



# BRIEFING DOCUMENT FOR EMPLOYERS

## THE NATIONAL SKILLS PLEDGE AND THE PROSKILLS SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE PLEDGE

An employer focussed approach to workforce development



## The meaning behind the National Skills Pledge and the Proskills Sustainable Workforce Pledge

The English Government launched the National Skills Pledge on the back of the Leitch Review of Skills (published December 2006), which warned that the UK must 'raise its game' on skills at all levels, if it is to sustain and improve its competitive position in the global economy.

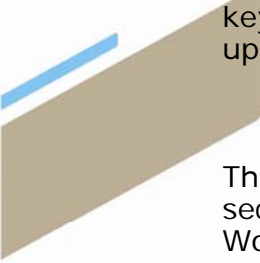


The National Skills Pledge is a voluntary, public commitment made by an organisation to invest in the skills of its workforce. It's a promise that, through training, the employer will work to boost the productivity and efficiency of their organisation and realise the potential of their employees by developing their basic skills and working towards relevant, valuable qualifications to at least Level 2 – the equivalent of five good GCSEs, grades A-C.



The Sustainable Workforce Pledge has been developed by Proskills and its employers in response to the recognition that a fully competent workforce is required to drive productivity, to increase competitiveness and to ensure business sustainability.

By making the National Skills Pledge, employers commit to improving the competence of new and existing staff in line with the needs of their business through skills training.



Building on the National Skills Pledge, the Sustainable Workforce Pledge comprises a commitment tailored to each of our industries that identifies the key requirements for skills training to ensure sustainability and serves to drive upskilling across the process and manufacturing sector UK wide.

The Sustainable Workforce Pledge therefore complements and enables the sector to build on the National Skills Pledge; employers making the Sustainable Workforce Pledge will be required to first make the National Skills Pledge.

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## What are basic skills?

By basic skills we mean the ability to read and write and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress in work and life. Just think, we are surrounded by print – print we need to be able to read, understand and digest. And being numerate no longer means just being able to add up and subtract; increasingly, we have to understand complex information presented in charts and graphs, deal with percentages, time management and problem solving. People who can't read effectively could be at risk because they cannot read Health & Safety requirements or communicate effectively through the ever increasing media of emails and texts. Those with limited numeracy skills could have difficulty measuring or counting and may even find it hard to manage their monthly bills.

Good basic skills are therefore essential to perform a wide range of activities safely and effectively within a workplace and underpin the success of every organisation. Poor basic skills may hamper the sustainability and growth of a business, the quality of its services or products, and affect the 'bottom line'. Basic skills are the foundation for further skills development. And when you consider that half of those already in the workforce have poor basic skills and 70% of the workforce for the year 2020 has already left compulsory education, the problem becomes more apparent.<sup>1</sup>

## Who can benefit from making the National Skills Pledge and Sustainable Workforce Pledge?

The National Skills Pledge and Sustainable Workforce Pledge are aimed at all companies, whatever their size. There is no cost attached; no hidden agenda and they are voluntary. The National Skills Pledge and the Sustainable Workforce Pledge aim to give employers a coherent framework for addressing basic skills as well as higher level skills training and complements the work of Proskills and the Sector Skills Agreements.

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## Why should employers make the National Skills Pledge and the Sustainable Workforce Pledge?

By making the National Skills Pledge and the Sustainable Workforce Pledge, employers in England will have access to the £62M that has been ring fenced for the process and manufacturing sector through a deal secured by Proskills with the LSC and the Government. You do not have to make the National Skills Pledge and Sustainable Workforce Pledge to access the new flexibilities to the full; but doing so, provides you with a coherent framework for addressing skills gaps.

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<sup>1</sup> Leitch Review 2006

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## What will you get in return for making the National Skills Pledge and the Sustainable Workforce Pledge?

In return, Proskills will be supporting the Skills Brokerage Service and Training Providers, to:

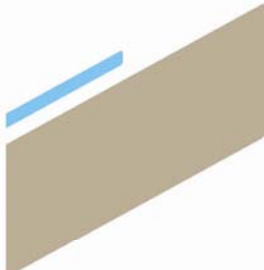
- Help identify training solutions based on current and anticipated business needs using the newly developed web-based skills profiling tool, ProFile
- Identify and source available public funding to help pay the cost of training
- Provide access to training provision that is both flexible and high-quality, where appropriate utilising on-site learning and assessment methods
- Signpost relevant training provision to meet business training needs
- Carry out a Return on Investment analysis and review training programmes to ensure they remain aligned to the changing needs of business
- Influence the development of industry-relevant national occupational standards and qualifications
- Identify and share good practice and case studies

## What will the business benefits be?

- Improved competitiveness
- Increased productivity through improved performance
- Improved quality and accuracy – less waste, more efficiency
- Better customer relations – fewer complaints, better customer retention
- A more motivated and confident workforce and better working ethic – improved staff retention
- Encourage initiative and innovation and unlock full potential of your workforce
- Better able to meet legal and Health & Safety Requirements – fewer accidents
- Measurable return on your investment in skills training
- Bottom-line improvements – more profits

