



GUIDANCE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ESF 2007 – 2013 PROGRAMME IN ENGLAND AND GIBRALTAR

Manual 3

Non CFO beneficiary requirements and guidance

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3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This manual sets out the requirements for managing ESF operations and projects outside of the main co-financing arrangements and for Technical Assistance projects. This guidance takes full account of the ESF Operational Programme, national rules and the Structural Fund regulations. The Structural Fund regulations relevant to the delivery of ESF funded activity are:-

- *Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006* – laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund
- *Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006* of the European Parliament and of the Council – on the European Social Fund
- *Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006* – setting out rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 – the “implementing regulations”

3.1.2 Under the Structural Fund regulations, an organisation responsible for spending ESF funds is called a “beneficiary”. A beneficiary is defined in Council Regulation 1083/2006 as:-

“an operator, body or firm, whether public or private, responsible for initiating or initiating and implementing operations. In the context of aid schemes under Article 87 of the Treaty, beneficiaries are public or private firms carrying out an individual project and receiving public aid”.

3.1.3 Note that individuals who are supported through ESF activity are referred to as ‘participants’. ESF eligibility rules which apply equally to CFO and non CFO managed provision are included in Manual 1 of the ESF guidance. Any changes to this guidance will be notified on the ESF website. ESF Division will update this guidance every three months and highlight any changes made. ESF beneficiaries will be bound by any changes to the guidance notified on the ESF website.

3.2 Circumstances

3.2.1 Whilst the vast majority of ESF funded activity in the Convergence and phasing in areas will be delivered through co-financing, in exceptional circumstances some activities can be managed by a process of application for a grant. The types of circumstances where this might happen are, for example:-

- a CFO does not have sufficient match funding to cover all the activities within a priority – phasing-in areas have very heavily front loaded expenditure profiles
- no CFO has a remit for the particular type of activity needed to deliver the regional ESF framework – the Convergence priorities cover a wider range of activities than those for the competitiveness and employment priorities.

3.2.2 As there are no CFOs in Gibraltar, the guidance in this section applies to all Gibraltar projects. All activity except Technical Assistance in non phasing regional and competitiveness areas is fully co-financed.

3.3 Calls for proposals and applications

3.3.1 In the circumstances described above, the Managing Authority will issue calls for project proposals that might be confined to, for example,

- a specific type of activity
- a specific target group
- a specific geographical area
- combinations of the above.

3.3.2 This should not be confused with the “alternative bidding” system used in the 2000-2006 programmes as the calls for proposals outside Gibraltar will have very specific targeting. The application form to be used is at annex 1.

3.4 Appraisal of applications.

3.4.1 Applications will be appraised by staff from the GO or from the Government of Gibraltar to judge to what extent the expected criteria are met. The intention is not to judge how well the form has been completed, but whether the proposed project and delivery arrangements will provide a best fit with the provision that is required and will be delivered in a way that meets regulations.

3.4.2 In order to have a transparent system that differentiates between separate applications, a rating system as follows will be used for the items in the application:

- **Excellent** – consistently strong in all aspects of the criterion;
- **Good** – consistently good in all aspects of the criterion. Minor weaknesses are capable of remedy and compensated for by strengths in other areas;
- **Acceptable** - weaknesses are capable of remedy but need to be addressed prior to contract or subject to specific conditions in offer letter, or;
- **Unacceptable** – the information provided is insufficient to allow for an

effective assessment to be made or assessor satisfied that criterion cannot be met.

3.4.3 Some questions are “gateway” questions as indicated in the appraisal framework below. If any gateway question is given a rating of “unacceptable”, it means that the whole application will be rejected.

3.4.4 Taking each question in turn, with the respective score for the question, the appraisal team will apply the expected standards and will make a formal signed and dated record of the appraisal. The appraisal criteria are at Annex 2. A copy of the appraisal pro-forma is at Annex 3.

3.5 Applications for Technical Assistance (TA)

3.5.1 In broad terms, Technical Assistance is eligible to support:

- preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and control activities of the Operational Programme;
- activities to reinforce the administrative capacity for implementing the funds at national and regional levels;
- the Operational Programme’s publicity and communication strategy;
- support for the cross-cutting themes of gender equality and equal opportunities and sustainable development;
- the development and implementation of programme monitoring and evaluation systems;
- support for the delivery of transnational and inter-regional activity;
- support to third sector networks to support participation by voluntary and community organisations in the programme, and ;
- in the Convergence Objective only, technical assistance can be used to invest in administrative capacity to facilitate programme delivery and strengthen capacity in input analysis and evaluation, including supporting the implementation of the programme in such a way that it is aligned with the Local area Agreement for Cornwall where appropriate.

3.5.2 Applications for Technical Assistance must be in accordance with either:

- the England TA strategy for applications for central funding; or
- the appropriate regional TA strategy for applications for regional funding.

3.5.3 Applications will be made on the form at Annex 4. Appraisal of applications for TA funding will follow the criteria at Annex 5 and be recorded on the pro-forma at Annex 6.

3.6 Obligations

Project providers are required to use their best endeavours to deliver the activities, outputs and results set out in the application form and funding agreement, and contribute fully to regional expenditure targets required to meet the European Commission's N+2 targets.

3.7 Information and publicity

Introduction

3.7.1 This section of the guidance:

- sets out the information and publicity requirements for the management and delivery of activity covered by the application form.
- is supplemented by additional publicity information and resources on the ESF website (www.esf.gov.uk), including: the Communication Plan for the England and Gibraltar ESF programme for 2007-2013; downloadable versions of the 2007-2013 ESF logo and supporting guidance on its use; and information on the distribution and display of ESF plaques and posters.

Complying with Regulations

3.7.2 Project providers must acknowledge the financial support from the European Social Fund and European Union. Provider are responsible for ensuring that all ESF activity (and match funded activity if delivered separately from ESF funded activity)

- is publicised to project participants and the general public.
- complies with the information and publicity requirements of the Secretary of State as set out in the Funding Agreement; and the European Commission as set out in articles 2-10 and Annex I of European Commission regulation (EC) No 1828/2006

Information and Publicity

3.7.3 To meet the regulatory requirements, providers must implement specific ESF information and publicity measures. These must include the following:

- displaying the 2007-2013 ESF logo (downloadable from www.esf.gov.uk along with supporting guidance) and references to financial support from the European Union on all information and publicity measures related to the 2007-2013 ESF programme. These include, but are not restricted to use on:
 - websites, e-communications, correspondence and literature used by the public and participants;
 - ESF programme documents such as application forms;
 - advertisements, press releases and other media targeted materials;
 - any other document concerning the administration of ESF activity. *[NOTE: the 2000-2006 ESF logo must continue to be used to publicise all activities related to the 2000-2006 ESF programme.]*

- displaying an ESF plaque and ESF posters provided by the Managing Authority for the 2007-2013 programme on the main premises. Plaques are provided free of charge by the Managing Authority, and must be positioned in a prominent location where they are clearly visible to staff, participants and others using the building.
- providing details about the project to the Managing Authority for inclusion in the publicly accessible list of CFOs and projects.

3.7.4 In addition, the provider is required to undertake and/or support other measures to publicise the ESF programme that are agreed at national and regional levels and/or which may be required by the Managing Authority. Such measures may arise from:

- the Communication Plan for the 2007-2013 England and Gibraltar ESF Programme (and any updates to the Plan).
- the annual Information and Publicity Plan (developed each year by the Managing Authority).
- requests arising from national, regional or local EU/ESF programme committees and/or publicity networks.
- requests made by the Managing Authority at national or regional level, which may include but are not restricted to the following:
 - planning and delivery of national and regional campaigns or events to publicise ESF;
 - developing and issuing press releases;
 - developing, maintaining and updating (complementary) ESF websites;
 - producing and distributing electronic and/or hard copy newsletters and/or other publicity materials such as booklets;
 - submitting news stories and case studies showcasing activities, outcomes and added value;
 - organising and publicising ESF visits by VIPs such as Government Ministers and representatives of the European Commission;

3.8 List of beneficiaries and operations

The Managing Authority will maintain a list of beneficiaries and operations on the national ESF website. For each region, it will list the names of projects and the project providers, the amount of funding (i.e. sum of ESF and match funding) allocated to the project, and whether the project is live or closed.

The list will be:

- generated from information supplied by CFOs and non co-financed projects to the Managing Authority.
- updated quarterly.
- shared with the European Commission and may also be used on the Commission's website

3.9 Provision of participant level management information

3.9.1 Project providers are responsible for ensuring that participants are eligible for ESF funded support (see Manual 1) and from the target groups in the ESF Operational Programme and regional ESF framework. Providers must report on participant outcomes and results accurately so that programme performance can be monitored and evaluated effectively and accurate feedback on performance can be provided to regional ESF committees, the England monitoring committee and the European Commission.

3.9.2 Providers have to provide the Managing Authority with core information on all ESF and match funded participants. Information is collected when participants start and leave ESF and covers particular characteristics of each participant and the results achieved such as qualifications obtained or gained employment. Information on participants supplied to the Managing Authority will be provided anonymously and will comply with Data Protection Act requirements. The specific participant level management information is shown at Annex 8.

3.9.3 Providers will transfer participant level data electronically to ESF Division quarterly. Failure to submit participant data by required dates may result in payments being suspended. If a provider does not have an individual participant database, arrangements will be made to enable it to enter and update individual participant details directly to the ESFD database through a secure website.

