

GTA England news



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GTA England support for developing and submitting bids for capital funding

Following the recognition of GTAs as eligible organisations for capital funding GTA England have been actively supporting members with their bids.

Despite the very tight timescales for 2013-14 bids, members have demonstrated the responsiveness of the network of GTAs.

Colleagues in BIS inform:

- The main SICF will only come into operation from 2015-16 when we have £100m available for both 2015-16 and 2016-17. On this basis, this guidance and application relate to what is, in effect, a pilot of the main SICF.
- We currently have funding available for 2013-14 only, but we are reviewing this position as part of the mid-year review and we are considering the scope for making further SICF funding available in 2014-15.

Executive

"GTA England have worked hard on behalf of the network to open up capital funding for GTA's, this is something we have been lobbying for over a few years. They have created access to a specialist in this field in support of wording and identifying the criteria of the bid and potential projects.

We look forward to the continued support and championing of the cause for future rounds of access to capital funding for GTA's via GTA England. This is a major achievement for GTAE and the GTA's it represents and is proof that GTA England is able to champion GTA's and influence key decision makers."

Nigel Donohue, WATA, Chief Executive

"From a WATA perspective I think the opportunity to bid for capital funding at a time when we are embarking on a significant new build is really positive and the positioning GTA England has managed to do in ensuring GTAs are seen as key stakeholders is critical. However, until we know the outcome the actual benefit is unknown.

Feedback from my FD on the day he attended on bid preparation was that it was extremely useful and the understanding/experience brought to the day was a great help in polishing our already well developed proposal."

Here's what some of our members have said about GTA England assisting in developing and submitting bids for capital funding.

Jill Nagy Rochdale Training, Chief Executive

"With the actual timelines being very tight the advanced provision of the draft application form and guidance was really helpful, enabling us to get a head start before the announcement.

Although we have written many bids to deliver training – we have not completed a Capital bid before. We found the specialist's feedback excellent and having that 'external'/'outside the organisation' view of our bid really worthwhile."

How you've benefited from GTA England membership this year

Peer Review: Successfully organising and completing 13 Peer Reviews is a milestone for us in 2013. Ensure you've booked for the free Peer Review training on 14th and 15th January to get your staff trained to participate. Watch out for the Peer Review Summary report in 2014 which will make for great benchmarking activity

Support: Make sure you log into the members area of the website to access your free copy of the Audit Toolkits and guidance for self assessment.

Watch out for your **free £50k** worth of AutoDesk software made available via our partnership with F1 in Schools – coming soon.

Post – Richards. GTA England are actively involved in the Aerospace, Automotive and Food and Drink Trailblazers helping shape the standards and new Apprenticeship arrangements.

Relevance: The Large Engineering Employers Apprenticeships Consortium have agreed to act as GTA England's national employer advisory Board ensuring that our strategic plans keep right on track with current developments.

Membership

You will be shortly receiving an email giving your membership fee for the 2014 year which commences from 1st January 2014. We are exploring payment options including direct debit in order to spread the cost of membership and need your response to inform the process.

On receipt of payment in January 2014 each GTA will receive free access to £50,000 worth of Autodesk software as a result of our continuing partnership with F1 in Schools.

Influencing: Gaining access to capital funding via the Skills Infrastructure and Capital Fund was one of the highlights of 2013. Agreeing special dispensation for GTAs offering long duration programmes with SFA. This should mean that the 20% output related funding for Technical Certificates can be paid in the year of achievement rather than on completion.

Cost reduction: Being prudent in negotiating for services and costs, holding off replacing our excellent Administration support, has meant that we are able to offer a reduction in membership fees for 2014.

Continuance of the partnership with EAL ensuring 10% discount; and free AeLP membership reduces the membership fee by some £3k on average.

Launch of teaching and learning and Quality Managers network ensuring a focus on quality improvement activities.

Autodesk offers an extensive portfolio of 3D design software

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The NCETM GCSE Mathematics Enhancement Programme

The Education and Training Foundation is working to further develop the skills of those currently teaching functional skills, preparing them to teach GCSE maths. The six day programme is available to numeracy teachers and trainers for £100 as it is subsidised by the Education and Training Foundation. The need for the Maths Enhancement Programme was highlighted by the OECD survey.



For more information visit <http://www.et-foundation.co.uk/maths-enhancement-programmed/128-maths-enhancement-programme.html>

Do the words 'SFA audit' fill you with dread?

Or are you fairly confident? Either way, you may find our experience valuable.

The GTA England endured a challenging experience at the hands of the SFA auditors in April this year. The three GTAs in the consortium went into the audit week feeling quite confident. By lunchtime on the first day, their confidence had diminished, and by teatime we all had our heads in our hands.

If you haven't had an audit for some time, you may be feeling relaxed about your learner file systems. You may, like some of our colleagues in the CCC, have cut out some seemingly cumbersome and bureaucratic processes in your GTA. Quality checks often get cut when times are hard. If this is you – have a re-think and make sure you put in place some simple processes to make sure you stay on track with funding requirements.

