



Skills Funding
Agency

Qualifications Information Guide 2013/14

Version 1.0

September 2013

Of interest to colleges, training organisations and awarding organisations

Contents

Introduction	3
The Publicly Funded Offer	6
Regulated Qualifications	6
What we will approve for funding	7
What we will not approve for funding.....	8
The Business Rules We Apply to Approve Regulated Provision for Funding.....	9
Interim Arrangements for Approving Qualifications for Funding	12
The Annual Review	14
The Funding Approval Process	14
The Regulated Unit Offer	15
2013/14 Business Rules for the Approval of Units for Funding	16
Unit Delivery	17
The Innovation Code	19
Non-regulated Provision	20
Annex A	22
Adult Entitlement to Learning	22
Early Years Educator Qualifications	22
Further Education Teaching and Training Qualifications.....	23
Learning Aim Reference Service.....	23
Personal Learning Record.....	23
Recognition of Prior Learning	25
24+ Advanced Learning Loans.....	25
Further Information.....	26
Useful Links.....	26

Introduction

1. The Qualifications Information Guide (the Guide) covers the publicly funded offer within the Adult Skills Budget (ASB) for adult learners (19+) in the academic year 2013/14. It contains details of the regulated qualifications the Skills Funding Agency (the Agency) has approved for funding as well as unit delivery, the Innovation Code, and the circumstances in which non-regulated provision is delivered.
2. The main areas of change in this updated version of the Guide include the interim arrangements for approving qualifications for funding, amendments to the rules for approving units for funding, Early Years Educator qualifications, Further Education (FE) teaching and training qualifications, and 24+ Advanced Learning Loans. We will update the Guide further in late autumn 2013 to reflect the introduction of new business rules for the approval of qualifications for funding. We will then publish the next edition of the Guide for 2014/15 in January 2014.
3. The Guide explains which regulated qualifications and units the Agency funds and the business rules we apply to approve regulated qualifications and units for funding. Please read the Guide alongside the [2013/14 Funding Rules](#) and the [Streamlined Funding System for Adult Skills](#). These documents focus on the rules we apply to the funding of qualifications and units.
4. Annex A of the Guide contains further details of aspects of the publicly funded offer, such as the Adult Entitlement. If you have any questions about the publicly funded offer that are not answered in this Guide, please contact the Qualifications Team at the Agency by emailing qualifications@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk.
5. The publicly funded offer is focused on regulated qualifications. The Agency has a remit to approve qualifications for funding and it is important that these qualifications are rigorous, high quality and responsive to both employers' and learners' needs. During 2012/13 we have reviewed the range of qualifications approved for funding in order to move towards an offer that:
 - provides high-quality qualifications that employers and learners value and that have high demand

- supports employment outcomes and/or meaningful progression
- supports innovation and flexibility and can respond to changing skills needs
- supports the achievement of English and maths at Level 2.

6. During 2013/14 we will continue to ensure that we have a robust and rigorous qualifications offer, aligning our work with other aspects of qualification reform, particularly:

- the review of adult vocational qualifications as announced in [Rigour and Responsiveness In Skills](#) (April 2013) and in [Matthew Hancock's letter to the Chairs of FE and Sixth Form Colleges](#) (July 2013)
- the work of the Department for Education (DfE) following the [Wolf Review of Vocational Education](#)
- the [Richard Review of Apprenticeships](#).

7. We will also continue to work closely with the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), which regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England, particularly in respect of their ongoing work to ensure that vocational qualifications are of the right quality and offered at the right price.

8. The document 'Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills' sets out the need to ensure that the publicly-funded qualifications offer for adults is rigorous and responsive to employer needs. As indicated in [Matthew Hancock's letter to the Chairs of FE and Sixth Form Colleges](#) (July 2013) we will put in place a new set of business rules for the approval of qualifications for public funding during the autumn of 2013. The new business rules will allow us to be confident of the appropriateness, value and quality of the qualifications we approve for public funding.

9. While we are developing these rules we need to manage the volume of new qualifications approved for public funding. Therefore, in the main, we will not consider for public funding new qualifications that enter Ofqual's [Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) until we implement our new rules in autumn 2013. However, we have introduced interim arrangements for the approval of certain qualifications, running from August to autumn 2013 (see paragraphs 36-39 below).