3.9.4 Provision of data at participant level will enable aggregation at various levels e.g. national, regional, by Priority, by participant type. This will enable programme managers to respond appropriately and quickly to emerging performance issues including progress towards outcome and results targets at provider, CFO and programme level. Data will be available to regions to inform delivery of regional ESF frameworks. It will also be used to provide the European Commission with programme level data on ESF participants as required by Annex XXIII of the Implementing Regulation.

3.9.5 Core participant data will be supplemented by participant follow-up surveys and other evaluation activity to ensure a full picture of programme performance and activity is available at all levels. There will be two national follow-up surveys of participants which will report in 2010 and 2013 based on a sample of all participants selected by ESF evaluators. Providers will be required to provide contact details for those participants selected for the surveys, having sought in advance the permission

of the individuals concerned to be contacted.

3.10 Quality

All activity that directly supports participants is subject to inspection by OFSTED, and the same quality standards apply equally to ESF and nationally funded provision. ESF funded activity must not be regarded or portrayed in any way as inferior other activity. Systems must be in place to ensure quality standards and continuous improvement. A copy of the Common Inspection Framework can be found on the OFSTED website at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk> .

3.11 Co-operation with audits

3.11.1 Providers must comply with requests from DWP, National Audit Office, the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors and other authorised organisations to examine any documents held that relate to the delivery of ESF funded activity.

3.11.2 Providers must also provide access to premises where the relevant documentation is held and reasonable assistance (including the provision of onsite, photocopying, facsimile, and telecommunications facilities) to facilitate the examination of such documents.

3.12 State Aids

3.12.1 State Aid rules aim to ensure fair competition and a single common market. Giving favoured treatment to some businesses would:

- harm business competitors;
- risk distorting the normal competitive market; and
- hinder the long-term competitiveness of the Community.

3.12.2 That is why the European Community founding Treaty generally forbids State-funded aid that would favour certain businesses or goods production. The State Aid rules contribute to the effective functioning of the Single Market and European Union economic reform in two key ways:

- They prevent State Aid that would seriously distort competition - thereby helping to achieve a fair market for businesses in all Member States;
- They allow State Aid that promotes economic development and other legitimate policy objectives, where this benefit outweighs any distortion of competition.

3.12.3 There is no precise definition of what constitutes a state aid. However there is a very clear statement of principle that any form of aid to a commercial undertaking – whether provided directly by the state or provided indirectly through ‘State resources’ – is incompatible with the Single Market if it distorts or threatens to distort competition within the Community.

3.12.4 Aid to individuals and most grants to public and not-for-profit organisations, such as voluntary, charitable and cultural bodies, are not affected by State Aid rules. These organisations are only affected when they are involved in commercial activities or compete with commercial organisations.

3.12.5 For most of the 2007-2013 ESF programme the ESF and public match funding provided to providers in Priority will not constitute state aid. Where ESF activity is supporting individuals to improve their employability and help them move closer to the labour market the aid is being provided to the individual and there are no direct benefits for enterprises.

3.12.6 However for those elements of the programme in Priority 2 which provide support to individuals in employment there may be state aid implications because their employers are receiving support towards the costs of training. Where ESF supports individuals in employment to achieve full or part qualifications this may constitute an aid. The new de minimis regulation covering the 2007-2013 programme enables an enterprise to receive up to €200,000 euros in aid (any public resources including ESF) over three fiscal years. Providing such aid is given within the de minimis rules there is no requirement to notify it to the Commission.

3.12.7 To ensure that the requirements of the de minimis regulation are met, scheme administrators must ensure that any award of ESF and other public match funding to an enterprise given under the terms of the de minimis block exemption does not breach the €200,000 (approximately £138,000 at € = 69p exchange rate) ceiling over three fiscal years. Member states are required to keep detailed records of any de minimis aid paid for 10 years. The new de minimis regulation:

- extends the scope of the regulation to marketing and processing of agricultural products with certain conditions and the transport sector (but not to road haulage operations for the acquisition of road freight transport vehicles).
- prohibits the cumulation of de minimis with other block exempted or notified aid schemes for the same costs, and ;
- increases the de minimis level from €100,000 to €200,000 except the road transport sector which remains at €100,000.

3.12.8 Organisations using the de minimis rules must put in place a monitoring system to ensure the limit is not breached. Typically, such a monitoring system will involve:

- asking enterprises receiving support under their scheme to identify all other sources of support (either in cash or in kind) that they have received in the last three years;
- checking if previous de minimis aid is involved, to ensure that the combined assistance does not exceed €200,000 over any three-year rolling period. If the limit is breached, the aid may have to be reduced or refused to ensure the limit is not breached.

3.12.9 The BERR (Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform) State Aid Branch advise writing to each recipient in the following terms:

“The assistance for [...] constitutes State Aid as defined under Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty of Rome and is being granted as ‘de minimis’ aid under Commission Regulation EC/1998/2006. European Commission rules prohibit any undertaking from receiving more than €200,000 euros (approximately £138,000) ‘de minimis’ aid over a rolling three-year period. Any ‘de minimis’ aid granted over the €200,000 limit may be subject to repayment with interest. If you have received any ‘de minimis’ aid over the last three years (from any source) you should inform us immediately with details of the dates and amounts of aid received. Furthermore, information on this aid must be supplied to any other public authority or agency asking for information on ‘de minimis’ aid for the next three years.”

3.12.10 Whilst de minimis rules are straightforward in principle they are difficult and complex to operate in practice because they are not project related and as such rely on individual enterprises being able to identify how much aid and under which schemes they have received support over a rolling three-year period. Where enterprises have exhausted their aid ceilings under de minimis, there is no capacity for further aid through ESF.

3.12.11 The European Commission is developing a new block exemption which is expected to be adopted by June 2008. This will mean that the existing exemptions will be replaced by a ‘super’ block exemption regulation covering training, employment and small and medium sized enterprises. ESF Division will issue further guidance on using this block exemption in ESF supported programmes (if appropriate) when it is adopted. **Until then state aids in the 2007-2013 ESF programme must be dealt with using the de minimis rules.**

3.13 Match funding

3.13.1 Match funding is an essential part of how ESF works. ESF can only meet part of the costs of eligible activity with the balance provided by match funding. Providers are required to provide or obtain from other sources the necessary public match funding to draw down ESF. In the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly convergence objective, match funding must contribute at least 25% of total eligible project costs. In the competitiveness and employment objective match funding must contribute at least 50% of the total eligible costs.

3.13.2 Match funding must come from the public sector – “public match funding”. Details of the source and amount of public match funding must be set out in the application form. Private and “in kind” match funding cannot be used. If organisations other than the provider supply some or all of the match funding, a Public Match Funding Certificate (PMFC) must be attached to the application form for each organisation providing match funding. A copy of the PMFC is at Annex 7.

3.13.3 The responsibilities of public match funders are to:-

- contribute to the actual eligible costs of the project;
- inform the project provider and the Government Office about any changes to the match funding they are providing;
- make sure the funds are in line with the criteria for public match funding;
- make sure the funds used to attract ESF are eligible;

3.13.4 Although the Public Match Funding Certificate should not be considered a legal agreement it is considered prudent to make a formal agreement with the match funder(s) to make sure that they will:

- provide the amount set down in the Public Match Funding Certificate;
- fulfil their responsibilities set out in the Public Match Funding Certificate;
- allow representatives from the EC, DWP, other government bodies, and any other relevant monitoring bodies access to match funding records; and
- maintain clear records as required by EC and ESF regulations and guidance.

3.13.5 A public match funder is an organisation which directly or indirectly receives over 50% of its main funding from central or local government (excluding any EU funding). (This does not include payment for work carried out by private enterprises for the public sector.)

3.13.6 Non-profit making organisations, whether incorporated or unincorporated, registered with the Charity Commission can supply public match funding. The registration must be maintained throughout the period of the claim for ESF support. For fuller information contact the Charities Commission or visit their website. Individuals from an unincorporated organisation may be personally liable if there is any need to repay ESF.

3.14 Eligible expenditure

Detailed guidance on the eligibility of expenditure, which applies both to ESF and match funding, is in Manual 1, section 1.6.

3.15 Profiling

3.15.1 Accurate profiling of planned ESF expenditure is essential to effective financial planning at all levels. Financial profiles enable the Managing Authority to develop financial plans and so ensure that funds are in place to pay providers promptly. Profiles are also used to provide annual financial forecasts which the European Commission uses for its financial planning.

3.15.2 Once the application form has been agreed, the provider is required to produce a profile of expenditure at Priority level. The profile breaks down the ESF and match funding agreed in the application form into quarterly periods. The profile periods are standard, and end on the last day of February, May, August and November. The profile also includes any anticipated project revenue. In addition to financial profiles, providers are also required to profile their participant starts

3.16 Making claims

3.16.1 The claims procedure enables providers to declare eligible expenditure included in the funding agreement and for the Managing Authority to make payments based on expenditure declared. The Managing Authority will not make advance payments to providers. It will reimburse providers for actual ESF expenditure declared. There will be no retention of payments, and final claims will be paid in full subject to satisfactory submission of the final claim.

3.16.2 Interim and final claim arrangements are summarised below. Detailed information on claim and payment arrangements are provided in the guidance notes which accompany the claim forms.

