

The Mayor's Academies Quality Mark

Statement of requirements for applications from Mayoral priority sectors training providers

Key information

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1. Introduction

The Mayor's Skills Academies Programme, established as part of the London Recovery Programme, introduced in 2022 a Quality Mark that sets a high bar for skills training in London that responds to the needs of sectors key to London's recovery. The Academies Quality Mark builds on the Mayor's Construction Academy Quality Mark and is only awarded to training providers who deliver high-quality provision which meets our assessment criteria. The second window for applications will be held from 19 April – 19 May 2023.

The objectives of the Quality Mark are to support the FE sector to deliver high quality industry-relevant provision and to:

- incentivise accessible, industry-relevant provision that gets Londoners into jobs
- raise the profile of good provision to employers and Londoners looking for good work
- provide a network of training providers with specialisms to deliver industry-related provision

The Quality Mark is an opportunity for providers to demonstrate and celebrate best practice in the sector and the GLA will use various channels to celebrate accredited providers.

This document outlines the Quality Mark application process, scoring guidelines and assessment criteria.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 London's Recovery Programme

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated entrenched inequalities, pushing groups already underrepresented in multiple sectors further from the labour market and disproportionately impacting those in certain industries and roles. Before the pandemic, many employers struggled to fill vacancies due to skills gaps, including in digital, skilled trades and key/employability skills. As the economy starts growing again, employers face recruitment challenges in finding skilled workers.

In response to the pandemic, the London Recovery Programme, overseen by the London Recovery Board, identified an ambition to restore confidence in the city, minimise the impact on communities and build back better the city's economy and society. The London Recovery Programme set out nine Missions to achieve this.

Please visit the [London Recovery Programme](#) for further details.

1.1.2 Mayor's Skills Academies Programme

As part of the Helping Londoners into Good Work Mission, the Mayor's Skills Academies Programme aims to support Londoners hardest hit by the pandemic into good work in sectors key to London's recovery and long-term economic growth. It will do this by providing financial support for the coordination and quality marking of training in London (including adult education) and the provision of bespoke support to help newly skilled people into work in our priority sectors.

The programme design builds on the learning of the [Mayor's Construction Academy \(MCA\)](#) which sought to address skills gaps facing the construction sector, creating more opportunities for Londoners to benefit from

good work opportunities.

It also builds on the work of the Mayor's [Workforce Integration Network \(WIN\)](#), which was established to address the structural barriers that prevent underrepresented groups from accessing high quality work opportunities across different sectors in London. The first phase of the WIN programme has focused on supporting young Black men aged 16-24 into quality employment in the digital tech and construction sectors. The Mayor's Skills Academies Programme will expand WIN to support other sectors and underrepresented groups.

The objectives of the Mayor's Skills Academies Programme are to:

- get Londoners into good work (direct employment, apprenticeships, or self-employment/freelance) in priority sectors
- help fill vacancies in priority sectors with skilled people
- support employers to address structural barriers to engagement, recruitment, retention and progression for underrepresented groups in their industry/workforce
- raise the profile of these sectors for potential applicants
- highlight routes into and career pathways within each sector to help underrepresented groups to navigate and overcome barriers to entry
- support the Further Education (FE) sector to deliver industry-relevant provision.

The Programme includes several elements:

1. Hubs
2. Training Provider Quality Mark
3. Bespoke support for excluded groups provided through the Workforce Integration Network
4. Awareness raising campaign
5. Capital funding for investment in training provider facilities (subject to funding availability)

This prospectus sets out the opportunity to apply for the Skills Academies Quality Mark. Please visit the [Mayor's Skills Academies Programme](#) for other information relating to the programme.

2. The Academies Quality Mark

The Mayor's Quality Mark is also aligned to the [Skills Roadmap for London](#) which was published in January 2022 and, builds on the success of the delegation of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the Mayor in 2019. The Roadmap sets out the actions that the Mayor will take over this mayoral term to ensure skills provision, learning and adult education are locally relevant, make an impact, and are accessible. Support will be offered to training providers as part of the Roadmap to help diversify their workforce and work towards net-zero estates. The Quality Mark specifically responds to a commitment in the Roadmap on supporting adult education providers as Anchor Institutions in their communities.