10. During the academic year 2013/14 we will also continue to:
 - evaluate the benefits and challenges of unit delivery
 - support the use of the Innovation Code in responding to employer needs
 - review the Level 2 and Level 3 adult entitlement
 - review qualifications linked to licence to practise and consider whether we may approve some of these for funding as part of the offer for the unemployed.

11. The Agency's Qualifications Approvals and Governance Group (QAG) oversees all of the work we do around qualifications. The QAG meets quarterly and has an independent chair from the adult skills and FE sector. It advises on all aspects of qualifications approval and related qualifications policy, and works in tandem with our Funding External Technical Advisory Group (FETAG), whose role is to review the new streamlined funding system, assist with impact assessment and to communicate with the sector.

12. Membership of the QAG includes representation from the following organisations:
 - Association of Colleges (AoC)
 - Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP)
 - Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
 - Department for Education (DfE)
 - Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB)
 - Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards (FISSS)
 - Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)
 - National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)
 - National Network of Local Adult Learning Providers (Holex)
 - Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual).
 - Skills Funding Agency.

The Publicly Funded Offer

The publicly funded offer is drawn from Ofqual-regulated qualifications and units, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) regulated Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma, Innovation Code provision developed in response to employer needs, and some non-regulated provision (that is, not regulated by Ofqual or the QAA).

Regulated Qualifications

13. Public funding for adults is focused on regulated qualifications. For a qualification to obtain approval for public funding, an Ofqual-recognised awarding organisation must offer it, and it must appear on Ofqual's [Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) or it must be an Access to HE Diploma regulated by the QAA.
14. Most qualifications we approve for funding are vocational, unit-based and credit-bearing, and are in the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).
15. We also recognise the need to support progression for young adults. Alongside QCF qualifications we also approve Functional Skills, general qualifications such as Advanced Levels (A-levels) and General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs), and certain other vocational qualifications that the Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed for inclusion in the [Key Stage 4 Performance Tables](#).
16. In addition, we will also approve the new Technical Level qualifications for 16- to 19-year-olds and will consider what criteria we may apply to the approval of Applied General qualifications for these learners. This aligns with the outcomes of the recent consultation on the reform of Level 3 vocational qualifications for 16- to 19-year-olds and the associated technical guidance available on the [DfE website](#).
17. We will also approve for funding Early Years Educator qualifications where they meet the necessary criteria and are confirmed as doing so by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

18. Alongside Ofqual-regulated qualifications, we also approve for funding the QAA Access to HE Diplomas. We will continue to support this provision because of the important function it plays in supporting adults without traditional qualifications to progress into higher education.
19. It is important to point out that whilst Ofqual regulation is a key requirement for the approval of qualifications for funding, it is not the only one. Not all regulated qualifications are approved for funding within the ASB and the following paragraphs summarise what is approved for funding and what is not.

What we will approve for funding

20. We apply a set of business rules to the process of approving qualifications for funding. We also use these rules to confirm which qualifications are eligible for which groups of learners.
21. Currently we will consider for approval for funding:
 - qualifications in the QCF from Entry to Level 4
 - Awards, Certificates and Diplomas in the QCF depending on their credit value, level and purpose and Sector Subject Area Code (SSAC)
 - units from qualifications approved for funding, depending on their credit value, level and SSAC, available as part of the offer for the unemployed (including 19 up to 24 Traineeships) and the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS)
 - a limited range of units which are available alongside Apprenticeships as part of the offer for micro-sized businesses
 - certain specified 'stand alone' QCF qualifications in the areas of food hygiene, first aid at work, health and safety and fork lift truck at Levels 1 and 2 for delivery to learners in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in the Work-related Activity Group, and learners receiving Universal Credit

- GCSE English and maths qualifications, Functional Skills English and maths qualifications (up to and including Level 2) and new QCF English and maths qualifications (up to and including Level 2)
- units from QCF English and maths qualifications
- certain specified English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) qualifications
- certain specified qualifications appearing in DfE Performance Tables, and other qualifications as identified in paragraphs 14-18 above.

22. During the academic year 2013/14 we expect awarding organisations to develop and submit for accreditation new QCF Skills for Life ESOL qualifications. As these are developed and regulated we will consider them for funding as part of the funding approval process. Full details of current ESOL qualifications that the Agency supports are available from the [Basic Skills](#) section of our website.

