



Guidance for FE providers when submitting evidence to estimate publicly funded enrolments

The government is reforming post-16 qualifications to ensure learners and employers can be confident that they are high quality qualifications that will support progression into higher education or skilled employment.

We are inviting awarding organisations to submit further new level 3 qualifications in the spring in Health and science, Construction and the Built Environment, Digital and Education and Early Years, as well as in the Care Services route. This will continue the process of reforming these routes while the Curriculum and Assessment Review looks at the curriculum more broadly. We know that awarding organisations (AOs) didn't manage to submit all the qualifications they wanted to in these routes in the previous round of reforms and this submission round offers the opportunity to have qualifications in these areas funded from 1 August 2026.

When submitting reformed qualifications, awarding organisations must provide supporting evidence to demonstrate that there is demand for the qualification. You play a key role in this process by assisting awarding organisations to gather this evidence. If an awarding organisation has contacted you asking for a letter of support for either a new technical qualification, or a new alternative academic qualification, they should have outlined the purpose, aims and content of the qualification and how it will support learners to access skilled employment or progression in a particular sector.

If you believe this qualification will be of value for the funding streams in which the awarding organisation has indicated they intend to request approval, (e.g. 16-19, adults, or both), please assist them by providing a letter that sets out the number of publicly-funded enrolments you think the qualification would attract for your institution. We have offered a checklist below of what the letter should cover.

We are looking for letters from institutions that have an ESFA funding agreement to deliver 16 to 19 study programmes, adult skills fund or advanced learner loans. We will also accept letters as evidence, from institutions that are contracted by the mayoral combined authority to deliver the adult skills fund (formerly adult education budget). Please note, DfE understands that the enrolments data you provide will be an estimate with caveats, rather than a definitive number.

This is your opportunity to support the development of reformed qualifications that are linked to new funding approval criteria, such as the direct links to occupational standards for technical qualifications.. So we encourage you to take advantage of this and we appreciate your support with the reforms to post-16 qualifications at Level 3 and below. DfE would like

to also take this moment to thank you for the continuing work you are doing to provide high quality education to learners.

Provider demand letter checklist

Section 1: Provider details

Please include **all of the following**:

- Letter head/provider logo clearly visible on the letter
- Provider name, address and UK provider reference number - UKPRN
- Date the letter is issued
- Title of the qualification(s)
 - A letter can contain support for more than one qualification, but please give each qualification a separate heading so it is clear which one you are attributing potential demand to.

Section 2: Confirm you are either funded by ESFA to deliver study programmes, adult skills fund or advanced learner loans, and/or contracted by mayoral combined authorities (MCAs)

- Please identify the type of funding you receive from ESFA (16 to 19 study programmes, adult skills fund, or advanced learner loans)
- Funding for apprenticeships and/traineeships are not accepted
- Where an institution is contracted by the MCA or GLA, please include a letter from the MCA or GLA confirming this

Section 3: Estimation of publicly funded enrolments from 1 August 2026

- Confirm what the estimated publicly funded enrolments will be on the new qualification for each funding year from 1 August 2026. We understand that this will be an estimate. Please provide the best information you can.
- By publicly funded enrolments, we mean 16 to 19 study programmes, adult skills fund, devolved MCA funding, and advanced learner loans
 - **Do not** include enrolments for apprenticeships and/or traineeships in the estimation
 - The estimate can be made for multiple of academic years to show an increase in predicted publicly funded enrolments

Section 4: Additional supporting information

- Explain how you have estimated your publicly funded enrolments. If it is a new qualification and there is no previous evidence of delivery, but you feel that the qualification is valuable to the sector, please explain why.

Section 5: Closing statement and information about the person who is signing the letter

- We do not require a digital signature, but the letter needs to be signed by a named person who has the authority to sign on behalf of that institution. This could be Head of XX department, lead lecturer in XX, principal/vice-principal, curriculum lead etc.
- Please include all of the following:
 - A closing statement which states “These estimated publicly funded enrolments do not include enrolments for apprenticeships or traineeships”
 - Full name, job title and email address of the person signing the letter

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