



# Functional Skills Support Programme e-Bulletin

Edition 3: September 2009



Welcome to the third edition of the Functional Skills Support Programme (FSSP) news bulletin for post-16 education and training centres. The start of the new autumn term has seen the launch of several new support programme activities including the FSSP website and regional helplines going live. This month's bulletin includes:

- **Programme updates:** FSSP activities and developments
- **In the news:** News from across the sector which relates to functional skills
- **Support available:** Information sources for FSSP, including updated regional helpline numbers

## Programme updates

### The new FSSP website goes live - REGISTER NOW!

The new dedicated FSSP website went live on 1 September and provides a first point of contact for all functional skills support. The site includes programme news, useful links, materials and resources. Website functionality will continue to be developed and features added over the course of the year, including a platform for communities of practice. The FSSP website can be accessed via the following link: [www.fssupport.org](http://www.fssupport.org). Make sure you register on the site now to gain access to the refreshed support materials which will be available in October.

### Development projects

Earlier this month post-16 centres had the opportunity to apply for funding for FSSP development projects. The intention of development projects is to encourage centres to work collaboratively to resolve issues and share ideas. They form an integral part of the programme's sector-led and sector-responsive approach. More than 140 applications were received from across the sector. Project themes range from secure estate to embedding for Diploma lines of learning and work-based learning. Representatives from AoC, ALP, HOLEX, LSIS and DCSF will be reviewing applications. Successful applicants will be notified in early October with projects planned to commence later in the month.

### Programme materials refresh

Work is continuing on a number of new materials and publications, with the first release scheduled for late October/ early November. This will include a publication entitled *FS in the Secure Estate*, a training module *Managing Functional Skills: Lessons from the Pilot* and ten new modules which have been reworked from last years FSSP modules based on feedback from across the sector. Details of other modules and publications will be announced at [www.fssupport.org](http://www.fssupport.org) in the next few weeks.

### Network event dates

Dates have now been confirmed for the next round of regional network events in November and December (listed below). Please note there are some updates since the August news bulletin. If you attended one of the last network events you will automatically receive an invite to the next event in your region. If you did not attend the last event and would like to attend future events please send an email to your regional team using the contact details listed under the "Support available" section of this bulletin.

East of England: 24 November  
East Midlands: 3 December  
London: 5 November

North East: 24 November  
North West: 3 November  
South East: 25 November

South West: 11 November  
West Midlands: 26 November  
Yorkshire and Humberside: 20 November

## Functional Skills Support Programme

## In the news

### National Strategies functional skills support for schools: New online module

A module for non-pilot schools, *An Introduction to functional skills*, is now available online. It can also be used by pilot centres to support the whole school development of functional skills. For current e-learning modules for schools and the introductory overview go to the National Strategies website and select functional skills.

[www.nationalstrategies.org.uk](http://www.nationalstrategies.org.uk)

### 14-19 Workforce support website now live: [www.14-19support.org](http://www.14-19support.org)

The 14-19 workforce support homepage went live last month. The site is a one stop shop designed for users to access all support under the 14-19 Reform. It provides easy access to all the websites and support programmes on offer, including the four learning routes. The page will become fully functional in January 2010 but can be accessed now to provide links through to other programmes. See [www.14-19support.org](http://www.14-19support.org)

### QCDA functional skills countdown events

This is the final year of the three-year programme to pilot functional skills qualifications before functional skills are mandatory in all learning pathways. To support centres through this year, QCDA are holding a series of functional skills countdown events around the country during the autumn. There will be an opportunity to find out more about the FSSP at these events along with the awarding organisations offering functional skills and the information needed from centres to evaluate these qualifications before they are available for use in all centres this month. For more information from QCDA on functional skills see <http://www.qcda.gov.uk/6062.aspx>

## Support available

### Regional helplines and email

Dedicated regional helplines and email addresses (listed below) went live this month. The regional teams are on hand to answer functional skills queries including:



- requests for information
- training enquiries and booking
- ordering publications
- general enquiries.

Region	Number	E-mail Address
North West	0127 065 4677	<a href="mailto:northwest@fssupport.org">northwest@fssupport.org</a>
North East	0191 215 6800	<a href="mailto:northeast@fssupport.org">northeast@fssupport.org</a>
Yorkshire & Humberside	0148 447 8250	<a href="mailto:yorkshireandhumberside@fssupport.org">yorkshireandhumberside@fssupport.org</a>
East of England	0148 040 9318	<a href="mailto:eastern@fssupport.org">eastern@fssupport.org</a>
West Midlands	0121 678 7205	<a href="mailto:westmidlands@fssupport.org">westmidlands@fssupport.org</a>
East Midlands	0115 854 1605	<a href="mailto:eastmidlands@fssupport.org">eastmidlands@fssupport.org</a>
South East	0844 335 2938	<a href="mailto:southeast@fssupport.org">southeast@fssupport.org</a>
South West	0182 336 5651	<a href="mailto:southwest@fssupport.org">southwest@fssupport.org</a>
London	0844 335 2938	<a href="mailto:london@fssupport.org">london@fssupport.org</a>
National helpline	0844 335 2938	<a href="mailto:helpline@fssupport.org">helpline@fssupport.org</a>

(Open from 9am-5pm Monday-Friday, excluding Public Holidays)

### Schools

For further information about NS support for functional skills please email: [functionalskills@nationalstrategies.co.uk](mailto:functionalskills@nationalstrategies.co.uk) or [secondary@nationalstrategies.co.uk](mailto:secondary@nationalstrategies.co.uk)

Telephone: 0118 918 2820 or 0118 918 2830

Visit: <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk>

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