

## Developing Scotland's Workforce AY 2019-20

### Q&As

#### **Q1. What are the key eligibility criteria?**

All participants on the project must complete an ESF form. In addition to this each student must be able to demonstrate their right to live / work (RTLW) in the UK, and there should be evidence of their residency in their respective area (H&I/LUPs) at the course start date. More detailed notes on eligible evidence types and restrictions/exceptions can be found in the [ESF Guidance](#).

#### **Q2. Are there any examples of evidence types that are unacceptable?**

- A. Delivery agents must always refer back to the guidance for suitable evidence types.

It should be noted that residency evidence must be from a suitably official source and be eligible to share with third parties. Correspondence relating to mobile phone contracts, store card accounts, optical appointments, Disclosure / PVG have previously been rejected at audit and are therefore not acceptable.

Young Scot Cards are also not eligible as evidence of a participant's right to live / work in the UK.

#### **Q3. Are there any restrictions on participant age?**

- A. Participants should be of working age - Developing Scotland's Workforce is a programme designed to encourage progression and upskilling. The project aims to support the emerging industries and key growth sectors by promoting relevant vocational skills and higher level qualifications.

NB: There is no requirement for participants to provide evidence of their age, although *additional evidence requirements* (copy of parent/guardian's photographic ID and signed consent) apply if the participant under 16 years old.

**Q4. Can non-EU foreign nationals prove their RTLW in the UK by using a UK/EU (full or provisional) driving licence?**

- A. Yes, individuals who have been issued with a UK/EU driving licence (Full or Provisional), regardless of birthplace, can use this solely to prove their RTLW in the UK – provided it is valid at the course start date.

**Update October 2021:** The exception to this is where the student has indicated on their participant form that they have either 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker' status. In these situations colleges and universities should refer to DSW guidance, Annex A: 'Eligibility of refugees and asylum seekers.'

**Q5. Can a driving licence be used exclusively to prove RTLW in the UK and residency?**

- A. Yes, provided that driving licence was issued in the UK/EU, is valid at the course start date and the address on the licence matches the address stated on the ESF participant form.

**Q6. What happens if the UK/EU driving licence is not valid at the course start date?**

- A. Any evidence being used to prove RTLW in the UK must be valid at the course start date. However, a driving licence that is not valid at course start date may be used to prove residency if it is valid within one month of the course start date.

Examples

- i. Student has a UK/EU driving licence valid from 3/8/19 - 23/5/28. The address on the DL matches the ESF form. The participant's course start date is 26/8/19.  
**This driving licence can be used for both RTLW evidence (valid at the course start date) and residency (because it was valid at the course start date).**
- ii. Student has a UK/EU driving licence valid from 25/9/19 until 23/5/28. The address on the DL matches the ESF form. The participant's course start date is 26/8/19.  
**This driving licence can be used only as evidence of residency (because it was not valid at course start date but it was valid *within one month***

**of the course start date). Additional evidence of student's RTLW would need to be provided.**

- iii. Student has a UK/EU driving licence valid from 30/10/19 until 30/10/28. The address on the DL matches the ESF form. The participant's course start date is 26/8/19.

**This driving licence would not be accepted as evidence of RTLW (because it is not valid at course start date) or for residency (because the valid from date is more than a month after the course started). Alternate evidence of both RTLW and residency would need to be provided.**

**Q7. What other monitoring criteria needs to be evidenced?**

- A. There should be evidence of each participant's highest (grouped) qualification level at the course start date.

**Q8. Is evidence required if a student has no qualifications / no recognised qualification?**

- A. If a student has no qualification, or no recognised previous qualification, delivery agents should provide a print from a system which records recognised qualifications, e.g. SQA.

**Q9. Does a Grade D / Result '7' count as a qualification for the purposes of showing highest prior qualification level?**

- A. Yes. Grade D, whilst not a pass, is reported on the Scottish Qualifications Certificate as a course award in its own right. Grade D indicates that the candidate has achieved all the National Units for the course at that level and has achieved a band 7 in the external assessment.