First and foremost, who in your organisation has read and inwardly digested the SFA Funding Rules? And have they shared all the relevant bits with the relevant people? People are usually more inclined to do things properly all the time, if they know why they are doing them and what the consequences might be if they do not. Then – do you have internal audit processes in place? And are your learner file records compliant and consistent?

If you can't honestly answer 'yes' to all of the above, fear not, help is at hand. Unfortunately I cannot

produce for you the edited highlights of the SFA Funding Rules. They need to be read in their entirety. And when you do, you might find some 'nuggets' that you could use to your advantage. The innovation code, for instance – have a good read if you are not already using this. But at GTA England, we used our audit experience wisely, and have come up with two toolkits for you to use. One is for setting up learner files correctly, and the other is for auditing them. You will find them on the GTA England website. As ever, please feel free to adapt them for your own use. But be sure to feed back to us – via the Quality Managers' Forum – how you have used and adapted them.

The toolkits have been trialled by GTAs attending the forum and here is some feedback received:

"A toolkit for signing on learners and starting their learning aims is an exceptionally useful document for those who may be new to this process. I also found it useful to use as a checklist for identifying areas of improvement. The threshold information was particularly useful, as were the examples given that cover the threshold days of 1, 14 and 42."

"I would certainly recommend the use of these toolkits – particularly to help develop new internal auditors and to measure overall compliance."

The SAR and Audit toolkits can be found in the members area of the website under Resources ➡ Library ➡ Toolkits.

Specialist apprenticeship provider wins prestigious national online learning award

Apprenticeship training provider, Appris, has been judged a winner in the Virtual Awards 2013. Appris has over 300 apprentices across 150 member companies in West Yorkshire, specialising in engineering manufacturing, business & administration, marketing and logistics apprenticeships.

As a Group Training Association (GTA) and registered charity, Appris has a board of trustees, with representation from a wide range of engineering and manufacturing employers across the West Yorkshire region.

The Virtual Awards are held online, as the name suggests, and were created by Ilkley-based online learning provider, Virtual College, to recognise the staggering growth in e-learning. Entries were invited by Virtual College for 6 sector specific awards and 3 categories which were open to any industry sector. Shortlisted entries for each category were judged by an independent panel.

Appris was judged the winners of the 'Education' Sector Award. Appris uses sophisticated online

profiling tools during its recruitment process, to help ensure that it matches the most suitable applicants for its apprenticeship vacancies, and also uses e-learning resources as part of its apprenticeship training programmes.

Kenny Stoddart, Operations Director for Appris, commented: "Online tools and resources are now an important complement to our traditional recruitment and delivery methods.

"Most of our apprentices are 'digital natives' and expect to use the latest technology as part of their apprenticeship programme."

Liam Prendergast, Commercial Manager of Virtual College's Education Division, said: "The format of the Virtual Awards ticks lots of boxes. Time and resource pressures mean people often struggle to justify attending remote events.

"We have over one million online learners and think there are huge benefits in bringing the best practice of customers such as Appris to a wide audience."



Virtual Award 2013 presented to Kenny Stoddart of Appris (left) by Jonathan Mannion, Account Manager, of Virtual College

Behind with your SAR? Or trying to improve the process for this year?

We can help ... you can now find on the website the GTA England Self-assessment Scoring Criteria. This document has come from our experience working with the Collaborative Contracting Consortium. Some of the issues arising from ongoing performance management made us have a re-think about how we manage quality improvement, and, frankly, what we were getting out of the process.

You may have asked yourself similar questions. GTAs spend an inordinate amount of money on quality improvement and 'self-assessment' activity. But how much of it actually improves the bottom line – by which we mean the outcome for the learner? The other bottom line – your revenue, is severely depleted by large amounts of compliance and verification activity. So why not make it work for you? We think that the self-assessment toolkit we have developed, encourages you to look critically at the right things – the key learning processes -in your organisation, properly assess their quality, and 'grade' them.

You can then decide from this process, what you are going to do to improve them. That's where our forums come in. You can join either the teaching practitioners' Journey to Grade One Forum, or the Quality and Operations Managers' Forum, or both. We meet around three times a year, and we use the time to work on ideas that will improve your teaching, learning and assessment, to improve the outcome for the learner.