Skills providers make an enormous contribution to London and the communities they serve, and the Quality Mark is an important step in recognising and showcasing the best practice that exists across the sector. This includes developing industry-relevant training that meets the needs of London's economy in a way that is accessible to Londoners and enables them to progress and succeed in work. The Quality Mark is an important way for learners and employers alike to recognise and access high-quality industry-relevant training provision

and the intention is for it to continue beyond the Mayor's Skills Academies Programme.

Going forward the Quality Mark and its wider principles will be reflected in the application process for other GLA employment and skills programmes. The Quality Mark aims to consider the changing needs of Londoners and London's economy, responding to emerging sector priorities over time.

2.1 The benefits of the Skills Academies Quality Mark

2.1.1 What are the benefits to providers?

The key benefits for a training provider obtaining the Quality Mark are:

Employer Awareness: The Quality Mark signposts employers to high-quality providers delivering industry-relevant skills for their sector as well as wider employability and work readiness skills.

Quality Mark Network: Quality Mark holders receive access to our regular schedule of Quality Mark network meetings. These events bring together high-quality providers to share ideas, discuss best practice and develop solutions to joint challenges for sector skills provision.

The network holds one in-person event for all Quality Mark holders each year at City Hall. Further sector specific network events are held throughout the year.

These network events provide a space for training providers to come together to tackle a range of issues for their relevant sector, ensuring there is strong input from sector bodies/trade associations, key sector employers and access to the GLA's wider networks.

The network meetings aim to support sectoral collaboration between training providers to understand how training provision can further contribute to the wider aims of the Skills Academies Programme and other skills and employment programmes.

Capital funding: The Mayor expects to launch an opportunity to access funding for investment in estate, facilities and equipment for providers that hold the Quality Mark. This funding will be available for capital projects which help providers to deliver accessible industry-relevant provision.

The Quality Mark aims to unlock a series of opportunities for training providers who are delivering good-quality provision to showcase and highlight this, based on the following principles:

- **Celebrating Excellence:** On Wednesday 5 October the Mayor of London hosted his first London-wide Adult Learning Awards. The ceremony celebrated the important role of adult learning in London and the achievements of Londoners, employers, and training organisations. This forms part of the GLA's wider awareness raising campaign that promotes the Skills Academies Programme and adult learning offer to Londoners. This promotional activity supports the Mayor's commitment to champion London's further and higher education sectors and complements a wider marketing of adult education and learning opportunities in London. Please visit our [Adult Learning Awards page](#) for further details along with the 2022 award winners.
- **Raising Awareness:** Providers are invited to promote their training offer directly to Londoners and employers through the GLA website, where the information will feed into the adult education provider map.

- **Recognition:** Quality Mark providers have access to relevant assets, which they are able to use as part of their own promotional activities and materials.

2.1.2 What are the benefits to employers?

Some of the key benefits for an employer in a Mayoral priority sector are:

Tackling skills shortages: The Quality Mark signposts employers to high-quality providers delivering industry-relevant skills for their sector as well as wider employability and work readiness skills. By recognising excellence and helping to improve the quality of training provision in London, there is a direct benefit to employers in being able to recruit skilled staff into their vacancies.

Trust and assurance: The Quality Mark provides reassurance for employers knowing a training provider who holds a Quality Mark is recognised as a ‘good quality’ provider delivering both industry-relevant and employer-approved training provision in their sector. The Quality Mark is designed to work alongside and complement other relevant Quality Marks and OFSTED, further supporting and enabling discussions between employers and skills training providers.

Industry-relevant courses: The Quality Mark recognises training providers who are delivering industry-relevant provision which meets employers’ needs – this ensures the courses help to tackle industry skills shortages. Training providers need to demonstrate an understanding of their chosen sector and the career pathways available to help inform learners with accurate and relevant information about jobs and careers in the sector.

2.1.3 What are the benefits to learners?

The Quality Mark will indicate to learners that the provider is a high-quality organisation providing industry-relevant training, with strong employer links in the sector. The key benefits for an existing/new learner in having a provider obtaining a Quality Mark are:

Learner experience: The Quality Mark can provide reassurance to prospective learners that they will receive a good quality learning experience.

