

**i** For information



Leading learning and ski

**Learning and  
Skills Council  
East  
Midlands  
Regional  
Commissioning  
Plan**

**December 2007**

Of interest to National, Regional and  
Local Learning and Skills Colleagues

## National Targets

Our Statement of Priorities, *Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives* (November 2007) sets out the Government's key strategic priorities and the contribution the LSC will make towards achieving them. The section below summarises the key points set out in the Statement of Priorities.

As part of the Comprehensive Spending Review, the Government has set out four new strategic priorities for the period 2008/09 – 2010/11.

- Sustainable growth and prosperity
- Fairness and opportunity for all
- Stronger communities and a better quality of life
- A more secure, fair and environmentally sustainable world

Under each of the priorities is a set of cross Government delivery agreements, each containing a number of Public Service Agreement targets (PSA), which together play a vital role in improving the delivery of services. The LSC will indirectly support a number of these delivery agreements and targets. We will also directly contribute to and lead on the following targets:

### Young People

- **Raise the educational achievement of all children and young people**
- **Narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.**

While our focus must be on all young people, our delivery targets will be measured specifically by the proportion of young people achieving Level 2 and Level 3 by the age of 19. By raising overall achievement, we will also increase the achievement levels of the most disadvantaged. The target levels are

- to increase the proportion of young people achieving Level 2 at age 19 nationally from 71.4 % in 2006 to 82 % by 2011, and
- to increase the proportion of young people achieving Level 3 at age 19 nationally from 46.8 % (in 2006) to 54 % by 2011.

In the region, by the end of 2006 68.8% of young people had achieved a Level 2 by 19 and 44.1% had achieved a Level 3 by the same age.

Through increasing the number of young people participating in learning, we will support the delivery agreement to **increase the number of children and young people on the path to success**. The specific delivery target is to reduce the percentage of 16-18 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), by 2 percentage points by 2010, from a current national level of 10%.

### Adult Skills

- **Improve the skills of the population, on the way to ensuring a world-class skills base by 2020.**

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The delivery targets for 2020 are:

- 95% of adults achieving the basic skills of functional literacy and numeracy
- More than 90% of adults being qualified to at least Level 2, with a commitment to achieve 95% as soon as possible
- 68% of the adult population being qualified to Level 3
- over 40% of the adult population qualified to Level 4 and above.

We will also work to deliver England's share of the UK ambition for 500,000 Apprentices and improve the quality and success rates of their learning in order to increase further the supply of economically valuable skills.

Working towards these targets, the Government has set interim targets for **2011** as follows:

### **Increase the proportion of people of working age achieving functional literacy and numeracy skills**

The target is **597,000 people of working age to achieve a first Level 1 or above literacy qualification, and 390,000 to achieve a first Entry Level 3 or above numeracy qualification.** These basic skills targets ensure we will continue to meet the target to improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010.

### **Proportion of working age adults qualified to at least a full Level 2 and 3**

By 2011, **79% of working age adults should be qualified to Level 2 and 56% qualified to Level 3.** These targets ensure we also remain on track to reduce by 40% the number of adults in the workforce who lack an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualifications by 2010.

Current national performance in 2006 is 69.7% of adults have achieved a Level 2 and 49.2 % have a Level 3. In the East Midlands 66% of adults achieved a Level 2 and 60% achieved a level 3<sup>1</sup>.

### **Proportion of Apprentices who complete the full Apprenticeship Framework**

The target is to have **130,000 learners completing the full Apprenticeship Framework in 2010/11.**

In 2005/06, 98,000 learners completed an Apprenticeship; in 2006/07, we expect this to exceed 100,000. In the East Midlands, 8,126 learners completed an Apprenticeship in 2005/06, in 2006/07 this was 8,558.

### **A new joint target with DWP/ JCP to move more people into sustainable employment and progression**

Work will begin this year to clarify and set in train the new joint target with DWP/ JCP to move more people into sustainable employment and progression and will underpin the integration of employment and skills services.

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<sup>1</sup> East Midlands Regional Performance Report version 26

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## **1 Foreword**

The LSC's vision is that *"through partnership working, Regionally and locally, learning and skills will be positioned at the heart of local and regional economic development and community regeneration"*

This document is the second Regional Commissioning Plan we have published. It comes at a time of stimulating and exciting change as we prepare for the move of our 14-19 provision to the nine Local Authorities in the Region by 2009/10 and push forward our agenda for ensuring our investments in learning and skills are truly led by the demands of the employers, learners and economy.