## What funding is available as part of the £62M deal?

Making the National Skills Pledge and the Sustainable Workforce Pledge will give employers across the 9 English regions a more flexible and consistent Train to Gain offering, including:

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- A decorative graphic on the left side consisting of a blue diagonal line above a brown parallelogram.
- All first NVQ Level 2 qualifications
  - Additional NVQ Level 2 in identified priority qualifications
  - All first NVQ Level 3 qualifications
  - Additional NVQ Level 3s in identified priority qualifications
  - Apprenticeships for people of all ages
  - Skills for Life qualifications (e.g. literacy and numeracy)
  - Funded Management and Leadership Training for companies with 10 – 250 employees

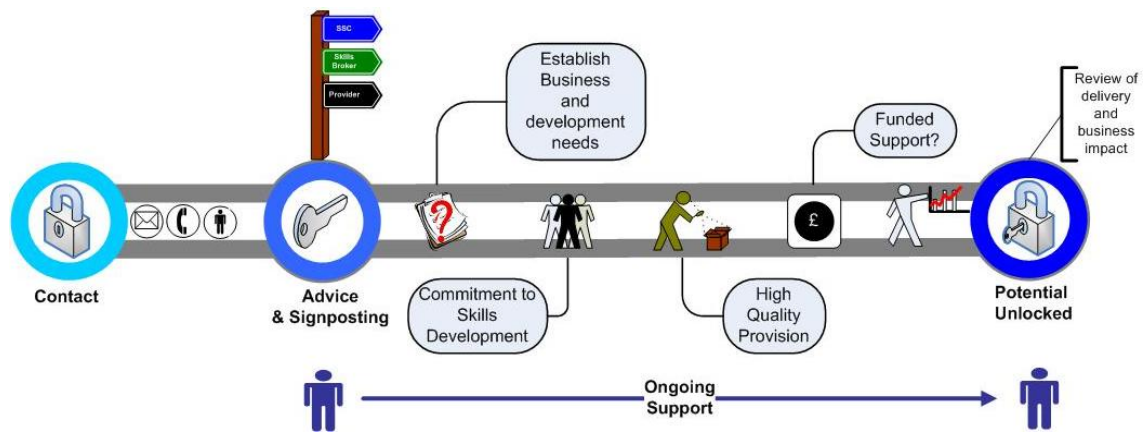
## Is there a limit to how much funding a company can access?

No. The amount of funding you may get will depend entirely on the number of learners a company signs up and eligibility criteria e.g. whether these are first or additional qualifications. To find out exactly how, contact us now!

## The Process

Contact Proskills Helpline on **01235 432 032**

We will put you in touch with your Proskills Regional Manager. The next step is to make your skills commitment. Certificates will be sent to you to allow you to demonstrate to employees, customers and other stakeholders your commitment to the development of your workforce. Your Proskills Regional Manager will arrange for a Skills Broker to visit you and will support them as required. A Skills Analysis will be carried out based on your business needs and a customised Training Programme developed. Relevant Training Provision will be signposted. Funding will be accessed based on the approved Training Programme. Evaluation and review of the Training Programme completes the process.



## Additional Benefits

A dedicated website will be created where companies or organisations that have made the National Skills Pledge and the Sustainable Workforce Pledge will have the opportunity to add their company logo and company profile.

Both the National Skills Pledge and Sustainable Workforce Pledge logo will be made available for use on company stationery and for web publication.

## Sign up now

To sign up or for more information,

Call: 01235 432032

Email: [info@proskills.co.uk](mailto:info@proskills.co.uk)

Web: [www.proskills.co.uk](http://www.proskills.co.uk)

**Call Train to Gain on 0800 015 55 45 or visit [traintogain.gov.uk](http://traintogain.gov.uk)**



**Faxback form**

To find out more about accessing funding for skills investment, simply photocopy this page; tick the relevant box(es); add your contact details and fax this form back to Proskills on 01235 833733.

Please send me more information on the Proskills Train to Gain Sector Compact

Please arrange for a Train to Gain Skills Broker to contact me

Please arrange for a Proskills Regional Manager to contact me

My contact details are:

Title: ..... First Name: ..... Last Name: .....

Position: .....

Name of Organisation: .....

Industry (please select one):

Building Products

Ceramics

Coatings

Extractive & Mineral Processing

Furniture, Furnishings & Interiors

Glass & Glazing

Paper

Printing

Address: .....

.....

..... Postcode: .....

Tel: ..... Mobile: .....

Email: .....

Website: ..... No. of employees: .....

The information provided on this form will be passed to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and to other partner organisations as deemed appropriate, such as the Skills Brokerage Service, that are responsible for promoting and developing skills in the UK as part of the UK Government's overall activities to raise the skills of UK plc.

If you do not wish us to pass on this information, please tick this box

