

WYCA AEB Flexibilities August 2022 User Guide

In July 2022, the Employment and Skills Committee recommended new flexibilities to be incorporated into the West Yorkshire Adult Education Budget (AEB) Funding Rules.

These rules align with the West Yorkshire AEB strategy and, following a year of implantation, begin to make use of the powers and flexibilities that devolution provides to the local area.

The flexibilities are intended to both enhance the impact of AEB funds in the area, and to simplify access and eligibility criteria for residents who need support.

They are part of our longer-term investment in West Yorkshire residents and skills. As such, we will continue to review uptake and impact of these flexibilities, and welcome further provider discussion on the application of the flexibilities.

The flexibilities are approved for use as of 1 August 2022. We acknowledge that the timing of approvals and guidance are likely to result in later adoption of some of the flexibilities. Webinars are planned for September to support adoption and will be made available via the West Yorkshire AEB website. Your Key Account Manager is also available to provide additional advice and guidance where needed.

Please use this guidance in conjunction with the latest funding rules v2.

Expanding the age of entitlement for a 'first full level 2' from 19-23 to 19+

If a learner is aged 24 or over without a full level 2, we will fully fund their first full level 2 qualification as listed as a legal entitlement. This brings the 24+ entitlement to a first full level 2 in line with those aged 19-23. 24+ Learners are still able to access qualifications from the local flexibility prior to their first full level 2.

Data Requirements

Set learner to fully funded.

Use DAM code **023** and DAM code **056**. DAM codes must be used to identify application of a WY approved flexibility. Usage will be monitored to measure uptake and impact of flexibility.

Expanding the digital entitlement to ensure digital skills for all

Providers may submit Digital Skills qualifications (Entry level, level 1 & level 2) which will be fully funded via the WYCA flexibilities.

Approval must be confirmed before learner start date.

A supporting rationale should be included, and all qualifications must be listed on find a learning aim. <https://findlearningaimbeta.fasst.org.uk>

Approved list of digital qualifications will be available on the [website](#)

Opportunities to submit additional qualifications to be added to the approved list are available by 21st September 2022, 31st January 2023, and 28th April 2023. Please complete template and email AEBinfo@westyorks-ca.gov.uk by 5pm on the dates above.

Approval will be communicated within 15 working days. The published list will be updated.

Data Requirements

Set learner to fully funded.

Use DAM code **023** and DAM code **057**. DAM codes must be used to identify application of a WY approved flexibility. Usage will be monitored to measure the uptake and impact of flexibility.

Ensure qualification is on the approved list.

WYCA will undertake monthly validation to ensure qualification is on the list.

Test Pilot: Increasing the number of courses 19-23s are entitled to

West Yorkshire Combined Authority have increased the number of level 2 qualifications 19 – 23 year olds can access prior to achieving their First Full Level 2 as part of a Test Pilot for 22/23. This test pilot will increase understanding of whether allowing 19-23 year olds to complete a level 2 qualification that is not a Full Level 2 legal entitlement qualification supports progression to further study, and/or employment.

Providers can fund level 2 qualifications from the Local Flexibility offer for 19-23 year olds. It is anticipated that this will not exceed iro 5% of a providers' AEB allocation.

Provision will be fully funded for 19 - 23 year olds who do not hold a Full Level 2.

Providers who anticipate utilising more than 5% of their allocation for this flexibility will be asked to submit a business case outlining demand and the alignment to economic need.

Data Requirements

Providers use code **023** and DAM code **058**. DAM codes must be used to identify application of a WY approved flexibility.

Alongside using the codes above, providers **must** indicate the learning objective in the **Provider Monitoring Field** stating one of the following.

1. Entry into employment
2. In-work progression
3. Progression to full level 2

Usage of DAM code **23**, DAM code **058** and the detail included in the Provider Monitoring Field will be monitored through monthly testing and subject to audit scrutiny.

This evidence will enable us to measure the uptake and impact of this flexibility.

Test Pilot: Bridging programmes for level 3

The 'Free Courses for Jobs' (FCfJ, previously Level 3 National Skills Fund) programme is undersubscribed nationally. In West Yorkshire we estimate that only around 20% of the funding available to our residents will be utilised in 2021/22. As a delegated fund, we have little ability to shape and design the offer itself, but we can use AEB flexibly to support adults in progressing and taking up this opportunity. This pilot aims to bridge the 'jump' between level 2 and level 3, particularly when an adult has been out of education for some time

Providers who have an FCfJ allocation can determine short 'bridging programmes' that provide a stepping-stone to the longer level 3 programmes. This may involve modules at level 2 or level 3 that serve as a taster, or a refresher, or potentially as a package which focusses on e.g. self-study, research skills, etc.

Eligibility and Data Requirements

Learners will only be eligible for bridging programmes if they meet the FCfJ eligibility criteria.

Providers must complete an application which includes a detailed costed bridging programme proposal detailing course outline to include GLH, regulated, non-regulated aims, cost per aim (both non-regulated/regulated).

Proposals will be considered by the AEB Performance Group assessed against value for money including cost per head, innovative delivery, added value to currently funded activity, sector links, and % target progression to a L3 FCfJ qualification.

Once approved a Z code will be created for non-accredited element of the 'bridging programme'.

Actual destination must be entered within 8 weeks of completing bridging programme. The test pilot will help us to assess uptake and impact, specifically progression to Level 3 FCfJ qualifications. We want to understand both the success and challenges facing learner progression.

Any learner engaging on the bridging programme will be fully funded through AEB. AEB funded delivery must comply with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Funding Rules.

RARPA would be expected to be utilised for non-regulated provision refer to guidance within the funding rules.