



Leading learning and skills

EDUCATION BUSINESS LINKS

(EBL)

**Requirements for Funding
2008 – 09**



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Purpose

The negotiation of EBL contracts will relate to 2007-08 performance; these requirements for funding; and specific LSC procurement/contracting requirements.

In addition to describing LSC requirements for funding, this document should serve as a point of reference for wider partners engaged in the design, development or delivery of work related learning in 2008-09.

KEY CHANGES FOR 2008-09

2008/09 is a transition year in preparation for handover of EBL funding and co-ordination to London local authorities.

LSC funding applies only to the 2008-09 financial year. With this in mind, key requirements of LSC funding in this financial year will be:

- **An action plan of activities to cover the full 2008-09 academic year;**
- **A separate section of that action plan will detail the EBLOC's proposed approach for managing the transition from LSC to LA funding;**
- **Local authority engagement in the development and sign-off of the action plan is formally required; and**
- **Delivery plans should be developed in a format that allows borough activity to be easily reviewed.**

** When funding beyond March 31st 2009 and the transmission of that funding is clarified, LSC will issue a further guidance note.*

BACKGROUND

1.1 These requirements apply to the delivery of local Education Business Links (EBL) activities to support work related learning (WrL), employer engagement, and Diplomas as part of the 14-19 reforms. The EBL funds are for the benefit of learners, teachers and employers in making learning more relevant to the world of work. The focus of the activity is the 14-19 age group, which is one of the Learning and Skills Council's priorities. The funds may be used for EBL activity that demonstrably contributes to meeting local, regional and national LSC priorities.



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1.2 Since September 2004, WrL has been an 'element' of the National Curriculum, i.e. it is a statutory requirement in key stage 4 for schools to have a WrL programme. WrL is defined as: planned activity that uses the context of work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding useful in work, including learning through the experience of work, learning about work and working practices, and learning the skills for work. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has now linked together guidance on WrL, enterprise education, and careers education and guidance, within over-arching guidance on the economic well-being strand of *Every Child Matters*.

1.3 Employer engagement refers to the recruitment and involvement of employers with 14-19 learners, teachers and educational institutions. Employer involvement is an important part of 14-19 programmes including: WrL; work experience; enterprise education, the Engagement programme, Young Apprenticeships; functional skills; School's Engagement programme; Diplomas; and Apprenticeships. Employer involvement is also a desirable feature of: information, advice and guidance (IAG); workforce development; facilities development; and equality and diversity initiatives.

London WrL Learner Offer

1.4 In 2006/07, London Region LSC undertook a review and consultation on the future direction of EBL in the light of the 14-19 reforms and the London Learner Offer. The outcome of the consultation was a consensus on the need to build on existing strengths and to ensure innovation in order to link young people's learning more explicitly to the London economy. A number of areas where progress can be made were identified: better alignment between the efforts of regional partners; more joined up working at local level; greater operation consistency, e.g. documentation, quality standards etc; and funding streams working harder for London's learners.

1.5 Due to Machinery of Government changes, the structural elements of the London LSC's review will not be implemented by LSC. However through 2008-09 it is anticipated that other elements of the review, as described in these requirements for funding, will continue to be implemented.

1.6 WrL is a key strand of the wider 14-19 London learner offer. Schools are required to deliver the five strands of *Every Child Matters* including economic well-being for 14-16 learners. This now includes the entitlement for learners to develop enterprise capability, employability skills and WrL (learning for, through and about work). Work experience, though not a statutory requirement, is

a central part of WrL which is statutory. Enterprise capability is funded directly to schools via the Standards Fund. Diplomas require a minimum of 10 days' work experience at all levels. There is also a need for employer engagement in all the programmes listed in para 1.3 above. It is schools and colleges that are responsible for ensuring that statutory requirements and National Curriculum guidance are met in order that learners are able to access WrL, EBL activities and employers.

1.7 The London WrL Learner Offer, therefore, comprises the entitlement for all 14-16 learners to:

- A programme of learning for, through and about the world of work
- A work experience placement of 10 days to develop their employability skills (not necessarily in one block)
- A programme to develop their enterprise capability
- Opportunities to learn from employers (employees) as part of these programmes.