In this Commissioning Plan, we set out our strategy for bringing about even further improvement. We demonstrate how we will enable public funding to be invested in opportunities which will meet the needs and aspirations of learners and fulfil the demands that employers have for a flexible, well-trained and highly qualified workforce, whose contributions will boost the economy of the region. In developing this plan we have worked with our Regional Development Agency (EMDA) to ensure that our commissioning ambitions are set in the context of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and that the plans on the areas on which we lead are fundamentally aligned and based on a shared understanding of issues. This will maximise the opportunities to target public investment where it can really make a difference.

Whilst the LSC does not have an independent 14-19 plan, this plan has been shaped by the general focus and emphasis of 14-19 Partnership Plans and aligns with the Children and Young People's Plans at a local level. In addition we have taken into account the work of our local employment and skills boards in sub Regional areas.

Our partnership working and focus on performance has produced some impressive results over the last three to four years. We have high levels of employment and we are one of the most desirable places to start and grow a business in the UK. A greater proportion of our young people are engaged in learning at Levels 2 and 3 and we have improved the proportion gaining qualifications at these levels faster than any other Region. We met our 2007 target for increasing the level of Basic Skills in the Region a year early. The targets we set for investing in participation for both adults and young people in our last Commissioning Plan have all been exceeded.

However, as we improve as a Region, the communities where deprivation has been persistent for many years become more starkly visible. Often these are communities such as the ex-coalfields and coastal strip, where historic changes to employment patterns have meant that there are large numbers of people living on Incapacity Benefits (IB) without access to work. Our Annual Statement of Priorities "Better Skills; Better Jobs; Better Lives" lays out clearly our determination to focus on these communities and other groups such as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; and those at risk of leaving education without further training or employment. We intend to use our resources to enable all people who want to gain qualifications and skills to get the help they need. We will do this by commissioning the provision of skills through the Region's colleges and providers in such a way that learning is made as individual and quick to respond as the people and companies taking it up. We have already made a good start in this area through the performance of our Train to Gain programme, but we recognise

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that the Leitch targets are challenging for the region and Train to Gain will need to achieve even more in the future.

The Leitch Implementation Plan has made it clear that we will need to double the number of apprentices in the Region by 2020. Fostering the demand for this amongst employers, and in particular young people, represents one of our greatest challenges. To ensure that we succeed in conquering these challenges we have developed, with the help of our partners, three key strategies over the last year, the Work Based Learning Strategy and Action Plan; the Adult Strategy and the Employer Engagement Strategy. It is these that underpin our ambitions to raise participation and achievement and to provide the higher level skills that will result in growth in the Region's economy.

The LSC and our partners share the vision that by 2020, the East Midlands will be a flourishing Region where skilled people work in growing and innovative businesses, where we are all part of thriving and safe communities.



**Verity Bullough**  
Regional Director  
LSC East Midlands



**John Kirkland OBE**  
Chair of the Regional Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Verity Bullough'.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Kirkland OBE'.

## 2 Investing in the East Midlands

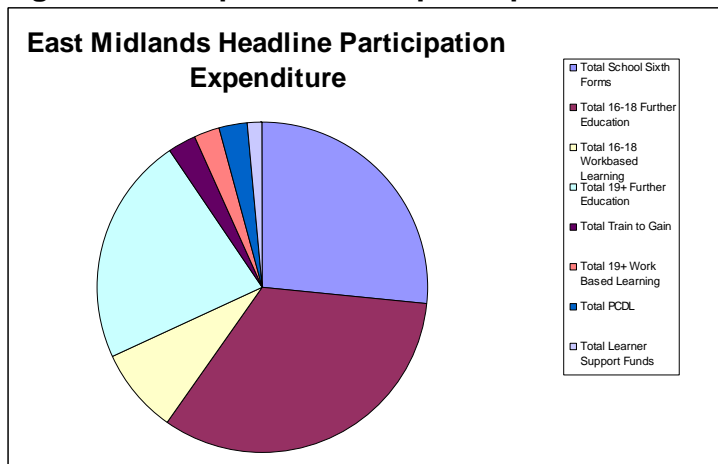
This year we will invest more than ever before in learning and skills in the East Midlands. We want to buy the best quality provision to meet the East Midland's needs, and will employ robust and urgent measures to withdraw poor-quality provision and to invest in providers that can deliver. This all means that we can now pay for the following in 2008/09:

- 324 extra places in further education for 16–18-year-olds
- 38,015 places in school sixth forms for 16-18 year olds
- 321 extra places for young people participating in Work Based Learning
- 1,050 extra full Level 2 places for adults in FE
- 719 extra full Level 3 places for adults in FE
- 1,200 Adult Learner Accounts<sup>2</sup>

In addition we will ensure:

- Over £435 million will be invested by the LSC on capital projects to provide world-class buildings for East Midland's learners to 2013
- 32,165 employees will start a first Level 2 or Skills for Life qualification via Train to Gain (TtG)
- 7,470 employees will start a Level 3 qualification via Train to Gain
- We will continue to reduce the number of young people counting as NEET.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure one: Expenditure on participation in the East Midlands 2006/07**



<sup>2</sup> This figure of 1,200 covers learners who started in 2007/08 and that will complete in 2008/09

<sup>3</sup> This has not been quantified as yet as the Region sits below national figure of 10% given in Statement of Priorities

Figure Two: Young Peoples: Mix of Provision Funding 2006/07

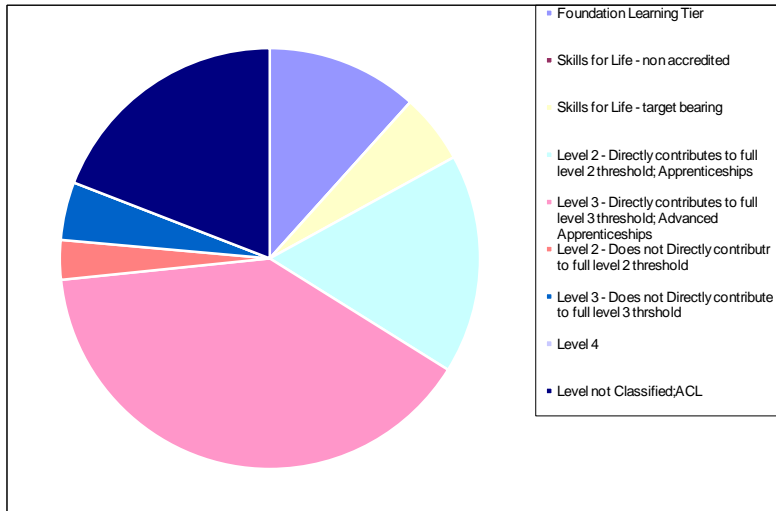
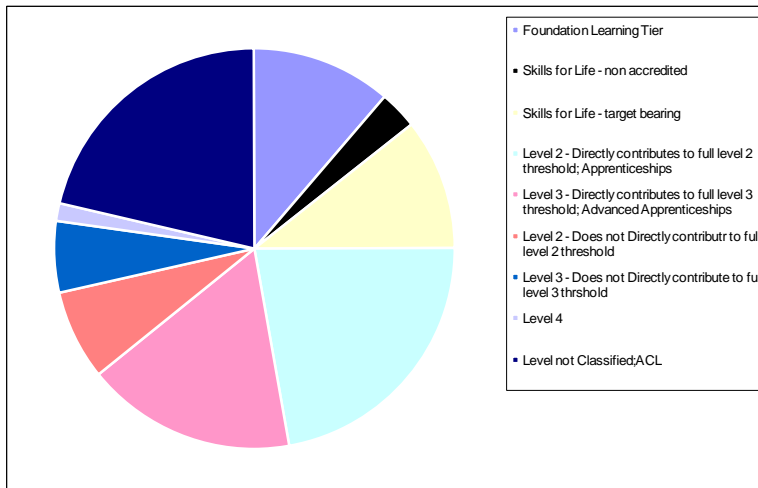


Figure Three: Adult: Mix of Provision Funding 2006/07



### 3 Investing in our Priorities

Employment forecasts show there is a demand for both low and high order occupations within the region. Increasingly in some rural areas such as Lincolnshire, the demand for low order occupations is met by migrant workers, many of whom then remain in the County. A large part of the demand for higher order occupations will be to replace retirees and others who leave the workforce.<sup>4</sup> A significant issue for the Region is that there will be fewer young people entering the workforce and thus we need to focus attention on the existing workforce and potential workers, as well as attracting new groups to stay and work in the Region, such as graduates from the universities and migrants. Our Train to Gain activity is intended to address these issues.

