

# **West Yorkshire Combined Authority**

## **ADULT SKILLS FUND (ASF): funding and performance management rules 2025 to 2026**

For the 2025 to 2026 funding year (1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026).

This document sets out the funding rules that apply to all providers of education and training who receive adult skills funding from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

**Version 4 – December 2025**

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## Introduction and purpose of this document

### 1. Introduction to the Adult Skills Fund

In the response to the [DfE consultation Skills for jobs: implementing a new further education funding and accountability system](#) published in July 2023, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) funded adult skills fund (ASF) has replaced the WYCA funded adult education budget (AEB).

The purpose of WYCA ASF is to support adult learners in West Yorkshire to gain skills which will lead them to meaningful, sustained, and relevant employment, or enable them to progress to further learning which will deliver that outcome.

Within ASF, further provision for Tailored Learning is available that supports wider outcomes such as to improve health and wellbeing, equip parents/carers to support their child's learning, and develop stronger communities.

This document is the second version of the new ASF funding rules 2025 to 2026 that replace the ASF funding rules 2024 to 2025. We recommend that providers review the whole document.

## Priorities for Adult Skills Fund

2. The Combined Authority is building upon previous national AEB Funding and Performance Management Rules, with some changes to reflect local commissioning decisions for West Yorkshire residents in 2025/2026. These rules are technical in nature, produced for an audience of Colleges, Local Authority Adult and Tailored Learning Providers, Independent Training Providers, and other organisations (known henceforth as Providers). They are a reference document for the purposes of delivering ASF funded learning for West Yorkshire residents for the academic year 2025/2026.
3. The Adult Skills Fund is aligned to the Combined Authority's ASF Strategy, link [here](#). ASF is one of many ways in which adult training is funded and skills are developed, its principal purpose is to engage adults and provide them with skills and learning needed for work, an apprenticeship and/ or further learning. The refreshed Employment and Skills Framework 2021-2025 identifies key priorities and actions for partners in the region, including to address higher level skills, digital skills, working towards net zero carbon economy and inclusive growth.
4. Within the context of the above strategies, we have defined the following priorities for the Adult Skills Fund in West Yorkshire:
  - Support the unemployed to gain and sustain employment.
  - Unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skills, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work.
  - Make learning more inclusive to support disadvantaged residents.
  - Increase the supply of skills to support key sectors in West Yorkshire.
  - Improve West Yorkshire's resilience by identifying and delivering the skills needed for the future.

5. The Combined Authority will allocate grant funding to a number of Further Education colleges and local authorities delivering to West Yorkshire residents in line with our legal advice. Other organisations that intend to deliver devolved ASF funded provision to West Yorkshire residents will be through a contract for services.
6. These rules do not apply to:
  - Apprenticeships.
  - Advanced learner loans
  - Education and training services funded by the European Social Fund
  - UKSPF - UK Shared Prosperity Fund (subject to confirmation).
  - Provision funded by Government as a response to the pandemic e.g. Kickstart, Restart.
7. This document forms part of the terms and conditions of funding, and you must read them in conjunction with your funding agreement. You must operate within the terms and conditions of the funding agreement, these rules, and the [Individualised Learner Record \(ILR\) - GOV.UK](#) specification. If you do not, you are in breach of your funding agreement with us.
8. All information, including hyperlinks, are correct at the time of publishing this document. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority reserves the right to make changes to these rules at any time.

## Understanding the terminology

9. The terms 'we' and 'us' refer to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA).
10. When we refer to 'you' or 'providers', this includes colleges, higher education institutions, training organisations, local authorities and employers who receive West Yorkshire Combined Authority funded ASF to deliver education and training to our residents.
11. We will use the generic term 'you' or 'provider' unless the requirements only apply to a specific provider type. We use the term 'funding agreement' to include:
  - Grant funding agreement
  - Contract for services
12. We use the terms 'resident' and 'learner' to describe those eligible to undertake Combined Authority funded ASF learning as they have a post code which confirms they will reside in West Yorkshire at the outset and for the duration of any provision.
13. If we refer to 'qualifications', **they will be** from the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) or an Access to Higher Education Diploma recognised and regulated by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).
14. We use the term 'provision' or 'learning' to cover the learning aims and programmes funded by us. 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 qualification as detailed in the Learning Aim Service. [Find a learning aim \(fasst.org.uk\)](https://fasst.org.uk) or as agreed with the Combined Authority.

15. 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 supporting agreed outcomes.
16. We may refer to this document as 'funding rules' or 'the rules'.

## Contacting us

17. You can contact us through our [adultskillsfund@westyorks-ca.gov.uk](mailto:adultskillsfund@westyorks-ca.gov.uk) email address.

## Section 1: General funding requirements

### Principles of funding

1. ASF funding must be considered in the broader skills funding and policy landscape, which encompasses apprenticeships, Learner Loans and HE activity not devolved to the Authority. All of these are however inextricably linked to ASF in terms of resident progression within the post-16 skills and employment system.
2. These rules apply in relation to all residents starting new Combined Authority funded ASF learning aims on or after 1 August 2025. You must check the eligibility of the learner. We will not fund learning for any resident whilst they remain ineligible. We will also not fund a learner who is unable to complete a learning aim or programme of study in the time available.
3. You must not transfer, cross or double fund learning supported by devolved Combined Authority ASF funding for West Yorkshire residents with:
  - ASF from national DFE funds
  - ASF from other devolved budgets
  - Apprenticeships
  - Advanced learner loans bursary fund
  - Advanced learner loan facility
  - ESF/SPF
  - Any other funded provision including Government response to the pandemic e.g. Kickstart/ Restart
4. Our relationship with the provider base will be primarily strategic rather than transactional, with a strong focus on proactive performance management and working together. We expect high quality provision, delivering measurable impact on the progression and outcomes for Combined Authority residents and representing value for money to the public purse.
5. Failure to comply with these rules could lead to formal performance management action being taken by the Combined Authority. The triggers for action and the type of action we may take is set out in these rules, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Performance Management Framework, and in your Grant Agreements and/ or Contract for Services.
6. You must not transfer funding between the Combined Authority call-off contract and grant funding agreements should you as a Provider hold both types of funding agreement with us. To aid transparency, the value of grant allocations and call-off contracts will be published annually by the Authority.
7. You must complete learner records accurately, including the resident's Unique Learner Number (ULN) field, in order to access Combined Authority funding. As West Yorkshire's overall ASF allocation is calculated by government based on residency within the Combined Authority area, it is particularly important that as part of your initial assessment you ensure the resident's postcode relates to where the learner resides at the start of their programme of learning, and where they

expect to be living for the duration of that learning. Should any changes occur, the Learner Record Service information must be updated. You can find more information in the Learner Records Service guidance here [Using the Learning Records Service - GOV.UK](#).

8. You must hold evidence to assure the Combined Authority that you are using the funding appropriately. Most evidence will occur naturally from your normal business processes. We retain the right to request performance management information and related evidence as part of the ongoing risk-based performance management process.
9. The Combined Authority support subcontracting when approached strategically with integrity, i.e. it extends the breadth and reach of provision to under-represented or hard to reach residents; provides opportunities to offer small scale, niche or specialist provision; creates partnerships which support learner progression and builds capacity and supports flexible delivery. Additional information on our approach to sub-contracting is in Annex D.

## Fees and charging

10. You must not make compulsory charges relating 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.
11. 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.

## Funding rates and formula

12. You can access this information in our [wy-asf-funding-rates-and-formula-2024-25-v1.pdf](#)

## Qualifying days for funding

13. 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. You can access this information in the [wy-asf-funding-rates-and-formula-2024-25-v1.pdf](#). This does not apply where the learner achieves the learning aim.

## Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

14. A learner 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:

- reduce the funding amount claimed for the learning aim by the percentage of learning and assessment the learner does not need as a result of receiving the prior learning, and
  - follow the policies and procedures set by the awarding organisation regarding recognition of prior learning, including any restrictions concerning where RPL or prior attainment may not be applied
  - ensure you have a robust internal RPL policy and appropriate resources to deliver RPL
  - we would not expect RPL or prior attainment to be used against the whole qualification, this is exemption rather than RPL.
- 15.** You must not use prior learning to reduce funding for English or Maths qualifications up to and including level 2 or essential digital skills qualifications up to and including level 2.
- 16.** If a learner 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. More information on the adjustment of fields is available in the DfE's [ILR guidance](#).

## Breaks in learning

- 17.** You and the learner can agree to suspend learning while the learner takes a break from learning. This allows the learner to continue later with the same eligibility that applied when they first started their learning. We will not fund a learner during a break in learning
- 18.** You must record the date a learner takes a break in learning and the date they restart their learning in the ILR. Further guidance on recording breaks can be found in the [ILR provider support manual](#).
- 19.** 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.
- 20.** You must not use a break in learning for short-term absences, such as holidays or short-term illness.

## Subcontracting

- 21.** In line with the WY ASF Strategy, Leeds City Region Grant providers ('Route 2' of commissioning) are not permitted to subcontract.
- 22.** You must not subcontract to meet short-term funding objectives.
- 23.** Subcontracted learning has an important role to play in the delivery of the ASF. Subcontractors can help widen participation amongst niche groups that would otherwise be hard to reach. Subcontracting also provides an entry point to funding

for smaller voluntary and community sector and niche Providers, where they may not otherwise be able to meet the minimum contract values.

- 24.** We define a delivery Subcontractor as 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 within your group, other associated companies, and sole traders. It also includes residents who are self-employed or supplied by an employment agency, unless those residents are working under your direction and control, in the same way as your own employees.
- 25.** Subcontracting will be agreed as part of agreeing your Delivery Plan, the value of which will be part of your grant agreement or call-off contract. It will only be agreed where this enriches the learning offer.
- 26.** Permission must be sought from the Combined Authority in advance of any new subcontracted provision. Any learning found to have been subcontracted without prior approval from WYCA may be subject to clawback.
- 27.** You must take your own legal advice about the impact of Public Contracts Regulations 2015 on your recruitment of delivery Subcontractors and have this advice available for inspection by us on request. Subcontracts of all values will be declared and published once agreed by the Authority. If your organisation does not apply a rigorous subcontracting due diligence process, we will review your funding arrangements and limit your ability to subcontract provision.
- 28.** Any changes to subcontractors or the amount of subcontracting you want to undertake following agreement of your Delivery Plan must be discussed and agreed with your Project Lead in advance of them undertaking any delivery.
- 29.** Additional information on subcontracting is included in Annex D.

## Section 2: Who we fund

### Residency eligibility

1. Determining eligibility based on nationality, immigration status and other related considerations is a matter for central government, particularly considering the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union. The Combined Authority is required to follow any directive given by the Secretary of State in this regard and is therefore adopting the eligibility for funding rules as set out in Annex A of the DFE rules, as they apply to residents within West Yorkshire.
2. You must check the eligibility of a learner, including verification of where in West Yorkshire they are resident, at the start of each learning aim and only claim funding from the Combined Authority for eligible learners. Please refer to [Annex G: Glossary](#) section of the funding rules for the definition of 'learner residency', and the [devolution postcode checker data set](#).
3. We will fund learners who are residents of West Yorkshire who on the first day of learning within the 2025 to 2026 funding year are aged 19 or older. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and those not living in the Combined Authority area will have their own funding arrangements.
4. The age of the learner on 31 August in the funding year determines whether the learner is funded through the Combined Authority's ASF funding methodology for residents aged 19 and over, or the DFE's 16 to 19 year-olds funding methodology for residents aged 16 to 19 and those aged 19 to 24 with an Education Health and Care (or EHC) plan.
5. Learners will be eligible for Combined Authority funded ASF for the whole of the learning aim or programme if they are eligible for funding at the start, even if the duration is for over one year. You must reassess the learner for any further learning they start and confirm that they have a Combined Authority post code.
6. Individuals will be eligible for WYCA funded ASF if they meet the criteria in the above section, the learning is taking place in England, and they fulfil the residency requirements set out in annex A.

### Unemployed

7. For funding purposes, we define a learner as unemployed if one or more of the following apply, they:
  - receive Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), including those receiving National Insurance credits only
  - receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
  - receive Universal Credit (UC), and their take-home pay as recorded on their UC statement (disregarding UC payments and other benefits) is less than £952 per calendar month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £1534 per calendar month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner)

- are released on temporary licence, studying outside a prison environment, and not funded by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).
8. Providers may also use their discretion to fully fund other learners if either of the following apply. The learner:
- receives other state benefits (not included in the list above) and their take-home pay (disregarding UC payments and other benefits) is less than £952 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £1534 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner)
  - not receiving any benefits, wants to be employed\*, and you are satisfied identified learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs. In order to claim full funding for learners who are unemployed and not in receipt of benefits, you must indicate that they earn below the earnings threshold by using LDM code 391 and FFI code 1. Evidence must be in place as part of the learner evidence pack to demonstrate the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs.