**Q10. How should a participant's previous qualification level be determined and recorded on their participant form?**

- A. Participants' previous qualifications should be logged on their ESF form according to their highest 'grouped' qualification – this is considered to be one that has a Group Award attached. Per Q8, this includes students who have been awarded a qualification with a 'D' grade.

Delivery agents should ensure that only one selection has been made and this agrees with the highest level qualification (as per the evidence) prior to the course start date.

NB. Participants who hold an advanced higher qualification should be recorded at SCQF 7 (ISCED 3-4), and those with an HNC/D should be recorded at SCQF 7-8 (ISCED 5-8).

***Q11. How should a participant's previous qualification level be evidenced where the certificate is in a language other than English?***

- A. For students with qualifications certificates in a language other than English, the delivery agent should provide a brief translation and confirm the relevant equivalent qualification level (in writing on the certificate).

***Q12. Is additional evidence required for withdrawn students?***

- A. We ask that delivery agents provide withdrawal forms for students who leave before the end of their course. In addition to this we should be able to show their continued engagement in the programme, so a credit listing and attendance report should be available (as for all ESF participants).

***Q13. How can continued engagement be demonstrated?***

- A. Delivery agents can show a participant's continued engagement by providing up-to-date attendance and achievement records.

***Q14. What defines a continuing student?***

- A. A continuing student, for the purposes of ESF funding, is one who has previously enrolled on a programme of activity and been funded on the same project (e.g. DSW).

***Q15. What is an Associate Student and are they eligible for ESF funding?***

- A. An Associate Student is essentially a University Student who is funded to study at the college. These students are enrolled on nationally recognised qualifications, i.e. HNC/D, and who will articulate to achieve a degree. The students will study at the college but have access to university systems, libraries etc. As Associate Students are funded through the university, they are not officially college students. Nevertheless, they must still be recorded in FES – and they are done so with the recognition that there is no college funding attached. Associate Students are therefore not eligible for ESF funding.

Please refer to the [FES Guidance notes](#) for more information.

**Q16. What is the significance of achieving the HE baseline, in addition to college core & ESF targets?**

- A. Colleges must achieve their core credit target before ESF can be claimed. This allows us to demonstrate additionality. We specify that colleges must also achieve their HE Baseline in order to safeguard against displacement of activity.

**Q17. How are ESF students identified in FES?**

- A. ESF participants are 'flagged' in FES using the Target Group marker '1' (Code list T). See [FES 2 Guidance notes 2019-20](#).

**Q18. How long do we need to keep ESF records for?**

- A. As it stands, delivery agents are required to retain all records relevant to the current programme until 31 December 2030.

**Q19. How should participants' personal data be dealt with?**

- A. Documents provided as evidence by participants should be redacted to show only relevant information – i.e. name, address, dates. Account numbers and reference numbers that are personal to the student should be redacted to protect participant interests. It must also remain clear as to where the document originated from.

**Q20. When can we destroy records for students that were tagged as ESF participants but who were not included in an ESF claim?**

- A. There will be various iterations of reconciliations before we ultimately finalise those students deemed eligible to be included in our ESF claim(s). Initially, each college / university will receive an annual reconciliation and student list; this will be based purely on the delivery of ESF credits and the students that have been flagged. SFC then needs to undertake a 100% check of all student evidence uploaded. Depending on the findings, there may be a need to further review the student list and where possible, look to replace students deemed ineligible with alternatives (only where delivery permits). Once SFC have submitted the claim and completed a final reconciliation, a definitive student list will be provided to allow you to identify which records should be kept (according to document retention guidelines set out in the guidance) and which ones can be discarded. Until this time, if a student is flagged as ESF, the college or university must retain all documentation per Q18.

***Q21. I am having problems with uploading documents to the secure server because of file sizes – is there a way that I can minimise the file size?***

- A. Delivery agents should zip the files before upload. This means that document size is drastically reduced and allows for quicker upload and reduces the number of documents that need to be uploaded.

***Q22. What are the timescales for FES returns?***

- A. The FES return dates are contained within SFC's FES 2 Guidance (paragraph 19). For reference they shown below:

1st Quarter – 08 November 2019

2nd Quarter – 07 February 2020

3rd Quarter – 03 July 2020

Final Return – 02 October 2020.

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