The Quality Mark assesses skills training providers on a number of criteria which aim to ensure a high-quality experience is being delivered for the learner focusing on various aspects of the learner journey and the quality of teaching and learning. The Quality Mark can also give learners reassurance that the training offered by the provider will increase their chances of obtaining employment in the sector.

Support for underrepresented groups: The Quality Mark is focused on highlighting the best practice of training providers who are supporting underrepresented groups into occupations within key sectors and tackling structural barriers to good work. The Quality Mark helps learners to identify those providers which provide support to people who are underrepresented either in learning or in the sector to access learning and employment opportunities.

The following groups are defined as priority groups within the Mayor’s Skills Academies Programme:

- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) Londoners
- unemployed or economically inactive Londoners

- Londoners earning below the London Living Wage
- women
- young people (16-24)
- older people (50+)
- lone parents
- people with caring responsibilities
- Deaf and disabled Londoners.

2.1.4 What are the benefits to sector bodies/trade associations?

Through network meetings the Quality Mark provides an opportunity for sector bodies to work directly with the GLA and Quality Marked training providers to share sector insights/trends and to collaborate to tackle sector-wide challenges and share good practice. Furthermore, as the Quality Mark continues to develop there is an opportunity for further integration and collaboration with other existing sectoral kitemarks.

2.2 Gaining the Quality Mark and who can apply

This statement of requirements pertains to the Skills Academies Quality Mark and invites applications from training providers covering the following sectors:

- creative industries
- digital
- green
- health and social care
- hospitality
- construction

The MCA Quality Mark has been integrated into the new Skills Academies Quality Mark.

As part of the Quality Mark process, training providers must demonstrate for their chosen sector(s):

- How skills training provision is industry-relevant, helping to tackle skills shortages
- The strength of employer links, including specific engagement with SMEs, where relevant
- How activities promote and support access to good work opportunities, particularly for underrepresented groups
- Evidence of positive learner journeys and destinations, and how effective Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) supports this process
- Evidence of existing markers of quality in skills provision, e.g. sector kitemarks and relevant assessments

Training providers applying to receive a Quality Mark, can only be assessed for training provision they deliver which is publicly funded and delivered predominantly to London residents. This can include training provision offered by a further education college, independent training provider, local authority, Institute for Adult Learning, and university.

Training providers are able to apply to be assessed and accredited for more than one key sector per application round. The GLA would like to highlight and recognise those training providers who are delivering high quality

provision across multiple sectors and the application process is designed to enable this.

Applicants who apply to be assessed and accredited for more than one key sector only need submit one 'Form A – Provider overview' to provide evidence for all organisational level requirements. Applicants will then need to submit one 'Form B – Sector Specific' for each sector Quality Mark they are applying for.

2.2.1 Do Academies Hub training providers need to apply for a Quality Mark?

As described in the Hubs Funding Prospectus, training providers who are partners in an Academy hub are expected to work towards gaining the Quality Mark.

Where the lead organisation for the hub is a training provider, we would expect them to lead by example and apply for the relevant sectoral Quality Mark. We would also ask Academy Hub lead organisations to encourage training providers who are their hub partners to work towards gaining the Quality Mark.

2.2.2 Can training providers who are not part of an Academies Hub apply for a Quality Mark?

The Quality Mark process is open to all publicly funded providers regardless of whether they are already Mayoral funded, part of an Academies Hub, in receipt of AEB funding or European Social Funds or not. The GLA would like to capture the range of good quality provision being delivered in support of London's key sectors, as well as creating opportunities to share knowledge and best practice between non-Hub and Hub training providers. Where a Hub and Quality Marked provider overlap, we would expect them to engage and work in partnership.

Full details of the eligibility criteria and evidence requirements to receive the Quality Mark are provided in Section 5 of this statement of requirements.

2.3 Quality Mark application rounds and validity

After the initial application process, accreditation review and the opportunity to apply will take place annually during the lifetime of the Mayor's Skills Academies Programme.

The Quality Mark is awarded for two years, and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the quality of provision is maintained. The annual review is a streamlined and light touch assessment process helping to support accredited training providers with their process of continuous improvement. Therefore, applicants are expected to submit their application in full every two years to retain the Quality Mark.