Interim claims

3.16.3 Providers must submit interim claims for payment for the quarters ending on the last day of February, May, August and November, within 20 working days of the quarter end. The Managing Authority must be informed if this timetable cannot be met. There is scope to submit claims outside of these periods if the need arises.

3.16.4 Interim claims must include only expenditure for the period covered by the claim together with any expenditure for previous periods that has not been previously declared. Claims must show the amount of ESF and match funding and a breakdown of expenditure by staff costs, participant costs, other costs, and any revenue received. Providers are also required to declare any ineligible expenditure included in previous claims by making voluntary adjustments and recoveries of funds identified and confirmed as irregularities from previous claim periods.

3.16.5 Where actual expenditure varies by more than plus or minus 15%, providers must provide a reason for the variance. If the next quarterly claim also has variances in excess of 15%, providers must supply a revised profile with that claim.

3.16.6 The number of participant starts in the period must also be provided and providers must have supplied participant management information for the period up to the end date of the previous interim claim.

3.16.7 The interim claim also requires providers to give narrative comments on ESF performance in the period covered by the claim, including any significant issues affecting delivery of the funding agreement. Claims submitted for the period to the end of February will need to provide a narrative report on performance over the previous year. ESF Division will provide guidance in good time on any specific issues that should be covered in the narrative comments for the February claim. The information provided will be used to contribute to the Annual Implementation Report that is sent to the European Commission.

3.16.8 The requirement to provide in-period expenditure claims is a change from the arrangements for 2000-2006 ESF programmes when providers declared expenditure cumulatively. The provision of in-period claims will enable more effective reconciliation and reporting of the recovery of irregularities and any ineligible expenditure included in previous claims – a requirement of the Structural Fund regulations.

Final claims

3.16.9 The claim for final payment is similar in format to the interim claim and provides the final declaration of expenditure and revenue for the agreement.

3.17 Document retention

3.17.1 All documentation relating to the delivery of ESF in the 2007-2013 period must be kept for a period of three years following the closure of the operational programme. This means that documents relating to any aspect of the programme including expenditure; audit; committees; selection of operations and so on, must be kept until the final payment in respect of the operational programme has been received by the Managing Authority.

3.17.2 The rules regarding document retention apply to all organisations involved in delivering and administering structural funds - that is the Managing Authority, Certifying Authority, Audit Authority, any intermediate bodies, co-financing organisations and their providers and non-CFO applicants.

3.17.3 Under Structural Fund regulations organisations are required to retain documents until three years after the European Commission makes the final payment for the programme concerned. As ESF Division is unlikely to make a final request for payment until 2016, documents will need to be retained until 2019 at the earliest. ESF Division will advise organisations of the final date for document retention when it receives the final programme payment from the European Commission.

Electronic retention of documents

3.17.4 Commission regulations allow for documents to be retained as originals or 'in versions certified to be in conformity with the originals on commonly accepted data carriers'.

3.17.5 The regulations allow for the electronic storage of documents provided that they are stored on a recognized data carrier, are certified as being copies of the original, meet national standards and are auditable. Documents must be held on an accepted data carrier. These include:

- photocopies of original documents;
- microfiches of original documents;

- electronic versions of original documents on optical carriers

3.17.6 Each document should be certified as being a true copy (conforming to) of the original. The following declaration satisfies this condition:

I certify that this is/contains a true copy(ies) of the original document(s)

Signed.....Date.....

Position in organization.....

3.17.7 All organisations involved in the delivery of ESF must keep electronic copies for the same length of time as required for paper copies. It is the organisation's responsibility to ensure that the electronic copy of the document can be relied on for audit purposes.

3.18 Audit Trail

3.18.1 Article 60 (f) of Commission Regulation 1083/2006 requires an adequate audit trail to be established. Article 15 of Commission Regulation 1828/2006 outlines the criteria which must be met in order that the Commission may regard an audit trail as adequate. These are that the audit trail:

- 'permits the aggregate amounts certified to the Commission to be reconciled with the detailed accounting records and supporting documents held by the certifying authority, the Managing Authority, intermediate bodies and beneficiaries as regards operations co-financed under the operational programme;
- permits verification of payment of the public contribution to the beneficiary;
- permits verification of application of the selection criteria established by the monitoring committee for the operational programme;
- contains(.....) the technical specifications and financing plan, documents concerning the grant approval, documents relating to public procurement procedures, progress reports and reports on verifications and audits carried out.'

3.18.2 This requirement means a sufficient audit trail must be maintained at Government Offices, at Intermediate bodies, at Co-financing Organisations (CFOs) and at the project delivery level. Audit trails should enable auditors to verify that:

- there is evidence to support the claim and that expenditure has/had been incurred in a proper manner;
- financial management is/was sound;
- applicants comply/ complied with EC regulations and the requirements of their contract;
- interim and project closure report entries are/were supported by evidence of expenditure; and,
- the project represented value for money.

3.19 Cross cutting themes

3.19.1 There are two cross-cutting themes:

- gender equality and equal opportunities; and
- sustainable development (which incorporates environmental sustainability).

3.19.2 EU Regulations require these themes to be promoted during the various stages of the implementation of the programme (**see DN- enter reference – ESF and the Regulatory basis**). The cross-cutting themes, and the providers role in promoting them, will be evaluated during the life of the programme. Their implementation will also be covered by monitoring and audit activities. All providers are expected to comply with relevant legislation.

3.19.3 Cross-cutting themes will be promoted through the dual approach of:

- mainstreaming the themes into the delivery of all projects; and
- supporting specific actions (for example, activities aimed to improve women's participation, or to provide training in environmental management).

3.19.4 Application forms should demonstrate how they will:

- actively promote equal opportunities and gender equality and build them into implementation arrangements;
- build sustainable development (including environmental sustainability) into implementation arrangements;
- help support region-specific cross cutting theme priorities as described in the regional ESF framework for the region.

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities

3.19.5 Providers must take appropriate steps to actively promote equal opportunities in line with their public duty under domestic legislation as well as prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the various stages of implementation, especially in the access of participants to projects. In particular, they must take account of accessibility for disabled people. Providers must ensure any sub-contractors also take appropriate steps to promote equal opportunities and prevent discrimination.

3.19.6 The Managing Authority will examine progress in implementing the cross-cutting themes (including the targets on the participation of women, ethnic minorities, disabled people and older people) when it holds reviews with providers. Providers will be expected to explain action taken to address any under-performance. The Managing Authority may request case studies and examples of good practice (for publicity purposes).

Sustainable Development

3.19.7 Providers will be encouraged to take sustainable development into account in their delivery including taking appropriate action to reduce or mitigate the environmental impact of projects.

3.19.8 The developmental approach will require providers who do not already have a sustainable development policy and implementation plan covering environmental sustainability to prepare an appropriate policy and implementation plan within the first

year of delivering their project. The policy statement should as a minimum cover issues such as:-

- compliance with relevant environmental legislation (for example, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations);
- reduction of waste and energy consumption;
- promotion of recycling
- a commitment to at least explore ways of minimising private transport use and promote public transport usage.

3.19.9 If the provider already has a sustainable development policy and plan which incorporates the above and will cover ESF activity, then it need not produce an additional policy statement and plan. Further guidance and training on Sustainable Development will be developed by the Managing Authority. .

3.20 Complementarity with other EU-funded programmes

3.20.1 Where appropriate, ESF activities may complement activities financed through other EU programmes. However, ESF activities must not duplicate activities financed by other EU programmes, and must not support activities which would otherwise be financed by other EU programmes.

European Regional Development Fund Programmes

3.20.2 ESF skills and employment actions may complement European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) activity as identified in regional ESF frameworks. The Operational Programme is not expected to finance activities that fall within the scope of ERDF.

Rural Development and Fisheries Programmes

3.20.3 The Operational Programme contains the following demarcation criteria with the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Fisheries Fund. ESF funding is not available for interventions that target enterprises engaged in agriculture, forestry or fisheries, or enterprises engaged in the primary processing of agricultural, forestry or fisheries products. ESF cannot fund activities which support agri-food schemes or the primary processing of agricultural and/or forestry products. ESF cannot support specific vocational training for individuals employed in enterprises engaged in these activities. However, ESF can support basic skills and other generic training for individuals employed in enterprises engaged in these activities. These principles also apply to the European Fisheries Fund in respect of fish and shellfish products and processing.

European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund

3.20.4 There are no plans to use European Investment Bank or European Investment Fund initiatives such as JEREMIE and JESSICA. Any queries about these initiatives should be referred to the Managing Authority.

Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action Programmes

3.20.5 ESF cannot support activities, including transnational and inter-regional activities, that are being financed through the Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action programmes.

Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development

3.20.6 In the Convergence Objective, ESF can support the development of human potential in research and innovation. Priority 5 includes research activities that support training of researchers and post-graduate studies, where related to the knowledge economy, labour market and human capital. These research activities must be linked to employment and skills needs now and in the future. They should complement but not duplicate any research projects in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly funded by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development.

3.21 Social partner joint actions in the Convergence objective

3.21.1 As required by the ESF Regulation, an appropriate amount of the ESF Convergence allocation will be available for social partner capacity-building activities, which can include training, networking measures, strengthening the social dialogue and activities jointly undertaken by the social partners. It is envisaged that this amount will be 2% of the ESF resources for Priority 5. This will enable social partners to contribute to the delivery of Convergence ESF activities and outcomes.

