

GUIDANCE ON ASSESSMENT AGAINST SFEDI ENDORSED PROGRAMMES AND STANDARDS

Introduction

These notes are intended to provide you with the information that you need at this initial stage to enable you to both work towards completing accreditation against the SFEDI Standards and to have a good understanding of the process involved.

Recognising Excellence (RE) is the official and only SFEDI Centre of Excellence for both the South West Region and Wales. We are a not-for-profit company and you can find further details about us on our website at: www.recognisingexcellence.co.uk.

The Assessment Process

The award must be completed within 3 years from the registration date. If a candidate does not complete within 3 years they will need to re-register with SFEDI who will re-register the candidate with ILM. This will incur the registration fee being invoiced to the candidate again: £150.00 + VAT. However, it is possible for you to complete the assessment process in a much shorter period. (The usual and recommended period for assessment is around three months.)

Application and Self-Assessment

We will provide you with a copy of the Business Support Standards and any other standards you have told us you wish to be assessed against, together with an application form which includes a self-assessment section.

The self assessment section requires you to consider each unit within the core standard and to note how you feel you may meet them. If you cannot provide evidence of meeting some part of the core units do not worry, simply enter this development

area on to your Personal Development Plan (PDP) which forms the final page of your application.

Verification and Pre-Assessment

We will verify your form, contacting you if any more information is required. Please remember to include an up to date CV and current / typical client list with your application. Once your form has been verified we will invoice you for the agreed assessment fee. Upon receipt of payment we will be able to assign an experienced assessor to you.

Assessor Discussion

Your assessor will be sent a copy of your application form and any accompanying information. This helps him/her to gain a good understanding about your experience and knowledge and will set the scene for your first discussion: your assessor will contact you directly to arrange this. This discussion will enable next steps toward successful accreditation to be planned with you. The whole process has been designed to use as little paperwork as necessary and your assessor will want to encourage you to demonstrate competence by providing evidence in a number of ways as follows.

- The evidence requirements for demonstrating occupational competence must be based substantially on evidence that would naturally occur during business support activities or events.
- This evidence will be closely related to meeting the business needs of the candidate's clients. It must include evidence drawn from contact with clients whilst undertaking the occupational role. This may include, subject to appropriate ethical and legal requirements, recordings of telephone conversations and copies of e-mail correspondence. This type of evidence is crucial to making judgements on the interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence and similar abilities that are so important to providing effective business information services.
- Evidence from simulation (a face-to-face consultation with a client who is starting or running a business) can be used to complement that from client interactions. It is recognised that evidence from a limited number of interactions with clients may

not provide evidence of the full range and depth of skills, knowledge and behaviours demanded by the NOS. Use of carefully constructed simulation that seeks to meet the requirements of a realistic working environment (see Appendix A) should be used solely for these purposes.

- Evidence from the other forms of assessment set out below may also be valuable in demonstrating the detailed knowledge and understanding that is the practical and contemporary embodiment of the general requirements set out in the standards.
- The combination of evidence derived from client contacts, simulation and other forms of assessment must be sufficient for a valid and reliable judgement of competence to be made by an assessor.

Observations

You will need to be observed on three separate occasions with three different clients covering a range of situations. After the first observation, your assessor will have a discussion with you to highlight your strengths and to identify development areas that would need to be addressed in the remaining observations.

The process then continues in a similar fashion for your second and third observations. Before your third observation exercise, your assessor will have clearly signposted to you what s/he requires you to cover to enable you to provide evidence against all the criteria within the Standards.

Report

Your assessor will clearly write up the results of the assessment of the three observations and a copy of this will be shared with you. Upon completion of the assessment a final report will be compiled. A verifier appointed by RE will oversee the process to ensure that it has been both rigorous and fair.

Completion

Once you have successfully demonstrated your competence, you will be sent an endorsed certificate with a unique SFEDI accreditation number confirming that you have met the criteria of the applicable SFEDI Standards. We will also send you a copy

of your final report, a confirmatory letter and the SFEDI logo for use on your business stationery.

Renewal

Accreditation lasts for 2 years. We will contact you again in good time to enable you to plan renewal of your accreditation.

The information you supply will only be viewed by members of RE staff, your assessor and, if requested, our External Verifier. Please send completed applications to jo.cook@recognisingexcellence.co.uk

Appeals

All candidates have the right to appeal against any assessment decision which they feel is incorrect. The appeals procedure sets out the method by which you may do this if necessary.

Why You Might Want to Appeal?

When your Assessor makes an assessment decision based on the evidence available, it is possible that you will disagree with this decision. Your SFEDI Centre Of Excellence is committed to fair, objective and impartial assessment against the requirements of the Standards, and as a result we hope that all of the decisions made by our Assessors are well-informed and in keeping with this commitment. However, the assessment process can be a complex one and there are many details to check. Part of our commitment to quality is to recognise the potential for error and to actively attempt to reduce it.

You will only need to invoke the appeals procedure if you are unable to resolve the matter with your Assessor. In all cases it is preferable for disputes of any kind to be resolved by professional, informal discussion. If, however, you are unable to do so or feel that such a conversation would be difficult, then you may use the appeals procedure.

What You Would Need to Do

Firstly, attempt to resolve the matter by talking to your Assessor. If you still wish to continue with the matter, you must submit the details of the appeal in writing to your

SFEDI Centre of Excellence. If you would prefer, you may call first to discuss the nature of the issue.

Appeals must be notified within one week of the assessment decision being communicated to you. The appeal will be acknowledged, in writing, within 5 working days.

What are the Stages of the Process?

Firstly the Internal Verifier/Quality Controller and your Assessor will review the assessment decision together. The candidate will be informed of the result of the appeal and will be given the option to continue the process, if s/he remains unhappy with the decision.

If the candidate wishes to pursue the appeal further then the process enters its second stage. The Internal Verifier will further review the appeal. The candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal.

Should the candidate wish to pursue the appeal beyond this stage, the Internal Verifier will pass the appeal to the SFEDI External Moderator.

Costs

Business Support Endorsed Programme	£1500 + VAT
Business Link Broker Endorsed Programme	£1600 + VAT
Business Link Gateway Endorsed Programme	£1600 + VAT
Skills Broker Endorsed Programme	£1600 + VAT
Social Enterprise Endorsed Programme	£1600 + VAT
Business Information Officer Endorsed Programme	£1600 + VAT
Business Mentor Endorsed Programme	£1500 + VAT
Enterprise Trainer Endorsed Programme	£1600 + VAT

Additional Standards:

Business Link Broker Standard	£400 + VAT
Skills Broker Standard	£400 + VAT

Social Enterprise Standard	£400 + VAT
Business Information Officer Standard	£400 + VAT
Business Mentor Standard	£100 + VAT
Enterprise Trainer Standard	£400 + VAT

Accreditation of Prior Achievement

For a reduction in price you would have to provide evidence that you had been properly observed in a client situation by a suitably qualified and independent third party within the last two years. Please let us know if you feel this applies to you and we will send you our Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA) form to complete and return for our analysis.

RE will advise you of the appropriate fees for undergoing your particular assessment at the outset. You will be sent an invoice at the start of the programme and will be expected to settle the payment in full before the assessment can proceed.