What we will not approve for funding

23. Currently we will not approve for funding:

- qualifications at Level 2 and above which do not have a purpose linked to preparation for employment, preparation for further learning and/or training or are linked to occupational competence
- qualifications at Level 5 and above for delivery outside of a Higher Level Apprenticeship
- Awards at Levels 2 and 3 for delivery outside of the offer for the unemployed (including 19 up to 24 Traineeships) and OLASS
- qualifications which are linked to licence to practise or more generally intended to meet an employer's statutory and/or legal responsibilities (see paragraph 32 below)
- qualifications which are linked to continuing professional development (CPD)
- qualifications that are linked to a particular employer ('vendor' qualifications)
- qualifications offered by an awarding organisation which has not signed the Awarding Organisation Personal Learning Agreement, not started uploading

achievement data into the Personal Learning Record (PLR), or not indicated that they have the capacity to upload achievement

- prescribed higher education qualifications such as Higher Nationals and Foundation Degrees.

The Business Rules We Apply to Approve Regulated Provision for Funding

24. As stated above, there is a set of business rules that we apply to regulated QCF qualifications and units for funding approval. These business rules currently focus on the:

- **size** of the qualification in terms of Award, Certificate and Diploma
- **level** of the qualification and/or unit
- **credit value** of the qualification and/or unit
- **purpose** of the qualification
- **Sector Subject Area Code** of the qualification.

Size Rule

25. Vocational Certificates (13 to 36 credits) and Diplomas (37 credits and above) are the core of the regulated offer in the QCF. Qualifications at these sizes are identified as 'full' for the purposes of the Level 2 entitlement. For the Level 3 Adult Entitlement, only Diplomas are identified as 'full'.

26. Awards (one to 12 credits) are approved for funding but at Levels 2 and 3 are only available as part of the offer for the unemployed (including 19 up to 24 Traineeships) and OLASS. However, Level 2 Awards that are new QCF English and maths qualifications are available to all eligible learners.

Level Rule

27. Awards at Entry, Level 1 and Level 4 are approved for all eligible learners. Awards at Levels 2 and 3 are approved only as part of the offer for the unemployed (including 19 up to 24 Traineeships) and OLASS.
28. Certificates and Diplomas from Entry Level to Level 4 are approved for funding for all eligible learners and at Levels 3 and 4 they are also in scope for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans.

Credit Value Rule

29. Certificates and Diplomas are approved for funding irrespective of their credit value. All Awards are currently approved but are funded on the basis of funding bands, which are grouped at three, six, nine and 12 credits. It remains the **expectation that most learners will undertake an Award with a credit value of three or more.**
30. Where a learner undertakes an Award below three credits, we would expect this to be either a QCF English and maths Award or a 'stand alone' qualification in an area such as health and safety. An Award below three credits may also be appropriate where the learner has particular needs that necessitate small qualifications. Full details of funding for Awards are available on [our website](#).

Purpose Rule

31. Each QCF qualification is assigned a purpose by the awarding organisation. Within Ofqual's current [regulatory arrangements](#) there are five primary purposes:
 - i. recognise personal growth and engagement in learning (purpose A)
 - ii. prepare for further learning or training and/or develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area (purpose B)
 - iii. prepare for employment (purpose C)
 - iv. confirm occupational competence and/or confirm the ability to meet a 'licence to practise' (purpose D)
 - v. updating and continuing professional development (purpose E).

32. We are aware of the [letter](#) Ofqual sent in April 2013 and the [letter](#) they sent in July 2013

to Responsible Officers of awarding organisations on the use of Descriptions of Qualifications ('descriptors') with regard to accreditation requirements of qualifications. However, for the time being we will continue to use 'purpose' as a business rule through which to approve qualifications for public funding.

