

Plain English Sector Qualification Strategy

The plan to ensure hospitality, leisure,
travel and tourism qualifications
meet business needs

July 2009

Introduction

This document presents the ‘Sector Qualifications Strategy’ in plain English.

A ‘Sector Qualification Strategy’ is literally a plan that has been developed to get qualifications relevant to the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism sector from where they are now to a position where:

- Qualifications reflect business needs
- Businesses understand what’s available
- Potential employees are undertaking qualifications that businesses value
- Qualifications are linked more effectively with business’ own training
- Qualifications are helping tackle the industry’s ongoing skills and labour problems

Why bother?

The industry has a strong training culture, but little reliance or confidence in qualifications.

Whilst two- thirds of businesses are training, only a third of this training leads to a nationally recognised qualification

Also, students are studying industry-specific qualifications – some of which are not providing them with the skills and knowledge that businesses are looking for.

“Training”...qualifications – I’m confused already!”

Training is the delivery of skills and knowledge that results in someone learning something. This could lead to a qualification or not.

Qualifications ‘test’ through methods such as questioning, written or practical tests, whether someone has actually learnt specific knowledge and skills. This plan is only focused on qualifications that are officially recognised as Nationally Recognised Qualifications. If you’re interesting in how this works – go to www.uksp.co.uk

What’s wrong with just training?

Nothing! - qualifications aren’t always the answer – there are fantastic examples of high quality training across the whole industry , but delivering training that leads to a qualification has been proven to:

- Help retain staff
- Make staff more productive than comparative staff not undertaking a qualification
- Expands the skills an individual possesses
- Motivate staff and provide them with some direction in their career

So what's the current problem?

Currently, two-thirds of businesses provide some sort of training to their staff, but only, three percent of this training leads to a nationally-recognised qualification.

People 1st's own research has shown that businesses:

- are confused about the number of qualifications on offer
- are confused about what someone doing a specific qualification would learn from doing it
- don't see the point of a qualification over and above training
- have lost faith in the robustness of qualifications.

Where do we want to be?

If successful the strategy will:

- Increase the number of businesses aware of key qualifications available to them
- Increase the number of businesses using UKSP to find the most relevant qualifications
- Increase the number of offering qualifications to their staff
- Reduce the number of employees without qualifications
- Ensure that students coming out of colleges and undertaking work-based qualifications have the skills the industry needs
- Increase the percentage of staff with an appropriate level of qualification
- Professionalise key occupations in the industry such as chefs and managers by increasing the importance of qualifications.

What are we doing about it?

The strategy sets out a way forward by focusing on:

1. Identifying clear routes to help someone progress through and across the industry

The industry offers a range of fantastic opportunities that allows someone to develop their career in many different directions. Qualifications should support this progression and we need to:

- be clear which qualifications are most appropriate for someone to work in certain occupations
- identify those qualifications that can support ongoing training and development
- be equally clear where a qualification isn't required to work in specific occupations.

These development routes are being mapped onto www.uksp.co.uk and will be ready from September 2009.

2. Getting rid of qualifications that the industry doesn't need, want or recognise

It's really important that the industry has the qualifications it needs. This will mean that some qualifications will go and that new qualifications will have to be created. At the start of the process we identified over 400 sector-specific qualifications. We've now got this down to just over 200. We've also identified a number of gaps where there is a need for specific qualifications such as customer service, gambling, mainstream restaurants etc.

3. Allow smaller qualifications to be amassed into larger qualifications so that they can meet the differing needs of businesses and learners

Those businesses looking for a qualification for their staff are often frustrated that they get a catalogue of qualifications that either "do this" or "do that", but don't do "a bit of this", but also "a bit of that". For years, colleges and trainers have put together different courses to meet the needs of different businesses, but getting the qualifications to do this has always been more difficult.

The way qualifications are developed and made available is changing. This will make it easier for a business to build a qualification using smaller qualifications – say combining food service, with some customer service and a bit of people management.

All new qualifications will be developed like this to allow different combinations to be built up.

4. Making it easier to link in-house training to a formal qualification

Many businesses may have long established training programmes in place, but decide to add value to it by linking them to a qualification. This is becoming easier to do and no longer has to mean adding unnecessary hoops and bureaucracy.

