

Peter Latchford
Chair
The Education and Training Foundation
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
London
SW1W 9SZ

29 June 2021

Subject: Basic Skills Workforce Grant

Commercial Reference Number: con_8606

Dear Peter

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Education, I would like to offer the Education and Training Foundation a grant on the terms of the enclosed funding agreement. The Power under which the grant is to be paid is Section 100 (1) of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 and will accordingly be paid only in respect of approved expenditure incurred by the Education and Training Foundation for the purpose of the funded activities.

English, maths and digital are known as the 'Basic Skills'. Securing good standards of basic skills is important for improving employability and participation in society. We know that greater basic skills are associated with better economic performance and, as stated in the Skills for Jobs White Paper, published January 2021, most occupations require competence in English, maths and digital¹.

Since 2014, the Condition of Funding (CoF) policy² has required most young people entering further education or training to continue studying English and/or maths, if they have not achieved a GCSE grade 4 on leaving secondary education.

¹ [Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk), p. 25

² [16 to 19 funding: maths and English condition of funding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

This policy places a requirement on further education (FE) settings and training providers to provide high quality Level 2 curricula to a significant number of students. However, colleges' ability to fulfil this requirement is affected by the challenges the sector faces in recruiting sufficient numbers of quality English and maths teachers.

Additionally, a large proportion of adults in the UK do not have the basic digital skills they need for life and work. To tackle this, government introduced a new legal digital entitlement that provides access to fully funded digital qualifications for adults with no or low digital skills. A new suite of essential digital skills qualifications (EDSQs) was introduced in August 2020, providing students with high-quality qualifications that equip them with the full range of essential digital skills for life, work and further study.

This Grant is to made to support those teachers providing students with English, maths and digital skills and, in particular, the English and maths 'resit' students to improve student attainment under the department's CoF policy, and teachers of the essential digital skills qualifications, and is more fully described at Annex F attached.

This correspondence constitutes a Grant Offer Letter. This letter will form an integral part of the Grant Agreement. The offer is subject to the provisions, limitations and conditions set out below and in the DfE general grant terms and conditions.

I am pleased to inform you that the Department is willing to offer your organisation funding of up to £3,226,124 for the period from 1 June 2021 to 31 March 2022.

This offer is subject to the terms and conditions set out below, and to the attached Department for Education general [Grant Terms and Conditions](#)³. You should read all annexes and general T&Cs carefully before accepting the offer of funding. Failure to observe these terms and conditions may result in the funding being withdrawn.

Project specific conditions

The grant is awarded under the additional following general conditions specific for this project:

Subcontracting:

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grant-funding-agreement-terms-and-conditions>

Notwithstanding the provisions of Clause 4.7 of the Department for Education general Grant Terms and Conditions You shall be entitled to sub-contract the Funded Activities subject to open and transparent procurement and agree to a copy of each contract awarded being shared with the Department within thirty (30) calendar days from contract signature date.

You shall ensure that terms are included in any sub-contract permitted under this Agreement require You to pay any undisputed sum due to the relevant Subcontractor within a specified period that does not exceed thirty (30) calendar days from the date You receive the Subcontractors invoice; and prohibit the Subcontractor from further sub-contracting any element of the Services provided to the Subcontractor without prior approval from the Department.

You warrant to the Department that each Sub-contractor has the competence, technical ability and sufficient financial standing to provide the Services which is being sub-contracted to it in the manner and to the standard required by this Agreement and any contract entered into pursuant to it is being engaged in accordance with terms and conditions which are consistent with Good Industry Practice has the legal capacity, power and authority to become a party to the Sub-Contract.