\*Where appropriate, learners should be referred to Tailored Learning. The purpose of Tailored Learning is to develop the skills, confidence, motivation, and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to:

- progress towards formal learning or employment; and/or
- improve their health and well-being, including mental health; and/or
- develop stronger communities

If the learner is unemployed and is claiming benefits you must complete the Benefit Status Indicator (BSI) to identify the learner is in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance (BSI 1) Universal Credit (BSI 4), or Employment and Support Allowance (all categories) (BSI 5)

## **Learners aged 19 to 23 (excluding English, Maths, Digital and ESOL)**

9. We will fully fund 19 to 23-year-olds, including individuals who are employed, on the day they start the following learning:
- qualifications defined within the legal entitlement that are a learner's:
    - first full level 2, and/or
    - first full level 3 as part of the legal entitlement and/or access to additional qualifications from the level 3 adult offer
  - local flexibility provision:
    - up to and including level 1 to support progression to a first full level 2, and/or
    - level 2 for those who already have a full level 2, or above, if they are unemployed
10. We will co-fund provision up to and including a level 2 for learners who have already achieved a full level 2, or above, who are employed. The earnings threshold eligibility criteria may apply.

## Learners aged 24 or older (excluding English, Maths, Digital and ESOL)

11. We will fully fund individuals aged 24 or older on the day they start the following learning:
- provision up to and including a level 2, if they are unemployed
  - qualifications from the level 3 adult offer, or above, if learners do not have a full level 3 qualification and they meet the eligibility criteria set out in the level 3 free courses for jobs offer section
12. If a learner is aged 24 or over without a full level 2, we will fully fund their first full level 2 qualification as listed as a legal entitlement. This brings the 24+ entitlement to a first full level 2 in line with those aged 19-23. 24+ learners are still able to access qualification from the local flexibility prior to their first full level 2.
13. For learners aged 24 and over, without a full level 2 undertaking their first full level 2, providers must set learner to fully funded. Use code 023 and DAM code 056. DAM codes must be used to identify application of a WY approved flexibility. Usage will be monitored to measure impact of flexibility.
14. We will co-fund all other learners aged 24 years and older for provision up to and including a level 2 where learners are employed and do not meet the earnings threshold criteria.

## Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

15. We will fund learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills and Children and Learning Act 2009.
16. The Combined Authority has the responsibility for securing the provision of reasonable facilities for education and training suitable to the requirements of persons who are 19 and over. This includes learners with an identified learning difficulty and/or disability who have previously had an education, health, and care (EHC) plan and have reached the age of 25.
17. The [16 - 19 funding methodology](#) will apply to learners aged 19 to 24, who have an EHC plan and require provision and support costs.

## Learners with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

18. To access provision and support costs you must inform us before the start of the 2025 to 2026 funding year where a learner:
- has reached the age of 25 and has not completed their programme of learning as set out in their EHC plan by the end of the previous funding year, or

- will reach the age of 25 in the funding year, where their EHC plan is not extended by their local authority to allow them to complete their programme of learning.

**19.** The learner must:

- have an EHC plan that confirms their needs could only be met by the training organisation they are, or were, attending, and
- continue to make progress on the programme of learning as set out in their EHC plan.

**20.** If a learner has an EHC plan, you must report this in the 'Learner funding and monitoring' fields in the ILR.

## Who we will not fund

You must not claim funding for residents who do not meet the eligibility criteria set out above. Please note this list is not exhaustive, but examples of residents who do not meet the eligibility criteria include the following:

- they are here without authority or lawful status
- they are resident in the UK on a student visa, unless they are eligible through meeting any other of the categories
- they are in the UK on holiday
- they are in the UK on a sponsorship visa
- their residence permit imposes a study prohibition or restriction

**21.** We will not fund learners whose EHC plan is extended by the local authority beyond their 25th birthday. The local authority must continue to provide top-up funding and contract directly with the institution in such cases.

**22.** We will not fund a learner during a break in learning.

## Section 3: What we fund

### Legal entitlements

1. WYCA funded ASF includes support for four legal entitlements to full funding for eligible adult learners.
2. The legal entitlements for level 2 and level 3 follow the definition of fullness in the [full level 2](#) and [full level 3](#) sections respectively. 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.
3. 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:
  - not previously attained have a GCSE in English or maths at grade 4 or above (or a qualification which is at a comparable or higher level) or have been assessed as having an existing skill level lower than grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English and maths), as part of their legal entitlement 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
  - Essential Digital Skills qualifications (EDSQs) OR Digital Functional Skills qualifications (FSQs), up to and including level 2, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 2
4. Learners who meet the residency eligibility criteria in Section 2 and are below the earnings threshold criteria or unemployed will also be fully funded for qualifications within policy entitlements that include:
  - free course for jobs
  - level 2 local flexibility HGV
  - 19 to 24 work placements
  - SWAP
  - The King's Trust
  - ESOL

### Funding contribution tables

5. The level of contribution for the Combined Authority funded ASF is set out in the tables below. Additional information on provision is included after the tables.

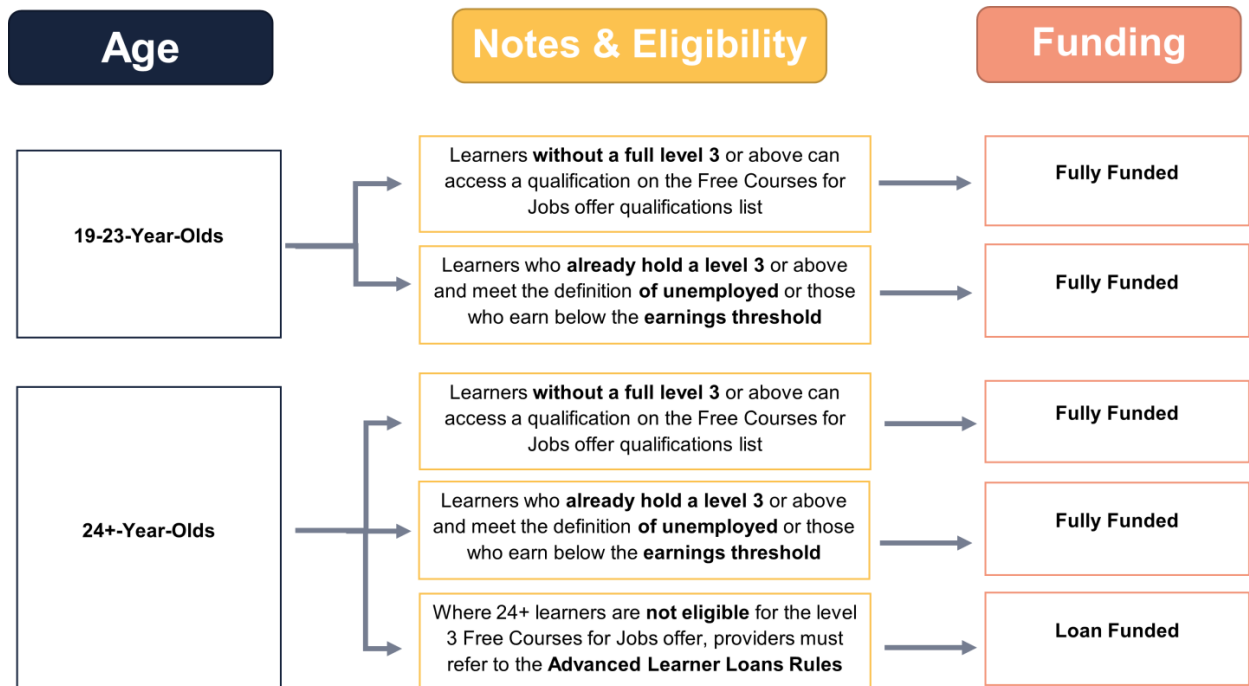
## Funding contribution table: 19 to 23

Provision	Notes & Eligibility	Funding
English & Maths: up to and including level 2	Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications	Fully Funded
Essential Digital Skills Qualifications: up to and including level 2	Must be delivered as part of the digital legal entitlement qualifications	Fully Funded
First Full Level 2 <i>(excluding Maths &amp; English)</i>	First full level 2 qualification must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications. Level 2 provision from the local flexibility offer <b>may</b> be funded for 19–23-year-olds who do not have a first full level 2 (see <i>'Test Pilot increasing the Number of courses 19-23s Entitlement'</i> section).	Fully Funded
First Full Level 3 <i>(level 3 legal entitlement)</i>	First full level 3 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications	Fully Funded
Level 3 Advanced Learner Loans	A learner who has already achieved a full level 3, does not meet the unemployed criteria or those who earn above the earning threshold.	Loan Funded
Learning aims to <b>progress</b> to a full level 2 – up to and including level 2	Can be delivered from entry level to level 2 provision from <b>local flexibility</b> (see <b>'flexible offer'</b> section)	Fully Funded
Learning aims up to and including level 2, where the learner has already achieved a first full level 2 or above ( <i>'Local Flexibility and Legal Entitlements'</i> )	For those who meet the <b>unemployed</b> criteria or those who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Fully Funded
	For those who <b>do not</b> meet the definition of <b>unemployed</b> or do not meet the eligibility criteria for learners who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Co-Funded
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): learning up to and including level 2	For those who meet the <b>unemployed</b> criteria or those who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Fully Funded
	For those who <b>do not</b> meet the definition of <b>unemployed</b> or do not meet the eligibility criteria for learners who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Co-Funded

## Funding contribution table: 24+

Provision	Notes & Eligibility	Funding
English & Maths: up to and including level 2	Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications	Fully Funded
Essential Digital Skills Qualifications: up to and including level 2	Must be delivered as part of the digital legal entitlement qualifications	Fully Funded
First Full Level 2 (excluding Maths & English)	For those who meet the <b>unemployed</b> criteria, who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b> , or those undertaking their <b>first full level 2</b> qualification.	Fully Funded
Learning to progress to level 2 ('Local Flexibility and Legal Entitlements')	For those eligible for their first level 2 as they meet the <b>unemployed</b> criteria or those who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Fully Funded
	For those who <b>do not</b> meet the definition of <b>unemployed</b> or do not meet the eligibility criteria for learners who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Co-Funded
Learning aims up to and including level 2, where the learner has already achieved a first full level 2 or above ('Local Flexibility and Legal Entitlements')	For those eligible for their first level 2 as they meet the <b>unemployed</b> criteria or those who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Fully Funded
	For those who <b>do not</b> meet the definition of <b>unemployed</b> or do not meet the eligibility criteria for learners who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Co-Funded
Learning aims up to and including level 2, where the learner has not achieved a first full level 2 or above ('Local Flexibility and Legal Entitlements')	For those eligible for their first level 2 as they meet the <b>unemployed</b> criteria or those who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Fully Funded
	For those who <b>do not</b> meet the definition of <b>unemployed</b> or do not meet the eligibility criteria for learners who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Co-Funded
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): learning up to and including level 2	For those who meet the <b>unemployed</b> criteria or those who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Fully Funded
	For those who <b>do not</b> meet the definition of <b>unemployed</b> or do not meet the eligibility criteria for learners who earn below the <b>earnings threshold</b>	Co-Funded

## Free courses for jobs offer



## English and Maths for those aged 19 or older

6. We will fully fund eligible learners for the following qualifications:

- GCSE English and/or maths
- Functional Skills English and/or maths from Entry to level 2
- Stepping stone qualifications (including components, where applicable) in English and/or maths approved by DfE

To be eligible for the legal entitlement the individual must meet the residency eligibility in section 1, and:

- be aged 19 or over, and
- not previously attained have a GCSE in English or maths at grade 4 or above (or a qualification which is at a comparable or higher level) or have been assessed as having an existing skill level lower than grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English and maths), as part of their legal entitlement

If a learner wants to retake GCSE English and maths qualification because they did not achieve a grade 4 (C), or higher, we will not fund the learner to only resit the exam.

You must not fund an apprentice for English and/or maths from DfE funded ASF.

You must not enrol individuals on qualifications which are not necessary for progressing towards a GCSE or Functional Skill level 2.

You must:

- 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 curriculums or DfE published English and Maths Functional Skills subject content the national standards for essential digital skills or DfE published Functional Skills subject content

or;

- carry out an appropriate diagnostic assessment to inform and structure a learner's evidence pack to use as a basis for a programme of study
- enrol the learner on a level above that at which they are assessed and/or of which they have prior attainment, and be able to provide evidence of this
- deliver ongoing assessment to support learning
- record the evidence of all assessment outcomes in the evidence pack

The assessments must place a learner's current skills levels within the level descriptors used for the RQF.

## Digital entitlement for those aged 19 or older

7. We will fully fund residents, including those who are employed, aged 19 or older, assessed at below level 2, as part of their legal entitlement on the day they start the following qualifications:
  - Essential Digital Skills qualification (EDSQ up to and including level 1)
  - Non-accredited provision for learners with very low digital skills.
  - Digital Skills qualifications from Entry Level up to Level 2 approved for use in West Yorkshire
8. We will fully fund non-regulated learning for learners, including those assessed at pre-entry level with significant learning difficulties and/or disabilities as part of a personalised learning programme, where assessment has identified the learner cannot undertake provision. This provision must be aligned with the national standards for essential digital skills and must not be a non-regulated version of a regulated qualification.
9. WYCA has expanded the Digital Skills legal entitlement for WY residents so that they can now access a range of fully funded Digital Skills qualifications ranging from entry level up to level 2. The list of qualifications that WYCA will fully fund are available by emailing [adultskillsfund@westyorks-ca.gov.uk](mailto:adultskillsfund@westyorks-ca.gov.uk). Providers can request additional qualifications to be added to the list by submitting a formal request with a rationale to your Project Lead at specified points in the year. Funding will not be back dated and will only be approved for full funding from the date of formal approval from WYCA. Approved list of digital qualifications will be available on the website.
  - a. Providers to set learner to fully funded.
  - b. Use code DAM 023 and DAM code 057

- c. DAM codes must be used to identify application of a WY approved flexibility. Usage will be monitored to measure the uptake and impact of flexibility. Ensure qualification is on the approved list.

