learning aim. This principle is the same for a new start in the funding year 2016 to 2017 and a continuing learner from previous years. This rate will apply for the full duration of the learning aim and does not change between funding years.

20 The amount you earn recognises the relative costs of delivering provision in different sectors and subjects, and we set the rates using the following criteria:

- regulated guided learning hours (GLH) where the qualification is part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)
- planned activity in hours – for non-qualification-bearing learning
- certain qualification types (refer to paragraph 31 for more information)

21 For new starts funded in the funding year 2016 to 2017, rates for qualifications are set using the funding rate that was set in 2015 to 2016. If a rate was not set in the funding year 2015 to 2016, rates for qualifications are set using regulated GLH; where GLH is not supplied, we will use Total Qualification Time (TQT). For

activity that is not a regulated qualification, rates are set using planned hours. For more information on planned hours, refer to the [Funding Rules](#).

- 22 We group GLH, TQT or planned hours into funding bands to generate a funding rate. The rates are held in the SAM, with the rows representing the funding band and the columns representing the programme weighting.

The regulated aims available for delivery

- 23 You can find the list of regulated aims (qualifications and units) for 2016 to 2017 using the 'Learning Aims' search on [the Hub](#). Alternatively, you will be able to search using the downloadable databases from the downloads section.

- 24 The list of eligible regulated aims will change over time as learning aims expire and new ones are created.

The non-regulated aims available for delivery

- 25 You can find the list of non-regulated aims for 2016 to 2017 using the 'Learning Aims' search on [the Hub](#). Alternatively, you will be able to search using the downloadable databases from the downloads section. For further information on non-regulated aims refer to Appendix H of the [ILR Specification](#). Non-regulated aims are used for the following:

- a) Specific subject learning not covered by regulated learning.
- b) Work experience. There are specific aims for recording work experience.
- c) Support for unemployed learners and learners not in education, employment or training (NEET). There are specific 'Preparation for work' aims for recording these aspects.

- 26 We distinguish between regulated and non-regulated provision using the 'Learning Delivery Genre' field in the 'Core_LARS_LearningDelivery' table in the downloadable database from [the Hub](#). The non-regulated aims can also be identified through the 'Category ref' field using the 'Class codes' values. For more information about what is contained in the LARS, refer to the 'Table and Field Definitions' document on [the Hub](#).

Programme weightings

- 27 Programme weightings recognise the relative costs of delivering training in different sectors and subjects, and are included in the published rates.
- 28 Programme weightings are set by referring to the Sector Subject Area (SSA). For all regulated qualifications and components of qualifications, awarding organisations decide the SSA. These are recorded on the [Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) and the [Quality Assurance Agency's Access to Higher Education](#) website. We set the SSA where multiple SSAs are recorded for components of qualifications along with a limited number of exceptions we have set. Full details of these are available in Annex 1.
- 29 Agriculture courses that need specialist resources (decided each year with support from Lantra) attract an extra uplift in the Adult Education Budget (AEB) and apprenticeship frameworks when delivered by providers with specialist resources.

The Single Activity Matrix

30 The SAM for the funding year 2016 to 2017 is set out below:

Funding band – hours	Activity type	Programme weighting (PW)				
		A – Base (un-weighted)	B – Low	C – Medium	D – High	E or G* (specialist)
Up to 2	Very small provision (1)	£14	£16	£18	£22	£24
3 to 4	Very small provision (2)	£21	£24	£27	£34	£36
5 to 6	Very small provision (3)	£35	£39	£46	£56	£60
7 to 12	Small provision (1)	£50	£56	£65	£80	£86
13 to 20	Small provision (2)	£100	£112	£130	£160	£172
21 to 44	Small provision (3)	£150	£168	£195	£240	£258
45 to 68	Medium provision (1)	£300	£336	£390	£480	£516
69 to 92	Medium provision (2)	£450	£504	£585	£720	£774
93 to 100	Medium provision (3)	£600	£672	£780	£960	£1,032
101 to 196	Large provision (1)	£724	£811	£941	£1,159	£1,246
197 to 292	Large provision (2)	£1,265	£1,417	£1,645	£2,025	£2,176
293 to 388	Large provision (3)	£1,987	£2,225	£2,583	£3,179	£3,417
389 to 580	Very large provision (1)	£2,573	£2,882	£3,345	£4,117	£4,425
581 to 1060	Very large provision (2)	£4,170	£4,670	£5,421	£6,671	£7,172
1061 or more	Very large provision (3)	£6,602	£7,395	£8,583	£10,564	£11,356