In addition, students aged 14-19 following Diploma programmes have an entitlement to:

- A work experience placement of 10 days at every level of the Diploma (not necessarily in one block)
- Opportunities to learn from employers (and employees) as part of these programmes.

In addition, students in further education colleges have an entitlement to be able to access:

- A programme to develop their employability skills
- Opportunities to learn from employers (and employees) as part of these programmes

And of course the participants on Young Apprentice and School's Engagement Programme have distinct entitlements

1.8 LSC funding is provided to support the EBL infrastructure of Education Business Partnerships (EBPs) and other EBL agencies which help schools to deliver this entitlement. 14-19 partnerships, schools and colleges make the key decisions about the range and extent of employer engagement and the EBL activities included in their programmes directed at the London WrL Learner Offer. 14-19 partnerships have an important role in establishing a WrL plan for their area.

The LSC funding priorities set out in this specification for 2008/09 build on current practice and aim to allow flexibility to meet 14-19 partnership and institutional priorities. EBL organisations have a vital role in: providing strategic and operational advice; brokering and/or delivering EBL activities; recruiting and briefing employers; improving quality; and ensuring good learner outcomes.

Menu of employer engagement activities

1.9 There is a long list of ways in which employers engage with 14-19 education. Schools, colleges and EBL organisations are likely to continue to offer a wide range of opportunities for employers to get involved. However, in order to support the London WrL Learner Offer this 'simple menu' of employer engagement opportunities comprises seven priority activities:

1. 10 days **work experience placements** to develop generic employability skills for 14-16 year olds
2. 10 days **work experience placements** to develop generic employability skills and support other aspects of Diploma learning or other vocational courses for 14-19 year olds
3. 1 day **group** and up to 3 day **customised professional development placements** for teachers and lecturers focusing on the first ten Diploma lines of learning
4. **Online coaching and mentoring** for a Diploma teacher following on from a professional development placement (and their group of Diploma learners from September 2008)
5. **Workplace visits** linked to vocational courses and (from September 2008 the first ten Diploma lines of learning)
6. **Curriculum development projects** linked to vocational courses, enterprise activities, the WrL programme (and from September 2008 Diplomas.
7. **Young Apprentice and School's Engagement Programme** entitlements.

1.10 The first five items on the menu of employer engagement activities do not require the employer or staff to leave their workplace. This should make it easier to engage smaller businesses. Curriculum development projects constitute a broader category of activities which generally take place at an educational institution during a short period of time (as in an enterprise day) or over a longer period (as in a term's module on a vocational course where the employer may be involved in setting a brief at the start and giving feedback on students' work at the end). Enterprise education activities are not emphasised in this specification as public money is already directed at this area through Standards Fund. EBLOs are able to access the funding by effective marketing and delivery of good quality activities.

Future direction of EBL in London

1.11 - Increasingly, local authorities and 14-19 partnerships will be responsible for commissioning the full breadth of the 14-19 Entitlement. They will need to ensure that there are strategies in place for the effective coordination of work experience and employer engagement in the Diploma and other programme areas from 2008 onwards. In most cases borough partners are working with local EBPs and other EBLOs to deliver WrL and employer engagement already. Indeed in several cases, Diploma Gateway bids included proposals to integrate employer databases across the area including EBP, school and college databases. 14-19 partnerships will need to develop further these plans for WrL in their areas in order to ensure the success of the 14-19 reforms and the delivery of the London WrL Learner Offer.