**10. You must:**

- carry out an initial assessment using current assessment tools based on the national standards for essential digital skills,
- if necessary, carry out an appropriate diagnostic assessment to inform and structure a learner's learner file to use as a basis for a programme of study,
- enrol the learner on a level above that at which they were assessed and be able to provide evidence of this,
- deliver ongoing assessment to support learning, and
- record the evidence of all assessment outcomes in the evidence pack.

- 11.** The assessments must place a learner's current skill level within the level descriptors used for the RQF.

## English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

- 12.** ESOL qualifications are part of the ASF learning at level 2 and below offer, please refer to this section for eligibility criteria.
- 13.** Providers offering ESOL qualifications may need to deliver additional learning to individual learners that incurs additional cost above the qualification rate. You can access information on how to do this in the [funding rates and formula guidance](#).

## Full level 2 qualification

- 14.** Level 2 is the level of attainment which is demonstrated by:
- a General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in 5 subjects, each at grade 4 (C) or above, or
  - a Technical Certificate at level 2 which meets the requirements for the 16 to 19 performance tables.
- 15.** If a learner 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 earnings threshold eligibility criteria. Please refer to the [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#) on GOV.UK and the prior attainment level tables in the [ILR specification: 2025 to 2026](#).

You can email [qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk](mailto:qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk) if you need advice on a previous qualification's designation.

- 16.** If a learner is aged 19 or over without a full level 2, we will fully fund their first full level 2 qualification as listed as a legal entitlement. This brings the 24+ entitlement to a first full level 2 in line with those aged 19-23. 24+ learners are still able to access qualification from the local flexibility prior to their first full level 2.

17. For learners aged 24+, providers must set learner to fully funded. Use code DAM 023 and DAM code 056. DAM codes must be used to identify application of a WY approved flexibility. Usage will be monitored to measure uptake and impact of the flexibility.

## Full level 3 qualification

18. Level 3 is the level of attainment which is demonstrated by a:
- General Certificate of Education at the advanced level in 2 subjects.
  - General Certificate of Education at the AS level in 4 subjects
  - QAA Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma at level 3.
  - Technical or applied general qualification at level 3, which meets the requirements for the 16 to 19 performance tables.
  - Core maths at level 3
19. If a learner aged 19 to 23 has achieved a level 3 qualification that was not classed as a full level 3 at the time they started it, but has since been classed as a full level 3, and wants to enrol on any subsequent level 3 qualification of any size, they may apply for an advanced learner loan (provided the qualification is designated for funding, and subject to learner eligibility conditions), or pay for their own learning. From the 1 April 2022 there is an exception to this rule, a learner will be fully funded under the level 3 adult offer.
20. Please refer to the [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#) on GOV.UK and the prior attainment level tables in the [ILR specification: 2025 to 2026](#). You can email [qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk](mailto:qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk) if you need advice on a previous qualification's designation.
21. For new linear AS and A levels, where a learner 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 ILR. The AS learning aim will be funded separately to the A level learning aim.

## Learning at level 3 legal entitlement and the level 3 free courses for jobs

22. Learners aged 19 to 23 who have not previously achieved a full level 3 qualification must be fully funded, regardless of the earnings threshold or employment status, if they choose a qualification from the level 3 legal entitlement or FCFJ list. You must not charge them any course fees.
23. Learners aged 19 to 23, are now funded through your FCFJ funding lines and will include the relevant uplift.

For the funding year 2025 to 2026, providers can find the qualifications approved in the [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#).

24. Learners who meet the residency eligibility, have exhausted their first level 3 legal entitlement and do not meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold or unemployed have the option of funding through an [advanced learner loan](#).)

## Level 3 Free Courses For Jobs offer

**25.** As part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, a targeted level 3 adult offer has been developed to support adults without an existing full level 3 qualification, adults who meet the earnings threshold eligibility criteria or the definition of 'unemployed'. This offer is also known as the Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs offer.

Free courses for jobs (FCFJ) is a targeted level 3 offer to support adults who meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold or unemployed.

**26.** The offer includes:

- 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. In particular, eligible adults 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](#).
- 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
- all learners, irrespective of age or when they started their learning, are now funded through your FCFJ funding line and will include the relevant uplift

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 availability regularly.

**27.** 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 to the start of the level 3 adult offer or the funding year.

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

**29.** We will fully fund individuals as part of the offer where they:

- are aged 19 or above on 31 August within the 2025 to 2026 funding year, enrol on the level 3 FCFJ qualifications approved for funding and meet the eligibility of being below the earnings threshold or unemployed or
- have not achieved a full level 3 qualification, or above, which meets the requirements set out in the full level 3 section; and

**30.** You must not claim for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority ASF 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 level 3 adult offer.

- 31.** Mayoral Combined Authorities have the flexibility to fund L3 qualifications not on the national list. Grant providers can request additional qualifications to be added to the list by submitting a formal request with a rationale to [adultskillsfund@westyorks-ca.gov.uk](mailto:adultskillsfund@westyorks-ca.gov.uk)

FCfJ funding can only be utilised from the date of formal approval from WYCA and cannot be retrospectively claimed. Any qualifications delivered using the flexibility will not attract an uplift. The approved Flexibilities list is available [here](#).

Once approved, a qualification will be assigned category code 56. Only qualifications on the WYCA approved Free Courses for Jobs list will be eligible, not all level 3 qualifications from category code 56 are eligible.

Providers delivering FCFJ through a procured contract are not eligible to deliver any additional qualifications other than those agreed in delivery plans.

**32.** You must:

- use LDM code 378 and FFI code 1 to claim for funding for 19 to 23 year olds learners, who have not achieved a full level 3 and earn above the earnings threshold learners who meet the requirements set out above.
- use LDM code 378, FFI code 1, and LDM code 391 when recording learners who meet the earnings threshold eligibility criteria or are unemployed, or are 19 to 23 years old and have not achieved a full level 3
- record the employment status and prior attainment of learners accessing the offer in the ILR
- use DAM 044 for all WYCA 19+ Level 3 FCFJ offer

To determine qualifications that are eligible for FCFJ funding you must use learning aims that are marked with:

- FCFJ Adult Skills validity category

The FCFJ learning aims continue to be marked with the category codes listed below.

- category code 45: National Skills Fund Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs rate 1
- category code 46: National Skills Fund Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs rate 2
- for short courses, you must also use category code 49: National Skills Fund Level 2 Free Courses for Jobs – short qualification
- Learning aims under category code 56: Free Courses for Jobs MCA and GLA are only eligible for funding if approved by West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

## Level 3 Skills Booster

33. This provision is intended to enable adults to gain the skills and learning required for employment, including progression into apprenticeships.

## Delivery Requirements

34. All conditions set out under the *Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs* offer apply.
35. As this provision was awarded through a procurement process, providers must deliver in line with the content of their approved bid.

This includes adherence to the agreed learning aims, qualification(s), and delivery model.

36. No changes or deviations are permitted without prior WYCA approval.

## Progression Requirement

37. At least 75% of learners who successfully complete their course must achieve a progression outcome, defined as:
- A new job (part-time or full-time) with a new employer or apprenticeship
  - A new role with their existing employer, or their existing role but with additional responsibilities. (explicitly linked to the training undertaken)
  - Increased opportunities for the self-employed - within 2 months of course achievement.
38. These progression outcomes will be tracked and monitored as part of performance management.
39. Providers are expected to have appropriate systems in place to track learner progression and liaise with employers post-completion.
40. For unemployed learners who gain employment, **DAM015** must be recorded upon confirmation of employment. Evidence must include the learner's employment start date, job role, and employer details, retained within the learner's evidence pack.
41. For employed learners, progression data must be submitted to CA at intervals agreed with your project lead, as a minimum twice in an academic year. Evidence of progression for employed learners must include employer confirmation detailing the increased responsibilities gained as a result of the course.

## Earnings threshold

42. We have introduced the earnings threshold as part of the eligibility criteria that enables learners to be fully funded if they earn below £25,750. The policy entitlement includes learners who are unemployed, employed or self-employed.

43. You may fully fund learners who are unemployed, employed, or self-employed, up to and including level 2 and the level 3 offers, if they earn below £25,750 annual gross salary.
44. You must have seen evidence of the learner's gross annual wages in these circumstances. This could be a wage slip or a UC statement within 3 months of the learner's learning start date, or a current employment contract which states gross monthly/annual wages. This list is not exhaustive, but you must evidence your decision to award full funding to an individual who would normally be eligible for co-funding.
45. To claim full funding for learners who earn below the earnings threshold, you must use LDM code 391 and FFI code 1.
46. If the learner is unemployed and is claiming benefits you must complete the Benefit Status Indicator (BSI) to identify the learner is in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance (BSI 1) Universal Credit (BSI 4), or Employment and Support Allowance (all categories) (BSI 5).

## Heavy goods vehicle (HGV) and passenger service vehicle (PSV) driver training

47. HGV driver training flexibilities have been developed to support an increase in HGV and PSV driver training. Further information available in the [rates and formula document](#) The 2025 to 2026 offer:

- includes level 2 qualifications which will prepare learners for HGV and PSV licence acquisition of all vehicles up to category C and E (articulated)
- includes any new additional qualifications that are approved for training in this sector throughout the 2025 to 2026 academic year
- allows all eligible learners, fully funded and co-funded, to be reimbursed for the cost of HGV and PSV licences and medical

Learners must be eligible under the criteria for DfE funded ASF eligibility and enrolled on one of the targeted approved for funding level 2 qualifications listed in [find a learning aim](#).

For learners, we will fund the first attempt only for:

- the HGV and PSV licence as part of a programme of training and
- the medical, at a cost of £61 per learner and/or
- a licence to upgrade from category C to category C+E

You must:

- use learning aims that are marked with:
  - category code 50: HGV Emergency Response, to identify an approved qualification, and
  - category code 51: HGV Medical for the additional learning aim to represent the HGV medical and
  - category code 52: HGV Licence, for the additional learning aim(s) to represent parts of the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) tests required to attain the licence, when learners undertake these elements
- record an outcome of “Achieved” in the ILR where you have a recorded learning aims for the HGV and PSV licence and medical aim, to generate reimbursement funding for these activities
- have criteria for how you will administer and distribute your funds
- retain evidence in the learner file confirming that you have verified the medical test and licence documentation, and evidence from your accounts of the payment made to the learner and learner’s receipt of the funds

## Work placement for 19 to 24 year olds

**48.** We will fully fund individuals for a work placement who meet the criteria in the [Section 2: Who we fund](#) section where they:

- are aged 19 to 24 on 31 August within the 2025 to 2026 funding year; and
- enrol on one or more learning aims from the ASF core offer, or a vocational qualification listed on [find a learning aim](#), alongside a work placement learning aim

A learner’s work placement must take place with an employer and allow the learner to develop new workplace knowledge, skills and behaviours. In total, the work placement element must be at least 70 hours and a maximum of 240 hours, and it must not be virtual or be simulated learning in an artificial environment.

A learner can have separate work placements in different organisations. These must last at least 2 weeks with each employer, and at least 70 hours in total with each placement supporting progression linked to their learning plan.

For learners on Jobseeker’s Allowance (JCA) or Universal Credit (UC), work placements can be between 70 to 240 hours.

A learner who is undertaking work experience as part of a SWAP funded through DWP must not be funded through the 19 to 24 work placement.

For eligible learners aged 19 to 24 the work placement will be funded through the DfE funded ASF funding methodology, with further information available in the [funding rates and formula guidance](#).

Providers must use learning aims that are marked with Adult Skills Fund – Work Placement, refer to the [funding rates and formula guidance](#).

The employer must offer at the end of each work placement (which you must evidence) either:

- a formal interview for a job or apprenticeship vacancy, plus feedback, or
- an exit interview, written feedback and evidence of the learner's time and activities during the work placement

## Reconciling the West Yorkshire Combined Authority funded ASF – Grant funded providers only

- 49.** The West Yorkshire Combined Authority pays Grant funded ASF providers on a monthly profile and will recover funds or make payments within the tolerances against actual delivery you submit through your ILR, EAS and funding claims. You must supply accurate funding claims that can be fully evidenced.
- 50.** At the end of the 2025 to 2026 funding year we will apply a 3% reconciliation tolerance. Where your delivery of West Yorkshire Combined Authority funded ASF is at least 97% of your annual West Yorkshire Combined Authority funded ASF allocation, we will not make an end-of-year adjustment, and you will not have to pay back any unspent funds.
- 51.** If you do not deliver 97% or above, we will confirm the value of funding you must pay back in your reconciliation statement.
- 52.** Reconciliation is based on the data you provide in ILR, EAS and claims. The value we compare to will exclude audit and monitoring. More information is available in the funding claims guidance.

## Learning in the workplace

- 53.** We will fund any regulated qualifications at an employee's workplace. You must ensure they are approved for WYCA funded ASF and available on [find a learning aim](#). Rules within the 'what we will not fund' section still apply.