*Some specialist provision receives an uplift if it is delivered by certain providers (paragraph 28).

31 Certain qualifications have their funding band set as a matter of policy:

Qualification type	Programme weighting (PW)				
	A – Base (un-weighted)	B – Low	C – Medium	D – High	E or G* (specialist)
GCE AS-level	£724	£811	£941	£1,159	£1,246
GCE A-level	£1,987	£2,225	£2,583	£3,179	£3,417
GCSE	£724	£811	£941	£1,159	£1,246
GCSE short course	£300	£336	£390	£480	£516
Functional skills in English or maths	£724	-	£941	-	-
Functional skills in IT	-	£336	-	-	-
Access to HE	£3,022	£3,384	£3,928	£4,835	£5,197

32 To encourage enrolment of English and maths GCSE in our adult skills programme, providers that deliver these qualifications to adults aged 19 and over outside apprenticeships will continue to receive a higher rate of £811. The increased rate applies to learners who start from 1 August 2015 and also applies to ESF learners. The full list of fundable English and maths qualifications is available on [the Hub](#).

33 Providers offering English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) qualifications may need to deliver additional regulated learning to individual learners that incurs additional cost above the qualification rate. Where additional hours are required, you can record these on the ILR using the 'Additional delivery hours' field, as detailed in the [ILR specification](#) and the [Provider Support Manual](#).

34 To calculate the additional hours, subtract the maximum GLH value from the total GLH that are planned for the delivery of the qualification. The maximum GLH value refers to the funding band in the SAM for that qualification. For example, a qualification in the '21 to 44' band has a maximum GLH of 44.

35 We generate funding by matching the value of the additional hours to the SAM. The matrix value for that funding band is added to the original rate of the aim to give an overall rate for the learning aim. For the calculation of the additional amount, all ESOL aims are assumed to have the base programme weighting (A). As we introduced a new smaller funding band in 2016 to 2017, we will apply the same principle to the additional rate from ESOL hours as we do with the main funding rate. We will apply the rates as published at the start of the learning aim throughout the duration of the learning aim.

36 For ESF non-regulated learning aims with a mixed SSA, we will fund these at the base programme weighting (A).

Funding formula for regulated learning and non-regulated activity

Principle

37 The funding formula is:

Funding = rate x area cost uplift x learning rate premium.

38 We adjust the funding formula to allow for differences in the relative cost of delivery. These differences are related to factors other than the size, sector or subject of the learning aim. Where appropriate, we adjust funding for 'area cost uplift' and the 'learning rate premium'. The learning rate premium is only used in exceptional cases by agreement with us and is a factor to increase or decrease the national rate.

39 The basis for funding is the rate for the learning aim. We refer to rates as 'unweighted' before we apply programme weightings or any increase for disadvantaged learners or area cost. After we apply the programme weighting we refer to the rate as 'weighted'. After we apply the uplifts we refer to the rate as the 'aim value', as noted in the 'ESF Aim and Deliverable report'.

40 There are some aspects of our Adult Skills Budget funding methodology that we **do not** implement for the ESF programme, which include the following:

- the annual cap of the maximum funding a provider can earn for each learner each year
- the large employer discount
- the employer or learner contribution (all aims are fully funded in ESF)
- reductions for prior learning (if applicable)
- the specialist resources uplift
- the long-term residential college uplift
- the disadvantage uplift

41 For more information on the above criteria and how they are implemented in the adult skills programme, refer to the [Funding Rates and Formula 2016 to 2017](#) on our website on GOV.UK.

