Bright

Independent Guide to choosing a Provider

DO NOT be ripped off- Please Read!

What to ask a training provider before you part with your money

There are many training providers that offer assessor, verifier and teacher qualifications.

There have been recent cases of some training providers who are not following the requirements of the qualifications they offer but continue to sell their courses. There have also been cases where training providers claim to have access to funding that does not even exist. These providers have been reported to Ofqual and are currently under investigation, but in the meantime, even if you don't use Bright; please ensure that you follow our guide to what you should ask your training provider before you part with your money.

Before you engage with any other training provider, you MUST ask them the following questions:

1. Do you have direct claim status (DCS) for this qualification and how long have you have DCS for?

If a provider has direct claim status (DCS) it means that they can claim for your certificate without the authorisation of the awarding body. If a training provider has DCS it is reassurance that it has delivered the qualification well over a period of time and that this provision has been checked by the awarding body. If a company does not have DCS then this may indicate that they are new or they have not delivered the qualification for long.

2. What are your External Verifier/ Moderator visits graded as?

All training providers should be approved by an awarding body, such as City & Guilds, NCFE etc. Every 6 months to 1 year they are checked and audited by an external moderator/ verifier and they produce a report of their findings. Any unsatisfactory reports will result in the company having the ability to run the course suspended of withheld. As a prospective customer you can ask for the grade or results of that visit or to see the latest report for the qualification you are going to do. If a training provider refuses to supply this information, then this should raise concerns.

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Skills Funding Agency

ypla Young People's Learning Agency

pride of Stratford Small Business of the Year Winner

The Skills Pledge

UKAS Management Systems 001

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3. For the assessor's qualification: if the company state that they provide the two learners required- ask who are they and how am I assessed?

Under Ofqual rules, the learners you are provided must be REAL learners.

Examples of not meeting the assessment criteria, which could make your qualification void, are listed below. Do NOT engage with any provider who states you can do this by any of the following methods. We have checked this with Ofsted and this is NOT allowed, subsequently these providers are currently under investigation:

- Meet the criteria for being observed as a trainee-assessor by videoing yourself and posting the video/ DVD to the company afterwards. Ofqual tell us that video may only be used in exceptional circumstances and not as the norm. Video is not acceptable because it isn't a live observation; it can be rehearsed, edited etc. Video can be used to back up other evidence but not in place of observation.
- Meet the criteria of assessing two real learners competence in the workplace by assessing a fellow student or assessing another person during their PTLLS micro teach. This is Simulation.
- Meet the criteria of assessing knowledge by asking a fellow student questions. This is simulation.

To complete the assessor's qualification, fully meeting the standards and to become a competent assessor you MUST use a reputable provider who does NOT cut corners. You must ensure that the training provider you engage with provides you with REAL learners or REAL apprentices, in REAL jobs, in a REAL workplace, and they are being assessed against REAL criteria and qualifications. You should be assessing for a REAL centre, with REAL standardisation procedures.

4. For all qualifications, ensure that the price quoted includes everything and that there are no hidden extras such as:

- Observation of you doing assessing or teaching
- Travel for the above
- Certification and registration fees

5. Funding- we have recently identified and reported providers who are promoting funding that doesn't even exist. If the company say they have funding, make sure you clarify the following:

- Ask them for their provider number. If they don't give this, then this should ring alarm bells. All training providers with approved government funding have a provider number that can be checked with the funding organisation.
  Examples of funding organisations are: Skills Funding Agency, Young Peoples Agency, Ministry of Defence, Student Finance England and The Institute for Learning.

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- Ask them what the eligibility criteria is for the funding, how long it takes to get paid and who is the prime contract holder of the funding.

6. Qualification length: Any training provider who claims you can complete a course in less than the following time frames is not in our opinion, providing you with a satisfactory service:

- Assessor's certificate: 4 weeks is the minimum time that you can assess two REAL learners properly. This is a requirement of the full certificate, therefore if a provider claims to train you in 3 days be careful!
- Verifier's certificate: 4 weeks is the minimum time that you can verify two REAL assessors and four REAL learners properly over a period of time. This is a requirement of the full certificate. Therefore if a provider claims to train you in 3 days be careful.
- CTLLS: 3-6 months as you need to be able to demonstrate teaching practice over a period of 30 hours.
- DTLLS: 6-12 months as you need to be able to demonstrate teaching practice over a period of 150 hours.

Even if you never engage with Bright, we sincerely hope that you find this guide useful, and only engage with ethical, good quality training providers who meet the standards required.

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