## Flexible offer and legal entitlements

- 54.** The Combined Authority will support delivery to adults of provision, including qualifications and components of these and/ or non-regulated learning, up to level 2 as a Funded Flexible Offer. The provision in our offer is fully or co-funded, depending on the learner's age, prior attainment, and circumstances.
- 55.** Refer to funding contribution table for learner eligibility. Learners aged 19 to 23 progressing towards their first full level 2 can undertake learning at entry and/or level 1 from the approved qualifications list. Additional qualifications are available through the Test Pilot: Increasing the number of courses 19 – 23s are entitled to.
- 56.** Where appropriate for the learner, you can deliver the flexible offer alongside a legal entitlement qualification.

- 57.** Learners aged 19 to 23, and aged 24 and over who have already achieved at level 2 or above, can undertake learning up to and including level 2 qualifications from the flexible offer or qualifications for the level 2 legal entitlement available on the Qualifications website or on Find a Learning Aim.
- 58.** Learners aged 24 and over who have not achieved a level 2 qualification can undertake learning up to and including level 2 qualifications from the local flexibility offer or qualifications in the level 2 legal entitlement list available on the Qualifications website or on Find a Learning Aim.

## **Test pilot: increasing the number of courses 19 – 23s are entitled to**

- 59.** WYCA have increased the number of level 2 qualifications 19 to 23 year-olds can access prior to achieving their first full level 2 as part of a Test Pilot. This test pilot will increase understanding of whether allowing 19 to 23 year-olds to complete a level 2 qualification that is not a Full Level 2 legal entitlement qualification supports progression to further study, and/or employment.
- 60.** Providers can fund level 2 qualifications from the Local Flexibility offer for 19 to 23 year-olds. It is anticipated that this will not exceed 5% of a providers' ASF allocation. Provision will be fully funded 19 to 23 year-olds who do not hold a Full Level 2.
- 61.** Providers who anticipate utilising more than 5% of their allocation for this flexibility will be asked to submit a business case outlining demand and the alignment to economic need.
- 62.** Providers must use DAM code 023 and DAM code 058. DAM codes must be used to identify application of a WY approved flexibility.
- 63.** Alongside using the codes above, providers must indicate the learning objective in one of the Provider Specified Learning Delivery Monitoring Fields A-D stating one of the following 3 or 4 digit codes.

1. Entry into employment	EIE
2. In-work progression	IWP
3. Progression to full level 2	PFL2

Usage of DAM code 23, DAM code 058 and the detail included in the Provider Specified Learning Delivery Monitoring Field will be monitored through monthly testing and subject to audit scrutiny. This evidence will enable us to measure the uptake and impact of this flexibility.

## Test pilot: bridging programmes that support progression to level 3

- 64.** This pilot aims to bridge the 'jump' between level 2 and level 3, particularly when an adult has been out of education for some time, supporting the update of courses provided through the Free Courses for Jobs delegated fund.
- 65.** Providers who have an FCFJ allocation can determine short 'bridging programmes' that provide a stepping-stone to the longer level 3 programmes. This may involve modules at level 2 or level 3 that serve as a taster, a refresher, or potentially as a package which focusses on e.g. self-study, research skills, etc.
- 66.** Learners will only be eligible for bridging programmes if they meet the FCfJ eligibility criteria.
- 67.** Providers must submit a detailed costed bridging programme proposal which will include:
- Aims and objectives
  - Course outline
  - GLH
  - regulated aims
  - non-regulated aims
  - cost per aim (both non-regulated/regulated)
- 68.** Proposals will be considered by the ASF Performance Group: incl. value for money, innovative delivery, added value to currently funded activity, sector links, and % target progression to L3 a FCfJ qualification.
- 69.** Actual destination must be captured within 8 weeks of completing bridging programme. The test pilot will help us to assess uptake and impact, specifically progression to Level 3 FCfJ qualifications.

Any learner engaging on the bridging programme will be fully funded through ASF. ASF funded delivery must comply with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Funding Rules.

## License to Practise

- 70.** There are priority sectors/industries facing skills gaps in occupational areas for which a license to practise may preclude a resident from undertaking practical training and skills development.
- 71.** WYCA aims to continue funding licences to practise where they are priority sector specific and linked to a resident's programme of learning in which the absence of a licence would be a barrier to learning and/or employment.
- 72.** Due to the success of the pilot, the License to Practise programme is now fully established in the construction, security, and warehouse industries. This includes the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS), Forklift Truck (FLT), and Security

Industry Association (SIA) licence requirements as part of a comprehensive package of learning that supports positive outcomes for residents.

73. The impact of this programme will be monitored and kept under review in the context of the priorities set out in the ASF strategy.
74. Providers must seek approval from the Combined Authority to deliver the License to Practise programme.
75. All elements of the License to Practise programme must be delivered.
76. Only qualifications included in the package should be delivered for the learner. If a provider wishes to deliver any additional aims alongside this, the learning aim must be part of the Legal Entitlement offer only.
77. For non-regulated learning, you must ensure you have appropriate and robust quality assurance processes in place in accordance with requirements outlined in the funding rules.
78. Although the programme may contain accredited qualifications, only the relevant Z code should be returned on the ILR.
79. These bespoke WYCA Z aims have been developed by the Combined Authority with specific requirements, delivery expectations, and associated costs. They are distinct from standard qualifications and are designed to meet regional priorities and employer demand.
80. A Z aim under the License to Practise programme, must only be recorded as 'completed and achieved' on the ILR where all components of the programme have been fully delivered and achieved. This includes mandatory elements that contribute to the overall purpose, such as licences to practise and industry-recognised certification.
81. The Z aim **must not be marked as achieved** unless the learner has successfully obtained the licence in addition to completing the training. The ILR status 'completed – awaiting results' can be used where exams have been sat and results are pending, but the learning has concluded.
82. Where the learner has not completed the full scope of the Z aim (e.g. not obtained a license) the aim must not be marked as achieved and must not attract the 20% achievement payment.
83. Providers are responsible for ensuring internal processes are in place to track and monitor progress against each component of the Z aim. Completion must only be recorded where delivery aligns with the full requirements of the approved programme design.
84. The following DAM codes must be used for all License to Practise programmes:

013	Sector Based Work Academy Programme	The programme will monitor participants of a Sector Based Work Academy and provide analysis to the success of the programme. Please use this DAM code to indicate the learning aim
015	Sector Based Work Academy Programme Job Outcome	The programme will monitor participants of a Sector Based Work Academy who have successfully gained a job outcome directly related to the Sector Based Work Academy

## King's Trust Team Programme

- 85.** The King's Trust Team Programme (formally known as The Prince's Trust) is a 12-week course designed to improve confidence, motivation and skills for eligible 16 to 25-year-olds. Each 'team' recruits a mix of 16 to 25-year-olds of different abilities and backgrounds, including employees sponsored by their employer. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority will fund the team programme. Providers in partnership with The King's Trust run and manage it on a local basis.
- 86.** In order to deliver the team programme, you must get approval in writing from The King's Trust.
- 87.** For eligible learners aged 19 to 25, we fund the team programme through the DFE ASF funding methodology. Please also refer to The King's Trust section in our funding rates and formula 2025 to 2026 guidance.

## Support funding

- 88.** The West Yorkshire Combined Authority's overarching 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 and/or disability, or a financial barrier, your West Yorkshire funded ASF allocation enables you to claim learning support and or learner support funding to meet the additional needs of learners. Additional information is in Annex B.

Support for learners undertaking tailored learning is funded from within the tailored learning allocation.

## Job outcome payments

- 89.** 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. The following conditions apply:
- the learner must provide you with evidence through a declaration, that they have a job for at least 16 hours or more a week for four consecutive weeks

- where the learner was claiming benefits relating to unemployment, they must also declare that they have stopped claiming these,.

## Approved qualifications

- 90.** Where you deliver regulated qualifications and/ or their components, you must ensure they are approved for West Yorkshire Combined Authority funded ASF and available on find a learning aim. This includes either aims listed under MCA/GLA West Yorkshire Combined authority *or* as a national 'Adult Skills' qualification. If a qualification is listed under both, the West Yorkshire rate takes primacy.
- 91.** If WYCA is not listed under the 'MCA/GLA' category on FALA, the qualification must be approved for funding under the DfE 'Adult Skills' funding category instead. In these cases, the national 'Adult Skills' funding rate will apply.
- 92.** If you are unsure whether a qualification is funded by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, you must contact your Project Lead for confirmation before adding it to the ILR.
- 93.** Qualifications and public funding provides information on qualifications that are no longer approved for funding.
- 94.** Where you deliver approved qualifications and/ or their components you must ensure that learners are registered for the qualifications and/ or component 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.
- 95.** Before delivering a component, you must check with the awarding organisation they provide a learner registration facility, and the learner can achieve it alone or as part of accumulating achievement towards a qualification.
- 96.** If the UK ENIC has confirmed the authenticity of a qualification gained overseas and confirmed it is comparable/compatible with a regulated qualification in England, currently part of the level 2 and level 3 legal entitlement, the resident will be deemed to have achieved their first level 2 and/or level 3 qualification.
- 97.** 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.

## Non-regulated learning

- 98.** Where you deliver non-regulated learning, you must ensure it is eligible for funding. Such learning could include:
- independent living skills or engagement learning supporting adults to operate confidently and effectively in life and work,
  - locally commissioned and/ or locally developed basic knowledge and skills needed to access technical qualifications,
  - employability and labour market re-entry,

- locally commissioned and/ or locally devised technical education short courses (also known as taster sessions),
- Tailored Learning courses, or
- basic digital skills courses, including where learners are unable to undertake digital skills qualification specified in the digital entitlement.

**99.** The eligibility principles we apply to non-regulated learning are as follows:

- it must not be provision linked to UK visa requirements,
- it must not be provision linked to occupational regulation unless we have confirmed the provision can be delivered as part of your Delivery Plan.
- it must not be restricted to being delivered to employees of only one employer,
- it must not be learning, for example, 'induction to college', that should be part of a learner's experience,
- it must not be used primarily or solely for 'leisure' purposes
- it must not be a non-regulated version of a regulated qualification,
- it must not be above notional level 2 (that is notional levels 3 or 4), and
- at national level 2 it must focus on technical provision.

**100.** 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 - [RARPA - Learning and Work Institute](#).

## Tailored Learning

This section only applies to providers with a non-formula Tailored Learning allocation included as part of their Delivery Plan and Annex to their Grant Agreement. If we fund your organisation through a contract for services, you will not have a Tailored Learning allocation.

As part of the new ASF, the term tailored learning replaces what was AEB Community Learning.

Tailored learning is primarily non-qualification based provision that is tailored to the skills needs of the learners and local communities. Tailored learning is non-formula funded which gives it the flexibility to support learners furthest from the workplace.

The primary purpose of tailored learning is to support learners into employment and to progress to further learning, in line with the overall purpose of the ASF. It will, however, also support wider outcomes including improvements to health and wellbeing, and equipping parents/carers to support their child's learning.

We would expect you to encourage and support all learners to progress on to 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.

Providers have the freedom and flexibility within these parameters to determine how they use their tailored learning allocation, to meet the needs of their communities and employers. This can include outreach activities in order to engage learners and drive participation in adult learning.

Tailored Learning Courses are delivered and reported on the ILR under the following seven delivery strands which link to the Tailored Learning objectives at annex C (please see the 2025 to 2026 ILR specification for further details):

- Engaging and/or building confidence
- Preparation for further learning
- Preparation for employment
- Improving essential skills (English, including English for Speakers of Other Languages, maths and digital provision)
- Equipping parents/carers to support children's learning
- Health and well-being
- Developing stronger communities

Please note, non-formula Tailored Learning funding follows funding model 11.

## Tailored Learning funding

- 101.** Where applicable, the Combined Authority funded ASF allocation will include an amount of non-formula Tailored Learning funding. We state this value in Appendix 1 of your grant agreement with us. You must deliver non-formula funded Tailored Learning provision in line with the existing Tailored Learning objectives set out in Annex C, up to this maximum amount.
- 102.** Non-formula Tailored Learning funding is paid on a monthly profile. You must attribute costs for eligible learners, up to the value of your non-formula Tailored Learning allocation. This should include the cost of delivering learning e.g breakdown of delivery and support costs (staffing, materials, learner support) linked to eligible learners.
- 103.** You must include the use of your tailored learning funding to cover learning and learner support costs up to the value of your tailored learning allocation. If you do, you must:
- claim for learning and learner costs through the final funding claim and follow the policy in line with the support funding section
  - record these costs in the learner's evidence pack and maintain evidence that support the costs for audit purposes
- 104.** We will monitor tailored 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.
- 105.** If we fund you through a grant, you have the flexibility to use all, or some, of your non-formula Tailored Learning funding in line with the ASF formula funded methodology (funding model 38) to meet local demand.
- 106.** You can use this amount of non-formula Tailored Learning funding (stated in your Appendix 1) to deliver non-regulated provision that may be similar to Tailored Learning, and/ or regulated qualifications to meet local demand. If you do you must:

- follow the DFE funded ASF formula-funded methodology and submit ILR data under funding model 38,
  - enrol learners following the Combined Authority funded ASF eligibility requirements, you must not use your non-formula Tailored Learning local fee remission policy.
- 107.** You can support learners aged under 19 if they are:
- a parent, carer or guardian attending provision delivered through family learning
  - funded through non-formula Tailored Learning using funding model 11 in the funding model field (refer to ILR guidance for more information).
- 108.** Learner outcomes of tailored learning courses are reported on the ILR. Please refer to the [2025 to 2026 ILR specification](#) for further details.
- To record cost contributions for tailored learning you must use the correct LDM codes. Please refer to the ILR specification for further details.
- 109.** ESOL delivered through Tailored Learning must not duplicate funded qualifications. Provision should have a focus on wider integration, practical application, practice of language skills and confidence building.
- 110.** Health and Wellbeing - individuals must demonstrate their suitability based on their personal circumstances and needs related to health and wellbeing. A well-defined personal progression plan must be included as part of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) requirement.
- 111.** To improve data collection providers must collect and input the following on the ILR
- Employment status and employment status monitoring
- 112.** The eligibility principles we apply to tailored learning provision are as follows:
- It must not be eligible for funding through an advanced learner loan
  - it must not be provision linked to UK visa requirements
  - it must not be provision linked to occupational regulation unless there is an agreed concession in place
  - it must not be learning, for example, 'induction to college', that should be part of a learner's experience
  - it must not be used primarily or solely for 'leisure' purposes
  - it must not be a non-regulated version of a regulated qualification. It must not be a regulated qualification that is not currently approved for funding
  - it must not be above notional level 3
  - for regulated qualifications that are fundable through formula funded adult skills unless specifically approved by WYCA.