Area cost uplift

42 The area cost uplift reflects the higher cost of delivering training provision in some parts of the country, such as London and the South East. We apply this consistently across all AEB 'formula-funded' provision and apprenticeship frameworks. We do not apply this uplift to apprenticeship standards.

43 If required the uplift factor is between 1.01 and 1.20, otherwise we default the factor to 1. This is based on the 'Delivery' location postcode recorded in the ILR. As the delivery location of distance and e-learning provision is not set, we default the area uplift factor to 1. Annex 2 contains details of areas where we provide an area cost increase. The area cost uplift factors are available on the [Uplift factors and postcode files](#) page of our website on GOV.UK.

44 We will apply the same principles to the area cost uplift in the funding year 2016 to 2017 as we do with the funding rate. The area cost uplift factor at the start of the learning aim will apply throughout the duration of the learning aim. We will calculate funding for learning aims starting before 1 August 2016 using area cost factors based on those for the funding year 2015 to 2016. The area cost factors in Annex 2 are the same in 2016 to 2017 compared to 2015 to 2016.

Earnings method

Qualifying period for funding

45 There is no qualifying period for learning aims in the ESF programme, unlike our mainstream adult skills programme.

Distribution of funding over time

46 The earnings method has the following features:

- i. For each learning aim, 25% of the funding is earned when the learner starts their aim. This is earned on the ILR 'Learning Start Date'.
- ii. If a learner leaves and subsequently restarts, you must create a new learning aim in the ILR and record it as a restart. This will not generate the initial 25% funding.
- iii. For each learning aim we retain 75% of the funding which is earned when the learner achieves their aim. All achievement funding is earned on the ILR 'Learning Actual End Date'.

Additional programme costs

47 For more information on what these costs cover and how to claim them, refer to the [Funding Rules](#) and the [supplementary data guidance](#).

48 If these costs are in the specification, you will earn an additional amount for each learner working towards any regulated aim or non-regulated learning.

49 The amount you earn will be based upon the amount stated in the specification.

50 You will earn this amount in full when a learner starts on a regulated or non-regulated learning aim. If a learner works towards multiple aims, it is earned on start date of the earliest learning aim.

51 We will only pay this once for each learner for each contract.

Actual costs

52 For more information on what these costs cover and how to claim them, refer to the [Funding Rules](#) and the [supplementary data guidance](#).

53 We expect you to supply to the ESF supplementary data collection the following type of data to claim funding:

- staff name
- hours worked
- hourly rate
- a full-time or part-time distinction
- invoice reference for goods and services

Community grants

54 This deliverable has two aspects; the value of the grant paid and the cost to administer the grant. For more information on what these costs cover and how to claim them, refer to the [Funding Rules](#) and the [supplementary data guidance](#).

55 We expect you to supply to the ESF supplementary data collection the following type of data:

- name of grant
- amount of grant

56 Where the management costs are 'actual costs', they will follow the same rules as outlined in the 'Actual Costs' section of your contract.

Progressions

57 You can find more information about progressions in the [Funding Rules](#).

58 You earn progression funding when a learner or participant leaves training and progresses to a destination of employment or further training. There are six progression deliverables, covering progression into the following:

- paid employment
- unpaid employment
- education
- an apprenticeship
- a traineeship
- a job search

59 We base the amount you earn upon the unit cost stated in the specification and information recorded in the ILR Learner Destination and Progression entity. You will earn this if the learner has progressed to one of the eligible destinations and has started at least one regulated or non-regulated learning aim within the contract.

60 If the specification allows progressions without the learner having started at least one regulated or non-regulated learning aim within the contract, then we will calculate the progressions accordingly. We will also relax this rule for sustained progressions. We will identify this through our internal reference data.

