

Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority

Adult Skills Fund - Funding Rules 2026/2027 *

* based on available information at time of issue

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date of Issue</i>	<i>Changes</i>	<i>Approved by</i>
<i>0.1</i>	<i>Initial Draft</i>	<i>DfE Funding Rules 25/6</i>	
<i>0.2</i>	<i>February 26</i>	<i>Re-instatement of 3 year residency rule with all previous exemptions plus new exemption for Hong Kong British Nationals.</i> <i>Introduction of Care Leavers' Support Fund</i> <i>Fully Funded Level 3 Award in Education and Training for a trial period.</i> <i>Funding for the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Green Card for unemployed learners</i>	<i>GLCCA</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>March 26</i>		<i>GLCCA Board (25 Feb 26)</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>July 26</i>	<i>Updated residency rule to align with national DfE policy</i> <i>Updating of Earnings Threshold to £26,800 to align with the DfE</i> <i>CSCS Card Rate confirmed as GLCCA specific aim and rate</i>	<i>GLCCA</i>

		<i>Clarification of Care Leavers' Support Fund eligibility</i> <i>Updating of the following sections to align with DfE rule changes in June 2026:</i> <i>Eligibility - Limited length visas</i> <i>Section 6 - Unemployed</i> <i>Section 3 - What we will not fund</i> <i>Section 17 – Learning Support</i>	
3	August 26	<i>Amendment of Contribution Chart to reflect that 19 – 23 year olds are fully funded and remove "via ASF" comment.</i> <i>Clarification of Level 3 funding lines for legal entitlement and eligibility to align with DfE. Removal of link in section 2.16</i>	

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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 DfE funded Adult Skills Fund (ASF) has replaced the DfE Funded Adult Education Budget (AEB).

The purpose of the ASF is to support adult learners 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 the ASF, further provision for 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 (Tailored Learning/Community Learning/Non-Regulated Learning).

This document replaces the ASF Funding and Performance Management Rules 2025 to 2026. We strongly recommend that Providers review the whole document in conjunction with the GLCCA Performance Management Framework and the GLCCA Funding Rates and Formula Guidance.

Please note that the GLCCA reserves the right to amend these Funding Rules should the need arise.

Headline GLCCA ASF changes for 2026-27

- The earnings threshold for policy entitlements for GLCCA residents is £26,800.
- Residency eligibility is aligned with the national DfE rules.
- Care Leavers' Support Fund – A special Learner Support Fund specifically for Care Leavers. Please see section 2.14 and Annex E. This is to support some of our most vulnerable residents.
- Level 3 Award in Education and Training – section 2.15. This qualification will be fully funded for a trial period of 2026/7 and 2027/8. This is to build capacity in the education and skills sector to meet demand, and we will assess the impact of the change in achieving this.
- Licences to Practice – The Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Green Card (Labourer) can be funded only for unemployed learners who obtain employment within 3 months of their programme end date. This is a 2-year pilot to support employment in a key sector and is subject to change in future years to reflect new opportunities.

Purpose of the document

This document applies to all Providers, and your subcontractors where applicable, who receive GLCCA funded ASF for the 2026 to 2027 funding year (1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027).

These rules do not apply to:

- Apprenticeships
- Advanced learner loans
- Skills bootcamps
- Provision delivered outside of the Combined Authority area

This document forms part of the terms and conditions of funding, and you must read them in conjunction with your funding agreement and the performance management framework. You must operate within the terms and conditions of the funding agreement, these rules, rates and formula and the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) specification. If you do not, you are in breach of your funding agreement with us.

Definitions and the [glossary](#) are included to assist in understanding the terminology and explain technical terms. We may make changes to these rules at any time.

Terminology

The term 'we' refers to the Combined Authority.

The term 'you' or 'Providers', includes colleges, higher education institutions, training organisations, local authorities, specialist designated institutions and employers and any other organisations who receive funding from the Combined Authority to deliver education and training through the devolved ASF. We will use the generic term 'you' or 'Provider' unless the requirements only apply to a specific Provider type.

'Resident/learner' covers those whose provision is funded by the Combined Authority.

'Provision' refers to all learning that we fund, whether it is a regulated qualification or other learning that is not a regulated qualification as detailed in the DFE 'Find a Learning Aim Service' available at <https://findlearningaimbeta.fasst.org.uk> or as agreed with the Combined Authority.

Qualifications will either be from the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) or an Access to Higher Education Diploma recognised and regulated by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

'Learning aims' mean a single episode of learning which could be a regulated qualification, a component of a regulated qualification or Non-Regulated Learning.

'Programmes' mean a coherent package of learning which may include regulated qualifications, components of regulated qualifications or nonregulated learning with clearly stated aims supporting agreed outcomes. We may refer to this document as Funding Rules or the rules.

General Funding Requirements

1. Who we fund

1.1 Eligibility

You must check the eligibility of a learner, including where in England they are resident, at the start of each learning aim and only claim funding for ASF for eligible learners. We will only fund **GLCCA residents** undertaking ASF provision subject to the requirements set out below.

Age

On the first day of learning, a learner must be aged 19 or older on 31 August within the 2026 to 2027 funding year to be GLCCA funded.

Duration

Learners will be eligible for 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.

Potential issues

If an individual starts a learning aim or programme and is not eligible for funding, we will not fund their learning while they remain ineligible.

You must not fund a learner who is unable to complete a learning aim or programme of study in the time they have available or in the length of time specified for the completion of a qualification.