Where you are delivering tailored learning, you must ensure you have appropriate and robust quality assurance processes in place. For instance, you could follow 'the

recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) cycle’.

Further [information on RARPA](#) is available from the Learning and Work Institute.

Tailored learning funding will be reconciled against the tailored learning allocation line at the end of the funding year. You must repay funding that has not been used for tailored learning or where its use cannot be evidenced. You must record the costs of tailored learning for audit purposes.

## Local fee remission policy

- 113.** You must have in place and operate a fair and transparent Tailored Learning local fee remission policy that requires residents to pay a course/ tuition/ joining fee, but also sets out clear eligibility criteria for those residents who qualify for either partial or total fee remission due to their circumstances.
- 114.** Local Fee remission policies must be available on your website and/ or in the venues you deliver Tailored Learning to eligible learners.

## Partnership working

- 115.** Partnership working underpins the Tailored Learning objectives and is critical to developing and delivering an effective Tailored Learning offer in a given locality.
- 116.** You must engage and work closely with a wide range of relevant partners and stakeholders in your local area to help shape your Tailored Learning offer to engage specific groups. These could include specialist partners, such as health, Jobcentre Plus and schools, and voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.
- 117.** We expect you to work with other providers in your local area, who may be in receipt of non-formula community funding. We expect you to develop a strategic, efficient Tailored Learning offer to reduce duplication of courses in a locality and signpost learners to other partners as and when appropriate.
- 118.** Outreach can be funded under Tailored Learning. Tailored Learning funding can be utilised to engage and deliver in the community e.g., room hire and/or key worker and/or commissioning models.

## Guided learning hours (GLH)

- 119.** GLH represents the recommended number of taught hours required for a qualification, assessed and standardised by The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), which regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.
- 120.** GLH is defined as ‘being taught or given instruction by a lecturer, tutor, supervisor, or other appropriate provider of education or training’, or ‘otherwise participating in

education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of such a person’.

## Planned hours

- Planned hours must be recorded on the ILR. The recording of all planned hours is compulsory from **1 January 2024**.
- You must keep evidence that reflects relevant and appropriate planned Guided Learning Hours (GLH) to be delivered per qualification. This must be recorded and can include classroom delivery, remote classroom learning and assessment. This should be supported by attendance records. Planned GLH should be based on the Scheme or Work/Curriculum Plan, with the number of delivery days, number of tutor led hours to calculate the planned delivery hours.

## Traffic light tracking system

- 121.** WYCA has introduced a traffic light tracking system to monitor Guided Learning Hours (GLH).
- 122.** Green represents GLH of 70% or more of the qualification  
Amber represents GLH 51- 69% of the qualification  
Red represents GLH of less than 50% of the qualification
- 123.** WYCA expects the majority of courses to be delivered at 70% or above of the recommended GLH. However, recognises there may be exceptional circumstances where courses are delivered under 70%. Formal approval must be sought on a case by case basis prior to delivery.
- 124.** In these exceptional circumstances, providers must submit detailed justification with evidence demonstrating value-added benefit. The approval template and process can be found in the [provider shared folder](#). Approval must be sought in advance of delivery to eligible for funding.
- 125.** Any qualifications delivered at 50% or under of the recommended GLH must have funding reduced by 50%. It is expected that the provider will perform this adjustment through the ILR.

## GLH reporting and adjustments

- 126.** Effective from R03 onwards, WYCA will issue a monthly exception report to providers, identifying learning aims planned at less than 70% of the recommended GLH. Providers are expected to address any issues flagged in this report promptly, where prior approval hasn't been obtained.

### Learning Aims below 70% GLH

- 127.** For any qualification delivered between 51%-69% of the recommended GLH, providers must seek permission from WYCA prior to the start of delivery (as point 108). If permission is not obtained, funding must be adjusted to align with the actual GLH delivered, e.g. if only 60% of planned GLH is delivered, only 60% of the funding should be claimed. This adjustment of funding must be reflected in the ILR.

### **Learning Aims below 50% GLH**

- 128.** For any qualification delivered at 50% or less of the recommended GLH, providers must automatically reduce funding by 50% in the ILR, as specified in point 110.
- 129.** WYCA will conduct monthly monitoring of providers' adherence to GLH requirements. Failure to comply may result in an increased risk rating for the provider.

### **End of year adjustments**

- 130.** If adjustments for GLH compliance have not been made by R13, WYCA will reduce funding accordingly for all non-compliant learning aims, regardless of their status.

## **Pure distance learning**

- 131.** Pure distance learning will be exempt from the GLH traffic light system to reflect additional consultation with stakeholders.

Pure distance learning:

- where there is minimal or no interaction with a teacher or other students
- learning is self-directed
- learners are provided with content and given timeframes to complete each assignment.

## **Identifying Distance Learning**

- 132.** We would like to be able to better identify different forms of distance learning through the ILR.

Where learning is delivered away from a learning centre, via distance or e-learning, the Delivery Location Postcode must be entered as ZZ99 9ZZ. This includes learning taking place through online delivery, whether live classes, pre-recorded content or content accessed at the learner's convenience.

**DAM code 073 'Software Driven Distance Learning'** must be used to identify any learning which takes place asynchronously and is accessed remotely by the learner in their own time, usually through an e-learning portal and/or through

printed workbooks. For example, where a learner works through modules at their own pace within an e-learning portal. This code should be used in conjunction with the Delivery Location Postcode above, to allow us to identification of 100% Distance Learning.

## What we will not fund

### 133. We will not fund:

- qualifications, units or learning aims that are not listed on [find a learning aim](#) or on the [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#)
- provision to learners in custody – the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) funds prison education in England. Please note you can use your ASF to fund individuals released on temporary licence.
- end-point assessment outside of apprenticeship standards, which is subject to Ofqual external quality assurance and regulated as a qualification
- any part of any learner’s learning aim or programme that duplicates provision they have received from any other source
- training through the Combined Authority funded ASF, where a learner is undertaking an apprenticeship or any other funded programme and where that training will:
  - replicate vocational and other learning aims covered by the apprenticeship standard or framework, including English and Maths,
  - offer career related training that conflicts with the apprenticeship aims
  - be taking place during the apprentices working hours. Where an apprentice has more than one job, working hours refers to the hours of the job the apprenticeship is linked to.
  - repeat the same regulated qualification where they have previously achieved it. The exceptions are that it is for and GCSE where the learner has not achieved grade 4 (C) or higher, or for English and maths where the learner has been assessed as having an existing skills level lower that grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English or maths)
- a learner to sit or resit a learning aim assessment or examination where no extra learning takes place
- On [Find a Learning Aim](#) for all aims with category code 41 and 47 (Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCA) and Greater London Authority (GLA) Provision) and 56: Free Courses for Jobs MCA and GLA providers must seek approval from WYCA before enrolling any learner on these aims.

## Section 4: Evidence

You must hold evidence to assure us that you are using the Combined Authority funded ASF appropriately. Most evidence will occur naturally from your normal business process.

1. You must make sure applications for Combined Authority funded ASF support your decision to claim funding and support the resident's case for consideration as ordinarily resident in England, or any exceptions set out in the 'Residency eligibility' section.
2. In line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), you must record in the evidence pack what appropriate documentation you have seen, rather than take photocopies to prove eligibility.

### Evidence pack

3. The evidence pack must contain evidence to support the funding claimed and must be available to us if we need it.
4. Evidence in the evidence pack must assure us that the learner exists and that they are a West Yorkshire resident.
5. The learner must confirm information they provide is correct when it is collected.

If the time spent in learning is short, the level of evidence in the evidence pack would reflect this.

Where you hold information centrally, you only need to refer to the source.

If applicable, the evidence pack must confirm the following:

- all information reported to us in the ILR, earnings adjustment statement (EAS), funding claims if applicable, and all supporting evidence to substantiate the data that you report and the costs you have incurred for funding claims
  - your assessment and verified evidence of eligibility for funding (e.g. proof of identity; proof of West Yorkshire address; employment status). The provider should detail how identification has been verified with a countersigned record of evidence the learner has provided to support eligibility for funding.
  - in exceptional situations only, where there is no available ID or evidence confirming a learner status as a West Yorkshire resident, we will consider a learner self-declaration.
6. If the time spent in learning is short, the level of evidence in the evidence pack would reflect this.
  7. Where you hold information centrally, you only need to refer to the source.
  8. If applicable, the evidence pack must confirm the following:
    - all information reported to us in the ILR, EAS, funding claims if applicable, and all supporting evidence to substantiate the data that you report and the costs

you have incurred for funding claims. your assessment and evidence of eligibility for funding (e.g. nationality; proof of identity; proof of West Yorkshire address; employment status). copies of all assessments and diagnostics undertaken to determine a learner's requirements.

- evidence and information on prior learning that affects the learning or the funding of any of the learning aims or programme.
- for 'personalised learning programmes', for example, non-regulated learning aims, full details of all aspects of the learning to be carried out, including supporting evidence of the number of planned hours reported in the ILR.
- a description of how you will deliver the learning and skills and how the learner will achieve
- Evidence of the number of planned hours reported in the ILR .This should reflect the intended structure of the programme for that individual and should include timetable or delivery schedule showing planned sessions and total planned hours the supporting evidence about why you have claimed funding, and the level of funding for a learner.
- details of any learner or employer contribution.
- support needs identified, including how you will meet these needs and the evidence of that. that learning is taking or has taken place and records are available. This will include verification of learning for withdrawn learners where qualifying period has been achieved. (e.g. completed workbooks, detailed attendance records, on-line logs)
- Evidence of delivered hours, including learner participation and attendance, such as:
  - dated register of hours/attendance
  - attendance reports of online learning
  - if applicable, a learner's self-declaration as to what state benefit they claim
  - a learner's self-declaration on their status relating to gaining a job; and
  - all records and evidence of achievement of qualifications and learning aims. This must be available within 3 months of you reporting it in the ILR.

**9.** Where the learner 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.

**10.** If a subcontractor delivers any provision to the learner, the provider must clearly identify the subcontractor and ensure that the subcontractor's evidence pack meets all requirements detailed above.

## Individualised learning

**11.** All learners, including those funded through the Adult Skills Fund and Tailored Learning, must have appropriate planning documentation in place at the start of learning.

While providers are not required to use a specific format such as an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), they must ensure that the documentation used is tailored to the learner's individual needs and clearly demonstrates the learner's suitability for

the course. For Tailored Learning provision, this must also show how the planned delivery aligns with the relevant Tailored Learning objectives.

As a minimum, the documentation must include evidence of:

- SMART learning objectives
- Any identified support needs
- Planned learning activities and progression goals
- Review points to monitor progress and achievement

Providers may use an ILP or a combination of documents, as long as the above requirements are clearly evidenced and available for review.

## Confirmation and signatures

- 12.** The learner must confirm the information is correct when it is collected. You must have evidence of this, which can include electronic formats.
- 13.** We accept electronic evidence, including electronic/ digital signatures. Where evidence is electronic, you must have wider systems and processes in place to assure you that learners exist and are eligible for funding.
- 14.** 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:
  - 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
  - an electronic signature can be anything from a check box to a signature and/or
  - a digital signature is where a document with an electronic signature is secured by a process making it non-refutable.
  - 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.
- 15.** 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 to 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.
- 16.** You must keep effective and reliable evidence. You are responsible for making the evidence you hold easily available to us when we need it.

## Starting, participating, and achieving

17. You can only claim Combined Authority funded ASF when directly related learning starts. This would not include enrolment, induction, prior assessment, diagnostic testing, or similar activities.
18. For your direct delivery and any subcontracted delivery, you and where relevant, your subcontractor(s), must have direct centre approval and, where appropriate, direct qualification approval from the respective awarding organisation for the regulated qualifications you are offering.
19. Delivery of the qualification (including learner registration with the awarding organisation) for direct delivery and any subcontracted delivery must be in line with the qualification specification and guidance set out by the relevant awarding organisation.
20. You must have evidence that the learning took place, and the learner was not certificated for prior knowledge.
21. Where the learning is certificated, you must follow the relevant awarding organisation's procedure for claiming the relevant certificate(s) and ensure the learner receives them. You must evidence this has happened in the evidence pack.
22. All destinations and/or progression details are a mandatory requirement for West Yorkshire Combined Authority learners. Destination and progression must be submitted to WYCA at R06 and R14. Actual destination data can be collected 1 and 12 months after the learning has ended from a sample or 100% of learners. Collection of actual data is optional for Tailored Learning.

