



[Home](#) > [SFA update: March 2017](#)



Skills Funding
Agency

1. Adult education budget (AEB) procurement – next steps

Information

Providers that applied for AEB funding through the recently closed procurement exercise will be informed of the outcome in May 2017. Successful providers will be awarded a contract for one year with the potential to extend in the future.

Independent training providers who chose not to submit a bid, or failed to secure funds through procurement, will be offered a run-down contract for the 2017 to 2018 year only. This will be set at either the value of the European Union procurement threshold (£589,148) or the value of their 2016 to 2017 AEB allocation – whichever is the lower.

2. New apprenticeship standards approved for delivery

Information

Last month we approved and published a range of new [apprenticeship standards](#) developed by groups of employers. They cover a wide range of sectors including real estate, construction, agriculture and horticulture production and healthcare.

We now have 162 [apprenticeship standards that are ready to use](#) with an assessment plan and more than 480 standards that are either approved or in-development.

An independent organisation must be involved in the end-point assessment, and employers will be asked to select an apprentice assessment organisation.

For information about becoming an apprentice assessment organisation, see the [register of apprentice assessment organisations](#).

3. Funding rules – delivery models

Information

Following the publication of the [Apprenticeship funding and performance management rules 2017 to 2018](#), we have been made aware of some emerging delivery models that are contrary to the policy intent.

For example, some providers are offering incentives for employers by paying or re-funding them for certain aspects. These include:

- inflating training costs to refund the employer's co-investment
- funding ineligible costs to employers as subcontractors
- claiming higher prices to fund non-English apprentices free of charge to the employer

Providers must not make payments of this kind to employers. We will continue to review these practices and will shortly be strengthening the funding rules to prevent this.

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