3.21.2 Joint actions with the social partners, particularly employers' organisations and trade unions, will be encouraged to ensure that this is achieved. These are likely to include activities to provide better access to training and development in the local workforce, and the support and development of social enterprises. Further information is set out in the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly ESF Framework.

3.22 Business Support Simplification

3.22.1 The Government is committed through the Business Support Simplification Programme (BSSP) to reducing the number of publicly funded business support schemes by 2010¹. The majority of ESF provision in the England 2007-2013 programme is likely to be outside the scope of the BSSP because its prime focus is on supporting workless and low skilled individuals to enhance their employability rather than providing direct support to business.

3.22.2 However there will be some areas where ESF projects do provide direct support or seek to influence employers and people starting self-employment and where this is the case ESF provision must be consistent with the plans to simplify business support as set out in the 2007 Pre-budget Report². This confirmed Business Link as the primary gateway to publicly funded business support and announced a high-level summary of the broad areas where the Government believes there is a case for publicly funded intervention. The regional ESF frameworks are fully committed to ensuring that where ESF does provide direct support to business it is consistent with these principles.

3.22.3 Business Link is now the primary gateway to publicly funded business support, and acts as an independent source of information, diagnosis and brokerage for businesses. Most proactive engagement of business should be undertaken through the Business Link brand – any exceptions will need a clear business case. Government is committed to a single integrated brokerage service from April 2009, to include skills brokerage as a major component. This is essential to make it easy for

¹ <http://www.dti.gov.uk/bbf/small-business/streamlining-government/bssp/page41661.html>

² Chapter 4 (para 4.43) - http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr/report/pbr_csr07_repindex.cfm

business to engage with one clear access channel to public support. Funding proposals that encourage competition for clients with Business Link must be avoided. To ensure additionality any proposals for funding must demonstrate how they will work with and through Business Link.

3.22.4 There will be a portfolio which will define those business support products where there is a case for publicly funded interventions although this will not be finalised until 2008. ESF should not be supporting business support products or services that fall outside the scope of the portfolio, as these types of activity are unlikely to be justifiable on grounds of market failure or promoting equality and would be contrary to the aims of BSSP. In the interim, before committing funding it is essential that the relationship between ESF funded activity and any similar mainstream offers of support funded by the RDA is made clear. This is to ensure that ESF projects offer genuine additionality and do not duplicate or displace mainstream activity. To reduce customer confusion, any addition or enhancement to mainstream activity should also use the same branding as is already in existence. In particular the Business Link brand should be used for self employment activity – this can be discussed with RDAs.

3.22.5 The following eligible activities from the national ESF Operational Programme should be branded using the latest portfolio descriptions:

- For ESF activities that will provide advice and support for self-employment, business creation and social enterprise, the latest descriptions in the portfolio should be used as appropriate: 'Business Creation – helping to overcome barriers to setting up and growing a new business', and 'Local Community Business Coaching – helping hard to reach communities to start up in business';
- For ESF activities that will provide support to develop a skilled and adaptable workforce (including management and leadership activity), the latest description in the portfolio that should be used is: 'Skills Solutions for Business – helping businesses to improve the skills of their employees and individuals to improve their skills for business'.

3.22.6 ESF Division will continue to work with the Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) so that BSSP can be built into future ESF programming documents.

3.23 Community Grants (Merseyside Phasing-in area only)

Overview

3.23.1 ESF Community Grants will enable small third sector organisations, that would not otherwise be able to access ESF, to access small grants through simplified application arrangements. Grants will focus on progression towards the labour market but will not duplicate provision that is available through mainstream ESF activity. Grants will strengthen the ability of small third sector organisations to deliver employment and skills activities to disadvantaged people.

3.23.2 Arrangements to support Community Grants will build on good practice developed in the Objective 3 Global Grants programme. Global Grants allow organisations that would otherwise not be able to access ESF, to do so through simplified administration.

Grant Co-ordinating Bodies

3.23.3 ESF Community Grants will be awarded and administered by Grant Co-ordinating Bodies. Whilst Community Grants will be delivered primarily through Co-financing arrangements in England, non-CFO delivery has been agreed in the Merseyside phasing-in area for 2007-2010 to enable activities supported under the Objective 1 programme to be finished off. The Grant Co-ordinating Body in Merseyside will be selected through a call for proposals and must be able to provide all required public match funding. The Grant Co-ordinating Body will be responsible for:

- publicising the availability of grants and making calls for applications in line with agreed regional priorities;
- selecting successful third sector applicants, agreeing level of approved grant and planned outcomes (for many grant awards outcomes are likely to focus on progress towards mainstream ESF and other provision);
- providing support, where necessary, to grant recipients to help them manage ESF effectively;
- monitoring performance and delivery of grant recipients and reporting back to the CFO.

Eligible activity

3.23.4 ESF Community Grants will support a range of activities aimed at assisting the disadvantaged or excluded to move closer to the labour market by improving their access to mainstream ESF and domestic employment and skills provision. Activities will support participants from the target groups in the Operational Programme but because the focus will be on individuals who have difficulty in accessing ESF or mainstream provision outcomes are more likely to be based on progression rather than achievement of jobs and qualifications.

3.23.5 Grants must not be used to duplicate provision that is available through other ESF co-financing – they will provide support to hardest to reach communities and individuals to access and succeed in this or other provision. The small third sector organisations that access grants are likely to be well placed to reach excluded individuals facing barriers which hinder access to the mainstream. The grants will support a wide range of activities including:

- initial help with basic skills;
- taster work experience including voluntary work;
- training, advice and counselling;
- jobsearch assistance including the provision of equipment and other assistance necessary to secure employment;
- confidence building, and;
- first contact engagement activities, for example to provide support to engage individuals with barriers in a non-threatening environment.

3.23.6 In addition there will be limited scope (up to 10% of the ESF available to support Community Grants) for grants to provide support to small third sector organisations themselves. Such support might include:

- training for staff and volunteers in third sector organisations on mainstream routes to employment and training, and;
- actions to support the development of delivery and accreditation arrangements in-house.

Care should be taken to avoid funding activities that are more appropriate for Technical Assistance.

3.23.7 If there were situations where third sector organisations had common needs, for example accreditation of staff for a particular qualification it might be more cost effective for the co-ordinating body to provide this through the provision of a service rather than a grant.

Funding

3.23.8 ESF Community Grants will operate in priority 1 of the Operational Programme. Up to 4% of Merseyside's Priority 1 allocation for 2007-2010 may be allocated to Community Grant activity. The maximum amount of ESF grant awarded will be £12,000 per small third sector organisation per year.

Delivery arrangements

3.23.9 There will be a separate Community Grants scheme in Merseyside taking account, if necessary, of any priorities for targeting Community Grants in the regional ESF framework. A Grant Co-ordinating Body will be selected following a call for proposals to be issued by Government Office North West.

3.23.10 The call for proposals will set out the basis for paying the Grant Co-ordinating Body. Payments will not be based on the achievement of specific results and outputs in the ESF Operational Programme. Whilst Community Grants will contribute to ESF objectives overall by helping individuals to move closer to mainstream activity they will not contribute directly to the achievement of the participant, job and NVQ output and results targets.

3.23.11 Community Grants will be awarded by the Grant Co-ordinating Body to small third sector organisations to support particular groups and achieve agreed outcomes and objectives. It will be necessary to capture and report on the outcomes achieved by the grant recipients including soft outcomes. There are likely to be some variations

in the objectives of Community Grants schemes at regional level depending on specific regional priorities or targeting.

3.23.12 Grant Co-ordinating Bodies will need an appropriate level of resource to meet their administration costs. Payment arrangements will need to reflect necessary administration costs and to provide the cash-flow for co-ordinating bodies and grant recipients where necessary. The managing Authority will agree an appropriate level of administration costs as part of the application and approval process, This is expected to be within a limit of 10% of the ESF awarded to the grant co-ordinating body but might be exceeded if an appropriate case can be made. Administrative costs will reflect necessary administrative, overhead and support costs to be undertaken by the Grant Co-ordinating Body.

Allocation of grants

3.23.13 The Grant Co-ordinating Body is required to allocate grants to small third sector organisations through an open, transparent and competitive process. It should advertise the call for applications for small grants widely and specify what activities can be supported including any targeting of participant groups. The Grant Co-ordinating Body must use simplified application procedures to ensure that small third sector organisations are able to apply for grants when applications are called for.

3.23.14 The allocation of grants will be made on the basis of selecting third sector applicants against specific criteria set out in calls for grant applications. Selection arrangements must be clear and transparent and published alongside the call for applications. A list of third sector organisations who are awarded grants following the selection process must be published. Grant recipients will receive 100% ESF. To avoid the risk of duplication the Grant Co-ordinating Body should liaise with Community Development Foundations appointed to deliver the 'grassroots grants' scheme on behalf of the Office for the Third Sector.

3.23.15 Given the nature of the grants and delivery through small third sector organisations, it would not be appropriate to award them through full open and competitive tendering arrangements. As the grants themselves will not be awarded through tendering, grant recipients will be required to maintain records of actual grant expenditure to ensure a full audit trail.