## Bradford Responsiveness - First Steps in Engagement and Numeracy

23. Progression outcomes must be tracked for LOT 1 at 2 and 6 months for all learners engaging in the programme to monitor sustained progression.
24. Progression Monitoring Form must be completed including supporting evidence by the provider to evidence learners gaining and sustaining employment, volunteering, or formal learning.

## Leaving learning

25. You must report the learning actual end date in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) for a learner who leaves learning as the last day that you can evidence, they took part in a learning activity.

## Individualised learner record (ILR)

26. You must accurately complete all ILR fields as required in the [2025 to 2026 ILR specification](#) even if they are not required for funding purposes.

27. The ILR must accurately reflect the learning and support (where applicable) you have identified, planned and delivered to eligible residents. You must not report inaccurate information that would result in an overstatement of the funding claimed.
28. Where your data does not support the funding claimed we will take action to correct this and recover funds you overstated.

## Self-declarations by learners

29. All self-declarations must confirm the learner's details and describe what the learner is confirming for requirements set out in this document.
30. If a learner self-declares prior attainment, you must check this in the [personal learning record \(PLR\)](#) and query any contradictory information with the learner. The PLR will not necessarily override the learner's self-declaration.

## Section 5: Payments and performance management

### Grant payments

1. If your devolved Combined Authority ASF is allocated to you as a grant for 2025 to 2026 we will make payments on profile as set out in the grant agreement.
2. Your grant agreement will state the maximum amount of Combined Authority funded ASF provision you can deliver between 1 August 2025 and 31 July 2026. Where applicable, it will also state the maximum value of non-formula funded Tailored Learning we will fund and any Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs to support the 24+ Adult Learner 3 Offer. (Separate Agreement will be issued for Level 3)
3. Your ASF grant allocation can be used to fund new starts, non-formula funded Tailored Learning and/ or the-24+ Adult Learner offer (where applicable).
4. You must provide three funding claims during the year setting out your actual delivery to date and, where appropriate, provide a forecast for the remainder of the funding year. The funding claims must include adult skills, non-formula funded Tailored Learning and learner support funding. The funding claims you must provide are set out below but please refer to the [funding claims guidance](#) (when published) for details of the:
  - mid-year forecast funding claim.
  - year-end forecast funding claim.
  - final funding claim.
5. The funding agreements for ASF grant allocations and ASF contract for services remain separate with different payment arrangements. You cannot wire funds between the two if both are held.

## Contracts for services

1. Your Combined Authority funded ASF contract for services can only be used to deliver formula funded adult skills and learner support and we will state the maximum of adult skills provision and learner support you can deliver between 1 August 2025 and 31 July 2026.
2. We will manage your contract in accordance with [Public Contracts Regulations 2015](#).
3. You must use DAM code 002 (Procured Devolved Adult Skills Fund to record delivery under this contract when you submit ILR data. Please refer to the [ILR specification](#) for more information about using DAM codes.
4. For Targeted Employment provision (Lot 2 from Spring 2025 Adult Skills procurement), DAM code 055 must also be used on the ILR.

We will pay for adult skills provision on the basis of your actual delivery each month, up to your contract value for the financial year. We will calculate the value of your actual delivery using the latest validated ILR and EAS data you provide.

5. Additional information on our approach to Performance Management is included in [Annex F](#).

## Annex A: Eligibility for funding

1. Learners who live in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland or England (outside of West Yorkshire) Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland and those not living in the West Yorkshire Combined Authority area will have their own funding arrangements. You must develop arrangements with the relevant devolved administration, Mayoral Combined Authority/ GLA or the Education and Skills Funding Agency if you are planning to deliver learning to learners who do not live in the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
2. You must not actively recruit learners who live or work outside of West Yorkshire.
3. For learning delivered at an employee's workplace, we will fund residents whose main employment or normal place of work is in the Combined Authority area.

## Residency eligibility

4. From August 2025, individuals will be eligible for West Yorkshire ASF funding if they are ordinarily resident in the UK on the first day of learning, they are a West Yorkshire resident and the learning is taking place in England.

You must not claim funding for individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria set out in the residency eligibility section. Examples of individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria include the following. Please note this list is not exhaustive:

Individuals will not be able to access ASF funding if:

- they are here without authority or lawful status
- they are resident in the UK on a student visa
- they are in the UK on holiday, with or without a visa
- they are in the UK on a sponsorship visa
- those whose biometric residence permit or residence permit imposes a study prohibition or restriction on the individual

## Learners with limited length visas

5. Providers must not fund learners who would not have enough time on their visa to complete their course and who do not intend to, or would not be eligible to, renew their visa. Where a course continues past a learner's visa expiry date, providers may at their discretion fund that learner only where they have a high degree of confidence that a learner intends to (and will be eligible to) renew their visa.

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

6. 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 decides 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.

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 on this status.

This is on the basis that the provider confirmed at enrolment that the learner intended to and will be eligible to renew their visa.

## EEA and Switzerland frontier workers

7. 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.

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 an eligible residency status.

## Asylum seekers

8. Asylum seekers are eligible to receive full funding if they:

- 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
- are receiving local authority support under section 23C or section 23CA of the Children Act 1989 or the Care Act 2014

An individual who has been refused asylum will be eligible for full funding if:

- 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
- they are granted support for themselves under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, or
- are receiving local authority support for themselves under section 23C or section 23CA of the Children Act 1989

Providers must use DAM code 023 and DAM code 059. DAM codes must be used to identify application of a WY approved flexibility. Usage will be monitored to measure the uptake and impact of flexibility.

## No recourse to public funds conditions

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

## Learners in the armed forces

10. British armed forces personnel, Ministry of Defence personnel or civil and crown servants resident in England, who meet the criteria in the [who we fund](#) section, are eligible for West Yorkshire funded ASF where learning takes place in England.

Members of other nations' armed forces stationed in England, and their family members, aged 19 and over, are eligible for West Yorkshire funded ASF, set out in the [who we fund](#) section, if the armed forces individual is ordinarily resident in England on the first day of learning. We will not fund family members that remain outside of England.

## Individuals who are not eligible for funding

You must not claim funding for individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria set out in the residency eligibility section. Examples of individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria include the following (please note this list is not exhaustive):

- they are here without authority or lawful status
- they are resident in the UK on a student visa

- they are in the UK on holiday, with or without a visa
- they are in the UK on a sponsorship visa
- they are an asylum seeker who has been here less than 6 months and aren't covered by the exemptions in the current rules

## Annex B: Support funding

### Learning support

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 learners who have an identified learning difficulty and/ or disability, to achieve their learning goal.
2. Learning support must not be used to deal with everyday difficulties that are not directly associated with a learner's learning on their programme.
3. You must:
  - carry out and document a thorough assessment to identify the learner's learning difficulty and/or disability
  - agree and record the outcome of your assessment, and keep all evidence of the assessment of the needs, planned and actual delivery in the evidence pack,
  - record details of the reasonable adjustments required and how support will be planned and delivered
  - carry out and document a thorough assessment to identify the learner's learning difficulty and/or disability
  - record and retain the appropriate evidence to demonstrate that the planned support has been delivered for each month you have claimed
  - confirm the continuing necessity and appropriateness of these reasonable adjustments on a monthly basis
  - report in the ILR that a learner 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. This does not apply to any non-formula tailored learning
  - learning support funding can only be claimed for each month in which reasonable adjustments are provided to the learner and where evidence of costs can be provided. For months in which no reasonable adjustments are necessary, or no costs have been incurred, a claim for learning support funding must not be made.
  - All learning support claims must be reported in the ILR. To claim any costs that exceed the fixed monthly rate, up to £19,000 you must also use the earnings adjustment statement (EAS). For any costs over £19,000 please see the next section for exceptional learning support.
  - You must keep evidence of these additional costs in the evidence pack. You must only record the excess amount on the EAS, not the whole learning support cost.

## Exceptional learning support claims above £19,000

4. 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).
5. Learners aged 19 to 24 who require significant levels of support should have an EHC plan provided by their local authority and, therefore, would access funding from their local authority.
6. You must submit ELS claims at the beginning of the learner's programme, or when you identify the learner requires support costs more than £19,000 in a funding year, by completing and sending the ELS claims document.
7. To claim exceptional learning support for a learner aged 19 to 24 you must confirm why the resident does not have an EHC plan. This should be a letter or email from the learner's local authority stating the reason(s) why the resident does not need an EHC plan.
8. When you claim ELS, 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.

## Learner support

9. 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 learner, you must identify their needs within the following 'categories':
  - hardship funding – general financial support for financially disadvantaged learners to support participation learning
  - 20+ childcare funding – for learners aged 20 or older on the first day of learning who are at risk of not starting or continuing learning because of childcare costs
  - Care to Learn top up for 19-year-olds
  - residential Access funding – to support the Combined Authority funded ASF learners where there is evidence that they need to stay residentially and are eligible for financial support in order to access provision

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. You must follow these rules and claim learner support using the appropriate method as set out below.

**10.** If you have a Learner Support allocation you must:

- have criteria for how you will administer and distribute your funds; these must reflect the principles of equality and diversity and be available to learners and to us on request.
- assess and record the learner's needs, demonstrating the need for support in relation to each Learner Support category that might be applicable – you must record this information and retain in the evidence pack.
- report the appropriate Learner Support Reason codes in the 'Learner Funding and Monitoring' fields in the ILR. This does not apply to non-formula tailored learning
- complete a mid-year funding forecast and a final claim.
- consider the availability of other support for learners, for example from Jobcentre Plus.
- make it clear to learners it is their responsibility to tell the Department for Work and Pensions about any learner support they are receiving from you, as learner support payments may affect their eligibility to state benefits.
- use either ASF or loans bursary to support specific provision funded by either ASF or ALL where a learner is on 2 courses at the same time

**11.** You must not use learner support funds for any of the following:

- essential equipment or facilities if the learner is eligible for full funding with the exception of the items covered in the first clause of the [hardship](#) section and the flexibilities in [ICT devices and connectivity](#) section
- a learner in custody
- a learner carrying out a higher education course or learning aims fully funded from other sources.
- to pay attendance allowances or achievement and attendance bonuses.

## Hardship

**12.** Where you have assessed that a learner is eligible for Learner Support: Hardship

You can use hardship funds for the following:

- course-related costs, including course trips, books and equipment (where costs are not included in the funding rate)
- 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,
- transport costs (but not make a block contribution to post-16 transport partnerships or routinely fund transport costs covered in the local authority's legal duty for learners of sixth-form age),
- examination fees,
- accreditation fees, professional membership fees and any fees or charges due to external bodies,
- your registration fees

- 13.** In exceptional circumstances, you can use hardship funds to assist with course fees for learners who need financial support to start or stay in learning.
- 14.** If an asylum seeker is eligible for provision, you may provide learner support in the form of course-related books, equipment, cash payments or a travel pass.
- 15.** All payments for hardship made to the learners must be itemised and evidenced.

## 20+ Childcare

Where you have assessed that a learner is eligible for Learner Support: 20+ Childcare Access Funding:

- 16.** You can only use childcare funding to pay for childcare with a childminder, provider or childminder agency registered with Ofsted.
- 17.** You must not use childcare funding to:
- fund informal childcare, such as that provided by a relative, set up childcare places,
  - or to make a financial contribution to the costs of a crèche

Learner support may be used to “top up” childcare costs for 19 year old learners receiving care to learn funding if their costs exceed the weekly maximum rates for that scheme.

The top up may only be applied to childcare provision eligible under the Care to Learn scheme rules. The provider must hold evidence that the maximum amount is being paid under care to learn to confirm that a top up is required.

Any top up paid must be made in line with care to learn guidance and paid directly to the childcare provider.

Providers must claim for care to learn top-up through learner support – 20+ childcare category.

To claim learner support to top-up care to learn providers must follow the same process currently set out in the learner support section.

## Residential access funding

- 18.** Where you have assessed that a learner is eligible for Learner Support: Residential Access Funding:
- Residential assessment should be per aim unless you have prior agreement from the funder for a package of learning aims.
  - Learner file contains clear evidence of the need to stay residentially
  - Summary assessment/document linking IAG to residential and ALS assessments (if applicable) to be included in learner file

- If a learner attends additional courses within the academic year, a declaration that confirms 'no change in circumstances' must be completed and retained in the learner file.
- Residential eligibility criteria to be explicitly linked to residential need on a per aim / programme basis.
- Evidence for residential eligibility including the assessment undertaken must be retained within the learner file
- Residential Assessment must be used for all learners on all funded provision including Tailored Learning

You can use residential access funding to support the Combined Authority funded ASF learners who meet our 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. You must:

- set out the criteria and procedures for considering and agreeing applications for support from your residential access funds,
- only pay for travel costs for learners who are awarded residential access funding in exceptional circumstances, and
- 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.
- ensure costs claimed represent value for money for the local area
- publish your rates where you have your own residential facilities
- Include residential eligibility assessment evidence against criteria listed in your learner support policy within each learner file

## ICT devices and connectivity

**19.** There are a number of schemes available to West Yorkshire residents to access ICT equipment and data e.g. [Good Things Foundation - Improving lives through digital](#). These schemes should be explored and used as the first port of call to provide ICT equipment.