33. The business rules relating to purpose are listed below.

- qualifications which have a purpose of 'recognise personal growth and engagement in learning' (purpose A) can be approved for funding at Entry and Level 1 only
- qualifications which have a purpose of 'prepare for further learning or training and/or develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area' (purpose B) can be approved for funding at Entry to Level 4
- qualifications which have a purpose of 'prepare for employment' (purpose C) can be approved for funding from Entry to Level 4
- qualifications which have a purpose of 'confirm occupational competence and/or confirm the ability to meet a 'licence to practice'' (purpose D) can be approved for funding from Entry to Level 4 where the sub-purpose is 'confirm competence in an occupational role to the standards required' (D1)
- qualifications which have a purpose of D where the sub-purpose is 'confirm the ability to meet a 'licence to practise' or other legal requirements made by the relevant sector, professional or industry body' (D2) cannot be approved for funding
- qualifications which have a purpose of 'updating and continuing professional development' (purpose E) cannot be approved for public funding.

34. Following the publication of [Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills](#) we are reviewing the current policy around qualifications linked to licence to practise, to decide if more of these qualifications should be made available as part of the offer for the unemployed and OLASS. The outcomes of this review will feed into the Skills Funding Statement for 2014/15. This follows the decision in January 2012 to make

available a certain number of specific 'stand alone' qualifications in the areas of emergency first aid at work, food hygiene, health and safety and fork lift truck driving.

Sector Subject Area Code Rule

35. All regulated qualifications are assigned a Sector Subject Area Code (SSAC) by the awarding organisations. There are 15 SSACs, which Ofqual monitors and list on the [SSAC section](#) of its website. We will approve qualifications for funding across all SSACs but for certain areas (for example, Preparation for Life and Work), we expect them to be at Entry and Level 1 only. In other areas (for example, History, Philosophy and Theology) we approve only general qualifications.

Interim Arrangements for Approving Qualifications for Funding

36. Following the completion of our first annual review of the publicly funded offer, including the removal from funding of qualifications with low or no publicly funded demand, we have introduced interim arrangements for the approval of qualifications for public funding. These interim arrangements were implemented on 7 August 2013. We have called these arrangements 'interim' because the new business rules will replace them in autumn 2013, following consultation with the FE sector. The interim arrangements will apply to regulated qualifications in the QCF only.
37. As part of the interim arrangements, and in advance of the introduction of new business rules in autumn 2013, we will only consider for funding approval qualifications that belong to one or more of the following categories:
- a. QCF English and maths qualifications
 - b. QCF qualifications that fall into a Sector Subject Area linked to the government's [Industrial Strategy](#) and where sector strategies have already been agreed and published, such as advanced manufacturing, knowledge services and enabling sectors

- c. QCF qualifications in Teaching and Training that have been developed using guidance from the Learning and Skills Improvement Service following the [Lingfield Review](#)
- d. QCF qualifications designated as 'full and relevant' Early Years Educator qualifications that have been developed following the [Nutbrown Review](#)
- e. QCF English for Speakers of Other Languages qualifications
- f. Replacement qualifications – QCF qualifications which replace existing qualifications approved for funding that are nearing their operational end-date. The awarding organisation must confirm the operational end-date of the existing qualification and the operational start-date of the new qualification
- g. Innovation Code – QCF qualifications which have been developed through the Innovation Code
- h. Gap in provision – where the QCF qualification has been developed because of a gap in provision and where there is no existing qualification that will recognise the learning or skills gain
- i. Re-entry – where the qualification has not been approved for funding for the academic year 2013/14 because of no or low demand, but:
 - now has evidence of growth in demand from specific training organisations for publicly funded enrolments
 - is in a government-identified growth sector
 - will be included in an Apprenticeship framework which is under development.

38. We will assess qualifications outside these categories against the new business rules when we introduce them in autumn 2013.

39. Full details on the interim arrangements are available on the [Funding Approval](#) section of our website. This includes the application form for awarding organisations to use in applying to the Agency where a qualification is in category f, g, h or i above.

The Annual Review

40. Each year we review the publicly funded offer. The review starts in September and finishes in December, with the outcomes of the review published the following January alongside the new Funding Rules and the new edition of the Guide.
41. The QAG monitors the review, which focuses on the level of **demand** for qualifications approved for public funding and the **outcomes** these qualifications deliver for employers and learners in terms of progression into employment and to the next level of learning and attainment. Where qualifications have low or no publicly funded demand, we will remove them from the offer.
42. We will also use the annual review to focus on particular aspects of the offer, for instance whether the offer is responsive enough in terms of the government's Industrial Strategy, whether we have the right breadth and depth of provision in a particular sector, or for a particular cohort of learners.