The Department may require You to terminate a sub-contract where it considers that the Subcontractor may prejudice the provision of the Agreement or may be acting contrary to the interests of the Department, the Subcontractor is unreliable and or has not provided reasonable Services to its other customers, and or the Subcontractor employs unfit persons, provided that such right shall not be exercised unreasonably, frivolously or vexatiously. You shall at all times remain responsible for all acts and omissions of Your Sub-contractors and the acts and omissions of those employed or engaged by the Sub-contractors as if they are Your own. An obligation on You to do, or refrain from doing, any act or thing shall include an obligation upon the Subcontractor to procure that the staff also do, or refrain from doing, such act or thing.

The sub-contracting by the Subcontractor of any of the Services shall not relieve You of any liability under this Agreement for any breach of the obligations arising under this Agreement.

Reporting

As per Annex J, The Education and Training Foundation will provide

performance reporting against KPIs at monthly and quarterly performance review meetings in a format to be agreed.

Charging:

Notwithstanding the provisions of Clause 17.1, 17,2 and 20.19 of the Department for Education general Grant Terms and Conditions You shall be entitled to charge for some of the programmes fully-funded by the Department, so long as the programmes subject to charges and the charges themselves have been agreed in advance between the Department and You.

All income generated by You in delivery of the Grant shall be reinvested in the development of the programmes and objectives as described in this Agreement. The Department reserves the right to terminate this arrangement immediately by giving notice in writing to You.

Complying with new Government policies

The grant funding is provided on the strict understanding that none of this funding is to be used for advertising, marketing, communications and consultancy, or for any costs associated with the maintenance, technical development or updating of existing websites or for the development/creation of new websites. Approval to undertake such spend should be sought through the relevant DfE policy team.

In addition to providing a signed copy of this agreement, you are then requested to follow the instructions on Bank Account Details (Annex B) and provide your organisation's bank account details. This will allow us to set your organisation up on the Department's payment system to receive the grant. Payment claims can only be sent to the DfE once the Grant Agreement has been signed and any pre-disbursement conditions have been met. Payments will be disbursed into the bank account number provided through the DfE suppliers' bank details process provided by the Education and Training Foundation.

Please note that any delays in returning the documents could result in a delay to the grant payment.

The Grant Manager for this Project at the Basic Skills Workforce Team is Ellie Agrebi (ellen.agrebi@education.gov.uk). We look forward to working with you to bring about the rapid signature of the Grant Agreement.

ACCEPTANCE OF OFFER

If you wish to accept this offer of a grant, please sign both copies of the enclosed grant funding agreement [Annex A] in the space provided and return one of them to Ellie Agrebi **on or before Friday 2 July 2021**. Please retain the other copy for your records. You must accept this grant offer and the conditions made in it in writing no later than 10 days from the date of this letter.

If you cannot return the acceptance by the specified date, please contact me before that date to explain the reasons. Otherwise, we will assume that the offer has been refused, and it will be withdrawn without further correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

Becca Taber
Deputy Director
Basic Skills Workforce
Careers and Further Education Directorate

Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith St
London SW1P 3BT

This Grant Funding Agreement is made between:

(1) The Secretary of State for Education and

(2) Education and Training Foundation of 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9SZ with Charity Commission registration number 1153859 and Companies House Registration number 08540597.

This Agreement comprises the Grant Offer Letter, project specific conditions, where relevant, any annexes to this letter and general Grant Terms and Conditions⁴.

This letter must be read in conjunction with general conditions of grant and these relevant annexes:

Annex A - Acceptance of Grant Offer and effective date

Annex B - Bank account details

Annex C - Claiming Grant in Arrears

Annex D - ~~Claiming Grant in Advance~~ Does not apply

Annex E - Details of Grant Allocations

Annex F - List of Objectives for which the grant is being paid

Annex G (i) - Annual Certification of Expenditure (external auditor or accountant's report arrangements)

Annex G (ii) - ~~Statement of Grant Usage (Statement prepared by Local Authority)~~ Does not apply

Annex H - Grant Payment schedule

Annex I - Sample Exit Plan

Annex J - ~~Sample Progress Report Template~~ Does not apply

Annex K - Generic Standard GDPR Clauses:

- Schedule 1 - Processing, Personal Data and Data Subjects
- Schedule 2 - Schedule for Joint Controller Agreements

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grant-funding-agreement-terms-and-conditions>

Annex F – List of objectives for which the grant is being paid Commercial Reference Number: con_8606

English, maths and digital are known as the ‘Basic Skills’. Securing good standards of basic skills is important for improving employability and participation in society. We know that greater basic skills are associated with better economic performance and, as stated in the Skills for Jobs White Paper, published January 2021, most occupations require competence in English, maths and digital⁵.

Since 2014, the condition of funding (CoF) policy⁶ has required most young people entering further education or training to continue studying English and/or maths, if they have not achieved a GCSE grade 4 on leaving secondary education.

This policy places a requirement on further education (FE) settings and training providers to provide high quality curriculum to a significant number of students. However, colleges’ ability to fulfil this requirement is affected by the challenges the sector faces in recruiting sufficient numbers of quality English and maths teachers.

Principals indicate maths and English are the most difficult academic subjects to recruit to: three quarters (75%) of principals identify maths as the most difficult for recruitment, and maths has the highest vacancy rate across all FE subjects at 6% (English is 4%). Numeracy and literacy, including Functional Skills qualifications (FSQs), also hold some of the highest vacancy rates and are the most difficult ‘other’ (non-vocational and non-academic) provision in which to recruit⁷.

Consequently, the teaching staff supporting resit students are crucial and investing in their capabilities can lead to improved outcomes for students and reduced recruitment and retention costs for colleges. These teachers need professional expertise and subject knowledge to continuously improve the quality of teaching and drive student attainment; an added benefit is that CPD helps teachers feel valued, which aids teacher retention in these hard-to-fill subjects.

⁵ [Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90424/Skills_for_Jobs_Lifelong_Learning_for_Opportunity_and_Growth.pdf), p. 25

⁶ [16 to 19 funding: maths and English condition of funding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/16-to-19-funding-maths-and-english-condition-of-funding)

⁷ [College Staff Survey 2018 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/68424/College_Staff_Survey_2018.pdf)

We expect that the significant disruptions to teaching and learning since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 is likely to increase the level of support needed by students who enter Further Education without English and maths GCSEs at grade 4.

In addition, a large proportion of adults in the UK do not have the basic digital skills they need for life and work. To tackle this, government has introduced a new legal digital entitlement that provides access to fully funded digital qualifications, at Entry Level and Level 1, for adults with no or low digital skills. Alongside this, a new suite of essential digital skills qualifications (EDSQs) was introduced in August 2020, providing students with high quality qualifications that equip them with the full range of essential digital skills for life, work and further study.

The Basic Skills Grant aims to support those teachers providing students with English, maths and digital skills and, in particular, the English and maths ‘resit’ students to improve student attainment under the department’s CoF policy, and teachers of the essential digital skills qualifications.

Objectives

The objectives of this grant are to ensure teachers of basic skills subjects have access to high-quality and relevant professional development in order to improve outcomes for students.

We are clear that the biggest factor in improving student outcomes is the quality of teaching – and high-quality teaching has the biggest impact for children from more disadvantaged backgrounds⁸. The cohort of students who need to study Level 2 English and/or maths in FE are disproportionately disadvantaged, therefore it is more important that they are taught by competent teachers who can maintain and develop their teaching practice.

There is work underway to strengthen the evidence about teacher professional development quality, and the extent to which it is effective in driving attainment. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is

⁸ [Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy; Supporting teachers to make a difference \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

conducting a systematic review of professional development, which will underpin a Guidance Report on professional development to be published in Autumn 2021.⁹

Insights gathered by the policy team in November 2020, showed that the FE sector has an **inconsistent approach to teacher professional development**. We spoke to representatives from 13 colleges and 7 English and maths regional network groups. They all valued access to subject specific CPD but faced some similar challenges.