3.23.16 Grant recipients should keep the following participant information:

- Details of all participants supported through Community Grants;
- Results of participant achievements including employment, full or part qualifications, soft outcomes;

3.23.17 Grant recipients should also keep the following financial records:

- Invoices to support all expenditure
- Bank statements
- Staff timesheets, job descriptions, expenses payments

3.23.18 Original documents (paper or scanned copies) must be maintained until advised by the Grant Co-ordinating Body.

Monitoring and reporting arrangements

3.23.19 There is likely to be significant interest in the outcome and achievements of

Community grants at regional and England level. Reports on progress will be provided to regional ESF committees and the England PMC. The Grant Co-ordinating Body will need to ensure that reporting arrangements fully reflect the objectives and priorities of regional Community Grant schemes.

3.23.20 To ensure that certain key information on progress can be provided to ESF committees and reported for example in the Annual Implementation Report, Grant Co-ordinating Bodies will be required to supply the following key data to the Managing Authority:

- number of applications for grants received;
- number of grants awarded;
- average value of grants awarded;
- number of participants supported through grants;
- achievement of soft outcomes, jobs and qualifications;
- short case studies of how grants have supported specific targets groups and specific outcomes achieved (case studies to be provided for 10% of completed projects, and ;
- summary of how grants are supporting regional priorities

Annex 1

Region	
Priority	

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – ENGLAND 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME APPLICATION TO MANAGE A PROJECT PART FUNDED BY ESF From an organisation not operating as a Co-Financing Organisation.

Please complete this form in full. Delete the explanatory notes in italics before submitting. You should refer to the ESF eligibility rules when completing the application.

Part 1: Applicant Details

1.1. Name of Organisation

1.2. Address

1.3. Contact name and Position

1.4. Telephone number

1.5. Fax number

1.6. Email

Part 2: Project length

Please provide the anticipated start and end date of the project. The start date will be formally agreed with the Government Office if your application is successful. The end date is the date that you anticipate ESF activity will finish.

3.1. Start date

3.2. End date

Part 3: Project Description and contribution to the regional ESF framework

3.1. Project Name

3.2. Project description.

NOTES

This description should include ESF and match funded activity.

In providing this information you need to

- Explain how the project will address the priorities described in the “call for proposals”*
- Explain how this project will contribute to the regional ESF framework. Which elements of the framework will the project support. How will activity complement other co-financed ESF provision in the region?*
- Explain how the project will complement ERDF activity*
- If your project will provide direct support to businesses explain how you will meet the requirements of the Business Support Simplification Programme.*
- Describe the activities that your project will support, the participants you will target and expected outcomes and results. A detailed breakdown of the planned participants and outputs and results should be provided at annex 1.*
- Show the key milestones you intend to achieve in the first year of the project e.g participant starts, progress towards output and results targets.*

3.3 Sub-contracting

Will any part of this project be sub-contracted to other organisations? If so, how will you select sub-contractors, manage their performance and ensure value for money?

3.4 Added Value – detail what added value ESF funding will give to this project.

Describe what value ESF funding will add to this project e.g will it increase the number of people trained or supported, will it increase the number of outputs and results that will be achieved, will it enhance the quality of provision or will it enable activity to take place that otherwise would not.

Part 4: State Aids

4.1. Will any activity funded through this project be a State Aid ?

Yes/No
If no explain why

4.2. State aids processes

NOTE

If you have answered yes, please describe how you will comply with State Aid regulations.

See the form guidance for more information.

Part 5: Cross cutting themes

5.1. Equal opportunities theme. Describe how you will implement the cross-cutting theme of 'gender equality and equal opportunities' within your project.

*How will you ensure that projects fulfil the principles of gender equality and equality of opportunity for all (Art 16 of Regulation 1083/2006)?
Please describe how you will support the themes and targets for gender equality and equal opportunities set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF framework.*

5.2. Sustainable development theme. Describe how you will implement the cross-cutting theme of 'sustainable development' within your project

How will you implement approaches to sustainable development, including environmental sustainability set out in the ESF Operational Programme 2007-2013 regional ESF framework.

Part 6: Capacity

You need to demonstrate that you have sufficient capacity to carry out the responsibilities of managing an ESF project. Please give evidence of capacity in terms of:-

6.1. Management arrangements

Detail the arrangements you will put in place to ensure that the project will be effectively managed.

6.2. People – the number and experience of staff working with ESF including as much detail as possible about the intended roles and responsibilities of staff involved with this project.

Detail how many staff will be involved in the management and delivery of the project and explain their roles and responsibilities. Demonstrate that the staff who will be involved have the appropriate experience and skills.

6.3. Accounting systems

Accounting systems need to be able to record and account for ESF funds separately and to identify match funding so that there is no double counting. The systems need to meet audit trail requirements described in Article 15 of Regulation 1828/2006

6.4. Monitoring and audit

How will you ensure that all the costs claimed are eligible and that all aspects of project activity are monitored against planned financial and output and results targets?

6.5. Management information

Give details of how data relating to individual participants will be collected and collated. Please confirm that you will be able to supply the core participant data for ESF and match funded participants as shown in annex 2. If confirmation cannot be given, state which data variables cannot be supplied

6.6. Evaluation

How will the overall effectiveness of the project be evaluated?

6.7. Quality

*ESF funded provision will be subject to inspection by OFSTED
What systems are in place to ensure quality standards and continuous improvement?.*

6.8. Publicity

Publicity requirements are detailed in Article 8 of regulation 1828/2006. Please describe how you will meet these requirements for ALL participants – funded both through ESF and match funding.

Part 7 – Financial Viability

If you are not a public body, please provide the information in the boxes below. The definition of a public body is covered in the ESF guidance. The information will be used to assess financial viability.

7.1. What is your organisation’s Legal Status

7.2 Please confirm that you have audited accounts for the last three years and could supply them on request.

7.3 Provide details of your auditor’s name and address

7.4 How long has your organisation been in existence?

Part 8 – Track Record

NOTE
Describe if your organisation received previous ESF support during the 2000-2006 Programmes giving details of your most recent dossier number. Briefly explain how the ESF funding was used and what the project achieved. Please also describe any other government funded projects that your organisation has managed in the same period.

Part 9 – Expected Project Expenditure Details

Note: You should refer to the ESF eligibility rules when completing part 9.

9.1. Staff costs – show the expected staff cost for each calendar year of the project.

Year	Name of post	Amount
Total		

Note – insert more rows if required

9.2. Expected participant costs – show the expected participant related cost for each calendar year of the project.

Year	Description of expected costs	Amount
	Total	

9.3. Expected direct other costs – show the expected other costs for each calendar year of the project that are considered direct costs.

9.3A. Premises related direct costs

Year	Description of expected cost	Amount

9.5. What proportion of total costs will be spent on administering the project?

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Part 10 – Financial Summary

10.1. First year of project – show summary for the first calendar year of the project.

Year	20..	ESF eligible cost for year	
		Match funding for year	
		Revenue for year	
		Total project cost for year	

10.2. Second year of project – show summary for the second calendar year of the project.

Year	20..	ESF eligible cost for year	
		Match funding for year	
		Revenue for year	
		Total project cost for year	

10.3. Third year of project – show summary for the third calendar year of the project.

Year	20..	ESF eligible cost for year	
		Match funding for year	
		Revenue for year	
		Total project cost for year	

10.4. Fourth year of project – show summary for the third calendar year of the project.

Year	20..	ESF eligible cost for year	
		Match funding for year	
		Revenue for year	
		Total project cost for year	

10.5. Project totals – show total expected costs for the project in sterling.

Total project cost	
Total ESF support applied for is	
Total match funding available	
Overall intervention rate for the project is : (ESF as a total of project cost)	%

10.6 Cash flow forecast – provide a cash flow forecast using the form provided to demonstrate that your planned cash resources can meet project delivery plans.

Part 11. Public Match funding

Show the amount of match funding that you will provide and show which budgets or programmes will be used to provide match funding. Note that all match funding must support eligible activity in the Operational Programme.

Year	Budget or programme source	Amount - sterling

If other organisations are providing match funding for this project, set out the name of the organisations providing match funding and the amount. The match funding must be 'cash' not 'in-kind'. A separate match funding certificate for each match funder should be included with this application.

Year	Name and address of match funder	Amount - sterling

Part 12. Declaration

I believe that the organisation is eligible to manage an ESF part-funded project and I

confirm that this organisation wishes to manage an ESF part-funded project for the 2007-2013 ESF England programme.

Signature

Name

Official Position

Date

When you have completed this form you should send it to the European Secretariat at the Government Office.

Appendix 1: Basis for estimate of indirect costs

NOTE

Indirect costs are costs which cannot be attributed to an ESF project. Expenditure in relation to indirect costs will be reimbursed on a flat rate basis but to calculate the rate of payment you must first estimate your indirect costs.

Please explain in the table below, for each indirect cost you have identified, the basis of your estimate.

e.g Gas

<i>Estimated annual gas bill</i>	<i>£5500</i>
<i>Estimated training hours provided by your organisation</i>	<i>100,000</i>
<i>Estimated ESF training hours provided by your organisation</i>	<i>10,000</i>
<i>Percentage of ESF hours</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Estimated indirect costs for gas - 10% of yearly bill of £5,500 is £550</i>	

Year	Indirect cost	Basis of estimating yearly cost
Total		

Insert more rows if required.