The GLA reserves the right to revoke the Quality Mark from a provider, either following the annual review, where a Quality Mark holder fails to provide evidence to meet the required criteria, or at any time at its discretion.

3. Application Process

3.1 The application process

The Quality Mark is awarded via an application process managed and administered by an external supplier procured by the GLA's Skills and Employment team. Applications will be provided to the external supplier on a confidential basis.

Please note that there are two separate forms for the 2023 application window two which are detailed in table 3 (criteria key). Applicants must make sure the correct form(s) are completed and submitted by the deadline.

Applications are to be made by submitting a completed application form and accompanying evidence to sectoralacademies@london.gov.uk by the **closing date of: 5pm, Wednesday 19 May 2023.**

For access to the Mayor's Academies Quality Mark application form, please submit your details on the [webform](#). The application form will be sent to you by email.

The GLA reserves the right to request references at its discretion.

3.1.1 Application clarification questions

Any questions from applicants must be submitted by email to sectoralacademies@london.gov.uk by **5pm, Friday 28 April 2023**. Questions via other means will not be permitted.

Applicants should note that all questions and their answers will be posted on the designated FAQs webpage by Friday 5 May 2023.

3.1.2 Quality Mark application timetable

Table 1: Quality Mark application timetable

Activity	Timeline
Launch of Quality Mark statement of requirements and application process – 2023 window	Wednesday 19 April 2023
Deadline for question submission	Friday 28 April 2023
Question responses uploaded to FAQs webpage	Friday 5 May 2023
Deadline for applications	Friday 19 May 2023

Applications scored and assessed

Monday 22 May – 23 June
2023

Successful applications announced and Quality Mark awarded

July 2023

4. How the GLA will select successful applicants

4.1 Scoring applications

Scorers will make an assessment of how well the application and evidence submitted addresses the criteria set out below, allocating a score between 0 and 2 as defined in Table 2 below.

Some criteria are essential and will be either pass or fail (rather than being scored) as indicated on the application form. If any of the individual essential criteria are judged as ‘fail’, or a score of 0 is allocated against one or more of the criteria, the application will fail the eligibility to receive the Quality Mark.

Pass Mark: Applicants can only achieve the Quality Mark if both the following criteria are met:

- Applicants must achieve a minimum score of 14 on **Form B**
- Applicants must achieve a total score of 24 across **Form A** and **Form B**

Table 2: Score scale

0	Fail – does not meet requirements, insufficient or no relevant information provided.
1	Satisfactory – response largely meets evaluation criteria but could be further developed with some additional work required.
2	Excellent – the applicant has completely met or exceed the evaluation criteria providing a detailed and comprehensive answer with convincing evidence.

Applicants must provide as much information as possible relating to the eligibility criteria, while observing the **word limits** for each answer. Additional documentation and evidence must be clearly titled (using the criteria numbers below in the file names) and should also referenced in the answers inserted into the completed application form.

Applications will be scored against the criteria specified below and applicant organisations must meet these criteria to receive the Quality Mark.

4.2 Feedback to unsuccessful applicants

Feedback on unsuccessful applications will be made available upon request.

4.3 Clarification meetings

Following any in principle offer of the award of the Quality Mark, the GLA may require successful applicants to provide further written clarification on any outstanding issues before the actual award is confirmed or attend a clarification meeting. This meeting will verify the GLA's evidence requirements.

You must not place any reliance whatsoever on receiving the Quality Mark until formally notified in writing which the GLA will do should your application prove successful.

5. Eligibility criteria and evidence requirements

Table 3: Criteria key

Key	Definition
Form A - Provider Overview application form	Form A contains Green shaded questions. These questions are all organisation wide. One Form A must be completed by all providers who apply.
Form B – Sector Specific application form	Form B contains Orange shaded questions. The questions are all sector specific and your responses to these questions must relate to your sector specific provision. NB. Applicants who apply to be assessed and accredited for more than one key sector will need to complete a separate sector specific form (form B) for each sector.

5.1. Quality Mark Criteria - Form A, Provider Overview

5.1.1. Criteria Section 1: Sector Applications

Question 1: Quality Mark sector application is being made for

Applicants must select which key sectors they are applying for and submit a Form B for each sector.

