

The Adult Learning Landscape

An overview

Jon Gamble, Skills Funding Agency

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NB. This presentation dates from before the latest [Skills Funding Statement \(2013-16\)](#), and should be read in conjunction with that document, available from the Department of Business Innovation and Skills at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-funding-statement-2013-to-2016>

Introduction

4 key questions

1. What are the government's **priorities** for publicly funded adult learning?
2. What are the different **types of learning** being funded?
3. How is the **funding** designed to support these priorities and the needs of adults?
4. and What does the Skills Funding Agency Do? **What is it for?**

1. Priorities

To promote and stimulate

- Access to high quality **information and advice** – the **National Careers Service**
- **Vocational education and training** to ensure employers have the workforces they need – **fit-for-purpose qualifications**
- **Apprenticeships** and the introduction of **Traineeships**
- Improvements in **English** and **Maths** – to address high levels of poor functional **literacy and numeracy**
- **Learning** that addresses other forms of **disadvantage** – such as unemployment, learning difficulties and disability, ESOL
- **Community Learning** – non-formal learning

2. Types of Learning

- **Formal learning** – in other words structured learning that leads to an ‘eligible’ qualification or certificated outcome
 - **regulated *vocational* qualifications** from the QCF - unit and credit based from entry to level 4
 - ***units* from QCF qualifications** (restricted eligibility)
 - **certain other regulated vocational qualifications**, not unit or credit based (i.e. not QCF)
 - **regulated *general* qualifications**, typically GCSE and A levels
 - **Access to Higher Education Diplomas**
 - **Functional Skills** – English and Maths
 - **Apprenticeship Frameworks** (employed status only)
 - **Traineeship Programmes** (19 – 23 year olds)
 - **Some Non-Regulated** provision (progression)
- **Non-Formal Learning** – structured community learning

3. Funding Learning

(i) Formal learning:

funding is prioritised for learning offers (provision) that support adults to

- take up an **apprenticeship**
- **achieve English and Maths** at (up to) level 2
- access and progress through **qualifications at Key Stage 4 and 5** (GCSE & A levels : young adults 19 – 23)
- progress into **Higher Education** (Access to HE)
- gain the **core and initial skills** required to enter employment (including Traineeships)
- **improve their skills** and/or **gain new skills** to help progress in employment
- progress to the **next level** of attainment and learning

3. Funding Learning, cont.

(i) Formal learning:

full funding is prioritised for adults aged 19+

- to take ***English and Maths GCSE or Functional Skills qualification in English and Maths*** if they do not currently hold the qualification at level 2 (*excludes apprentices*)
- who are in receipt of **JSA** or **ESA** (in the Work Related Activity Group) or **Universal Credit** because they are unemployed and need help to move into work, progress in work or remove a barrier to getting into work for ***all learning aims up to and including level 2 (including units)***
- ***but under 24*** and following a programme of learning that leads to an eligible qualification or outcome

3. Funding Learning, cont.

(i) Formal learning:

funding support is available for other adults aged 19+ in the form of

- **24+ Advanced Learning Loan** and enrolling on an eligible course at Level 3 or 4 (which includes A levels, Access to HE Diplomas and other Diplomas and Certificates)

IMPORTANT NOTE : These are funding headlines and are a guide only. Individuals should always confirm their eligibility for funding support with learning providers or get further Information online at:

nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advancedlearningloans

3. Funding Learning, cont.

- (ii) **Non-Formal or Community learning:** funding is allocated to approved providers to deliver programmes of structured learning designed to support and promote a range of outcomes:
- **Social renewal** - by bringing local communities and individuals together to experience learning and the benefits it can bring
 - **Stronger communities** with more self-sufficient, connected and pro-active citizens
 - **Improved confidence** and willingness to engage
 - **Acquisition of skills** preparing people for training, employment or self-employment and volunteering
 - Improved **digital, financial literacy** and/or **communication skills**
 - **Parents and carers** to be better equipped to support their children's learning
 - Improved/maintained **health and well-being**

3. Funding Learning, cont.

(ii) Non-Formal or Community learning:

funding support (a funding contribution) for this area of adult learning is focussed on people who are

- *Disadvantaged*
- *Least likely to participate*
- *Including people in rural areas*
- *People on low or no incomes with low skills*

- *Fees will be collected from people who can afford to pay and used where possible to extend provision to those who cannot*

3. Funding Learning, cont.

(ii) Non-Formal or Community learning:

- ***In summary, funding for community learning is designed to widen participation and transform people's destinies by supporting progression relevant to personal circumstances***
- ***In most cases it does not lead to a qualification but is designed to improve confidence and support progression in its widest sense***

4. The Skills Funding Agency

What is it for? What does it do?

- The Skills Funding Agency is a **partner organisation** of the Department for **Business Innovation and Skills**
- Its job is to **fund and promote adult further education and skills training** in England
- It allocates **£4b of public funding** through contracts with approved learning providers through an agreed system of published **funding rules** designed to ensure government priorities are properly implemented by those providers
- The Agency then **monitors and audits** its approved providers to ensure both the appropriate use of public funds and progress against government adult learning priorities
- The Agency (through its Chief Executive) is **accountable to Parliament** for the efficient and effective use of those public funds

In conclusion

- Government supports both Formal and Non-Formal Adult Learning (further education) in England through public funding allocated by the Skills Funding Agency
- Both types of learning have different but complementary objectives
- Full funding is targeted to support adults who are 'disadvantaged' and most in need of help
- Other funding routes are available to support all adults acquire or improve their skills and employability, confidence, health and well-being