Annex 2

Appraisal criteria for non CFO applications

Application item	Criteria
Part 3: Project Description and contribution to the regional ESF framework	
3.2. Project description Gateway question	<p>The call for proposals will have set the call within the context of the regional ESF framework and complementary activities set out in CFO plans.</p> <p>The main criterion here is to ensure that the proposed activity does fit the call for proposals and the regional ESF framework and does not duplicate activity that will be managed through co-financing.</p> <p>There should be evidence of working with the CFOs in partnership to ensure complementarity.</p> <p>There should also be evidence that planned ESF activity will complement ERDF activity.</p> <p>If the project plans to provide direct support to business the application should show how it will meet the requirements of the Business Support Simplification Programme.</p> <p>The project must give a breakdown against the costs of the planned number of participants, outcomes and results, which again should fit with the call for proposals.</p> <p>The key milestones should give an indication as to the viability and deliverability of the project.</p>
3.3. Sub-contracting	<p>If sub-contracting will not be used, then no rating should be given.</p> <p>If sub-contracting is to be used, it must be clear how sub-contractors will be selected in a transparent way; how their performance will be managed, and how value for money will be ensured.</p>
3.4. Added value	<p>Must indicate how ESF will bring added value to the project in terms of quantity (eg numbers supported; additional outcomes) and/or quality (eg additional support such as carer care; ESOL training).</p>
Part 4 State aids	
4.1. Will any activity funded through this project be a State Aid ?	<p>The answer is likely to be “no”, and if so no rating should be given. The applicant should explain why activity will not be a State Aid.</p>

Application item	Criteria
4.2. State aids processes	If the answer to 4.1. is “yes”, there must be evidence that the applicant has the capacity to collect and collate the required information, and understands what the obligations on them are.
Part 5 Cross cutting themes	
5.1. Equal opportunities theme Gateway question	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of equal opportunities and gender equality must be as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and be compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on this theme. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.
5.2. Sustainable development theme Gateway question	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of sustainable development are as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on these themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.
Part 6 Capacity	
6.1. Management arrangements	The application should describe the arrangements in place to ensure how the project will be managed effectively.
6.2. People	There needs to be enough people with the right skills, knowledge base and abilities to cover the range of functions required.
6.3. Accounting systems	These must enable ESF and match funding expenditure to be separately identified and to meet audit trail requirements.
6.4. Monitoring & audit	There must be assurance that all the costs claimed will be eligible and that all aspects of project activity will be monitored against planned financial, output and results targets.
6.5. Management information.	Systems will be in place to collect participant level data (from sub-contractors if relevant), validate and collate and send it to the Managing Authority
6.6. Evaluation	This should set out how the contribution of delivering the project to the regional ESF

Application item	Criteria
	framework and operational programme will be subject to a qualitative evaluation.
6.7. Quality	As ESF funded provision will be subject to inspection by OFSTED, there must be systems in place to ensure quality standards and continuous improvement, and support to any sub-contractors to enable them to meet the standards.
6.8. Publicity	The application must show how the regulations will be met so that, amongst other requirements, all participants are made aware that the provision is part funded by the European Union.
Part 7 Financial viability	
7.1. Legal status	Gateway question when taken together Full information must be provided for all the questions, otherwise the risks of proceeding are likely to outweigh the benefits. Not a gateway question in the case of Gibraltar projects.
7.2. Audited accounts for last three years	
7.3. Auditor name and address	
7.4. How long in existence	
Part 8 Track record	
Details of previous ESF and other government funded projects	Evidence should be compiled in the form of, for example, accuracy and timeliness of claims; Article 4 visits; Article 10 visits; other GO contacts, to assess previous performance of the applicant.
Part 9 Project expenditure details and Part 10 Financial summary	
Total project costs	Do the projected costs give value for money when set against the projected number and type of participants, outcomes and results. How well do the costs and associated targets relate to the broad costs and targets in the regional ESF framework.
Part 11 Public match funding	
Amount and source Gateway question	There must be evidence of the amount and source of clean cash match funding.
Part 12 Declaration	
Declaration	Must be signed and dated.

Annex 3

Region	Cornwall convergence	
	Merseyside phasing in	
	South Yorkshire phasing in	
	Gibraltar	

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – ENGLAND AND GIBRALTAR 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

Appraisal report on a non-CFO application for grant

Date and title of managing authority call for proposals	
Project name	
Name of organisation	
Date application form received	
Date of appraisal	
Appraised by	
Signatures	
Overall assessment & recommendation	

Assessment Scale

Excellent – consistently strong in all aspects of the criterion;

Good – consistently good in all aspects of the criterion. Minor weaknesses are capable of remedy and compensated for by strengths in some areas;

Acceptable - weaknesses are capable of remedy but need to be addressed prior to contract/offer letter or subject to specific conditions in offer letter;

Unacceptable – the information provided is insufficient to allow for an effective assessment to be made or assessor satisfied that criterion cannot be met.

Application form item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Part 3: Project Description and contribution to the regional ESF framework		
<p>3.2. Project description</p> <p>Gateway question</p>	<p>The call for proposals will have set the call within the context of the regional ESF framework and complementary activities set out in CFO plans.</p> <p>The main criterion here is to ensure that the proposed activity does fit the call for proposals and the regional ESF framework and does not duplicate activity that will be managed through co-financing.</p> <p>There should be evidence of working with the CFOs in partnership to ensure complementarity.</p> <p>There should also be evidence that activity will complement ERDF activity</p> <p>If the project is providing direct support to businesses the application should show how it will meet the requirements of the Business Support Simplification Programme.</p> <p>The project must give a breakdown against the costs of the planned number of participants, outcomes and results, which again should fit with the call for proposals.</p> <p>The key milestones should give an indication as to the viability and deliverability of the project.</p>	

Application form item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
3.3. Sub-contracting	<p>If sub-contracting will not be used, then no rating will be given.</p> <p>If sub-contracting is to be used, it must be clear how sub-contractors will be selected in a transparent way; how their performance will be managed, and how value for money will be ensured.</p>	
3.4. Added value	<p>Must indicate how ESF will bring added value to the project in terms of quantity (eg numbers supported; additional outcomes) and/or quality (eg additional support such as carer care; ESOL training).</p>	
Part 4 State aids		
4.1. Will any activity funded through this project be a State Aid ?	<p>The answer is likely to be “no”, and should explain why. If so no rating should be given.</p>	
4.2. State aids processes	<p>If the answer to 4.1. is “yes”, there must be evidence that the applicant has the capacity to collect and collate the required information, and understands what the obligations on them are.</p>	
Part 5 Cross cutting themes		
<p>5.1. Equal opportunities theme</p> <p>Gateway question</p>	<p>Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of equal opportunities and gender equality must be as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on this themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.</p>	
5.2. Sustainable	<p>Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of sustainable development are as required by EU</p>	

Application form item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
development theme Gateway question	regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on these themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.	
Part 6 Capacity		
6.1. Management arrangements	The application should describe the arrangements in place to ensure how the project will be managed effectively.	
6.2. People	There needs to be enough people with the right skills, knowledge base and abilities to cover the range of functions required.	
6.3. Accounting systems	These must enable ESF and match funding expenditure to be separately identified and to meet audit trail requirements.	
6.4. Monitoring & audit	There must be assurance that all the costs claimed will be eligible and that all aspects of project activity will be monitored against planned financial, output and results targets.	
6.5. Management information.	Systems will be in place to collect participant level data (from sub-contractors if relevant), validate and collate and send it to the managing authority	
6.6. Evaluation	This should set out how the contribution of delivering the project to the regional ESF framework and operational programme will be subject to a qualitative evaluation.	
6.7. Quality	As ESF funded provision will be subject to inspection by OFSTED, there must be systems in place to ensure	

Application form item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
	quality standards and continuous improvement, and support to any sub-contractors to enable them to meet the standards.	
6.8. Publicity	The application must show how the regulations will be met so that, amongst other requirements, all participants are made aware that the provision is part funded by the European Union.	
Part 7 Financial viability		
7.1. Legal status	Gateway question when taken together Not for Gibraltar projects Full information must be provided for all the questions, otherwise the risks of proceeding are likely to outweigh the benefits.	
7.2. Audited accounts for last three years		
7.3. Auditor name and address		
7.4. How long in existence		
Part 8 Track record		
Details of previous ESF and other government funded projects	Evidence should be compiled in the form of, for example, accuracy and timeliness of claims; Article 4 visits; Article 10 visits; other GO contacts, to assess previous performance of the applicant	
Part 9 Project expenditure details and Part 10 Financial summary		
Total project costs	Do the projected costs give value for money when set against the projected number and type of participants, outcomes and results. How well do the costs and associated targets relate to the broad costs and targets in the regional ESF framework.	
Part 11 Public match funding		

Application form item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Amount and source Gateway question	There must be evidence of the amount and source of clean cash match funding.	
Part 12 Declaration		
Declaration	Must be signed and dated.	

Annex 4

Region	<i>State region or if a national project</i>
Priority	

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – ENGLAND 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME APPLICATION TO MANAGE A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT PART FUNDED BY ESF

Please complete this form in full. Delete the explanatory notes in italics before submitting. You should refer to the ESF eligibility rules when completing this application.

Part 1: Applicant Details

1.1. Name of Organisation

1.2. Address

1.3. Contact name and Position

1.4. Telephone number

1.5. Fax number

1.6. Email

Part 2: Project length

Please provide the start and end date of the project. The anticipated start date will be formally agreed with the Government Office or ESF Division during the next stage of the process. The end date is the date that you anticipate activity will finish.