The Funding Approval Process

43. Until the introduction of the new business rules in autumn 2013 we will continue to operate a monthly approval process. During the interim arrangements (outlined in paragraphs 34-37 above) the approvals process takes place on **20 September 2013** and **21 October 2013**.
44. We will only consider qualifications for approval once we receive details of newly regulated qualifications from Ofqual and QAA. Qualifications approved for funding have funding rates attached and are then published on our [Simplified Funding Rates catalogue](#) and the Learning Aims Reference Service (LARS – see paragraph 77 in Annex A below). Updates on the timescales for LARS are available on The [Data Service website](#).
45. We approve qualifications for a period of one academic year or until the operational end-date applied by the awarding organisation, whichever is earlier. If an awarding

organisation extends the operational end-date of a qualification, this does not necessarily mean that we will also extend public funding.

The Regulated Unit Offer

During the academic year 2013/14 we will continue to make units that are within the Rules of Combination of qualifications approved for funding available as part of the offer for the unemployed (including 19 up to 24 Traineeships) and OLASS. We will also continue to evaluate whether, and on what basis, we will extend the facility to deliver units.

46. Unit delivery enables learners to access units from qualifications and undertake learning and accumulate achievement (in the form of credits) on an incremental and flexible basis. By achieving units and accumulating credit, learners can work at their own pace towards a target qualification or they can attain the skills they need to enter or re-enter employment.
47. Colleges and training organisations engaged in unit delivery must use the Personal Learning Record (PLR) for awarding organisations to record their achievement. The PLR is online and accessible, and provides learners with a record of all their achievements in one place. It can help learners understand and plan future learning opportunities and also enables them to present proof of achievement to employers. Most awarding organisations offering QCF units and qualifications now use the PLR to upload learner achievement. In addition, we are working to strengthen the links between Lifelong Learning Accounts and the PLR. More information on the PLR is contained below in Annex A (paragraph 77).
48. Units are offered as part of the offer for the unemployed (including 19 up to 24 Traineeships) and OLASS. However, units which are within the Rules of Combination of QCF English and maths qualifications are available to all eligible learners. The list of units available for the academic year 2013/14 is published in the [Simplified Funding Rates catalogue](#) and also on the LARS. In addition, a limited range of additional units are available as part of the enhanced offer for [Micro Enterprises](#).

2013/14 Business Rules for the Approval of Units for Funding

49. Whilst units within the Rules of Combination of a qualification approved for public funding are in scope for unit delivery, **it is not the case that all units from an approved qualification are automatically made available**. For 2013/14 we will update the unit offer each quarter and apply the following business rules:

- we will make available units from all QCF English and maths qualifications for all eligible learners
- we will approve only units from Entry to Level 3
- we will only approve units with a credit value of one to 15 (this is to avoid the delivery of large units where the learner should register on a qualification)
- units must belong to a qualification with one of the following primary purposes:
 - prepare for further learning or training and develop knowledge and skills in subject areas (purpose B)
 - prepare for employment (purpose C)
 - confirm occupational competence (purpose D1).

50. Units must also have one of the following SSACs:

- 01 health, public services and care
- 02 science and mathematics
- 03 agriculture, horticulture and animal care
- 04 engineering and manufacturing technologies
- 05 construction, planning and the built environment
- 06 information and communication technology
- 07 retail and commercial enterprise
- 08.1 sport leisure and recreation - coaching only
- 08.2 travel and tourism
- 09.1 and 09.2 (performing arts, and crafts, creative arts and design) – OLASS only

- 09.3 and 09.4 arts, media and publishing (second tier areas of media, communication, publishing and information services only)
- 13 education and training
- 14.1 foundations for learning and life and purpose A (recognise personal growth and recognition in learning) and at Entry Level and Level 1– OLASS only
- 14.2 preparation for life and work (second tier area of preparation for work only) – all Levels
- 15 business administration and law.