1.2 Residency Eligibility

Individuals will be eligible for the GLCCA funded ASF provision if the learning is taking place in England, and they are a GLCCA resident. The GLCCA resident postcodes can be found here: [Adult education budget \(ASF\) postcode files - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Unless otherwise stated, individuals must be ordinarily resident in the GLCCA area on the first day of learning to meet the residency requirements.

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 those:

- who are here without authority or lawful status
- who are resident in the UK on a student or graduate visa
- who are in the UK on holiday, with or without a visa
- who are in the UK on a sponsorship visa, including skilled worker visas and seasonal worker visas
- whose biometric residence permit or residence permit imposes a study prohibition or restriction on the individual

This list is not exhaustive.

Dependants of all individuals with sponsorship visa status, with the exception of seasonal workers, are eligible for ASF funding.

Learners with limited length visas

You 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, you may at your discretion fund that learner only where there is documented evidence indicating that the learner intends to, and is likely to be eligible to, renew their visa.

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

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

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.

1.3 Asylum Seekers

Asylum seekers are eligible to receive 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 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](#)

1.4 No recourse to public funds conditions

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.

1.5 Learners in the armed forces

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 DWP 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 GLCCA 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.

1.6 Fees and charging

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.

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.

1.7 Qualifying days for funding

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 GLCCA Funding Rates and Formula Guidance.

This does not apply where the learner achieves the learning aim.

1.8 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

A learner could have prior learning or attainment that has been previously accredited by an awarding organisation or could be formally recognised and count towards achievement of a qualification. If this is the case, you must:

- Reduce the funding amount claimed for the qualification aim by the percentage of learning the learner does not need
- 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.

You must not use prior learning to reduce funding for:

- English and maths qualifications up to and including Level 2 or
- Essential digital skills qualifications up to and including Level 1

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 is available in the GLCCA Funding Rates and Formula Guidance.

1.9 Breaks in learning

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.

You must record the date a learner starts a break in learning and the date they restart their learning in the ILR. Further guidance on recording breaks can be found in the DfE's [ILR provider support manual](#).

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 to reflect the break in learning.

You must not use a break in learning for short-term absences, such as holidays or short-term illness.

1.10 What 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. This is due to the [Ministry of Justice](#) funding prison education in England. Please note you can use your GLCCA funded ASF to fund individuals Released on Temporary Licence (RoTL).
- 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 GLCCA funded ASF, where a learner is currently undertaking an apprenticeship and where that training will:
 - offer career-related training that conflicts with the apprenticeship aims
 - be taking place during the apprentice's 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 the learner has previously achieved it, unless it is for any GCSE where the learner has not achieved grade 4 (C) or higher
- A learner to sit or resit a learning aim assessment or examination where no extra learning takes place
- where a learner is undertaking an apprenticeship and where that training will replicate vocational and other learning aims covered by the apprenticeship standard, including English and maths or approved English or maths qualifications which are required for an apprentice to complete their apprenticeship where an apprentice does not already hold a suitable equivalent qualification. The apprenticeship funding route is the primary funding mechanism; the exception is where the employer does not fund English and/or maths. The apprentice may exercise their legal entitlement in this situation, and they can be funded through ASF. Refer to the apprenticeship funding rules for further guidance

1.11 Evidence

You must hold evidence to assure us that you are using the GLCCA funded ASF appropriately. Most evidence will occur from your normal business processes. You must make sure enrolments for the GLCCA funded ASF support your decision to claim funding and support the individual's case for consideration as ordinarily resident in the GLCCA, or any exceptions set out in the Residency [eligibility](#) section.

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.

[Annex D](#) contains the details on the evidence required.

2. GLCCA funded ASF

GLCCA funded ASF includes support for 4 legal entitlements to full funding for eligible adult learners.

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:

- English and maths up to and including level 2 for individuals aged 19 and over who have not previously achieved a GCSE grade A* - C or grade 4 or higher; 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) 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 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below Level 1

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.

Policy Entitlements

Learners who meet the residency eligibility criteria in Section 1 and are below the earnings threshold criteria will also be fully funded for qualifications within policy entitlements that include:

- Free Courses for Jobs
- Level 2 local flexibility
- Tailored Learning (Community Learning)
- HGV and LGV licences
- Level 3 Award in Education and Training (please note, fully funded for all learners regardless of earnings)
- Licenses to Practice – CSCS Labourer Card (Green)
- Care Leavers
- The King's Trust
- ESOL

2.1 Learning for Level 2 and below (including the full Level 2 entitlement)

We will fully fund learners who meet the residency eligibility, are aged 19 and over, and who meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold, to undertake learning:

- Up to and including Level 2 qualifications from the local flexibility offer and/or
- Qualifications from the full Level 2 legal entitlement qualification list

Learners aged 19 to 23 who have not previously achieved a full level 2 qualification must be fully funded, regardless of the earnings threshold, if they choose a qualification from the level 2 legal entitlement list. You must not charge them any course, tuition or examination fees.

Learners who have exhausted their first full level 2 entitlement and do not meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold will be co-funded.

For the funding year 2026 to 2027, Providers can find the qualifications we have approved in the [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#).

2.2 Learning at Level 3 legal entitlement and the Level 3 Free Courses For Jobs (FCFJ)

Learners aged 19 to 23 who have not previously achieved a full level 3 qualification must be fully funded, regardless of the earnings threshold (including the unemployed), if they choose a qualification from the level 3 legal entitlement or FCFJ list. You must not charge them any course fees.

Learners aged 19 to 23 who undertake a qualification from the FCFJ list are funded through your FCFJ funding lines (ILR LDM code 378), and will include the relevant uplift.