2.1. Start date

2.2. End date

Part 3: Project Description

3.1. Project Name

3.2. Give a detailed project description.

NOTES
Describe the activities that your project will support. What will be the main outcomes of the project? Explain how the project will contribute to the national and/or regional Technical Assistance strategy

2.3 Sub-contracting

Will any part of this project be sub-contracted to other organisations? If so, how will you select sub-contractors, manage their performance and ensure value for money?

Part 4: Cross cutting themes

4.1 How will the project comply with the principles of equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming?

4.2 How will the project comply with the principles of sustainable development including environmental sustainability?

Part 5: Capacity

You need to demonstrate that you have sufficient capacity to carry out the responsibilities of managing an ESF project. Please give evidence of capacity in terms of:-

5.1 Management arrangements

Detail the arrangements you will put in place to ensure that the project will be effectively managed.

5.2. **People** – the number and experience of staff working that will support the project.

NOTE

Detail how many staff will be involved in the management and delivery of the project and explain their roles and responsibilities. Demonstrate also that the staff who will be involved have the appropriate experience and skills.

5.3. Accounting systems

NOTE

Accounting systems need to be able to account for ESF funds separately and to identify match funding so that there is no double counting. The systems need to meet audit trail requirements described in Article 15 of Regulation 1828/2006. How will you ensure that all the expenditure you will claim is eligible?

5.4 Publicity

NOTE

Publicity requirements are detailed in Article 8 of regulation 1828/2006. Describe how you will ensure that activity supported by Technical Assistance will meet ESF publicity requirements.

Part 6 – Financial Viability

If your organisation is not a public body, you need to show that you are financially viable. (The definition of what is a public body is included in the form guidance).

Please complete these boxes :-

6.1. What is your organisation's Legal Status

6.2 Please confirm that you have provided audited accounts for the last three years and could supply them on request.

Yes/No

6.3 Provide details of your auditor's name and address

6.4 How long has your organisation been in existence?

Part 7 – Track Record

NOTE

If you received ESF Technical Assistance support during the 2000-2006 Programmes give details and include your most recent dossier number. Briefly explain how the ESF funding was used and what the project achieved. Please also explain any other government funded projects that your organisation has managed during the same period.

Part 8 – Expected Project Expenditure Details

Note: You should refer to the ESF eligibility rules when completing part 8.

8.1. Expected STAFF COSTS – show the expected staff cost for each calendar year of the project.

Year	Name of post	Amount
Total		

8.2 Expected OTHER COSTS – show any other expected cost for each calendar year of the project. This must be split between direct costs and indirect costs.

8.2A Premises related direct costs

Year	Description of expected cost	Amount
Total		

8.2B Depreciation items direct costs

Year	Item to be depreciated	Description of depreciation method to be used	Current value of item	Depreciation Amount
Total				

8.3C Other direct costs

Year	Description of expected cost	Estimated amount
	Total	

8.4 Expected indirect other costs – show any expected indirect other costs for each calendar year of the project.

Year	Indirect cost item	Estimated amount
	Total	

Please now complete Annex 1. This should show how you have derived your estimates for each indirect cost that you have identified.

Part 9 – Financial Summary

9.1 First year of project – show summary for the first calendar year of the project in sterling.

Year	20..		

9.2 Second year of project – show summary for the second calendar year of the project in sterling.

Year	20..		

Third year of project – show summary for the third calendar year of the project in sterling.

Year	20..		

9.3 Fourth year of project – show summary for the fourth calendar year of the project in sterling.

Year	20..		

10.0 Project totals – show total expected costs for the project in sterling.

Total project cost	
Total ESF support applied for is	
Total match funding	
Overall intervention rate for the project is :	%

Part 11: Public Match funding

Show the amount of match funding that you will provide and show which budgets or programmes will be used to provide match funding. Note that all match funded activity must support eligible activity in the Operational Programme.

Year	Budget or programme source	Amount

If other organisations are providing match funding for this project, set out the name of the organisations providing match funding and the amount. The match funding must be ‘cash’ not ‘in-kind’. A separate match funding certificate for each match funder should be included with this application.

Year	Name and address of match funder	Amount

Part 11: Declaration

I believe that the organisation is eligible to manage an ESF part-funded project and I confirm that this organisation wishes to manage an ESF part-funded project for the 2007-2013 ESF England programme.

Signature	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>
Official Position	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>

When you have completed this form you should send it to the European Secretariat at the Government Office in your region. If this is a project to support national Technical Assistance the application should be sent to ESF Division.

Appendix

NOTE

Indirect costs are cost which cannot be attributed directly to an ESF project. Expenditure relating to indirect costs will be reimbursed on a flat rate basis but to calculate the rate of payment you must first estimate your indirect costs.

Please explain in table below, for each indirect cost you have identified, the basis of how your estimate is made.

e.g Gas

<i>Estimated annual gas bill</i>	<i>£5,500</i>
<i>Estimated annual training hours by your organisation</i>	<i>100,000</i>
<i>Estimated annual ESF training hours by your organisation</i>	<i>10,000</i>
 <i>Percentage of ESF hours</i>	 <i>10%</i>
 <i>Estimated indirect costs for gas</i>	 <i>- 10% of yearly bill of £5,500 is £550</i>

Indirect cost basis for estimate

Year	Indirect cost	Basis of estimating yearly cost

Annex 5

Appraisal criteria for Technical Assistance applications

Application item	Criteria
Part 3: Project Description	
3.2. Project description Gateway question	<p>The project must fall within the scope of either the national or regional Technical Assistance strategy.</p> <p>It must be clear what the purpose and objectives of the project are, with clearly stated outcomes.</p> <p>The key milestones should give an indication as to the viability and deliverability of the project.</p>
3.3. Sub-contracting	<p>If sub-contracting will not be used, then no rating should be given.</p> <p>If sub-contracting is to be used, it must be clear how sub-contractors will be selected in a transparent way; how their performance will be managed, and how value for money will be ensured.</p>
Part 4 Cross cutting themes	
4.1. Equal opportunities theme Gateway question	<p>Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of equal opportunities and gender equality must be as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and be compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on this theme. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.</p>
4.2. Sustainable development theme Gateway question	<p>Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of sustainable development are as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on these themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.</p>
Part 5 Capacity	
5.1. People	<p>There needs to be enough people with the right skills, knowledge base and abilities to cover the range of functions required.</p>

Application item	Criteria
5.2. Accounting systems	These must enable ESF and match funding expenditure to be separately identified and to meet audit trail requirements.
5.3. Publicity	The application must show how the regulations will be met so that, amongst other requirements, all documentation makes clear that the activity is part funded by the European Union.
Part 6 Financial viability	
6.1. Legal status	Gateway question when taken together Full information must be provided for all the questions, otherwise the risks of proceeding are likely to outweigh the benefits. Not a gateway question in the case of Gibraltar projects.
6.2. Audited accounts for last three years	
6.3. Auditor name and address	
6.4. How long in existence	
Part 7 Track record	
Details of previous ESF and other government funded projects	Evidence should be compiled in the form of, for example, accuracy and timeliness of claims; Article 4 visits; Article 10 visits; other GO contacts, to assess previous performance of the applicant.
Part 8 Project expenditure details and Part 9 Financial summary	
Total project costs	Do the projected costs give value for money when set against the projected activities and outcomes
Part 10 Public match funding	
Amount and source Gateway question	There must be evidence of the amount and source of clean cash match funding.
Part 11 Declaration	
Declaration	Must be signed and dated.

Annex 6

Appraisal report on an application for Technical Assistance funding

National	Yes/No
Region	
Priority	

Project name	
Name of organisation	
Date application received	
Date of appraisal	
Appraised by	
Signatures	
Overall assessment & recommendation to Programme Monitoring Committee / Regional ESF Committee* <small>*Delete the non relevant committee</small>	

Assessment Scale

Excellent – consistently strong in all aspects of the criterion;

Good – consistently good in all aspects of the criterion. Minor weaknesses are capable of remedy and compensated for by strengths in some areas;

Acceptable - weaknesses are capable of remedy but need to be addressed prior to contract/offer letter or subject to specific conditions in offer letter;

Unacceptable – the information provided is insufficient to allow for an effective assessment to be made or assessor satisfied that criterion cannot be met.

Application item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Part 3: Project Description		
3..1. Project description Gateway question	The project must fall within the scope of either the national or regional Technical Assistance strategy. It must be clear what the purpose and objectives of the project are, with clearly stated outcomes. The key milestones should give an indication as to the viability and deliverability of the project.	
Part 4 Cross cutting themes		
4.1. Equal opportunities theme Gateway question	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of equal opportunities and gender equality must be as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on this themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.	
4.2. Sustainable development theme	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of sustainable development are as	

Application item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Gateway question	required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on these themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.	
Part 5 Capacity		
5.1. People	There needs to be enough people with the right skills, knowledge base and abilities to cover the range of functions required.	
5.2. Accounting systems	These must enable ESF and match funding expenditure to be separately identified and to meet audit trail requirements.	
6.8. Publicity	The application must show how the regulations will be met so that, amongst other requirements, any documentation makes clear that the activity is part funded by the European Union.	
Part 6 Financial viability		
6.1. Legal status	Gateway question when taken together Not for Gibraltar projects Full information must be provided for all the questions, otherwise the risks of proceeding are likely to outweigh the benefits.	
6.2. Audited accounts for last three years		
6.3. Auditor name and address		
6.4. How long in existence		
Part 7 Track record		

Application item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Details of previous ESF and other government funded projects	Evidence should be compiled in the form of, for example, accuracy and timeliness of claims; Article 4 visits; Article 10 visits; other GO contacts, to assess previous performance of the applicant	
Part 8 Project expenditure details and Part 9 Financial summary		
Total project costs	Do the projected costs give value for money when set against the projected activities and outcomes.	
Part 10 Public match funding		
Amount and source Gateway question	There must be evidence of the amount and source of clean cash match funding.	
Part 11 Declaration		
Declaration	Must be signed and dated.	