In most cases these plans will form a part of the wider 14-19 plan/strategy. It is key requirement of this funding that cross-borough EBLOC plans align with borough level planning - and that every effort is made to ensure the funding changes ahead do not disrupt the learning experience of young people across London.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

2.1 In 2008/09 there are four main areas of activity to be funded. These build on the funding streams in previous years while taking into account the London WrL Learner Offer, the London EBL Review and the DfES National Review of WrL:

1. **Work experience** – for 14-16 learners
2. **Professional development for staff** (including professional development placements)– especially for staff working on vocational programmes and those who will be teaching the first five Diploma lines of learning; and INSET on employer engagement
3. **Innovation in WrL** - in delivering the economic well-being strand of *Every Child Matters* with a focus on WrL; and responding to the local priorities of 14-19 partnerships
4. **Strategic brokerage and employer engagement** - improving the quality of schools' economic well-being (including WrL and enterprise programmes) programmes; and increasing employer engagement in delivering schools' programmes.

Work Experience

2.2 Work experience funding is for the coordination of work experience across an area, generally a borough, but this could be delivered over two or more

boroughs to increase cost-effectiveness. EBLOs have a responsibility to ensure that systems are in place for the effective management of the health, safety, child protection and welfare of all learners. Although schools are primarily responsible for the curriculum links and learning outcomes for students, EBLOs have an important role in encouraging and supporting school coordinators and teachers in improving quality. This can be achieved in several ways including:

- Reviewing the school's work experience programme with the school senior managers/work experience coordinator and helping them to develop an action plan for improvement
- Focusing the programme to develop the employability outcomes identified by the CBI in their recent report *Time well spent: Embedding employability in work experience* (7 competencies were identified: self-management; team working; business & customer awareness; problem-solving; communication & literacy; application of numeracy; application of IT)
- Promoting a uniform approach to assessing learner outcomes (i.e. using the NEBPN's *Pre-16 Work Experience Impact Assessment Tool*)
- Offering regular networking opportunities for school coordinators for staff development purposes and to share effective practice.

2.3 During 2008/09 the five London EBLOCs, EBPs and local authorities should work collaboratively to ensure a consistent approach to incorporating these features into contracts with local work experience providers. They should also seek to establish a common London-wide approach to tackling gender stereotyping in the choice of work placements.

Professional development for staff

2.4 Professional development placements (PDPs) have been a consistent feature of LSC EBL funded activity since 2001. The definition and quality of such placements has been questioned including the fact that they are often not closely linked to schools' continuing professional development programmes. In recent years the requirement to meet targets has encouraged large group, one- or half-day PDPs at the expense of customised placements which meet the needs of individuals and subject departments. It is also the case that there is often little or no follow up so that the placement is a one-off experience. It is important that there are identified learning outcomes for teachers in improving their knowledge of the sector and that they are able to develop the curriculum based on their experiences.

2.5 It is important to continue to prioritise the first five Diploma lines of learning for the 2008/09 PDP programme and, in addition, focus on the second five lines.

For 2007/08, it was proposed that a customised placement programme for Diploma teachers will lead to sustained links through online coaching and mentoring and this should continue through 2008/09. The aim is to create ongoing partnerships following the PDP where the teacher and the employer (or employee) are in regular online contact over the Diploma curriculum. The employer would also act as a coach/mentor to the Diploma students but on a collective basis working through the teacher. So students and the teacher could pose questions to the employer, say monthly (or as agreed) on issues related to their module in the Diploma syllabus.

2.6 The 14-19 reforms demand a higher level of employer involvement than in the past. It is important that teachers and lecturers can manage relationships with employers effectively and know how to make the most of such links. EBLOs are in a strong position, because of their brokerage role with employers, to arrange INSET on employer engagement.

2.7 For 2008/09 the priority activities for professional development for staff at borough or 14-19 partnership level are:

- Customised 1-3 day placements for new and future Diploma teachers and lecturers and teachers of other vocational courses in the first ten lines of learning. These would be organised for individuals or departments (1-5 people) to be developed in consultation with 14-19 partnerships, school and college leaders.
- INSET on employer engagement focusing on the employment sectors in the first ten Diploma lines of learning. This would explain the importance of creating sustained relationships and reducing the barriers to employer engagement.

2.8 At sub-regional level there should be a high-profile and high-quality programme for teachers and lecturers across the area including visits to some of the leading businesses in the area (or in central London), again focusing on the first five Diploma lines of learning. One organisation should take the lead in organising the sub-regional programme to ensure cost-effectiveness.