Unit Delivery

51. We require colleges and training organisations to deliver units as part of a coherent programme of learning that will support meaningful achievement and progression. We also expect that learners will receive support to progress towards a substantial qualification. The following list, though not exhaustive, gives an indication of some of the features that we expect to see in programmes of units, which should:

- include units that respond to locally assessed skills needs, and support growth sectors
- deliver an appropriate mix and balance of employability and vocational units
- deliver a level of challenge appropriate to the learner to facilitate progress
- ensure units can support credit accumulation and support opportunities for qualification achievement
- avoid units with large credit values, so that each programme is a coherent package of units supporting smaller pieces of learning, allowing the accumulation of credit which learners may use later towards a target qualification
- be of sufficient size to allow delivery of the features described above
- consist of more than one unit.

52. In designing a coherent programme of units to offer, colleges and training organisations should check to confirm that the units have received funding approval.

They should also ensure that the awarding organisation offering the units is able to award the unit and credit, and to confirm registration and assessment arrangements. Normal learner eligibility rules will apply to units.

53. When recording unit delivery, colleges and training organisations should complete the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) as normal, in compliance with the latest guidance published by *the information authority*. If units are the learning aim, colleges and training organisations should record this on the ILR using the normal Learning Aim field (A09). Colleges and training organisations should record learners' employment status in the employment status fields in the ILR.
54. Colleges and training organisations should not use units to maximise success rates or funding. They must record units as learning aims where the learner intends to complete a full qualification in the normal way.
55. Success rates are based on successful completion of the learning aim entered on the ILR. In the academic year 2013/14, alongside the simplified funding methodology, we will include units in the success rate calculation where they are entered as the learning aim. If a full qualification is entered as the learning aim on the ILR and the learner achieves units but not the qualification, any unit(s) achieved will not contribute to the success rate for that qualification.
56. Outcomes of the unit delivery research carried out by NIACE in 2011/12 were published in their [Evaluation Report](#) in April 2012. Further research into unit delivery was carried out by NIACE in 2012/13. The evaluation report on this later work is available on the [NIACE website](#).

The Innovation Code

The Innovation Code (the Code) was recommended in Baroness Sharp's report [A dynamic nucleus: Colleges at the heart of communities](#) (November 2011) and endorsed in [New Challenges, New Chances](#). (December 2011). It is a mechanism aimed at increasing the flexibility and responsiveness of the ASB and will be available in the funding year 2013-14.

57. The Code is designed to help colleges and training organisations respond rapidly to local business, employer and employment needs by allowing adult learners to enrol on a course that does not currently lead to a regulated QCF qualification. While delivering the course, the college or training organisation should work with an Ofqual-recognised awarding organisation to develop a qualification based on the course. This means that different employers across the country can recognise learners' achievement and skills gain.
58. The Code is intended for training provision that has the support of business and employers but is not currently on the QCF. In delivering provision developed through the Code, colleges and training organisations should work towards migration of the provision to the QCF so that learners' achievements are recognised nationally and are transferable.
59. The Code applies to new or existing training provision but colleges and training organisations should not use it for training provision which is ineligible for public funding and where either the learner or employer should pay. Also, colleges and training organisations should not use it to offer non-regulated versions of regulated qualifications, or to deliver qualifications which the Agency has previously ceased to fund. Colleges and training organisations cannot use the Code as part of a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan.
60. There is no formal application process to use the Code but colleges and training organisations wishing to use it must be on the Agency's [Register of Training Organisations](#) and must be currently delivering ASB or OLASS4 training provision. In

addition, we encourage colleges and training organisations to contact their Relationship Team to discuss use of the Code.

61. We will fund learners enrolling on 2013/14 Innovation Code provision as part of the [Streamlined Funding System for Adult Skills](#). Colleges and training organisations must deliver the Code within their existing funding allocation. The Code is meant for participation and colleges and training organisations should not use it to pay the costs of developing new qualifications. Existing funding, learner eligibility and entitlement rules apply, as set out in our [Funding Rules 2013/14](#).
62. Colleges and training organisations can use the Code for both employed and unemployed learners, but they must not use it to deliver all or part of an Apprenticeship framework. However, once a qualification has been developed through the Code, this new qualification could become part of an Apprenticeship framework.
63. Provision delivered through the Code in the academic year 2013/14 will not affect the college or training organisation's Qualification Success Rate or Minimum Levels of Performance.
64. We have produced further information to support colleges and training organisations in using the Code, which is available on the [Innovation Code](#) section of our website.

