

8 September 2017

STF NEWS

Welcome to new members

STF is delighted to welcome two new members who have joined the federation in the last few weeks:

- Edinburgh College
- William Morrison Training.

Membership of STF has grown significantly this year and is now at a record high of 140.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND

Tenders for Foundation Apprenticeships 2018-20

Skills Development Scotland is inviting proposals for Foundation Apprenticeship Projects for participants commencing in academic year 2018-2020.

However, in a significant shift of emphasis, delivery of each framework will now require a partnership approach, and as a minimum, bring together Colleges, Local Authorities, schools, private training providers and employers. The closing date for tenders is 29 September 2017. [Click here for more details.](#) on the PCS web site.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Conference Workshops and Speed Networking

Details about some of the Workshops and Speed Networking sessions taking place at this year's Annual Conference have now been published on the STF website.

Main sponsor, SQA, will be hosting two workshops and four speed networking sessions, including 'ITA opportunities with SQA qualifications'.

Other session hosts include City & Guilds, BEMIS, Nil by Mouth, Morton Fraser, ILM and Skills Development Scotland.

[Click here for more details.](#)

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

New Flexible Workforce Development Fund

The Scottish Government has published a [press release](#) giving outline details of the new Flexible Workforce Development Fund.

- The fund will be available to Scottish organisations across the private, public and third sectors who are subject to the UK Apprenticeship Levy
- Employers can apply for part of the £10 million fund to partner with colleges to deliver in-work skills training
- The one-year pilot fund will focus on the up-skilling and re-skilling of existing employees of any age, with individual organisations able to apply for up to £10,000.

The fund will be administered via colleges only – no private training providers will be able to access the fund. More details are available on the [Scottish Funding Council web site.](#)

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

SDS Letter of Guidance published

Scottish Government has issued Skills Development Scotland (SDS) with its Letter of Guidance for 2017-18. The correspondence outlines the government's expectations of SDS in the current year. Some of the key points are:

- The Grant-in-Aid budget for 2017-18 is £179.6 million. This compares to £176.2 million in the previous year.
- The introduction of a new 3 year **Digital Growth Fund** to support digital skills development in SMEs, with up to 6,000 people annually accessing training in key areas such as software development.
- **Early Learning and Childcare** Skills Investment Plan (SIP) to be developed. SDS to review the financial contributions and eligibility criteria for ELC related apprenticeships for those over 25.
- **Flexible Workforce Development Fund:** SDS will be expected to assist in promoting the fund to employers.
- **Modern Apprenticeships:** Review of current MA rural supplement, with refinements introduced where required. Continued enhanced contribution rates for disabled people and those with experience of care up to the age of 29.

The letter also outlines previously known targets for Modern Apprenticeships (27,000 new starts in 2017-18); Employability Fund (9,000 places in 2017-18); Foundation Apprenticeships (5,000 places in 2018-19) and Graduate Level Apprenticeships (379 places in current academic year).

In addition, there is continued support for the Transition Training Fund, Adopt an Apprentice, SERI and Individual Training Accounts.

SDS has also been asked to consider the scope to further develop the Certificate of Work Readiness - and expand the content and reach of the [apprenticeships.scot](#) web site. [Click here for more details.](#)

MEMBER NEWS

SUSE seeks Board Members

The Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE) is a membership organisation representing organisations and practitioners who deliver supported employment across Scotland.

SUSE is now seeking new Board Members who share its passion for equality and diversity in the workplace and will uphold its commitment to best practice and partnership. [Click here for more details.](#)

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Concessionary Travel Scheme consultation

The Scottish Government is consulting on the future of the National Concessionary Travel Scheme. It is seeking the views of people across Scotland on how best to ensure the longer term sustainability of the existing free bus travel scheme and on providing free bus travel to young modern apprentices.

It is particularly keen to have as many Modern Apprentices or those with a shared interest in the success of apprenticeships contribute to the consultation. [Click here for more details.](#)

STF NEWS

Member issues – are you affected?

The following two issues have been raised with the Chief Executive in the last few weeks – and it would be helpful to hear member feedback on these:

1. New ITA Verification Process: Now that training providers must assume responsibility for verifying income, some members have expressed concern at the additional administrative time it will take to secure the evidence required to meet SDS audit requirements. In addition, members have highlighted that it will be difficult to secure evidence from some client groups.
2. ESF Tagging: Some MA providers have recently learnt that some of their candidates have been 'tagged' as being partly funded by ESF. This requires additional evidence to be supplied to SDS – and members have expressed concern at the increased administration this will cause.

If you have views or comments on either of these issues, please contact [Stuart McKenna](#)

MEMBER JOB VACANCIES

Job Vacancies – Quest

STF Member, Quest, is currently recruiting Associate Assessors and Associate Trainers throughout Scotland in a range of occupational areas including Business Administration and Management. [Click here for more details.](#)

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