For funding year 2026 to 2027, providers can find the qualifications we have approved in the national [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#). Any local additions to this list will be notified.

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 have the option of funding through an Advanced Learner Loan (ALL).

2.3 Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) offer

For Providers with a 26/27 FCFJ allocation, Free Courses for Jobs is a targeted Level 3 offer to support adults who meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold.

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 DfE's funding rates and formula document. This uplift should be used to support delivery of the Level 3 FCFJ offer.

Eligible learners, irrespective of age or when they started their learning, are funded through your FCFJ funding line and will include the relevant uplift

Only 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.

We will fully fund learners who meet the residency eligibility as part of this offer where they:

- Are aged 19 or above on 31 August within the 2026 to 2027 funding year; and enrol on the FCFJ qualifications approved for funding and meet the eligibility of being below the earnings threshold

- Are aged 19 to 23 on 31 August within funding year 2026 to 2027, enrol on the FCFJ qualification approved for funding, have not achieved a full level 3 and earn above the earnings threshold criteria

You must not claim for GLCCA funded 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 FCFJ offer. The criteria for ALL can be found in the [DfE's Advanced Learner Loans Funding and Performance Management Rules](#).

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

- 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
- Category code 49: National Skills Fund Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs short qualification

The Category Code Effective to date must be after the delivery start date.

2.4 English, maths and digital for those aged 19 or older

English and Maths

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 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)

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 the GLCCA funded ASF.

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

Digital Skills

We will fully fund eligible learners, including those who are employed, for the following qualifications:

- Essential Digital Skills Qualification (EDSQ) up to and including Level 1
- Digital Functional Skills Qualifications (DFSQ) up to and including Level 1

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

- Aged 19 or over, and
- Assessed as having digital skills levels below Level 1

2.5 General funding principles for English, maths and digital entitlement

We will fully fund non-regulated English, maths and digital for learners, including those learners 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 the entitlements above.

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

or;

- The national standards for essential digital skills or DfE published digital Functional Skills subject content
- 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.

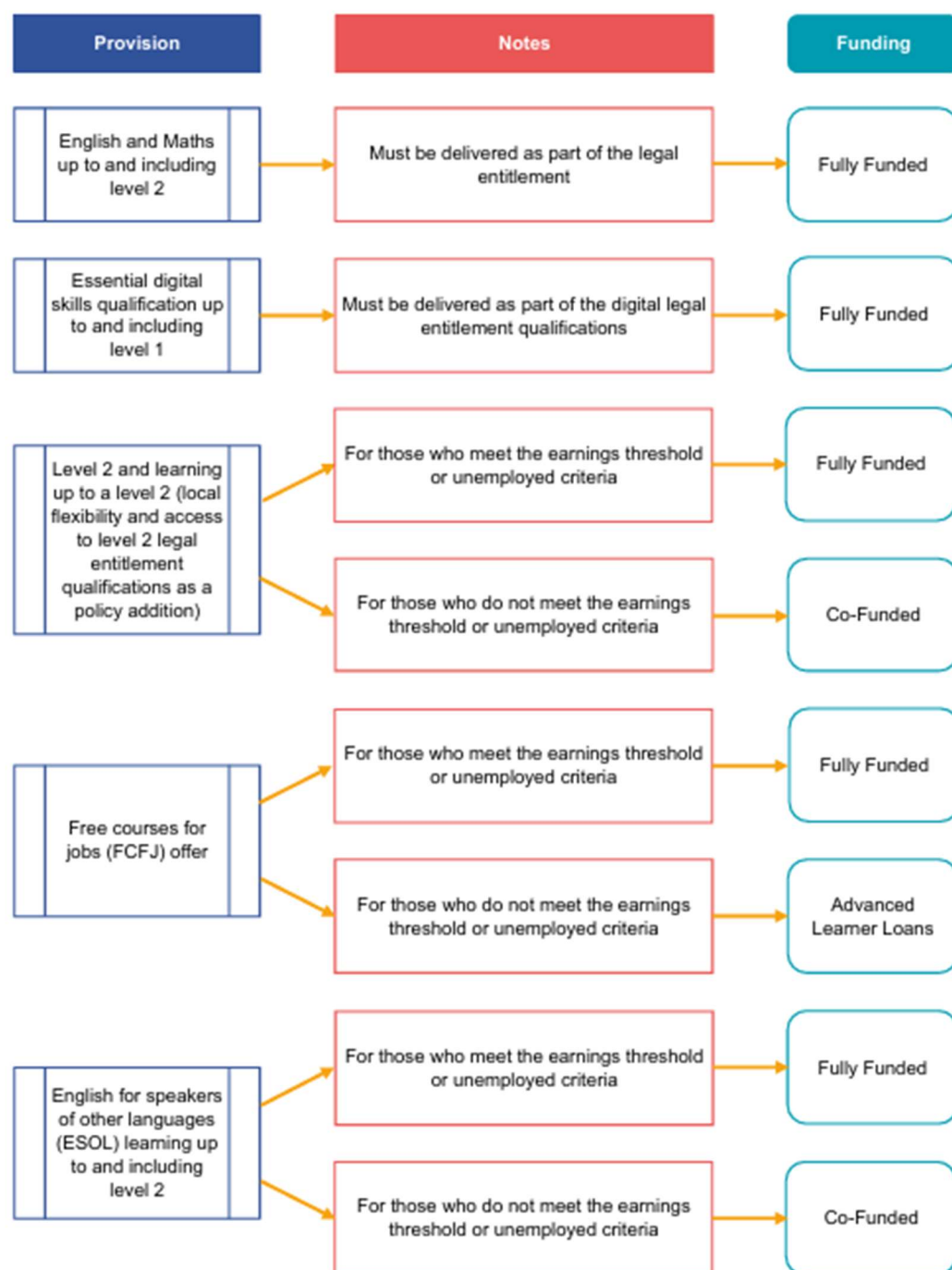
2.6 GLCCA Contribution Charts

Charts 1 and 2 show the level of contribution for GLCCA funded ASF. You can find the text version of these charts in Annex B. The text in bold relates to either contents of this document or external links as shown below.