Non-regulated Provision

Non-regulated provision is provision that neither Ofqual or the QAA regulates. We focus funding on regulated provision because it is part of a national quality assured framework, and achievement gained within that national framework has national recognition and transferability. However, we also recognise that for some learners and in some circumstances there is a need for non-regulated provision.

65. Since 2010 we have reduced the amount of non-regulated training provision that we fund. During the academic year 2013/14 we will continue to monitor the amount of non-regulated provision delivered and expect to undertake further work around non-regulated provision in advance of August 2014.

66. During 2013/14, alongside monitoring the amount of non-regulated provision delivered, we expect colleges and training organisations to focus on the following categories in terms of the non-regulated provision that they deliver:

- designed to support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities where regulated provision may be inappropriate
- currently offered by Specialist Designated Institutions following the commitment in the [Skills Funding Statement 2012-2015](#) (December 2012) to safeguard the training provision they offer
- supporting ESOL as new regulated provision is scheduled to be developed in this area and we wish to avoid any gaps in training provision for learners
- developed under the Innovation Code.

67. We expect colleges and training organisations to offer non-regulated training provision only where no suitable regulated training provision is available to meet the learner's assessed needs. Colleges and training organisations will record non-regulated training provision using the new class codes, as detailed in appendix H of the [ILR Specification for 2013/14](#). Please note that the Innovation Code has its own learning aims, which are different from non-regulated class codes.

Annex A

Adult Entitlement to Learning

68. Learners aged 19-23 are entitled to full funding for their first 'full' Level 2 or Level 3 qualification. Only qualifications at Level 2 and 3 which are designated 'full' are within the scope of the Adult Entitlement. In the QCF vocational Certificates and Diplomas at Level 2 are designated 'full' and therefore included in the Adult Entitlement; vocational Diplomas at Level 3 are designated 'full' and therefore included in the Adult Entitlement. Qualifications that are part of the Adult Entitlement are flagged as 'full' on the 2013/14 [Simplified Funding Rates Catalogue](#).
69. As part of the Adult Entitlement, some learners may enrol on a higher level qualification without having first achieved the previous, lower level, qualification (for example, enrolling on a Level 3 qualification without first achieving a full Level 2). For learners enrolling on a Level 4 without first achieving a full Level 3, only a Diploma at Level 4 will be fully funded.
70. Alongside the qualifications mentioned in paragraph 68 above, five General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs) at A*-C are also considered 'full' at Level 2 and two A-levels are considered 'full' at Level 3.
71. Further details on funding eligibility are available in Annex 1 of the [2013/14 Funding Rules](#) (pages 77-80).

Early Years Educator Qualifications

72. In July 2013 the Government published the criteria for Early Years Educator qualifications. This followed the Nutbrown Review into early education and childcare and the Government's response: [More Great Childcare](#).
73. The criteria lay out the minimum requirements for what an Early Years Educator should know, understand and be able to do to be considered qualified to support young children from birth to five years in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The National College for Teaching and Leadership has responsibility for confirming whether an awarding organisation's qualification meets the Early Years Educator criteria and also

for informing appropriate funding agencies of qualifications that are regulated and satisfy the criteria.

74. Once we receive confirmation that the qualification is regulated and meets the Early Years Educator criteria we will consider it for approval for funding.

Further Education Teaching and Training Qualifications

75. From September 2013 a new suite of FE teaching and training qualifications will be available. Of this new suite we will consider the following qualifications for approval for funding in the context of current business rules:

- Level 3 Award in Education and Training (12 credits)
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training (36 credits): also in scope for 24+ Plus Advanced Learning Loans.

76. Of the existing suites of Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualifications, the 2007 suite of Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS) qualifications is **not** approved for funding for the academic year 2013/14, but the following existing suites are approved for funding for new starts until 31 December 2013:

- 2011 Level 3 and Level 4 Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS)
- 2007 and 2011 Level 3 and Level 4 Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTTLS).

Learning Aim Reference Service

77. The Learning Aim Reference Service (LARS) will replace the Learning Aim reference Application (LARA) for 2013/14. It will hold information on both funded and non-funded learning aims that the Agency recognises. It will set out the information that supports the funding and data collections processes. Further information about the LARS is available on [The Data Service](#) website.

