

Bitesize Briefing Workforce Hub Sector Qualification Strategy (Nov 2008)

The Workforce Hub was funded to start the work to develop a Sector Qualification Strategy for the Third Sector across the UK. The project is funded by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills and has three parts.

1. The development of Three Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) reports
2. The development of the Sector Qualification Strategy (SQS)
3. Development of an action plan to implement the SQS

The Hub has completed the first stage. This involved writing three reports, which will be published on the Hub website.

1. A Report that sets out the skills gaps and needs across the Sector. This will also include a breakdown of the policy issues relating to learning and skills and their possible impact on the Sector as well as some work on scenarios that may well affect the Sector and impact on future skills needs.
2. A report that looks at the provision of learning opportunities across the UK concentrating on the accredited learning but capturing a flavour of other learning that is accessed.
3. A report that looks at the gaps between supply and demand and that starts to make recommendations for the future that will enable the Sector to better improve the skills of its workforce, both paid and unpaid.

The second part of the project, the development of the Sector Qualification Strategy is due to be completed by the end of February 2009. This stage will involve consultation to get the views of stakeholders both within the Sector and also other who work with the Sector on learning and skills issues.

Following completion of a consultation document at the end of November, a 12 week consultation process will begin.

The consultation will be both on-line as well in person at events. We will be working with the Sector as well as with other stakeholders to ensure that as many opinions are gathered as possible.

Sector Skills Body for the Third Sector

The news that the Hub has been funded for stage 2 has coincided with the announcement of a new skills body for the Third Sector; this will affect how the project develops as this body will take on responsibility for the action plan. The importance of the SQS is therefore two fold as it will not only influence government and the LSC but it will set the agenda for the new skills body.

The new sector skills body currently sits with Skills for Justice, but will be set up as an independent body with £2.5m funding until 2011. This body will then take over the Workforce Hubs role in the areas of skills and occupational standards.

To find out more about the project or to get involved with the reference group see www.ukworkforcehub/sqs or email mark.freeman@ukworkforcehub.org.uk