More businesses are looking at this and there are various ways in which this can work and benefit them. There's also plenty of good practice to build on and a number of organisations who can help. To get the lowdown ring People 1st's Business Solutions team on 01895 81 7021.

5. Making sure that assessment is relevant and robust

An ongoing concern emerging from our research was that the assessment used within qualifications are not sufficiently strong or not relevant to a particular area. For example a written test wouldn't be the best option if it were testing chef skills.

People 1st will be working with partners to make sure that the assessment is relevant and to ensure that businesses can have confidence that it is strong, but relevant.

6. Reviewing apprenticeships

Apprenticeships have always had an important place in the sector. Businesses are clear that they want a 'trade apprenticeship' back in place that provides a real alternative to studying full-time in college. Our key focus will be developing more demanding apprenticeships for management and leadership and fine dining chefs.

We also have the worst completion rates for Apprenticeships than any other sector. To tackle this we have undertaken research with providers and employers delivering the apprenticeship who have good retention rates to find out what they are doing.

On the back of this we now have a model that we are trialling with a number of colleges and trainers to test how well it works in increasing the number of apprentices that complete the programme.

The trial will run from August 2009 to August 2010.

7. Explaining these changes on a dedicated website – www.uksp.co.uk

It will be important that all these changes can be simply explained on www.uksp.co.uk. This was developed by People 1st as a central resource for both businesses and individuals working in or considering entering the industry, following extensive research among 5,000 businesses into the labour market.

The site brings together information on careers, job opportunities, qualifications, employers, colleges and trainers and funding for the industry.

UKSP is a unique, highly interactive website, the first of its breed and a key priority in People 1st's strategy to address the skills needs facing our industry. UKSP cuts right through the highly complicated education, training and qualifications system. It is the only point of reference for businesses and individual users working in or considering entering the sector, providing essential information on skills development including:

- The Good Employer Guide – where (for the first time ever in this sector) employers rate themselves on stringent criteria and then ask their staff to do the same with the results being publicly available. UKSP allows individuals to search for vacancies with these organisations and even match their skills to advertised vacancies to find their ideal job
- Market Place – Individuals can upload their CV to the Get Spotted database in order to put themselves in front of Good Employers who will be able to find these prospective employees through Talent Search
- A unique career progression map – based on 18 months' research and development, showing every single occupation in the sector from kitchen porter to senior manager, with details of activities, salaries, related qualifications and the progression routes for these jobs
- A Good Qualification Guide - listing all qualifications and identifying the ones highly regarded by industry. This unique guide empowers businesses to choose the right qualifications for their staff. It helps individuals take ownership of their own career development
- A Good Provider Guide - listing colleges, universities and private trainers that have allowed both their students and the employers they work with to rate their performance



- A funding guide showing which qualifications are supported by government funding as well as information on bursaries, grants, loans, tax credits and wage subsidies available

How we are taking forward the strategy?

The strategy was developed through talking to businesses, colleges, trainers and other partners. All of these are represented on Industry Advisory Panels.

These Panels cover specific areas such as

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| • Front Office and Accommodation Services | • Public Sector and Large Scale Catering |
| • Food Processing and Cooking | • Professional Cookery |
| • Asian and Oriental Cookery | • Travel Services |
| • Tourism Services | • Casual / Branded Dining |
| • Gambling | • Events |
| • Customer Service | • Food and Beverage Service |
| • Visitor Attractions | • Management and Leadership |
| • Small and Micro Businesses | • Fast Food |

These panels meet quarterly and are facilitated by People 1st. They aim to support those organisations developing the qualifications to ensure that the final qualifications meet business needs. To join these panels ring 01895 81 7041.

What will we see and when?

A large percentage of new qualifications will need to be developed by autumn 2010. These include:

June 2009

- Two new industry customer service qualifications aimed at front facing, operational roles and first line managers

August 2009

- Revised Apprenticeship frameworks in hospitality

September 2009

- Revised qualifications for school meals
- Two new food and beverage qualifications aimed to be delivered full-time in colleges

October 2009

- Short gambling qualifications in areas like social responsibility

July 2010

- Tour guiding qualifications

August 2010

- New chef qualifications for fine and mainstream dining
- A new front office qualification aimed to be delivered full-time in colleges
- Revised food safety qualifications
- New travel qualifications

How can I find out more?



**The best place for more information
is to go to www.uksp.co.uk**