Score: N/A

5.1.2. Criteria Section 2: Eligibility Checks

Question 2: Provider Information

Criteria: Demonstrate the training provision being assessed is publicly funded and delivered predominantly to London residents

Score: PASS or FAIL

Evidence requirements: Documentation confirming contracts in current (2023/24) academic year and expect to hold a contract/grant in future years:

- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- Greater London Authority (GLA)

If applicable, please provide documentation confirming applicant is on Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP).

Question 3: OFSTED Grades

Criteria: Publicly funded providers should have a minimum OFSTED grade of 2 (Good).

Score: PASS or FAIL

Evidence requirements: Link to access latest OFSTED report.

Where providers are subcontracting for an OFSTED assessed prime contractor, the OFSTED grade of the prime must be a minimum OFSTED grade of 2 (Good). Providers are invited to submit provision evidence to be followed up with clarification discussions where required.

5.1.3. Criteria Section 3: Organisation-wide Quality Assurance

Question 4: Learner Journey

Criteria: Applicants should demonstrate a clear learner journey from prospecting to course completion/achievement.

Applicants should demonstrate how bespoke support for underrepresented¹ learners is helping them to prepare for good work

Score: 0-2

Evidence Requirements: Learner journey chart including:

- identification of learners
- initial assessment
- induction
- any wider holistic support built within the course e.g. mental health and wellbeing support
- adaptations designed and delivered to improve accessibility and access to provision for underrepresented learners

- bespoke support for underrepresented learners
- progression into further/ higher learning, employment or an apprenticeship for relevant skills courses

Question 5: Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Criteria: Applicants to demonstrate how they are delivering high-quality Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to learners and embedding careers education in the curriculum.

Further information can be found here:

- [Matrix Standard](#)
- [Gatsby Benchmarks for Careers Education.](#)

Score: 0-2

Evidence Requirements: Evidence provided of **Matrix Accreditation** – this means applicant will receive full marks and can skip to next question.

If evidence is not provided, applicant must submit narrative evidence detailing:

- how they are working towards delivering high-quality Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to learners against the key elements of the Matrix Standard.

OR

- narrative evidence of how applicant is working towards meeting the [Gatsby Benchmarks for Careers Education.](#)

Question 6: Quality of teaching and learning

Criteria:

a) Staff

Applicants should demonstrate teaching

and assessing staff have relevant qualifications and experience to offer a sufficiently broad and thorough learning experience.

Evidence requirements: Documentary evidence such as:

- Staff Development Policy
- Academic Recruitment Policy
- CPD Policy

Score: 0-2

Criteria:

b) Monitoring and Feedback Procedures

Applicants should demonstrate procedures are in place to monitor, review and provide feedback on the performance of teaching and assessing staff. Demonstrating how this supports wider Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities.

Evidence requirements: Documentary evidence of monitoring and feedback procedures, which could include:

- Learner satisfaction surveys
- Employer satisfaction surveys/ case studies.

Narrative explaining

- monitoring and feedback procedures, including how evidence are evaluated
- how CPD is offered following evaluation of findings

Question 7: Governance

Criteria: Applicants should demonstrate appropriate governance is in place to ensure suitable oversight of sector provision.

There should be clear visibility and transparency of related governance documents on applicant's website.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Documentary evidence which may include:

- governance charts,
- associated Terms of Reference documents,
- Safeguarding Policy

Note, governance refers to any individual, group or groups that ensures the adherence of members of an organisation to any policies and procedures, and monitoring delivery against agreed targets.

Question 8: Quality Management

Criteria: Confirmation that a quality management system is in place that allows the provider to monitor and report performance and quality.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Documentary evidence.

Copy of most recent Self-Assessment Report.

Question 9: Raising Green Awareness and supporting net-zero carbon

Criteria: Applicants to demonstrate what strategies and activities are in place to raise awareness of the Green Agenda and working towards becoming net-zero carbon organisations.

Applicants should highlight how their responses to both their internal and external activity is joined up.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Examples of documentary evidence could include:

- Sustainability/net-zero/carbon neutral strategy
- The Carbon Trust standard of ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems or equivalent: Carbon, Water, Waste, Supply Chain, Zero waste to landfill

Provide narrative evidence to:

- explain how technical knowledge is being embedded within the applicant's curriculum to link to green skills/sustainability/tackling climate change
- demonstrate what sustainability strategies and activities the applicant has in place working towards becoming net-zero carbon by 2030.
- the intended impact and progress to date of these activities.