**20.** If digital access is still a barrier you can support disadvantaged learners who are undertaking classroom or blended learning to continue to participate via online learning where the learner does not have:

- internet access at home, and/or
- a suitable device, for example a laptop or tablet, to complete the necessary online course work

**21.** You must secure value for money when purchasing IT devices and/or internet access including:

- deploying any unused devices before you purchase new ones
- exploring options to access low cost second hand or recycled devices
- avoiding entering long term contract arrangements
- holding a record of actual costs for any IT devices and/or internet access bought for this purpose and make this available to us, if asked

- For costs related to assets, a methodology for calculating depreciation should be in line with the organisation's accounting policy which must be based on industry practice.
- 22.** 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:
- they will return the device when their online learning aim(s) is complete, or if they leave before completing their learning
  - they will return the device in the same condition in which they received it
- 23.** You must maintain an up-to-date record of the loan and return of devices to learners.
- 24.** You must hold a record of the method and calculation used to determine the cost of loan equipment.
- 25.** You must record the following evidence in the learner's evidence pack:
- the outcome of the assessment undertaken to identify the learner's individual needs
  - the learner declaration referred to above

## Annex C: Tailored Learning objectives

1. 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.
2. Collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot.
3. 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.
4. Develop stronger communities, with more self-sufficient, connected, and proactive 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.
5. 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 for minimising overheads, bureaucracy and administration.
6. Tailored Learning will be monitored annually to measure the impact, destination and progression outcomes this learning is having on our residents.

The Combined Authority will conduct an annual review of subcontracting for all providers who subcontract. It will protect learners by looking for signs of non-compliance and checking with main providers that the rules are being followed.

- It is vital that all directly funded organisations must properly monitor and control all subcontracted delivery.
- Lead providers should set out in their organisation's strategic aims their reason for subcontracting, which must enhance the quality of their learner offer. Lead providers are responsible for the selection and actions of their delivery subcontractors.

We expect providers to maximise the amount of funding that reaches front line delivery of high-quality learning. We've published additional information describing our expectations of lead providers when they [subcontract](#). These rules have been reordered for clarity.

## Your policy for delivery subcontracting

1. Your rationale for subcontracting must enhance the quality of your student offer. You must be clear about the educational rationale for your subcontracting position.
2. For each subcontractor you should detail:
  - a list of your specific costs for managing them, including specific costs for quality monitoring activities and for any other support activities offered by you to the subcontractor, and
  - how you will determine each cost is reasonable and proportionate to delivery of their teaching or learning and how each cost contributes to delivering high quality learning.
3. You should also document the timing for review of your policy for delivery subcontracting, which should be done annually. We expect the policy, including the rationale to be published by 31 October 2022. It should be easy to navigate from the front page of your education and training web pages.
4. Your governing body or board of directors and your accounting officer (senior responsible person) must also agree your policy for delivery subcontracting. This policy must set out your reasons for subcontracting and that all your delivery subcontracting meets your strategic aims and enhances the quality of your learner offer. You must be able to confirm this by way of evidence, such as minutes of meetings and/or written sign-off.
5. You must include all subcontracted delivery within your delivery plan and agree this with the Combined Authority prior to the start of the funding year.
6. Any changes to subcontractors or the amount of funding allocated to individual subcontractors, differing from the agreed Delivery Plan, must be discussed and agreed with your Project Lead in advance of them undertaking any delivery.

7. You cannot enter into agreements with additional subcontractors without express permission of the Combined Authority in advance.
8. You must only use, delivery subcontractors if:
  - you have the knowledge, skills, and experience within your organisation to:
  - successfully procure, contract with and manage those subcontractors and
  - can evidence this with the CVs of relevant staff.
  - your governing body/ board of directors and your accounting officer (senior responsible person) determine as being of high quality and low risk.
  - you have robust procedures in place to ensure subcontracting does not lead to the inadvertent funding of extremist organisations.
  - before agreeing to use them, you have:
    - a) described your reason for subcontracting.
    - b) listed all services you will provide in your delivery plans, and the associated costs when doing so.
9. You are responsible for the actions of your delivery subcontractors connected to, or arising out of, the delivery of the services, which you subcontract.

## **Review and publication of your policy for delivery subcontracting**

10. You must review your policy for delivery subcontracting annually. This policy must be signed by your governing body or board of directors and your accounting officer.
11. You must publish your policy for delivery subcontracting on your website before entering into any subcontracting agreements for the 2025 to 2026 funding year.

## **Minimum content requirements for your policy for delivery subcontracting**

12. As a minimum, you must include the following in your policy for delivery subcontracting:
  - how a maximum 20% management fee can be applied to subcontractors:
  - your contribution to improving your and your delivery subcontractor's quality of teaching and learning:
  - how you will identify the support required and associated costs for different delivery subcontractors:
  - how and when you communicate and discuss your policy for delivery subcontracting with potential delivery subcontractors, or current ones for new learner starts:
  - for each subcontractor, how you will determine a detailed list of your specific costs for managing them, quality monitoring activities and other support activities offered by you to the subcontractor:
  - for each subcontractor, how you will determine each cost is reasonable and proportionate to delivery of their teaching or learning and how each cost contributes to delivering high quality learning:
  - how you will ensure you describe to each subcontractor, before each subcontracting relationship is agreed:

- your reason for subcontracting, and
- the services you will provide when subcontracting to them and the associated costs when doing so, including a list of specific costs for managing the subcontractor, specific costs for quality monitoring activities and specific costs for any other support activities offered by you to the subcontractor:
- payment terms between you and your delivery subcontractors, including the timing of payments in relation to delivery and timescale for paying invoices and claims for funding received:
- timing for review of your policy for delivery subcontracting:
- where you publish your policy for delivery subcontracting; and
- how you will align all subcontracting arrangements to the Combined Authority ASF strategy.

## Selection and procurement of your delivery subcontractors

13. You must get our written approval before awarding a contract to a delivery subcontractor and keep evidence of this.
14. When appointing delivery subcontractors, you must avoid conflicts of interest and you must:
  - write to us about any circumstances (for example, where you and your proposed subcontractor have common directors or ownership) which might lead to an actual or perceived conflict of interest, and
  - not award the contract without our written permission, and
  - keep as evidence both your request and our reply, and
  - must be clear in your delivery plans on the sub-contractors you will be using.
15. You must carry out your own thorough due diligence checks when appointing delivery subcontractors and have both the detailed process and the results available for inspection by us.
16. You must not use a delivery subcontractor's presence on any public register or database, as an indicator that they are suitable to deliver to your specific requirements.
17. You must not enter into new subcontracting arrangements or increase the value of your existing arrangements if any of the following circumstances apply until we are satisfied that concerns have been addressed and the circumstances no longer apply, or we have provided written permission in advance:
  - Ofsted monitoring visits show insufficient progress:
  - Ofsted has rated your organisation as inadequate; or
  - the outcome of the annual financial health assessment we carry out on you is inadequate.

## Entering into a delivery subcontract

18. You must only award contracts for delivering the Combined Authority funded ASF provision to legal entities. If the legal entity is a registered company, it must be recorded as 'active' on the [Companies House](#) database.

- 19.** You must not award, or renew a subcontract to any organisation if:
- it has an above average risk warning from a credit agency;
  - it has passed a resolution (or the court has made an order) to wind up or liquidate the company, or administrators have been appointed; or
  - its statutory accounts are overdue.
- 20.** You must make sure that learners supported through subcontracting arrangements know about you and your delivery subcontractor's roles and responsibilities in providing the learning.
- 21.** You must have a legally binding contract with each delivery subcontractor, including the terms we have stipulated.
- 22.** You must have a contingency plan in place for learners in the event that:
- you need to withdraw from a subcontract arrangement;
  - a delivery subcontractor withdraws from the arrangement.; or
  - a delivery subcontractor goes into liquidation or administration.
- 23.** You must make sure that the terms of your subcontracts allow you to:
- monitor the delivery subcontractor's activity,
  - have control over your delivery subcontractors, and
  - monitor the quality of education and training provided by delivery subcontractors.
- 24.** You must obtain an annual report from an external auditor for the Combined Authority funded ASF contracts with your delivery subcontractors which provides assurance on your arrangements to manage and control your delivery subcontractors and comply with any guidance issued by us.
- 25.** You must also supply us with a certificate signed by the external auditor and an authorised signatory to confirm you have received a report that provides satisfactory assurance. We may ask you to provide a copy of the full report and any associated plan to implement the external auditor's recommendations.

## **Terms that you must include in your contracts with delivery subcontractors**

- 26.** You must make sure your delivery subcontractors:
- meet the requirements set out in these funding rules:
  - provide you with ILR data so your data returns to us accurately reflect your subcontractor's delivery information:
  - give us, and any other person nominated by us, access to their premises and all documents relating to the Combined Authority funded ASF provision:
  - give you sufficient evidence to allow you to:
  - assess their performance against [Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework](#),
  - incorporate the evidence they provide into your self-assessment report, and

- guide the judgements and grades within your self-assessment report
- always have suitably qualified staff available to provide the education and training we fund through the Combined Authority funded ASF
- co-operate with you to make sure there is continuity of learning if the subcontract ends for any reason
- tell you if evidence of any irregular financial or delivery activity arises, irregular activity could include, but is not limited to
  - non-delivery of training when funds have been paid
  - sanctions imposed on the delivery subcontractor by an awarding organisation
  - an inadequate Ofsted grade
  - complaints or allegations by learners, people working for the delivery subcontractor or other relevant parties, or
  - allegations of fraud or corruption
- are bound by ESF clauses from your funding agreement being then included in the subcontract, even if the provision being subcontracted is not funded by the ESF
- do not use our funding to make bids for, or claims from, any European funding on their own behalf or on our behalf; and
- do not use payments made as double funding for ESF co-financing projects.

**27.** You must include in your contract with each delivery subcontractor:

- reference to your delivery subcontracting policy and where it can be found on your website
- your reason for subcontracting with them
- a list of all services you will provide to them and the associated costs for doing so. This must include
  - a list of itemised, specific costs for managing the subcontractor
  - specific costs for quality monitoring activities and for any other support activities offered by you to the subcontractor
  - a description of how each specific cost is reasonable and proportionate to delivery of the subcontracted teaching or learning; and
  - how each cost contributes to delivering high quality learning.

## **Monitoring of your delivery subcontractors and subcontracted provision**

**28.** You must manage and monitor all your delivery subcontractors to ensure that high-quality delivery is taking place that meets these funding rules.

**29.** You must carry out a regular and substantial programme of quality assurance checks on the education and training provided by your delivery subcontractors, including visits at short notice and face-to-face interviews with staff and learners. The programme must:

- include whether the learners exist and are eligible, and
- involve direct observation of initial guidance, assessment and delivery of learning programmes.

30. The findings of your assurance checks must be consistent with your expectations and the delivery subcontractor's records.

## Second-level delivery subcontracting

31. You must not agree the use of any delivery subcontractor where this would require you to subcontract the Combined Authority funded ASF provision to a second level.
32. All your delivery subcontractors must be contracted directly by you, and you may have more than one subcontractor. The restriction on the level of subcontracting is in place to ensure:
- that lead providers retain clear and transparent accountability for the quality of training provision,
  - that proper and appropriate controls are in place to manage the learner experience, and
  - that value for money is achieved by mitigating funding being utilised for multiple tiers of subcontractor management.

## Reporting your subcontracting arrangements

33. In advance of any new subcontracted provision permission must be sought from the Combined Authority.
34. You must provide a fully completed delivery subcontractor declaration by the dates we will give you. This will be at least twice during the 2025 to 2026 funding year. If you do not make the declaration on time, we will suspend your payments. If you do not subcontract, you must still provide a nil return to confirm this.
35. You must also update your subcontractor declaration if and when any of your subcontracting arrangements change during the year.
36. You must report to us the actual level of funding paid and retained for each of your delivery subcontractors in 2025 to 2026. You must email this information to the Combined Authority ASF Manager using a template which we will supply to you. We will let you know the date by when you must do this and then publish the information on GOV.UK.
37. You must include the following on the template for funded ASF delivery:
- name of each delivery subcontractor,
  - the [UK Provider Reference Number](#) (UKPRN) of each delivery subcontractor,
  - contracts start and end date for each delivery subcontractor,
  - funding we have paid to you for the Combined Authority devolved funded ASF delivery by delivery subcontractor in that funding year,
  - funding you have paid to each delivery subcontractor for the Combined Authority devolved funded ASF delivery in that funding year,
  - details of the funding you have retained in relation to each delivery subcontractors Combined Authority funded ASF delivery for that funding year, and if appropriate, funding each delivery subcontractor has paid to you for services or support you have provided in connection with the subcontracted delivery.