Annex 7

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND- ENGLAND 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME PUBLIC MATCH FUNDING CERTIFICATE

Part 1: Non-CFO Details

1.1. Name of Applicant Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.2 Project Name	<input type="text"/>
1.3 Name of Public Match Funding Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.4 Type of Public Match Funding Organisation	<i>Either central government body, local authority, charitable trust or other central or local government part-funded body.</i>
1.4. Address of Public Match Funding Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.5. Post Code	<input type="text"/>
1.6. Name of Contact at Public Match Funding Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.7. Contact Telephone number	<input type="text"/>
1.8. Contact Email address	<input type="text"/>

Part 5: Declaration

- I confirm that my organisation is eligible to act as a Public Match Funder as set out in the Guidance.
- My organisation is able to provide match funding for the full length of the project.
- I confirm that this amount does not include any funds (eg from Government programmes such as New Deal) that have already been used to match other EU funding.
- I will immediately inform the applicant and the Department's European Social Fund Unit or relevant Government Office of any changes to the above funding provision.
- I confirm that the details on this form are correct.

Name	
------	--

Official Position	
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Signature	
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Date	
------	--

Annex 8

CORE PARTICIPANT MI REQUIREMENT (ESF and MATCH)

Identification data

- Priority Project Number
- Transfer Date

NOTE: Characteristics such as Region, Objective and Priority can be derived from the above project number.

Individual participant details

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
All starters		
Gender	Male/Female	The gender of the participant
Age	Date of Birth	The full date of birth of the participant
Identifier	Participant identifier	The unique number by which the CFO identifies an individual participant. May be required for follow up surveys. ¹
Location	Postcode	The full postcode of the address that the participant resides at
Participation	Start date	The date that the participant started on the ESF project. ²
Status ³	Employed	Participants who are in paid employment on the day they commence an ESF project. The participant must work 8 hours or more per week. This includes : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees (people who work for a company and have their National Insurance paid directly from their wages) and Self-employed (people who work for themselves and generally pay their National Insurance themselves).

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
	Unemployed	Participants who are without a job and available to start work and looking for work, or waiting to start a job that has already been obtained, as at the date they started on the ESF project.
	Economically inactive	Participants who are not employed, but who also do not satisfy the criteria for unemployment. This does not include 14-19 NEETS or young people at a risk of becoming NEET.
	Full time education or training	<p>A participant who satisfies one of the following criteria but is not a 14-19 NEET:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time education either in a school, A FE Institution or a HE institution • In full-time Work-based learning (including apprenticeships, Entry to Employment and NVQ learning) <p>Other education or training (including independent colleges or training centres or receiving training or part-time education but not currently employed)</p>
	14 -19 NEET	<p>Participants aged 14-19 who on joining an ESF project who are not in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time education either in a school, A FE Institution or a HE institution or • Work-based learning (including apprenticeships, Entry to Employment and NVQ learning or • Other education or training (including independent colleges or training centres or receiving training or part-time education but not currently employed) or • Employment <p>And</p> <p>Participants aged 14 and 15 who are at risk of becoming NEET when they leave school, for example those identified by the Connexions Service as needing 'support' or 'intensive support'.⁴</p>
If unemployed	Length of unemployment on starting < 6 months 6 – 11 months 12 – 23 months	<p>Only for those whose status is Unemployed. Set to zero for participants who are not unemployed.</p> <p>Information on length of unemployment to be provided using bandings provided (i.e. less than six months; 6-11 months etc).</p>

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
	24 – 35 months 36 + months	
Ethnicity ⁵	<p>White 1) British 2) Irish 3) Other</p> <p>Mixed 4) White and Black Caribbean 5) White and Black African 6) White and Asian 7) Other mixed background</p> <p>Asian or Asian British 8) Indian 9) Pakistani 10) Bangladeshi 11) Other Asian background</p> <p>Black or Black British 12) Caribbean 13) African 14) Other Black background</p> <p>Chinese or other ethnic group 15) Chinese 16) Any other ethnic group</p> <p>Prefer not to say 17) Not stated</p>	
Disability	Disabled/with health conditions (Yes/No)	<p>Participants who on joining an ESF project report having a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-limiting disability or learning difficulty (which includes long term health problems); or • A current disability covered by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
		<p>A 'work-limiting disability' is a long-term health problem disability or learning difficulty that affects the amount or type of work a person can do.</p> <p>The DDA defines disability as a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. To count as disabling under this definition an impairment must be physical or mental, have a substantial adverse effect on day to day activities and be long-term.</p> <p>When this variable is set to 'yes' this indicates that the participant has either indicated that they have a disability or suffer from a health condition or have a disability and also suffer from a health condition.</p> <p>When set to 'no' this indicates that a participant has indicated that they do not have a disability and do not suffer from a health condition</p>
Highest level of qualification held ⁶	None	Participants who do not have a QCA defined relevant qualification at any level.
	Below Level 1	Participants who on starting ESF do not have a relevant full qualification at level 1 or above (as defined in the QCA National Qualifications Framework).
	Level 1 or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 1 or the equivalent
	Level 2 or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 2 or the equivalent
	Level 3 or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 3 or the equivalent
	Level 4 or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 4 or the equivalent
	Level 5 or higher or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 5 or the equivalent
	Not known	This value indicates that it is not known which relevant qualifications the participant does or does not hold.

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
		(N.B 'Relevant' means a qualification relevant to the sector in which a participant is working or seeking to work. For example, a participant may have academic qualifications at level 2 but these may not be relevant to the sector or occupation. Or a participant may have a level 2 vocational qualification which relates to an old or declining industry, and is not relevant to their current sector or organisation).
Priority 1 and Priority 4 leavers		
Date of leaving	End date	The date that the participant left the ESF project
Leaving status ⁷	Employed	Participants who are in employment within 6 weeks of leaving an ESF project in a job that lasts for 8 hours or more per week. This includes employees and self-employed people.
	Unemployed	Participants who on leaving the ESF project are unemployed.
	Economically inactive	Participants who on leaving the ESF project are economically inactive
	Into education or training	Participants who on leaving the ESF project are in education or training
	14 – 19 NEET	Participants who are classified as '14-19 NEET' on leaving the ESF project
Qualifications gained ⁸	Gained no qualification	Participants who did not acquire any relevant new qualifications after participating in the ESF project
	Gained basics skills qualifications	A participant who gained a Skills for Life entry level, level 1 or level 2 qualification in literacy or numeracy or language (e.g ESOL) or ICT, as a result of the ESF project (even if the qualification is awarded after the participant has left the project).
	Gained Level 1	A participant who acquired a relevant level 1 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project.
	Gained Level 2	A participant who acquired a relevant level 2 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained Level 3	A participant who acquired a relevant level 3 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained Level 4	A participant who acquired a relevant level 4 qualification as a result of participating in

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
		the ESF project
	Gained Level 5 or higher	A participant who acquired a relevant level 5 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project.
Priority 2 and 5 leavers		
Date of leaving	End date	The date that the participant left the project
Leaving status	Into education or training (Yes/No)	Participants who on leaving the ESF project are in education or training
Qualifications gained ⁹	Gained no qualification	A participant, who did not acquire any relevant new qualifications after participating in the ESF project
	Gained basic skills qualifications	A participant who acquired a Skills for Life qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained Level 1	A participant who acquired a relevant level 1 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained units or modules of level 2 qualifications	A participant who gains at least one unit or module of a level 2 qualification, but not a full level 2 qualification as a result of participating in an ESF project
	Gained Level 2	A participant who acquired a relevant level 2 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained units or modules of level 3 qualifications	A participant who gains at least one unit or module of a level 3 qualification, but not a full level 3 qualification as a result of participating in an ESF project
	Gained Level 3	.A participant who acquired a relevant level 3 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained units or modules of level 4 qualifications	A participant who gains at least one unit or module of a level 4 qualification, but not a full level 4 qualification as a result of participating in an ESF project.
	Gained Level 4	A participant who acquired a relevant level 4 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained Level 5 or higher	A participant who acquired a relevant level 5 qualification as a result of participating in

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
		the ESF project.

¹ For DWP, this is the 12 digit numeric client reference no. For LSC, this is the provider code followed by the client number.

² A MI participant record is required for each participation in the programme by an individual.

³ The values for 'status' are mutually exclusive i.e a participant can only belong to one of these categories not more than one.

⁴ Young people in part-time learning (less than 16 hours) are included in 'full-time education and training' and are not counted as NEET.

⁵ One only of the 17 ethnicity options to be used for each participant.

⁶ These values are mutually exclusive i.e it is only the highest level relevant qualification for a participant that is recorded.

⁷ The values for 'leaving status' are mutually exclusive i.e a participant can only belong to one category.

⁸ These values are not mutually exclusive. Any qualification that a participant has acquired must be recorded i.e a participant may acquire one or more qualifications.

⁹ These values are not mutually exclusive. Any qualification that a participant has acquired must be recorded i.e a participant may acquire one or more qualifications.