ECITB Approved Training – Key principles and priorities

ECITB Approved Training

1. A key tenet of the ECITB's strategy is to support and encourage the transferability of skills across all sectors of the industry. Increasing the mobility of a skilled workforce will help reduce unnecessary waste and duplication. Therefore grant aid is prioritised to support training related activities which are aligned to national and industry specific standards. Where training is not aligned to national or industry specific standards grant aid may be provided but at a reduced rate to incentivise the industry to use transferable standards.

2. Grant aid can be provided for any principal or related activities as defined in the Board Order, however the Board prioritises training in certain areas as being critical to the productivity and safety of the industry and to meet current and future industry demands. These training areas are:

    - New entrant training, specifically
        - Apprenticeships
        - Graduate development
        - Reskilling sector transferees
    - Upskilling existing workers
        - Craft/technician skills (eg. Mechanical joint integrity, NDT)
        - Safety training (including behavioural safety and human factors)
        - Project management / project controls / commercial awareness
        - Design training (eg CAD, BIM)
    - Behavioural and cultural change in the industry
        - Leadership, Management and Supervisory development
        - Mental Health Awareness
    - Validation of competence (VQ's, technical tests)
    - Training as a contractual requirement (e.g. Work access, plant operations)

3. There are some areas of training undertaken in the industry which are required to gain access to sites or to ensure a worker can travel offshore. These passport schemes are excluded from grant support. Currently these are:

    - CCNSG
    - CSCS
    - BOSIET
    - MIST

4. Notwithstanding the lists in paragraphs 2 and 3, the Board and the OGC may reprioritise grant aid or support excluded training if the needs of the industry justify the deviation.

5. The grants which are available in respect of ECITB approved training are set out in the schedule of grants in the grant management system in the ECITB's Membership Services Portal ("MSP"). Any requests for grants to support training outside the schedule should be by submitting a Regional Discretionary Fund application, also through the MSP.

6. The key principles for establishing and using the Regional Discretionary Fund are set out in Appendix 1 to this annex.

Employer's in-house training

7. Employer's in-house training activities may attract grant payment, as this supports the development and productivity of an employer's workforce. However, where an employer's training programmes do not align with ECITB approved training as described in the MSP, an application for Regional Discretionary funding should be made. For the avoidance of doubt, grant support for employer's in-house training will be to support the delivery of training. Grant support will not normally be provided to cover the costs of development of an employer's in house training.

Regional Discretionary Funding – Key Principles

1. As part of operational planning each region budgets for a discretionary fund by which the budget holder can make a discretionary award to support training in the region. By definition the fund is managed at a regional level. All regional budget holders are responsible for establishing the regional employers consensus to help determine how the fund should be deployed with respect to the following:

    - Percentage of grant support for approved applications.
    - Whether a different percentage of grant should be applied to different types of training.
    - Providing funding windows across the year to ensure everyone has reasonable access.

2. This will be part of the regions operational planning for each year and consensus should be sought from employers though regional fora and the parameters set will be approved as part of the overall operational plan.

3. All discretionary applications should meet the criteria outlined in this appendix. Where the requests fall within the principal and related activities of the Board Order and are from employers who are on the ECITB Register of Leviable Establishments, the discretionary application is dealt with according to financial authority levels.

4. The primary goals of this grant scheme are to increase engagement with training by employers, provide learning solutions to employers where there is no existing ECITB approved grant which meets their needs, and to make the training supply chain more responsive to the skills needs of the industry.

5. The eligibility criteria applied in reaching grant award decisions are as follows:

    a. As a general rule, the fund is to be used for securing and funding external training, rather than in-company programmes.

    b. If the fund is used to fund internal training, special arrangements will apply relating to the approval and verification of training. These will include defining the outcomes and identifying satisfactory evidence that outcomes have been achieved.

    c. Non-eligible training programmes (see Annex A para 3) and any training where there is an existing support mechanism within the ECITB or from another funding agency.

    d. Preference should be given for programmes involving several collaborating employers, rather than single company schemes.

e.   Preference should be given to programmes or innovations in training that attract additional levered support to achieve more or better outcomes.

f.   Preference should be given for programmes that show specific skill enhancements or where there is a key market failure in existing provision.

g.   The funds should normally be used to procure training, and not to cover other costs.