The factors that influence access to, and the quality of, their professional development include:

- availability of funding
- time available for CPD
- accessibility of CPD
- relevance of training available
- overall CPD strategy of the college
- level of SLT 'buy-in' to CPD
- the college's overall approach to English and maths
- individual manager's approaches and experiences

Both English and maths teachers need flexible access to easily accessible, continuous CPD that is relevant to their subject, and opportunities to undertake in-depth, reflective training that allows development of practice. They need a clearer way of navigating the CPD on offer, to maximise the limited time they have available.

In addition, to support the introduction of EDSQs, there is a need for us to ensure that all teachers who deliver EDSQs have the skills and knowledge required to do so effectively.

The elements the grant will deliver to meet our policy objectives and user needs are:

1. A means of providing teachers with **flexible and easily accessible CPD** that is consistent, relevant and subject-specific, and that can be quickly adapted to meet the sector's needs in an uncertain landscape

⁹ [Teacher professional development | Education Endowment Foundation | EEF](#)

2. Continued opportunities to undertake **in-depth, reflective training and research** into teaching and learning practice and pedagogies, in order to change or develop teaching approaches and to share best practice
3. Help to **maximise teachers' limited time**, through improved understanding of best practice approaches, and knowing how to identify and address professional development needs and navigate the CPD made available

The table below describes, at a high level, the different programme strands to be delivered through the grant funding, to meet the policy objectives.

Table 2 - High level description of programme strands

Programme name	Description
Shaping Success (SS)	A broad development programme for all English and maths teachers that delivers a flexible range of targeted training and resources. Teachers need shorter, accessible courses to maximise their CPD time and keep their knowledge up to date.
Sector English Strategy (SES)	A new pilot for English leaders that will explore the Centres for Excellence in Maths model and consider how this could benefit teachers of English. There is currently no similar provision available, and we need to increase our understanding of what works in teaching English.
Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA)	A development programme for all basic skills practitioners that offers collaborative action research projects, covering topics identified by teachers. Teachers benefit from dedicated time to explore and address specific areas of practice, to overcome teaching, learning and assessment challenges, and to share effective practice.
Advanced Practitioners (AP)	A professional development programme for current and aspiring advanced practitioners ¹⁰ that delivers training, action learning sets, and conferences. These teachers, who are supporting other teachers in developing their approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, need a dedicated career development programme, and often gain evidence from AP to support their advancement to Advanced Teacher Status, a formal professional status.

¹⁰ 'Advanced Practitioners' is a catch all term used because the FE sector does not have identical job titles, roles and responsibilities across different settings. Here, 'Advanced Practitioners' means highly experienced teachers who have some responsibility, either formally or informally, for supporting other practitioners to develop their own teaching, learning and assessment.

<p>Practitioner Research Programme (PRP)</p>	<p>An accredited research programme that allows practitioners to undertake academic research on maths- and English-related issues in their organisation. This programme seeks to address the unique situational challenges affecting delivery of English and maths that providers face across multiple qualifications whilst delivering learning that reaches across the whole sector. The sector benefits from participants using this learning and research to support change at organisation level and sharing best practice more widely; there are also long-term career development and capability benefits.</p>
<p>Regional Specialist Leads (RSLs)</p>	<p>A means of supporting providers, and English and maths practitioners, through expert and tailored advice and guidance. English and maths challenges are distinct and often heavily contextualised by setting, so providing regionally delivered support assists in developing local communities of practice whilst minimising practitioners' time and effort in addressing issues and exploring CPD.</p>
<p>Essential Digital Skills (EDS)</p>	<p>A means of developing and supporting teachers of the new Essential Digital Skills qualifications, through four strands of targeted activity (online events, case studies, communities of practice, online games), because DfE is investing in these qualifications and the digital entitlement and needs skilled, knowledgeable teachers to ensure successful delivery.</p>