Chart 1: 19 to 23-year-olds



Chart 2: 24+



2.7 Unemployed

The eligibility criteria for ASF funding includes having earnings below the threshold of £26,800. This includes individuals with no earnings, such as those who are unemployed or economically inactive.

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.

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 Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) (BSI 1), UC (BSI 4) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) (all categories) (BSI 5).

2.8 Earnings threshold for full funding

We have introduced the earnings threshold as part of a new eligibility criteria that enables learners to be fully funded if they earn below £26,800. The policy entitlement includes learners who are unemployed, employed or self-employed. This threshold is specific to the GLCCA.

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. Please note this is not an exhaustive list, but you must evidence your decision to award full funding to an individual who would normally be eligible for co-funding.

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).

2.9 Licences

In addition to on-programme funding, the GLCCA will also pay the cost of the Construction Skills and Certification Scheme (CSCS) Green Card where it is an occupational requirement, at a cost of £58.00 per learner. This is for unemployed learners only to support progression into employment. Where this is funded, evidence of actual progression into work within 3 months of the course's end date will be required. In exceptional cases, the GLCCA may agree additional payment where the cost is above this amount. Please also see HGV and LGV Training below.

Please note the GLCCA is not funding any other Construction Skills and Certification Scheme (CSCS) cards.

See the GLCCA ILR Coding Guidance for full details.

2.10 Heavy goods vehicle driver training

HGV driver training flexibilities were developed to support an increase in HGV and LGV driver training. This offer:

- Includes level 2 qualifications which will prepare learners for HGV and LGV licence acquisition for all vehicles up to category C and E (articulated)
- Includes additional qualifications that are approved for training in this sector throughout the 2026 to 2027 academic year
- Allows all eligible learners, fully funded and co-funded, to claim for the cost of HGV and LGV licences and medical

The offer will be eligible to all learners aged 19+ who reside in a Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority postcode and are 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 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

Claiming Funding of Additional elements

Unless specified as part of a bespoke offer, Providers must:

- Use learning aims that are marked with category code 50: HGV, to identify an approved qualification.
- Category code 51: HGV Medical for the additional learning aim to represent the HGV medical

- 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 licence and medical aim, to generate reimbursement funding for these activities
- Have criteria for how you will administer and distribute your funds
- Retain and provide 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 as agreed with the Combined Authority

2.11 Work placement for 19- to 24-year-olds

We will fully fund individuals for a work placement who meet the criteria in the Who we Fund section where they: are aged 19 to 24 on 31 August within the funding year 2026 to 2027; 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 JSA or 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 GLCCA Funding Rates and Formula guidance. Providers must use learning aims that are marked with Adult Skills Fund – Work Placement, refer to the GLCCA 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

2.12 The King’s Trust Team Programme

The King’s Trust Team Programme 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. We fund the team programme. Providers in partnership with the King’s Trust run and manage it on a local basis. To deliver the team programme, you must get approval from The [King’s Trust](#) before commencing delivery.

GLCCA will fund eligible learners aged 19 to 25 using the national DfE funded [funding methodology](#). Please also refer to The King’s Trust section in the [funding rates and formula guidance](#).

2.13 English for speakers of other languages

ESOL qualifications are part of the ASF learning at level 2 and below offer, please refer to this section for eligibility criteria.

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 GLCCA Funding Rates and Formula Guidance document.

Advance notice: GLCCA will not fund ESOL learning aims, whether accredited or non-accredited, from 1 August 2027. This includes Tailored Learning.

2.14 Care Leaver Support Fund

GLCCA will provide an enhanced package of support for Providers that deliver ASF funded training to Care Leavers aged 19-25 (*aged 19-25 as of 31/08/2026*) of up to £1,500 per Care Leaver and must be used for reasonable expenses that would support the learner to progress to higher levels of learning or employment. The Support Fund can be claimed when a learner is studying a programme of learning at 60GLH or above. This should be claimed through the EAS. The provider must keep evidence of expenditure in the same way they would for general learning or learner support. The Authority advises providers to build this into their own Learning/Learner support policies.

Please see [Annex E](#) for full details.

2.15 Award in Education and Training

For 2026/27 and 2027/28, GLCCA will fully fund the level 3 Award in Education and Training (AET).

Funding flexibility is intended to test different approaches to attracting new entrants into FE teaching who may otherwise not have the opportunity to train to teach.

All learners will be fully funded for the 26/27 and 27/28 academic years. Funding is not guaranteed to continue after this pilot period.

2.16 Tailored Learning

Nationally as part of the new ASF, the term Tailored Learning brings together what was ASF Community Learning, formula-funded ASF Non-Regulated Learning (previously delivered through adult skills) and any new employer-facing innovative provision that is not qualification based. 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 ASF. It will, however, also support wider outcomes including using it to improve health and wellbeing, equip parents/carers to support their child's learning and develop stronger communities.

You have the flexibility to use your Tailored Learning funding in line with the ASF formula funded methodology (funding model 38), to meet local demand. This flexibility works one way; you cannot use your

ASF formula funded allocation to fund additional Tailored Learning, and we will not fund above the value stated in your contract.