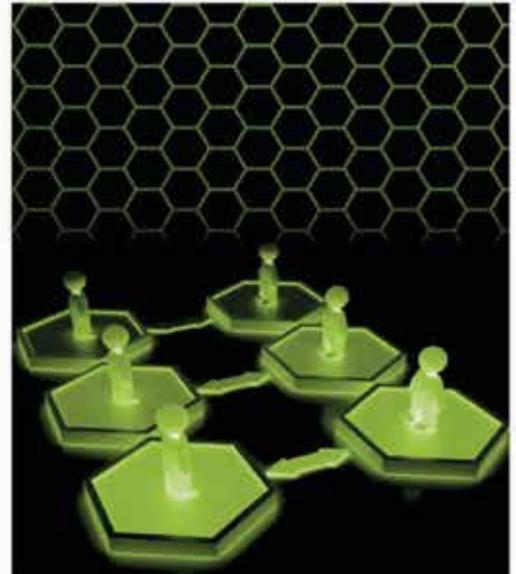
You may already have a completed SAR that you are happy with. But there are ideas within the Self-assessment Scoring Criteria that you can add to your Quality Improvement Plan this year, so that when you come to compile your SAR next year, you will have high quality data to show the improvements you have made, and the impact they are having.

We hope you will use and adapt the toolkit to suit your own GTA. As you do, please feed back via the forums the changes you have made, so others can benefit from your innovations. Thank you and enjoy!

Jane Nutting



appris



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**To discuss further,
contact Charlotte Gee
directly on
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IET to lead Apprenticeships trailblazer

I was impressed with your apprentices Charlotte, Sarah and Nicole, I had a quick chat with them afterwards and I thought they gave a really good presentation focusing on women in engineering. I have put The Women's Engineering Society (who we host here at the IET) in contact with them as I think they would make great role models for budding female apprentices, happy to do what I can to help to raise their profile and SETA's.

By Owen Davis

Award-winning apprentices recognised by Maritime and Engineering College North West

The next generation of engineering and maritime stars were recognised at the annual Maritime and Engineering College North West (MECNW) Apprenticeship Awards.

The ceremony on November 14, held at MECNW in Birkenhead, celebrated the achievements of learners across 11 different award categories which were presented by former Liverpool FC and England player and coach Sammy Lee.

George Day, from Peel Ports, was named overall Apprentice of the Year and also Peel Apprentice of the Year.

Other winners included Calum Ellis of Archbell Greenwood Structures, for ECITB (Engineering Construction Industry Training Board) Apprentice of the Year, Sam Hankin was crowned Cammell Laird Apprentice of the Year, and James Harding of Cammell Laird took home the Welder of the Year award.

Also recognised at the ceremony were Conor Clyne of Interserve Industrial Services, for special achievement, Bradlee Jeffries of Genco Logistics, was crowned Commerce and Logistics Apprentice of the Year, MD Engineering's Jay Cawley was named Young Engineer of the year and finally Kieran Sait of Peel Ports, won the Institution of Mechanical Engineers Award.

Dave Steele, a learning co-ordinator with MECNW, was crowned Inspirational Staff Member of the Year after apprentices voted him their clear winner. Dave specialises in working with the apprentices on functional skills such as literacy and mathematics, which are a compulsory element of their overall qualification framework.

Jim Teasdale, chief executive of MECNW which is part of the Mersey Maritime Group, hailed the achievements of the winners and said they paint a bright picture for the region's industry.

"Once again, we have seen an excellent shortlist of candidates and the winners really stand out for their endeavours and achievements over the past year," he said.

"The maritime sector on Merseyside is booming and currently employs about 28,000 people. This is set to double over the next decade through projects such as Liverpool2 and Wirral Waters. We see a bright future for the sector and the winners of these apprenticeship awards show that future is in safe hands."

"Nurturing young talent is key to a stable and successful Merseyside and we will continue to work with employers to help them identify the young people they need now to become the engineers and manufacturing specialists of tomorrow."



Guroo Functional Skills Open Training Event on 11th Feb 2014 in Manchester with guest speaker Sandra Kay from North Lancs Training Group.

Guroo will be organising a third event as the two first ones sold out so quickly. The event will take place at the Mercure Manchester Norton Grange Hotel and Spa on 11th Feb 2014 from 9.45 am until 13.30.

Sandra Kay, Skills for Life Operations Co-ordinator from North Lancs Training Group will be the guest speaker on the day! The rest of the session will be led by Sally Bryant, Functional Skills and maths specialist.

Event agenda:

9.00 am - 9.45 am	Teas and coffees on arrival, welcome by Cathy Vaissieres-Brien
9.45 am - 10.15	Start of event/Presentation on the positive impact Guroo had on North Lancs Training Group by Sandra Kay.
10.15 am - 11.30 am	Training session led by Sally Bryant
11.30 am - 11.45 am	Coffee break
11.45 am - 13.30	Training session led by Sally Bryant
13.30	End of event

The event is an ideal opportunity for anyone who wishes to brush up on training or to find out more about Guroo. A mixture of managers and practitioners will attend the event, both current customers and undecided/potential ones! This will be a great opportunity to network with local organisations and hear their thoughts on Guroo!

Tickets need to be booked via Eventbrite. Please email cvaissieres@guroo.co.uk for your invite! Hurry as there are only 20 tickets available! Check how many tickets there are left on a regular basis via Twitter.

If you wish to book 8 tickets min for the same organisation, let us know as we may be able to run an event on your doorstep!

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