61 To be eligible for funding, the learner's progression must start no later than 28 days after the last day of learning on a regulated or non-regulated aim. This is recorded in the 'Outcome Start Date' of the ILR progression record. For example, if the last day of learning is the 1 September then the 'Outcome Start Date' must be no later than 29 September to be eligible for funding.

62 If two progression records meet the criteria above, then we will use the progression record with the latest start date to decide which deliverable it links to in your contract. We will only pay for one progression for each learner for each contract.

63 You will earn the progression funding in the month of the 'Outcome Start Date' of the relevant progression record.

Sustained Progressions

64 You earn these when a learner or participant leaves training and progresses to a destination of employment or further training and sustains that progression. There are multiple progression deliverables covering progression into the following:

- paid employment
- unpaid employment
- education
- an apprenticeship
- a traineeship

And then sustaining this for three, six or 12 months.

65 We will base the amount you earn upon the unit cost stated in the specification. To earn this funding, the learner must meet the criteria for a progression and also sustain this for the periods described above. If the 'Outcome End Date' is not known, the time period is based upon the 'Outcome Collection Date' recorded on the ILR 'Destination and progression record'.

66 For more information about sustained progressions, refer to the [Funding Rules](#).

67 You will earn the sustained progression funding in the month when the time period (three, six or 12 months) has been met. This is based upon the 'Outcome Start Date' and either the 'Outcome End Date' or 'Outcome Collection Date' of the relevant progression record.

Other deliverables defined in the specification

- 68 These costs are any other related activity that can be defined, measured and verified in the specification.
- 69 We will base the amount you earn upon the unit cost stated in the specification. You claim this funding through the supplementary data collection.
- 70 For more information about the other deliverables in the contract and how to claim them, refer to the [Funding Rules](#) and the [supplementary data guidance](#).

Annex 1: Programme weightings by sector subject area

Programme weightings are linked to the SSA. We only use SSA Tier 1 where an aim does not have a Tier 2 SSA assigned.

SSA	SSA Tier 2 description	Most likely programme weighting
1	Health, public services and care	B – Low
1.1	Medicine and dentistry	B – Low
1.2	Nursing and subjects and vocations allied to medicine	B – Low
1.3	Health and social care	B – Low
1.4	Public services	A – Base
1.5	Child development and well being	B – Low
2	Science and mathematics	A – Base
2.1	Science	B – Low
2.2	Mathematics and statistics	A – Base
3	Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	B – Low
3.1	Agriculture	E – Specialist
3.2	Horticulture and forestry	E – Specialist
3.3	Animal care and veterinary science	E – Specialist
3.4	Environmental conservation	B – Low
4	Engineering and manufacturing technologies	C – Medium
4.1	Engineering	C – Medium
4.2	Manufacturing technologies	C – Medium
4.3	Transportation operations and maintenance	C – Medium
5	Construction, planning and the built environment	C – Medium
5.1	Architecture	C – Medium
5.2	Building and construction	C – Medium
5.3	Urban, rural and regional planning	C – Medium
6	Information and communication technology	A – Base
6.1	ICT practitioners	B – Low (up to Level 1) C – Medium (Level 2 and over)
6.2	ICT for users	A – Base (up to Level 1) B – Low (Level 2 and over)
7	Retail and commercial enterprise	A – Base
7.1	Retailing and wholesaling	A – Base
7.2	Warehousing and distribution	A – Base
7.3	Service enterprises	B – Low
7.4	Hospitality and catering	C – Medium
8	Leisure, travel and tourism	A – Base
8.1	Sport, leisure and recreation	B – Low
8.2	Travel and tourism	A – Base
9	Arts, media and publishing	A – Base
9.1	Performing arts	B – Low

