

Workforce Development Fund guidance for employers accessing the Workforce Development Fund

What is the Workforce Development Fund (WDF)?

The Workforce Development Fund (WDF) for 2015-16 is a retrospective funding stream from the Department of Health disseminated by Skills for Care. This means that an employer must have directly incurred costs for the qualification units undertaken by their staff before a claim is made through WDF. The fund focuses on the achievement of qualification units and supports the ongoing professional development of staff across the adult social care sector in England. The fund is distributed by Skills for Care via a network of employer led partnerships and large national organisations:

- An 'Area or National partnership' is a collection of social care employers who come together to 'pool' their workforce development needs.
- A 'Large National' organisation is a social care provider that has 1000+ employees, provides services to a substantial number of service users and operates in two or more Skills for Care areas in England.

The fund is only available to adult social care employers in England.

The application process

Organisations and partnership leads submitted funding applications to Skills for Care. Funding allocations were agreed and grants were awarded to successful applicants in April 2015.

How do I become eligible for funding?

There are three things that you must do before you become eligible for WDF:

1. Have joined a partnership by completing a member's declaration form and submitting to the grant holder.
2. Comply with NMDS-SC requirements or be prepared to meet these prior to claiming funding. We have also developed a guidance document – NMDS-SC completion guidance.
3. Have employees who are completing eligible qualification units against which you want to claim funding, see the acceptable units list.

What is the role of the grant holder within a WDF partnership?

The grant holder is responsible for disbursement of the WDF to partnership members, and for supporting those members to comply with Skills for Care's eligibility criteria and evidence requirements. Grant holders must also ensure that as far as practically possible partnerships are open to all members within the health or social care sector, including micro-employers.

How do I find a partnership?

Partnership details have been advertised on Skills for Care's website from April 2015. From the [Accessing WDF via a partnership](#) page choose a link to national partnerships or partnerships in

your area. You will be able to review the partnerships and contact the one you would like to join, via the details displayed on the webpage. If you operate in the local authority areas advertised, where funds can be claimed directly from Skills for Care, please follow this [link](#) and use the information, guidance and forms which are available here.

How do I join a partnership?

You need to check that you are aware of Skills for Care's eligibility criteria as outlined above. Once you are aware of the criteria you then need to complete a member's declaration form and submit it to the grant holder. Some grant holders may ask for additional information to support your application.

How do I comply with the NMDS-SC requirements?

Read the [NMDS-SC completion guidance](#).

For an establishment to meet the NMDS-SC requirements for the Workforce Development Fund in 2015-16, the following three things must be completed:

1. An establishment which has completed an NMDS-SC organisational record before 1 April 2015 must fully update its organisational data.
2. The establishment must fully complete individual NMDS-SC worker records for a minimum of 90% of its total workforce (this includes any staff who are not care-providing).
3. Individual records for workers completed before 1 April 2015 which are included in the 90% calculation must be both fully completed and updated.

Once the above requirements have been met, an establishment will be able to claim WDF until 31 March 2016.

How will I know when I have met the NMDS-SC requirements for WDF?

Log into your NMDS-SC account and from the left hand menu click on reports. Choose 'My WDF NMDS-SC requirements report'. This will tell you whether your establishment is 'eligible' or 'not eligible' in terms of meeting the NMDS-SC requirements for WDF. Where an establishment is not eligible, this report will show whether this is due to the establishment data or the worker data. You can then run the 'My establishment report' and / or 'My worker list' to identify gaps in the data. As these are live reports, you can update your NMDS-SC information and rerun the reports to get an updated position.

Parent establishments can run 'My WDF NMDS-SC requirements parent report'. This will show which of your subsidiaries are 'eligible' or 'not eligible' in terms of meeting the NMDS-SC requirements for WDF. If you cannot see data relating to your subsidiaries via this report, this will be because of the data sharing permissions set by the subsidiary, which will have been set so that data is not shared with the parent account.

How do I claim funding?

Once your application has been approved by the grant holder and a member of your staff has completed an eligible unit the learning provider must complete a qualification unit summary sheet in full and send it to the grant holder. Skills for Care has a template unit summary sheet that can be used, or you may submit an alternative version supplied by your learning provider, as long as it captures these items:

- Candidate name

- Candidate registration number
- Unique learner number
- Name of Awarding Organisation
- Name of Learning Provider or Centre number
- Unit code
- Unit title
- **Internal Verifier date**
- **Internal Verifier signature**

Has to be dated between 1 January 2015 and 31 March 2016

It is important to note that a maximum of 60 credits per learner can be claimed in any financial year so it is strongly recommended that you secure written agreement from the learning provider at the outset that fully completed unit summary sheets will be provided free of charge on a regular basis to enable WDF to be claimed. The financial year for 2015/16 is 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

In lieu of a unit summary sheet or learning provider equivalent, we will accept a copy of the learner's certificate, with a summary of units completed.

Copies of certificates being used as evidence must contain the following information:

- Candidate name
- Candidate registration number
- Unique learner number
- Our unit code as per the acceptable units list (our unit codes will need to be written on, if the awarding organisation uses different codes)
- Name of units completed
- The date of issue of the certificate must fall within our advertised dates for the funding year, so 1 January 2015 – 31 March 2016 for 15/16.
- Name of Awarding Organisation
- Name of Learning Provider or centre number

Each WDF grant contains 5 milestones which are as follows:

30 June 2015

30 September 2015

30 November 2015

29 January 2016

31 March 2016

These deadlines are applicable to the grant holder; you must check with them what timeframes you must work to in order for them to achieve these deadlines.

What happens next?

- The grant holder reviews the evidence received and for fully evidenced eligible units submits funding claims to Skills for Care in line with the grant milestones.
- Skills for Care reviews claims received and pays the grant holder.
- The grant holder then pays their member. WDF partnership grant holders have to pay the funding directly to their members and cannot pay the WDF to a third party such as a learning provider under any circumstances.

How does the process of claiming WDF differ for large national organisations who claim funds directly from Skills for Care?

- Skills for Care has contracted directly with a number of large national organisations. These organisations need to submit an organisation declaration form to Skills for Care which details the NMDS-SC id, name and address for all subsidiaries for which WDF will be accessed and CQC provider and location ids if applicable.
- The NMDS-SC requirements must be met as detailed above.
- Completed unit summary sheets, or equivalent, must be submitted to the lead contact within your organisation to enable them to submit a claim for funding.

Who can help me?

- For queries relating to claiming the Workforce Development Fund please contact your grant holder.
- For general enquiries about the Workforce Development Fund please email wdf@skillsforcare.org.uk.
- For information about any other Skills for Care resources or projects or the ways Skills for Care can support you, please contact info@skillsforcare.org.uk or 0113 2411275
 - For NMDS-SC queries please contact the NMDS-SC Support Service on 0845 8730129 or nmds-support@skillsforcare.org.uk

If you have any feedback about the Workforce Development Fund please email wdf@skillsforcare.org.uk