You can use the amount of Tailored Learning funding (stated in your appendix 1) to deliver regulated provision to meet local demand. If you do deliver regulated learning, you must enrol learners following GLCCA funded ASF eligibility requirements set out in the GLCCA contribution charts above.

You must not use Tailored Learning funding for learning that is:

- Eligible for funding through an advanced learner loan
- Primarily or solely for leisure purposes. We define learning for leisure purposes as learning where the primary or sole intent of the learning is for leisure

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 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

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.

You can support learners aged under 19 if they meet both of the following, they are:

- A parent, carer or guardian attending provision delivered through family learning
- Funded through Tailored Learning using funding model 11 in the funding model field (refer to ILR guidance for more information)

Tailored Learning courses are delivered and reported on the ILR under the following purpose types, please refer to the 2026 to 2027 ILR specification for further details:

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

Learner outcomes of Tailored Learning courses are reported on the ILR.

The eligibility principles we apply to Tailored Learning provision are as follows:

- 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. That includes regulated qualifications that are not currently approved for funding
- It must not be above notional level 3

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.

Providers must have a fair and transparent fees policy in place. Providers are asked to collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot. Your fees policy must be available on your website and, where appropriate, in the venues where you deliver Tailored Learning.

2.17 Funding for developing innovative provision

Funding for developing innovative provision enables eligible Providers to earn up to 3% of their ASF allocation on the development of innovative provision. The purpose of this flexibility is to encourage local innovation and to support eligible Providers to be able to develop new provision, in partnership with local employers and others.

We expect that provision developed using this flexibility reflects the priorities outlined in the local skills improvement plans.

You have the flexibility to use all, or some, of the additional 3% and you must use this flexibility to fund the development costs of establishing new provision. This includes:

- research and developments costs to support work with large employers and/or local SME/micro businesses to scope and develop non-accredited provision bespoke to that employer
- project management costs to support the costs of overseeing the project development and setting up of new non-accredited provision. It could also cover the staff costs of developing and preparing new qualifications for submission to DfE/awarding bodies approval processes
- training for the trainer developing training for teaching staff to be able to deliver provision in new and emerging fields such as green skills and artificial intelligence

You must be able to demonstrate that the above activity has been delivered and ensure you clearly document and retain records as evidence of the complete breakdown of costs that have been incurred and paid.

This evidence may well form part of the documentation comprised of your normal financial systems and processes which demonstrate clearly the different costs specifically spent from this funding such as direct costs (such as invoices, expenses), personnel costs (such as payroll, time records) and any indirect costs (how these have been calculated).

You must complete the earning review claim and submit this according to the published deadline in the Performance Management Framework.

You must not use this flexibility to claim:

- Funding for learners, including those where new provision is being piloted
- For any capital costs, building/estates refurbishments, maintenance and restoration

2.18 Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

ASF does not fund learning for learners aged 19-24 who have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP). This provision must be funded using the DFE 16-19 funding methodology which is not available through the GLCCA.

2.19 Support Funding

The GLCCA funded ASF'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 GLCCA funded ASF allocation enables you to claim learning support and/or learner support funding to meet the additional needs of learners.

Support for learners undertaking Tailored Learning is funded from within the Tailored Learning allocation.

2.20 Learning Support

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.

Learning support must not be used to deal with everyday difficulties that are not directly associated with a learner's learning on their programme.

You must:

- Carry out and document a thorough assessment to identify the learner's learning difficulty and/or Disability – the cost of this assessment cannot be claimed through ASF
- Agree and record the assessment and outcome of your assessment in the evidence pack

- Record details of the reasonable adjustments required and how support will be planned and delivered
- Record and retain the appropriate evidence to demonstrate that the planned support has been delivered
- 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, unless a learning aim is delivered in less than one calendar month. In this case you may claim the entire cost through EAS.

Exceptional Learning Support claims above £19,000

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) but only for the amount above 19,000. The amount up to 19,000 should be claimed through the monthly rate and any excess funding through the EAS. 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.

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 cost form](#).

To claim exceptional learning support for a learner aged 19 to 24 you must confirm why the individual 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 individual does not need an EHC plan.

When you claim exceptional learning support 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.

2.21 Learner support

Learner support is available to provide financial support for learners 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 DfE funded ASF learners (set out in the Who we Fund section) where they need to live away from home in order to access provision
- ICT devices and connectivity to support disadvantaged learners who cannot undertake online delivery
- Care leaver support fund

You must not claim more than 5% of your total learner support 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.

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. 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
- Claim funding in a timely way through the ILR and or Earning Adjustment Statement. Overall, Learner Support and Learning Support Funding claimed should be shown on the earnings review claims when submitted.
- 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 ASF support fund (or loans bursary where appropriate) to support specific provision funded by either ASF or ALL where a learner is on 2 courses at the same time.

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 or released on temporary licence
- 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

2.22 Learner Hardship

You can use learner 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
- To support continuing traineeship learners, including the work placement element

In exceptional circumstances, you can use learner hardship funds to assist with course fees for learners who need financial support to start or stay in learning. 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.

2.23 20+/Childcare

You can only use childcare funding to pay for childcare with a childminder, provider or childminder agency, registered with Ofsted.

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 creche

You must not use childcare for those aged 20 years or older to top up childcare payments for those receiving Care to Learn payments.

2.24 19-year old learners - Care to Learn

Learner support may also be used to provide further help with childcare costs for 19-year-old learners in receipt of Care to Learn whose 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 institution 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.