While the proportions of adults with NVQ Level 2 or 3 (or equivalent) qualifications has increased, there are still over a million working age people in the Region, (27%) who do not hold Level 2 qualifications. There are also high estimates for the number of people with only entry-level literacy and numeracy<sup>5</sup>, yet only a small proportion recognise that they need to improve these skills.<sup>6</sup>

There is a clear geographic pattern of low educational attainment and skills, high unemployment and health problems that result from urban deprivation, industrial restructuring and rural isolation. The areas primarily affected are in the cities, especially in Nottingham and Leicester, as well as in the former coalfields areas of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and the coastal region of Lincolnshire.<sup>7</sup> As the roots of this complex deprivation are diverse, it will require committed partnership working to address the needs of these various communities.

Through our partnership work with the ESP<sup>8</sup>, we have identified the following to be priority sectors for the Region as a whole, together with sectors that are of importance within each of our five sub-Regional areas. Through the implementation of Sector Skills Agreements (SSA) we will progressively ensure that the qualifications funded through our provision are those identified by Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) as being the ones that employers want and value.

|                                 |                              |  |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| • Construction                  | • Health and social care     | • High performance engineering/transport equipment |
| • Food and drink manufacture    | • Retail                     | • Logistics/distribution                           |
| • Tourism/leisure/hospitality   | • Clothing and textiles      | • Medical, pharmaceutical and biotech              |
| • Creative industries/new media | • Environmental technologies |  |

<sup>4</sup> IER, LSC, SSDA, *Working Futures II: 2004-2014*, EM27.xls

<sup>5</sup> DfES, Read Write Plus – Skills for Life Survey 2003 accessed from [http://www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus\\_skillsforlifesurvey/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus_skillsforlifesurvey/)

<sup>6</sup> BMG, LSC *East Midlands Household Survey – East Midlands Report*, p.119

<sup>7</sup> Anne E. Green, *Mapping Deprivation in the East Midlands – Implications for Policy*, 2006, (Nottingham: emda), p.4

<sup>8</sup> ESP Partnership plan

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The Region also has a large number of public sector employers accounting for 28.5% of jobs, ranging from the NHS to several universities. Currently these public sector organisations are part of the Region's public sector compact and as such are committed to improving the levels of skill within their workforce and in particular to increasing the number of Apprenticeships available in this area of work.

The LSC is part of a joint East Midlands Health Sector Alliance (HSSA) to ensure a focussed approach to commissioning of skills. It will focus on staff at bands 1-4 to fund skills development and qualifications at Levels 2, 3 and 4, Apprenticeships and Skills for Life<sup>9</sup>

16-18 funding and participation in the Region has risen over the last two years, with significant variations at sub-regional level. In particular there has been increased participation on full Level 2 and Level 3 courses and in priority areas of provision. In line with Government and LSC policy, we can expect that this trend will continue and 16-18 participation will continue to rise with the rate of increase being above national assumptions. We will focus more resources on those who face the most disadvantage in our communities in order to ensure our challenging achievement targets are met.

The proportion of young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) fell in 2007 by 1%, in line with national changes. This represents a large shift from 2005/06 when NEET rose. In addition, the Region was one of the first in the country to meet the September Guarantee in all areas. Using discretionary funding such as the European Social Fund (ESF) we will continue to provide enhanced opportunities and add value to provision for young people in this group.

Work Based Learning provision for young people has improved its quality significantly during the last two years, with success rates for Apprenticeships increasing by 15%. The Region leads the country in terms of its rate of improvement. However, participation has fallen and increasing demand for Apprenticeships from young people and employers represents the Region's major challenge.

In May 2007, there were 161 young people under 18 years of age from the East Midlands Region in custody. Of these, approximately 81% were aged 16 and 17. Ensuring that these young people are enabled to improve their qualifications and gain employment upon leaving custody is a continuing challenge for the Region. Adult participation in the East Midlands reduced by 24% between 2005/06 and 2006/07 with local area ranges that varied between 37% and 18%. Despite this, the East Midlands experienced significant rises in the proportion of its adult learners studying a full Level 2 or 3 programme. At Level 2 there has been a 13% increase over the two years and at Level 3 this increase has been 9%. Much of this rise is due to the changes made by providers in the balance and mix of their provision, in an effort to assist the skills demands of the Region. Improving the qualification base of those in work to boost the Region's economy remains a significant challenge for the Region and its Train to Gain programme.