SSA	SSA Tier 2 description	Most likely programme weighting
9.2	Crafts, creative arts and design	C – Medium
9.3	Media and communication	B – Low
9.4	Publishing and information services	A – Base
10	History, philosophy and theology	A – Base
10.1	History	A – Base
10.2	Archaeology and archaeological sciences	B – Low
10.3	Philosophy	A – Base
10.4	Theology and religious studies	A – Base
11	Social sciences	A – Base
11.1	Geography	B – Low
11.2	Sociology and social policy	A – Base
11.3	Politics	A – Base
11.4	Economics	A – Base
11.5	Anthropology	A – Base
12	Languages, literature and culture	A – Base
12.1	Languages, literature and culture of the British Isles	A – Base
12.2	Other languages, literature and culture	A – Base
12.3	Linguistics	A – Base
13	Education and training	B – Low
13.1	Teaching and lecturing	B – Low
13.2	Direct learning support	B – Low
14	Preparation for life and work	A – Base
14.1	Foundations for learning and life	A – Base
14.2	Preparation for work	A – Base
15	Business, administration and law	A – Base
15.1	Accounting and finance	A – Base
15.2	Administration	A – Base
15.3	Business management	A – Base
15.4	Marketing and sales	A – Base
15.5	Law and legal services	A – Base

The exceptions to the table above are:

- Waste management and recycling in SSA 1.4 is weighted at B – Low.
- Hair and beauty in SSA 7.3 is weighted at C – Medium.
- Music technology in SSA 9.1 is weighted at D – High.
- Music practitioners in SSA 9.1 is weighted at E – Specialist.
- Entry level functional skills in maths is weighted at C – Medium.
- Functional skills in ICT is weighted at B – Low.

Annex 2: Area cost uplifts by region

London A 1.20	London B 1.12
Camden	Barking and Dagenham
City of London	Bexley
Greenwich	Havering
Islington	Redbridge
Kensington and Chelsea	Barnet
Lambeth	Enfield
Southwark	Waltham Forest
Westminster	Bromley
Wandsworth	Croydon
Hackney	Kingston upon Thames
Tower Hamlets	Merton
Lewisham	Richmond upon Thames
Newham	Sutton
Haringey	Brent
Hammersmith and Fulham	Ealing
	Harrow
	Hounslow
	Hillingdon

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Non-fringe 1.03

Central Bedfordshire	North Hertfordshire	Stevenage
Bedford	South Bedfordshire	Luton

Berkshire, Surrey and West Sussex Fringe 1.12

Bracknell Forest	Runnymede	Reigate and Banstead
Crawley	Slough	Tandridge
Elmbridge	Spelthorne	Waverley
Epsom and Ewell	Surrey Heath	Windsor and Maidenhead
Guildford	Woking	Mole Valley

Berkshire Non-fringe 1.12

Reading	Wokingham	West Berkshire
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Buckinghamshire Non-fringe 1.07

Aylesbury Vale	Milton Keynes	Wycombe
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Hampshire and Isle of Wight 1.02		
Basingstoke and Deane	Hart	Rushmoor
East Hampshire	Havant	Southampton
Eastleigh	Isle of Wight	Test Valley
Fareham	New Forest	Winchester
Gosport	Portsmouth	

Cambridgeshire – 1.02		
Cambridge	Huntingdonshire	South Cambridgeshire
East Cambridgeshire	Peterborough	Fenland

Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire Fringe 1.10		
Broxbourne	South Buckinghamshire	Watford
Chiltern	St Albans	Welwyn Hatfield
Dacorum	Three Rivers	East Hertfordshire
Hertsmere		

Kent and Essex Fringe 1.06		
Basildon	Harlow	Thurrock
Brentwood	Sevenoaks	Dartford
Epping Forest		

Oxfordshire 1.07		
Cherwell	Vale of White Horse	West Oxfordshire
Oxford	South Oxfordshire	

West Sussex Non-fringe 1.01		
Adur	Arun	Worthing
Chichester	Horsham	Mid-Sussex



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