

Frequently asked questions

Q.1 Should the graduate professional leader achieve Early Years Professional Status within 2 years of the setting receiving the first Graduate Subsidy payment or the last payment?

The graduate professional leader is expected to achieve the Early Years Professional Status within 2 years of first receiving the Graduate Subsidy.

Q.2 Why are settings with fewer than 18 childcare places not eligible for the Graduate Support Programme? Won't this exclude many rural settings?

Eighteen place settings are likely to be the minimum for most full day care settings in order to be sustainable. By focusing on settings with 18 or more places we are maximising the impact of the Graduate Support Fund on improving the quality of provision for as many children as possible.

Q.3 Do providers always have to have an Ofsted Good rating? What if they have not been rated yet, or are rated unsatisfactory after they have received Graduate Support Fund?

Providers that have not received an Ofsted rating are eligible to apply for the Graduate Support programme at the discretion of their local authority. Where there are concerns about providers who have yet to be rated, we suggest that settings should await the Birth to Five Annual Single Conversation assessment result before considering applications for the Graduate Support Programme (this should result in a green / dark green RAG, or in a 30% area where they will be exempt from Ofsted / RAG grading). If a provider receives an satisfactory or below rating after they have received Graduate Support Programme funding the local authority will normally cease payments * *At local authority discretion* . For this reason we have now implemented an interim 6 month application.

Q.4 Can the Graduate Support Programme be used to train and develop staff other than the named graduate?

No. The only strand of the fund that can be allocated to staff training is the Future Graduate Allowance. You should allocate £1,352.04 (based on minimum wage) for staff cover for study periods for the named graduate, 38 weeks for 6 hrs per week – this should be the same allocation given to those studying by distance learning. The remaining fund - £148 can go towards reference and study stationary and £500 as salary enhancement.

Q.5 Can a setting pay for the graduate professional leader's fares to attend their Early Years Professional Status Course?

No. The CWDC support package that can be applied for could be used to cover fares.

Q.6 Does the Early Years Foundation Degree have to be Sector Endorsed?

No, there are a range of good quality Early Years Foundation Degrees (EYFDs) available that are not Sector Endorsed. All EYFDs, sector endorsed or not, are eligible courses for Future Graduate Allowance participants.

Q.7 Do those settings wanting to claim Future Graduate Allowance have to commit to the graduate gaining Early Years Professional Status within 2 years of completing the Early Years Foundation Degree?

Yes, at the outset settings commit to their employee attaining Early Years Professional Status after the EYFD has been completed. Once the setting's employee has gained their Level 5 FD or equivalent, the setting is expected to claim the Graduate Leader Subsidy and commit to the Graduate Leader Subsidy conditions, including gaining EYPS within 2 years.

Q.8 Is the Future Graduate Allowance available per setting, regardless of how many people in the setting are undertaking the foundation degree?

Just one Future Graduate Allowance is payable per setting to ensure the setting can establish an Early Years Professional leader. Settings already claiming the Graduate Support Fund are not eligible to also claim Future Graduate Allowance, unless the setting is in a 30% define area then 2 applications will be accepted.

Q.9 If the staff member leaves and the setting can not replace them, can Funding start up again later if there is an employee committed to attain Early Years Professional Status?

Yes, funding payments will stop whilst there is nobody training, but if the setting later employs somebody who wants to gain a relevant Level 5 qualification and go on to do Early Years Professional Status and the setting remains eligible LAs can start making payments again.

Q.11 Can a graduate who is paid by more than one setting help all the employing settings claim the Graduate Leader Subsidy?

The Graduate Leader Subsidy will be paid to only one setting where the graduate meets the eligibility criteria. Lincolnshire County Council remain committed to supporting the Government's aim of all full daycare settings employing a graduate leader by 2015.

Q.12 What will the EYPS Supplement support?

This payment is now given on a claims basis once the EYP has attended an EYP Network Meeting, this will support with travel costs and staff cover whilst the EYP is off site. Settings with an EYP will also be able to make a claim if the EYP is approved to be part of the 'Paired children's centre support'. All claim forms will be available from the Network Co-ordinator during each meeting.

Q.13 What happened to the Graduate Leader Fund

As part of the Government spending review they removed all ring-fenced budgets to local authorities (of which GLF was one budget). It is then down to each individual Local Authority to define the areas they felt the budgets would be best used – hence the arrival of the Graduate Support Programme as Lincolnshire is committed to continuing with the initiative of having a graduate in each full daycare setting by 2015.

Q.13 How long can I expect this funding to last for?

This is down to Lincolnshire County Council annual allocation of funding; therefore no guarantees are given beyond March 2012.