2.25 Residential Access Funding

You can use residential access funding to support DfE funded ASF learners who meet eligibility criteria in the Who We Fund section, 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
- 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 you evidence the costs that make up your claim represent value for money for the local area
- publish your rates where you have your own residential facilities

2.26 ICT Devices and Connectivity

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

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

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

You must maintain an up-to-date record of the loan and return of devices to learners.

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

2.27 Job Outcome Payments

The earnings method principles changed for grant funded providers starting aims on or after 1 August 2024. In previous years 20% of funding was held back and only earned on achievement of the learning aim; this will continue for procured contracts. This 20% element will continue to be earned on completion for grant-funded providers for new starts from 1 August 2024. We therefore refer to 'achievement /completion' and 'achieves/completes' to reflect the difference. For more information, please refer to the GLCCA Funding Rates and Formula Guidance

For fully funded learners who are unemployed we will pay 50% of the completion/achievement payment if they start a job before completing/achieving the learning aim. If the learner then completes/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 4 consecutive weeks
- where the learner was claiming benefits relating to unemployment, they must also declare that they have stopped claiming these.

Annex A: Devolution of adult education functions

As a devolved authority GLCCA has the responsibility for funding ASF to its residents. Details of all powers and funding that have been devolved to individual areas can be found through the [local government association website](#).

Annex B: GLCCA contribution charts text version

Lists 1 and 2 are the text version of charts 1 and 2 and show the level of GLCCA funded ASF.

Chart 1: 19- to 23-year-olds

- English and maths for those aged 19 to 23 up to and including level 2 - Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement - Fully funded
- essential digital skills qualifications up to and including level 1 - Must be delivered as part of the digital legal entitlement qualifications - Fully funded
- first full level 2 entitlement (excluding English & maths) - First full level 2 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications - Fully funded
- learning aims up to and including level 2 (Local flexibility offer) - For those who meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria - Fully funded. For those who do not meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria - Co-funded
- first full level 3 legal entitlement - First full level 3 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications - Fully funded
- free courses for jobs (FCFJ) at level 3 offer – For those who meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria or are above the earnings thresholds and have not achieved a full level 3 – Fully Funded
- free courses for jobs (FCFJ) at level 3 offer – Learners above the earnings threshold – Advanced Learner Loans.
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) learning up to and including level 2; For those who meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria - Fully funded. For those who do not meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria - Co-funded

Chart 2: 24+

- English and maths up to and including level 2 - Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement; Fully funded
- essential digital skills up to and including level 1 - Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications - Fully funded
- level 2 and learning up to level 2 (local flexibility and access to L2 legal entitlement qualification as a policy addition) - For those who meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria; Fully funded. For those who do not meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria; Co-funded
- free courses for jobs (FCFJ) offer - For those who meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria; Fully funded. For those who do not meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria - [advanced learner loans](#)
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) learning up to and including level 2 - For those who meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria - Fully funded - For those who do not meet the earnings threshold or unemployed criteria - Co-funded

Annex C: Qualifications

Full Level 2 Qualification

Full level 2 is the level of attainment which, is demonstrated by:

- a 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

Please refer to the [qualification downloads - list of qualifications approved for funding](#) on GOV.UK or email qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk if you need advice on a previous qualification designation.

Full level 3 Qualification

Full 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

Please email qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk if you need advice on a previous qualification's designation.

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.

Approved qualifications

Where you deliver regulated qualifications and/or their components, you must ensure they are [approved for DFE funded ASF](#) and available on [find a learning aim](#). [Qualifications and public funding](#) provides information on qualifications that are no longer approved for funding.

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 learners a significant period in advance of the learner starting the qualification.

We will fund qualifications that are linked to occupational regulation/licence to practise. You can find more information about these qualifications at the [qualifications website](#).

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.

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 individual will be deemed to have achieved their first full level 2 and/or level 3 qualification.

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.

Annex D: Evidence

Evidence Pack

The evidence pack must contain evidence to support the funding claimed and must be available to us if we need it.

Evidence in the evidence pack must assure us that the learner exists.

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, EAS, funding claims if applicable, and all supporting evidence to substantiate the data that you report
- your assessment and verified evidence of eligibility for funding and a counter signed record of the evidence the learner has provided to support their eligibility for funding
- 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 the 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
- the supporting evidence about why you have claimed funding and the level of funding for a learner
- details and evidence of any learner or employer contribution
- support needs to be identified, including how you will meet these needs and the evidence of that
- that learning is taking or has taken place (including a work placement for continuing traineeship learners) and records are available
- 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, learning aims or continuing traineeship learners. This must be available within 3 months of you reporting it in the ILR

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.

If a subcontractor delivers any provision to the learner, the provider must clearly identify the subcontractor. This must match the information reported to us in the ILR.

Confirmation and signatures

The learner must confirm the information is correct when it is collected. You must have evidence of this, which can include electronic formats.

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.

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.

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.

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

You can only claim GLCCA funded ASF when directly related learning starts. **This would not include enrolment, induction, prior assessment, diagnostic testing, or similar activities.**

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.

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.

You must have evidence that the learning took place, and the learner was not certificated for prior knowledge. 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.

Leaving learning

You must report the learning actual end date in the 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)

You must accurately complete all ILR fields as required in the [2026-2027 ILR Specification Overview](#) even if they are not required for funding purposes. You should refer to the Funding Rates and Formula Guidance document as required.

In addition, you must apply specific GLCCA ILR coding as detailed in the GLCCA ILR Coding Guidance.

Failure to correctly code activity in the ILR may result in a loss of GLCCA funding.