Personal Learning Record

78. The Personal Learning Record (PLR) is a free online service that enables learners, colleges and training organisations to view learner achievement to date and identify the most suitable provision for future learning. Colleges and training organisations can use

the PLR as a guide in forming a coherent learning programme that enables credit accumulation towards full qualifications.

79. Data available on the PLR include: subject, level, grade, credit, source, start date, end date, award date, reference code, awarding organisation, grading type and minimum guided learning hours. The PLR is particularly useful in the context of unit delivery. All colleges and training organisations involved in unit delivery must use the PLR to support learners in understanding routes to achievement.
80. It is important that colleges and training organisations ensure that every learner has a Unique Learner Number (ULN) entered for qualifications, to support awarding organisations in the accurate uploading of achievement data to the PLR. There are several stages in the correct use of the ULN:
1. The college or training organisation obtains the individual learner's ULN.
 2. The college or training organisation registers the learner with the relevant awarding organisation.
 3. The awarding organisation uses the Learning Records Service (LRS) to verify the ULN against learner details.
 4. The awarding organisation reports back to the college or training organisation about any ULNs that it cannot verify.
 5. The college or training organisation works with the LRS to establish the correct ULN.
 6. Once the correct ULN is established, the college or training organisation updates and re-submits the learner data to the awarding organisation.
 7. The awarding organisation uploads the learner's achievements to the PLR.
81. Learners do not have access to the PLR, but any college or training organisation registered as a Learner Registration Body (LRB) with the LRS can arrange to access the PLR with the learner. The LRS Customer Helpdesk is available by telephone on 0845 602 2589 or by email at lrsupport@learningrecordsservice.org.uk. The LRS website is www.learningrecordsservice.org.uk.

Recognition of Prior Learning

82. The term Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) describes a method of assessment. It considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the requirements for a unit or qualification through knowledge, understanding or skills they already have, and so do not need to develop through a course of learning.
83. RPL is different from credit transfer and exemption because it does not relate to assessed and formally certificated learning. RPL enables learners to have previously uncertificated achievement recognised where appropriate and to claim credit for that achievement.
84. Whilst there is no restriction on the proportion of credit within a qualification that may be achieved through RPL, the Agency's [2013/14 Funding Rules](#) identify a threshold of 50% at which funding is affected. Full details of the funding rule for RPL are contained on page 8 of the 2013/14 Funding Rules. Also, individual awarding organisations have their own policies on RPL and colleges and training organisations should be aware of these.
85. During 2012/13 NIACE examined the understanding and use of RPL in the context of Agency-funded training provision. NIACE's work in this area will continue in the academic year 2013/14. The 2012/13 RPL evaluation report is available on the [NIACE website](#).

24+ Advanced Learning Loans

86. 24+ Advanced Learning Loans (Loans) are available in the academic year 2013/14 for eligible learners aged 24 and above studying at Levels 3 and 4. Individuals can apply for a Loan from April 2013 for courses starting between 1 August 2013 and 31 July 2014. More information about Loans is available on the [24+ Advanced Learning Loans](#) section of our website.
87. Qualifications available through Loans have to be listed on the LARS at the point of application. The type of qualifications available are:
- A/AS/A2 Levels (up to four of these).
 - QAA Access to HE Diploma.
 - QCF Level 3 Certificate.

- QCF Level 3 Diploma.
- QCF Level 4 Certificate.
- QCF Level 4 Diploma.
- Advanced Apprenticeship Framework.

Further Information

88. If you have a query about funding rates or how the Agency funds provision, please email fundingsystemsteam@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk. For queries about funding information please email The Data Service: servicedesk@thedata-service.org.uk.

Useful Links

89. For further information on the QAA's approval process and Access to HE courses, please visit their website: www.accesstohe.ac.uk. Other useful links include:

- [Ofqual Register](#)
- [2013/14 Funding Rules](#)
- [Qualifications Simplified Funding Rates catalogue](#)
- [The Data Service](#)



© Crown copyright 2013

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence.

To view this licence, visit:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/>

or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This document is also available from our website: www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

If you have any enquiries regarding this publication or require an alternative format, please contact us: info@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

Publication number – P – 130241