2.9 The five EBLOCs should work collaboratively to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the development of the PDP programmes and employer engagement INSET which meet Pan-London Quality Standards, and build on current good practice. That work will be important regardless of the funding changes and will be of added value to local authorities.

Innovation in WrL

2.10 During the London Review of WrL the importance of maintaining innovation was stressed. It was also said that some WrL activities which were LSC funded are tired and no longer meet the needs of schools. It is also important to encourage cross-borough collaboration and the involvement of new, non-EBP deliverers of EBL (in line with national policy). The 14-19 Pathfinder programme showed that collaborative projects across an area involving schools, colleges and sometimes WBL providers are an excellent way of engaging employers and developing good practice that can be disseminated more widely. It is also important that programmes that work are sustainable because they are valued by schools, colleges and employers. For these reasons for 2008/09 the WrL funding will be directed at innovative projects which meet the following criteria, that they:

- meet the priorities of local 14-19 partnerships (and have been negotiated with 14-19 partnerships)
- can be delivered across more than one borough (but do not have to be)
- involve a minimum of 120 learners from at least 4 institutions (ideally including a college) and have clear learning outcomes linked to vocational programmes or the economic wellbeing strand (including WrL and enterprise strand) of *Every Child Matters*
- include an equal opportunities and diversity dimension
- involve employers in the design, delivery and evaluation of the project
- have an end product which can be disseminated in the form of a case study and curriculum materials
- have potential for sustainability.

2.11 EBLOCs should develop a common approach to contracting for the Innovation in WrL strand of funding with competitive tendering for borough and cross-borough contracts. Where providers claim that they have already contracted with their schools for existing WrL activities, then EBLOCs should top-slice some of the **Innovation in WrL** funding for one area-wide project which EBPs and other providers can bid for, and which meets the criteria set out above.

Strategic brokerage and employer engagement

2.12 A key role of EBLOs is to broker relationship between schools and businesses. In the past, relationships have often been insufficiently strategic instead focusing on delivering individual funding streams or selling services to schools. Some EBLOs have tended to work with only a limited number of schools on the patch while ignoring others. To date the employer engagement strand of LSC funding has been used for any activity that involves (new) employers. The 14-19 reforms and the National Review of WrL and the EBL infrastructure

emphasise the importance of EBPs and other EBLOs listening to and responding to the needs of their clients. For these reasons the Strategic brokerage and employer engagement strand of LSC funding for 2008/09 should meet the following criteria.

- EBPs (or other EBLOs winning the contract if it is locally tendered) would have an annual strategic review and planning meeting to evaluate the economic wellbeing programme (including WrL and enterprise), employer engagement and individual programmes provided by the EBP and other EBLOs. This review should be signed off by the 14-19 Partnership.
- The meetings would be held with a senior manager and WrL coordinators (and people in other relevant roles) in every school and special school, and would lead to an action plan for quality improvements and a service level agreement.
- Part of the agenda would be to establish what profile of employers would help the school in the delivery of its curriculum. Employer engagement would then be part of the action plan and service level agreement. This would include an agreement on behalf of the EBLO to broker a minimum of five employers fitting the profile to work with the school over the year.

PROGRAMME APPLICATION & BUDGETS

- 3.1 EBL funded activity includes
- learners with special educational needs
 - at risk of exclusion.
- 3.2 EBL is funded from the LSC regional allocation subsuming previously separate budget headings. The funding has been allocated on a regional basis for 08-09.

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION – COLLECTING AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 Management information reports should be sent to the appropriate LSC local office – the detail of which will be agreed at contracting stage.
- 4.2 If programmes or activities rely on LSC funding but also receive funding from other organisations, they should be included, but must be clearly identified.



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4.3 MI should be available in a format that allows borough by borough activity summaries to be easily accessible

ANNEX 1

Milestones

By

Draft delivery plan	June 15 2008
Agreement with 14-19 collaborative & final delivery plan	June 29 2008
Contracts agreed	July 10 2008
Contracts issued	July 10 2008