The ILR must accurately reflect the learning and support (where applicable) you have identified, planned and delivered to eligible learners. You must not report inaccurate information that would result in an overstatement of the funding claimed.

Where your data does not support the funding claimed, we will take action to correct this, and we could recover funds you overstated.

Self-declarations by learners

All self-declarations must confirm the learner's details and describe what the learner is confirming for requirements set out in this document.

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.

Annex E: 19-25 Care Leavers Support Fund

As part of our commitment to support Care Leavers, the Combined County Authority will fund a Care Leavers' Support Fund for young people aged 19-25 under the care of our constituent councils.

Purpose of the Support Fund

The purpose of the Care Leavers' Support Fund is to raise awareness of adult education as well as remove barriers to participation for this important group of learners and enable Care Leavers to overcome any financial barriers to learning. The defined groups reflect that these learners are unlikely to be receiving financial assistance from parents or carers, so may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate.

Providers may utilise the Care Leavers' Support Fund to incentivise participation, attendance, attainment, and progression to higher levels of learning or employment.

For the 2026/27 academic year, Combined County Authority funded ASF Providers will be able to utilise funding from their ASF Learner Support Fund allocation to provide financial support to Care Leavers enrolled on a qualification programme of 60GLH or longer, of up to £1,500. Learners should be awarded the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the types of costs they have and not be automatically awarded £1,500.

Providers must ensure they have a clear and accessible policy or statement setting out how they will use the Support Fund, the eligibility criteria they use and any terms and conditions they set. Funding should be claimed through the EAS.

Institutions must ensure learners are eligible for the financial support for defined vulnerable groups in each year they require support.

We encourage institutions to provide support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund by making payments in kind where possible, for example breakfasts, lunches, equipment etc. While Providers do have flexibility to provide vouchers or small petty cash payments, based on the Care Leaver's individual circumstances, Providers must not make Support Fund payments as regular payments for living costs. This is out of scope of the Support Fund, and any such payments would be subject to the Social Security Amendment (Students and Income-related Benefits) Regulations 2000.

Eligibility for the Care Leavers' Support Fund will be:

Care Leaver Definition

You must obtain an official letter from a named social worker within the relevant local authority responsible for providing the learner's leaving care services. The letter must confirm the learner's status as a Care Leaver and that their address is within the Greater Lincolnshire area. You must ask for evidence from each learner and retain copies for audit purposes.

Age

A learner must be aged 19 or over but under 25 at 31 August 2026 to be eligible for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund in the 2026 to 2027 academic year.

These learners aged 19+ can receive support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund only while they attend education or training **funded** through **Greater Lincolnshire** Combined County Authority contracted ASF Learning provision, if their eligibility continues, and their institution considers they need the support to continue their participation.

Postcode

To be eligible for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund 19-25, learners must **be resident within Greater Lincolnshire and** be in the care of our constituent councils.

Care Leavers' Support Funds must not be awarded to learners enrolled at another institution, where that institution also receives public funding for the learner.

Learners aged 19 – 25 enrolled on higher education qualifications are not eligible for support under this scheme.

Eligible education provision

To qualify for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund, eligible learners must be participating in provision of over 60GLH, that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (for example Ofsted). The

provision must be funded by ASF. Therefore, Apprentices and employer-funded schemes are ineligible for funding from the support fund.

Learners who are not funded or eligible for ASF are not eligible for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund.

Evidence of eligibility

Providers must obtain proof that learners meet the criteria for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund and that they fully meet the definition of a Care Leaver. Institutions should ask for evidence from each learner and retain copies for audit purposes.

Claiming funding

All Combined County Authority funded Providers may use their Learner Support Fund allocation to award payments to Care Leavers. Funding will be claimed via the Earnings Adjustment Statements.

Providers may Vire funds into the Care Leaver Support Fund from their main ASF allocation, as necessary. In future years, a notional allocation may be made to support planning, based on past take-up.

As a matter of principle, no eligible Care Leaver should be denied financial support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund in the 2026/27 academic year, due to insufficient allocation of Learner Support Funds. In the event a Combined County Authority contracted Provider has insufficient allocation to pay Care Leaver Support Funds, a request for additional funding may be made in-year.

ASF Evaluation

The impact of this policy will be evaluated, and all participating Providers must contribute to the evaluation. This will also enable Providers to propose improvements to maximise impact.

Case Studies

Subject to learner consent, we will request case studies to demonstrate the impact of the Care Leavers' Support Fund.

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.
Advanced learner loan	Advanced learner loans are available for individuals aged 19 or above to undertake approved qualifications at levels 3 to level 6, at an approved provider in England. Advanced learner loans give individuals access to financial support for tuition costs similar to that available in higher education and is administered by Student Loans Company.
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.
ASF funding methodology	The funding methodology for individuals aged 19 and over, participating in ASF learning.
Benefit Status Indicator (BSI)	Complete the Benefit Status Indicator (BSI) to identify the claimant is in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance (BSI 1) Universal Credit (BSI 4), or Employment and Support Allowance (all categories) (BSI 5).
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.

Term	Description
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.
Components of regulated qualification	A subset of a qualification, which could be a unit.
Continuing learners	Learners who commenced learning in a previous funding year and remain in learning as of 1 August 2026.
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, and the delegation of those functions to the Mayor of London under section 39A of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, in relation to their areas.
Digital Entitlement	The study of EDS qualifications for learners who have digital skills assessed at below level 1. Qualifications that are designated up to and including level 1 are Essential Digital Skills qualifications and digital Functional Skills qualifications.
Earnings adjustment statement (EAS)	The form Providers need to fill in to claim funding that cannot be claimed through the Individualised 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 £26,800.