Question 10: Promoting fair pay and Good Work

Criteria:

a) Sector employers

Applicants to demonstrate how they are embedding the following principles around 'Good Work' within conversations with sector employers:

- London Living Wage
- Employment status & rights
- Limiting and avoiding the use of zero-hour contracts
- The Mayor's Good Work Standard

b) Internal support

Applicants must demonstrate what strategies/activities they have in place to support 'good work' principles within their own organisation.

Further information:

[Good Work Standard \(GWS\)](#)

[London Living Wage](#)

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Documentary evidence provided of London Living Wage accreditation and/or Mayor's Good Work Standard (GWS).

If documentary evidence is not provided, applicant must submit narrative evidence demonstrating how the applicant is working towards either the London Living Wage accreditation OR the Mayor's GWS.

Please provide narrative evidence of:

1. how applicant is supporting new/existing sector employers to embed the 'Good Work' principals
2. how applicant embeds 'Good Work' principles within own organisation

Question 11: Promoting Diversity and Inclusion

Criteria:

a) Applicants to demonstrate what strategies/activities they have in place to support Equality, Diversity & Inclusion within their organisation at all levels.

b) Applicants to demonstrate how they are embedding Diversity and Inclusion principles within conversations with sector employers.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Narrative evidence to demonstrate what strategies/activities are in place to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within the applicant's own organisation to:

- be an inclusive organisation that is representative of the communities the applicant serves and is located within.
- highlight gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps within the applicant's own organisation and publication of this data.
- Examples shared of what applicants are doing to address these pay gaps.

Provide narrative of how support is given to new/existing sector employers to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion principles.

Wider examples of evidence could include:

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy
- Disability Confident Level 1, 2, 3
- Being a 'Ban the Box' employer
- Care Leaver Covenant Signatory
- Stonewall Awards (Gold, Silver, Bronze)
- Investors in Diversity Award

5.2 Quality Mark Criteria - Form B, Sector Specific

Question 1: Quality Mark sector application is being made for

Sector options

a) Please select one option:

- Digital
- Creative
- Health and Social Care
- Hospitality
- Green
- Construction

Score: N/A

Evidence requirements: Confirm which sector this application relates to. Please only provide details on this form for the sector being applied for. If applying for more than one sector, you must complete a separate Form B for each sector.

Criteria: Applicants must provide details of the sector specific courses.

Score: N/A

Evidence requirements List the relevant courses this application relates to specifying:

- Name of course
- Learning aim reference numbers
- Qualification type
- Level

Question 2: Industry relevance: Training offer

Criteria:

a) Applicants should demonstrate how their training offer is industry relevant to include:

- how training offer addresses sectoral skills shortages referring to specific sub sectors and particular occupations
- how industry intelligence is used to inform and shape the training offer.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Please submit course information via the 'Skills Academies Quality Mark Course List' provided.

Documentary evidence can include:

- Planning documents setting out the strategy for delivery in the coming two academic years
- Evidence of consultation with employers and/or employer groups as part of developing those documents.

Criteria: Applicants should list any sector bodies/trade associations worked with and the outcomes achieved. Applicants can provide evidence of sector-specific kitemarks they currently hold or are currently working towards.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Narrative evidence setting out how applicant works with relevant sector bodies, trade associations, industry bodies. Examples of evidence could include:

- Relevant sector-specific kitemark (documentary evidence required if holding a kitemark).

Criteria: Applicants should demonstrate how their engagement with local stakeholders, and support of local/regional strategies, helps to ensure alignment of training offer to the needs of the local/regional economy.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Narrative evidence setting out how applicant is working with local stakeholders can include:

- Local Authorities (LAs)
- Sub Regional Partnerships (SRPs)
- Other training providers
- Chambers of Commerce
- Sector-based organisations

Supporting statements from at least one of the stakeholder organisations listed above must be provided. The statement should highlight how applicant's training offer is responding to sectoral need. Official letterhead or

emails with full contact details will be accepted.