## Sector-based work academy programme (SWAP)

- 38.** The Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) is designed to help Jobcentre Plus claimants build confidence to improve their job prospects and enhance their CV, whilst helping employers in sectors with current local vacancies to fill them. SWAP can last up to 6 weeks and has 3 main components:
- pre-employment training
  - work experience placement; and
  - a guaranteed job interviews
- 39.** The scheme runs in England (and Scotland). Participants remain on benefits throughout their placement. Only the pre-employment training element in England can be funded through ASF local flexibility, and normally lasts 2-3 weeks. Jobcentre Plus fund the other components and will pay any travel and childcare costs whilst claimants are on the work experience placement. FE providers are part of the SWAP local design process and are informed when to expect referrals and how many.
- 40.** You must record in the evidence pack that you have seen the claimant's SWAP referral notification issued by Jobcentre Plus, setting out start date and times for their ASF funded pre-employment training.
- 41.** To claim full funding for claimants referred to SWAP pre-employment training you must use LDM code 375 and complete the Benefit Status Indicator (BSI) to identify the claimant is in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance (BSI 1), Universal Credit (BSI 4) or Employment Support Allowance (BSI 5)
- 42.** You must keep a copy of the claimant's SWAP referral notification issued by Jobcentre Plus in the evidence pack setting out start date and times for their DFE ASF funded pre-employment training.

## Targeted Employment Programmes (TEPs)

- 43.** Targeted Employment Programmes are designed to assist learners to learn new skills in an area of work where there are jobs, for example, rail, construction, security, warehousing, health & social care, hospitality, and contact centres.
- 44.** The TEP should provide West Yorkshire residents with the on-the-job and professional accreditations needed to enter work and link them directly to employers who have live job vacancies.
- 45.** TEPs are in addition to SWAP provision.
- 46.** Targeted Employment Programmes expands the referral routes beyond Jobcentre Plus, allowing participants from various referral routes.
- 47. Targeted Employment Programmes must:**
- Be co-created with employers and designed to move residents into employment
  - Have vacancies open for application at the end appropriate for the number of individuals completing the training opportunity.

- Engage individuals who are unemployed or eligible for full funding under the earnings threshold
- Support learners who have not been successful through this TEP to apply for similar roles with their newly acquired skills

#### **48. Programme Components:**

- Non accredited or accredited qualifications tailored to sector-specific needs
- Essential skills, knowledge and behaviours required to gain employment in the sector
- Personalised 'support into work' such as mock interviews, personal statement, sector specific CVs and application process.
- Guaranteed job interviews
- Post course support for those who are not successful.

#### **Guaranteed job interviews**

**49.** Providers must ensure that all learners participating in a TEP receive a guaranteed interview with an employer who has current or forthcoming job vacancies relevant to the programme. Evidence of this must be retained in the learner's evidence pack. As a minimum, this should include:

- Correspondence or confirmation from the employer verifying that the learner was offered and/or attended an interview
- Post-interview feedback from the employer (either confirmation of employment or constructive feedback), which should also be recorded in the learner's file

#### **DAM Codes:**

**50.** In order for West Yorkshire Combined Authority to monitor and report on the Targeted Employment Programmes, providers must use the following DAM codes on the ILR:

- 013 Sector Based Work Academy Programme.

The programme will monitor participants of a Sector Based Work Academy and provide analysis to the success of the programme. Please use this DAM code to indicate the main learning aim within a SWAP / TEP programme.

- 015 Sector Based Work Academy Programme Job Outcome.

The programme will monitor participants of a Sector Based Work Academy who have successfully gained a job outcome directly related to the SWAP / TEP placement.

- 016 Sector Based Work Academy Component Learning Aim.

The programme will monitor participants of a Sector Based Work Academy and provide analysis to the success of the programme. Please use this DAM code to indicate an additional aim that is part of a learners SWAP / TEP programme.

**51.** Providers must ensure that employment outcomes are recorded in the ILR (DAM 015) as soon as employment is confirmed

52. As TEPs are co-designed with progression routes and guaranteed interviews, evidence of employment outcomes is expected within two months of the learner's achievement date.
53. This data will be reviewed during contract performance and review meetings, and providers will be expected to demonstrate how they are tracking and capturing progression outcomes in a timely and robust manner.
54. Providers are expected to have appropriate systems in place to track learner progression and liaise with employers post-completion. They must retain evidence of job outcomes within the learner's evidence pack, including the learner's employment start date, job role, and employer details.
55. Demand for TEPs must be employer-led, and provision should reflect genuine labour market need. We reserve the right to request evidence of employer engagement and demand alignment for each TEP at any time during the contract period.

#### **56. License to Practise**

For Targeted Employment Programmes related to [License to Practise](#), SIA/FLT/CSCS, a predetermined amount will be paid, and providers must deliver the specified components outlined in the relevant pathway.

## **Annex F: Performance management review**

See separate document – ['Performance Management Framework 2024-25'](#)

## Annex G: 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.
ASF funding methodology	The funding methodology for residents aged 19 and over, participating in ASF learning. You can access <a href="#">ASF funding methodology</a> on GOV.UK.
Advanced learner loan	<a href="#">Advanced learner loans</a> are available for residents aged 19 or above to undertake approved qualifications at levels 3 to level 6, at an approved provider in England. Advanced learner loans give residents access to financial support for tuition costs similar to that available in higher education and is administered by Student Loans Company.
A Level	A subject-based qualification conferred as part of the General Certificate of Education, as well as a school leaving qualification offered by the educational bodies in the United Kingdom and the educational authorities of British Crown dependencies to students completing secondary or pre-university education.
Adult Skills Fund	Combines all the Education Skills Funding Agency participation and support funds for adult education and skills training, but does not include apprenticeships, continuing learners and advanced learner loans funding;
Action Plan	Document detailing the steps you will undertake to achieve your Delivery Plan should you be underperforming
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 of national contributions are deducted.
AS Level	An independent qualification encompassing the first year of an A Level qualification's content
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.
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.
Continuers	Learners who commenced learning in a previous funding year and remain in learning as of 1 August 2025.
Tailored Learning	Helps people of different ages and backgrounds gain a new skill, reconnect with learning, pursue an interest, and learn how to support

Term	Description
	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 or aims.
Delivery Plan	The document which sets out the activity to be delivered by the provider.
Department for Education	The Department for Education is a department of Her Majesty's Government responsible for child protection, education, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.
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, in relation to their areas.
Digital Entitlement	The study of qualifications for learners who have digital skills assessed at below level 2.
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.
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check	A non-departmental public body of the Home Office of the United Kingdom. The DBS enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially involving children or vulnerable adults, and provides wider access to criminal record information through its disclosure service for England and Wales.
Earnings adjustment statement (EAS)	The form providers need to fill in to claim funding that cannot be claimed through the Residents Learner Record (ILR).
Earnings Threshold	The earnings threshold is a new eligibility criteria, that enables learners to be fully funded if they earn below than £25,750.
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.

Term	Description
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.
Education Skills Funding Agency (DFE)	The Education and Skills Funding Agency is an executive agency of the government of the United Kingdom, sponsored by the Department for Education. The DFE is accountable for funding education and training for children, young people and adults.
Employment status (formerly employed)	<p>The main types of employment status are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• worker</li> <li>• employee</li> <li>• self-employed and contractor</li> <li>• director</li> <li>• office holder</li> </ul> <p>More information on <a href="#">employment status</a> is available.</p>
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	The study of English by speakers of other languages.
Equality Act 2010	The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society
Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMS)	Data reporting measures set by the Authority to address any key equality and diversity issues prioritised by the Authority through its strategic planning processes to measure how Providers are collectively narrowing these gaps through skills provision.
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. We are a co-financing organisation for the ESF.
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	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.

Term	Description
'Find a learning aim' service	Formally known as the Learning Aim Reference Service (LARS) the 'Find a learning aim' service offers a web-based search facility. It allows users to search by most commonly used fields for Qualifications, Units, Apprenticeship Frameworks and Apprenticeship Standards and their associated validity and funding details.
Full level 2	The following qualifications are designated full at level 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Certificate of Secondary Education in 5 subjects, each at grade C or above or grade 4 or above</li> <li>• a Technical Certificate at level 2 which meets or has previously met the requirements for 16 to 19 performance tables</li> </ul>
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 AS level in 4 subjects QAA Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma at level 3 Technical or applied general qualification, at level 3 which meets or has previously met the requirements for 16 to 19 performance tables Core maths qualification at level 3
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 West Yorkshire Combined Authority and providers who receive funding for education and skills training.
Funding Model (11 and 38)	The funding methodology we apply to submission of finalised ILR data. For ASF funding, Funding Model 11 (Tailored Learning) and 38 (Adult Skills) are used, noting model 11 is non-formula funded (i.e., ILR data does not generate a funding rate and is paid on monthly profile) and model 38 is formula funded. More information is available in the <a href="#">2024-25 ILR specification</a>
Funding year	The Combined Authority adult funding starts on 1 August and finishes on 31 July.
General Data Protection Regulations	The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) are Europe-wide legislation that replaced the Data Protection Act 1998 in the UK. The GDPR sets out requirements for how organisations have to handle personal data.
General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)	In the United Kingdom, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) is an academic qualification, generally taken in several subjects by pupils in secondary education in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Term	Description
Guided learning	<p>As defined by Ofqual:</p> <p><i>“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.</i></p> <p><i>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.”</i></p> <p>You can find more information in the <a href="#">Ofqual Handbook</a> .</p>
Hardship	Within learner support, a category of support to assist vulnerable and disadvantaged learners to remove barriers to education and training.
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.
ILR specification	The ILR Specification is the technical documents, guidance and requirements to help providers collect, return and check ILR and other learner data.
Job outcome payments	Payments made for learners who are unemployed at the start of learning who cease learning to take up a job.
Evidence pack	A collection of documents and information 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.
Learning support	Funding to enable providers to put in place a reasonable adjustment, set out in the <a href="#">Equality Act 2010</a> , for learners with an identified learning difficulty and/or disability to achieve their learning goal.
Learner residency	We use the term ‘resident’ or ‘residence’ in this document for different purposes. For ASF devolved funding they must have a West Yorkshire Combined Authority Post Code. Additional residency requirements apply to those outside of the Combined Authority and UK, EU and EAA rules apply.
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.

Term	Description
Learning aim reference number	The unique eight-digit code used to identify a specific learning aim.
Learning delivery monitoring (LDM)	A code used as part of the Individualised Learner Record (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.
Legal entitlement	The <a href="#">legal entitlement to education and training</a> 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 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 2
Local flexibility	Regulated qualifications, and or their components, and non-regulated learning that the DFE funds, which is <b>not</b> 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 <a href="#">Find a learning aim</a>
National Insurance Credit	Applies if you're not paying National Insurance, for example when you're claiming benefits because you're ill or unemployed. Please see <a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a> for further information on eligibility and how to apply.
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 Tailored Learning
Non-formula Tailored Learning funding	Where applicable, providers receive a non-formula funded Tailored Learning allocation' as part of their ASF 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 Tailored Learning allocation. Providers submit Tailored Learning data through funding model 11. More information is available in the <a href="#">ILR specification</a>
Ofqual	The <a href="#">Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation</a> , which regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.
Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)	The independent body that checks on standards and quality in UK higher education.

Term	Description
Personal learning record (PLR)	A database that allows resident 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meet the outcomes for a qualification or a component of a qualification through knowledge, understanding, or</li> <li>• skills they already have and so do not need to undertake a course of learning for that component or qualification.</li> </ul>
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.
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.
Sector-based work academy programme (SWAP)	SWAP is a DWP scheme that offers pre-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.
Senior responsible person	For example, chief executive, managing director, principal, or their equivalent.
Self-declaration	A process where the learner can confirm something through his or her own signature.
Local Employment Skills Panels & the Leeds City Region Enterprise partnership (LEP)	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.

Term	Description
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 residents in certain circumstances to meet their day-to-day living needs.
Statutory entitlement	<p>The <a href="#">legal entitlement to education and training</a> allows learners to be fully funded who are aged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 19 to 23 if they study for a first qualification at level 2 and/ or level 3.</li> <li>• 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1.</li> </ul>
Subcontractor	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 your group, other associated companies, and sole traders. It also includes residents who are self-employed or supplied by an employment agency, unless those residents are working under your direction and control, in the same way as your own employees.
Technical Certificate	A qualification which provides you with extensive knowledge in your chosen apprenticeship career path. Alongside the NVQ, it is a key component of some apprenticeship programs. Technical Certificates are issued to residents who have completed a specialized course of study that is related to specific vocational skills.
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).
Universal Credit	Universal Credit is a United Kingdom social security payment that was designed to simplify the benefits system and to incentivise paid work. It is replacing and combining six benefits for working-aged people who have a low household income (income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, and Income Support; Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit; and Housing Benefit). Please see <a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a> for further information on eligibility and how to apply.
Young people's funding methodology	The funding methodology for residents aged 16 to 19 (and those aged 19 to 24 with an EHC plan). You can access <a href="#">16 to 19 funding methodology</a> on GOV.UK.

## Summary of main changes 2025 to 2026 V4

We have highlighted the main changes made in this document in the table below.

Please note this is not an exhaustive list of all changes. You must refer to the main document for the definitive rules, which apply to all providers of education and training who receive funding from the Secretary of State for Education acting through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

If you have a specific query on the funding rules, please email [AdultSkillsFund@westyorks-ca.gov.uk](mailto:AdultSkillsFund@westyorks-ca.gov.uk).

Section	Page	Paragraph	Change
Level 3 Skills Booster	25	33 - 41	New section added for the recently procured Level 3 Skills Booster.
Annex D – Subcontracting	56	6	Paragraph added to confirm requirements for subcontracting changes.