Term	Description
Economically inactive	People who are not involved in the labour market including early retirees, carers and the long-term sick
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.
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. Please refer to appendix A for more information.
European Union	A list of member states is available on the EU website .
Employment status (formerly employed)	The main types of employment status are: - worker employee - self-employed and contractor - director office holder More information on employment status is available.
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	The study of English by speakers of other languages.

Term	Description
GLCCA funded ASF	Funding you can claim from GLCCA for delivery of ASF eligible provision to individuals set out in the who we fund section.
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.
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, Non-Regulated Learning, 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.
Full level 2	The following qualifications are designated full at level 2: General Certificate of Secondary Education in 5 subjects, each at grade C or above, or grade 4 or above a Technical Certificate at level 2 which meets or has previously met the requirements for 16 to 19 performance tables

Term	Description
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 digital 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 GLCCA and Providers who receive funding for education and skills training.
Funding model (11 and 38)	Identifies 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 2025 to 2026 ILR specification
Funding year	The GLCCA s adult funding system operates on a funding year basis, which starts on 1 August and finishes on 31 July.

Term	Description
General Data Protection Regulation	The GDPR is retained in domestic law as the UK GDPR, but the UK has the independence to keep the framework under review. The UK GDPR sits alongside an amended version of the DPA 2018.
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 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.
Learner residency	We use the term resident or residence in this document for different purposes. Residence in the UK, EU and EEA has specific definitions in education law, and this is set out in the residency eligibility section. Following the devolution of adult education functions, there is a new emphasis on residence in England, in determining and evidencing eligibility for GLCCA funded ASF - see who we fund and evidence sections.
	This means the permanent residency of an individual in the GLCCA region (i.e. not a temporary address for duration of learning taking place), immediately prior to enrolment determines eligibility for GLCCA funded ASF.

Term	Description
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.
Learning aim reference number	The unique eight-character code used to identify a specific learning aim.
Learning delivery monitoring (LDM)	A code used as part of the 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.
Learning support	Funding to enable Providers to put in place a reasonable adjustment, set out in the Equality Act 2010 , for learners with an identified learning difficulty and/or disability to achieve their learning goal.
Legal Entitlements	GLCCA funded ASF includes support for 4 legal entitlements to full funding for resident eligible adult learners. These entitlements are set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills and Children Learning Act 2009 and include: English and maths, up to and including level 2, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have not previously attained a GCSE grade A* - C or grade 4, or higher. first full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23, and/or

Term	Description
	first full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23 essential digital skills qualifications, up to and including level 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1
Leisure Learning	Defined as learning where the primary or sole intent of the learning is for leisure. This applies to curriculum intent and to the learner's purpose for undertaking the learning. For example, a learner may participate on a course within the learning aim Creative Arts to improve their confidence, and another to improve their well-being. Similarly, a learner may participate on a course within the learning aim volunteering, active citizenship to develop employability skills, another to contribute to community life.
Local flexibility	Regulated qualifications, and/or their components, that we fund, which is not part of the English and maths, or level 2 or level 3 legal entitlement offer. All regulated that is available for funding through the flexible local offer is listed on find a learning aim .
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 engagement and confidence building employability skills labour market re-entry essential skills (English, maths, digital)
Ofqual	The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation , which regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.

Term	Description
Ordinarily resident	For funding purposes, a person who normally lives in the United Kingdom, are allowed to live there by law, and return there after temporary trips outside the country.
Personal learning record (PLR)	A database that allows individual learners access to their past and current achievement records. These can be shared with schools, colleges, further education training Providers, universities or employers.
Policies	Alongside to the legal entitlements the GLCCA have policy entitlements allowing full funding for residency eligibility learners, over 19 years old, and meet the earnings threshold criteria, these include: level 2 and below, local flexibility, free courses for jobs, work placements, HGV, King's Trust, Tailored Learning
Recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA)	The Learning and Work Institute have published updated RARPA Guidance . This comprises a clear framework designed to support learners through the learning process, identifying key outcomes. It provides a robust approach to quality assurance 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 The Learning and Work Institute .
Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	An assessment method that considers whether a learner demonstrates that they can: meet the outcomes for a qualification or a component of a qualification through knowledge, understanding, or skills they already have and so do not need to undertake a course of learning for that component or qualification
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.

Term	Description
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.
Sector-based work academy programme (SWAP)	Sector-based work academy programme 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.
Self-declaration	A process where the learner can confirm something through his or her own signature.
Skills Bootcamp	A skills bootcamp is a bespoke employer-led level 3 to 5 programme, designed to meet skills needs within the economy. Following a procurement process, the skills bootcamp programme began in August 2022.
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 individuals in certain circumstances to meet their day-to-day living needs.
Study programme	Study programmes are for learners aged 16 to 19 and cover all levels up to level 3. Funding is for each learner, rather than for each qualification and can only have one core aim at a time.

Term	Description
Tailored Learning	For 24/25 Tailored Learning is to be used for Community Learning activity only and FM11 is to be used. All other non-regulated aims will remain formula funded and FM38 is to be used.
Unique learner number	A 10-digit number used to match a learner s achievement to their personal learning record (PLR).
Work placement	A placement with an employer in a workplace setting as part of a continuing learner’s offer.
Young people’s funding methodology	The funding methodology for individuals aged 16 to 19 (and those aged 19 to 24 with an EHC plan). You can access 16 to 19 funding methodology on GOV.UK.