Further examples of evidence could include:

- Membership of local/regional/London skills/economic development board

Question 3: Employer engagement Strategy

Criteria: Employer Engagement Plans

a) Applicants should demonstrate their employer engagement strategy within the sector, setting out how the organisation builds and maintains relationships.

b) Applicants should demonstrate how their employer engagement strategy specifically engages Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and/or voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) in their sector.

Score: 0-2

Evidence of requirements: Narrative evidence setting out, in detail:

- Employer engagement strategy/plan (provide evidence as required)
- Attendance at any relevant events or employer forums in the preceding 12 months
- Planning engagements scheduled for the coming 12 months

Specific actions undertaken to engage SMEs/small businesses

Question 4: Strength of relationships

Criteria:

a) Applicants should demonstrate integration with employers to secure opportunities for learners in support of the quality of learner experience while on a programme of study and destinations post-study.

Narrative evidence setting out any activity to secure (list not exhaustive):

- work placements for learners
- employer-led talks and site visits
- any in-kind support from employers to deliver any programmes
- employer input to programme design or delivery
- employer support for pastoral care/ mentoring
- employment for learners including apprenticeships

Where possible, provide evidence of volume and/or quality of any of the above.

Note, all activity to relate to provision targeting the chosen sector.

Score: 0-2

Question 5: Employer Satisfaction

Criteria:

a) Applicants should demonstrate high levels of employer satisfaction with the customer service provided to employers. Explain how your customer service meets employer needs and continues to remain employer

focused.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Narrative evidence setting out:

- The process used to survey employers and/or other feedback mechanisms on employer satisfaction rates;
- How feedback is used to support continuous improvement.

Further evidence which **must** be provided are:

- Supporting statements from no fewer than **five employers** (with representation from both large employers and SMEs) from the (named) sector. Letterhead and emails with company signature will be accepted.
- A list of a further **five sector-related employers** who can be contacted at a later date as part of the follow-up assessment process.
- Any results of satisfaction surveys or other relevant information including:
 1. The latest results/evaluation of your employer survey
 2. Copy of latest employer survey

Examples of further evidence which could be provided are:

- Any recent reviews supplied to Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA) through the employer satisfaction surveys available on Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP).

Question 6: Destination Data

Criteria:

b) Applicants should demonstrate meaningful provision to support learners into employment or further training on completion of their course or programme.

Score: 0-2

Evidence of requirements: Narrative evidence setting out outcomes that have been achieved by the applicant against the following:

- job starts including apprenticeships
- further training starts
- sustainment to six months
- start-ups/freelance

Please state whether these outcomes can be verified by the Individualised Learner Record (ILR).

Question 7: Sector promotional activities

Criteria:

a) Applicants to demonstrate how they raise the profile of the sector to potential learners, focusing on how they target and recruit underrepresented groups.

Applicants to demonstrate how they highlight routes into and career pathways within their sector to help underrepresented groups to navigate and overcome structural barriers to entry focusing on engagement, recruitment, retention and progression for underrepresented groups in the workforce.

Narrative evidence of how applicant highlights and promotes career pathways into their sector specifically for underrepresented groups.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: This could include details of:

- Outreach strategy/specific outreach activities
- Promotional activities/specific marketing materials
- Partnerships with voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations.

Theme: Facilities

Criteria: Applicants should demonstrate how their training facilities and equipment support the delivery of high-quality inclusive provision relevant to industry need.

Score: Not scored Response for this question is for information only

Evidence requirements: Descriptive and/or documentary evidence describing the facilities available for the sector.

Theme: Quality of teaching and learning

Criteria: Applicant should provide detail of how teaching and assessment staff stay up to date with industry/sector trends to meet the current and future demands from both employers and learners.

Score: 0-2

Evidence requirements: Narrative detailing how teaching and assessment staff:

- have/are working towards qualifications aligned to professional body/sector-specific standards.
- maintain CPD to meet current and future demands of employers and learners within the sector

The department of Business, Industrial and Energy Strategy (BEIS) declares that, a company is an SME if two of these three characteristics are met: annual turnover less than €50m; number of employees less than 250; or annual balance sheet total less than €43m. This is based on the EU definition (recommendation 2003/361/EC) that also defines a Micro enterprise as <10 headcount, less than €2m turnover or less than €2m or their balance sheet.

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