Work Based Learning provision for adults, in line with that provided for young people has improved its quality significantly during the last two years, with success rates for Apprenticeships increasing by 14%. However as with young people, the level of

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<sup>9</sup> Letter of Agreement: Joint Investment Framework and Health Sector Strategic Alliance

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participation in Apprenticeships is very challenging in light of the Leitch implementation plan.

Skills for Life provision has increased ensuring that key skills of literacy and numeracy are improved throughout the workplace and wider society. Providers have changed the courses they offer so that in 2006/07 at least 80% of the Region's funding was spent on recognised qualifications that enabled progression to Level 2 and beyond. Small businesses in the region have identified shortages of basic literacy skills, in their workforce and emphasised the importance of in-house training as the favoured route for skills development.<sup>10</sup>

Since 2002/03, the region has experienced an overall increase in learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the bulk of this growth is within young people. There have been disproportionate decreases in the provision of support for adult learners of Asian or Asian British (39.8%), and Black or Black British (34.7%) which raises potential equitable access issues for provision within a picture of decreasing adult overall participation. It is this challenge that the Region has focused on as its fourth priority.

### **3.1 Increasing the offer from the sector**

Increasingly, we will focus on and prioritise public investment in areas of market failure such as Skills for Life and full Level 2 provision. Outside these priority areas, we expect a partnership approach to funding with both learners and employers contributing towards the cost of learning.

In 2008/09, we expect FE providers to increase their levels of fee income and full-cost provision by broadening their offer to adults, encouraging more employers to see FE as the solution to their skills needs, and delivering more professional qualifications and Level 4 and 5 provision. We also expect to see institutions broadening their income base, and therefore becoming more autonomous and less reliant on public funding.

We estimate that fee income in the East Midlands is currently £6,535,054 and represents 39% of the total fee income that could be collected. In 2008/09, we wish to see an increase of 3.5% in the level of fee income, to 42.5%. This equates to £7,041,500. Through broadening their offer to adults and, encouraging more employers to see FE as the solution to their skills needs, our colleges should be able to move effectively towards this target.

### **Capital**

Our investment in capital in the Region will underpin the wider development of the FE infrastructure bringing benefits to learners, employers and the wider community. We will increasingly focus capital investment on both meeting the needs of an area and the renewal of the college estate. Our investment in world-class buildings will contribute to the regeneration of local neighbourhoods. During 2008/09 we will develop an East Midlands Learning Strategy for 2020 and use this to drive the revisions to our Capital

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<sup>10</sup> Federation of Small Businesses – East Midlands Area Policy Unit October 2007

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Strategy, taking into account the increasing trends towards specialisation at Levels 4 and 5 and the requirement for localised provision that will meet the needs of areas with low skills and high unemployment.

To date the FE sector within the East Midlands has demonstrated ability to deliver high quality projects on budget, with Stephenson College being awarded 2nd prize in the RIBA/LSC Further Education Awards in 2006. We aim to build on this success across the whole of the FE estate in our ambitions to deliver 'world class' buildings by 2013.

In addition to those projects which have already received LSC approval in principle, further expenditure of around £707 million capital funds will be required to move the whole estate to world class standard and achieve the objective of renewing the estate by 2013, of which £435 million is LSC supported. Whilst this is seven years away, the lead-time and build time of major projects dictates that contracts will need to be in place by 2008-2011 to meet this ambitious target. This figure includes £56.3 million for School Sixth forms and £18 million for specialist colleges.

Our estimate of future capital requirements based on our current capital plan is below.

**Table one: Estimated future capital requirements<sup>11</sup>**

|                          | <b>Projects in development (in discussion with LSC)<br/>£M</b> | <b>% support requested</b> | <b>Undeveloped future projects anticipated<br/>£M</b> | <b>% support requested</b> | <b>Known/potential School developments<br/>£M</b> |
|--------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| Derbyshire               | 22.0   | 35                         | 30.00   | 90                         | 10.00   |
| Leicestershire           | 45.94  | 52.56                      | 34.00   | 64.71                      | 4.00  |
| Lincolnshire and Rutland | 70.0   | 67.14                      | 58.02   | 35.85                      | 10.50   |
| Northamptonshire         | 77.8   | 56.04                      | 62.00   | 63.55                      | 26.00   |
| Nottinghamshire          | 183.46   | 57.44                      | 68.06   | 54.69                      | 5.80  |
| <b>Region</b>            | <b>399.20 M</b>  | <b>57.07</b>               | <b>252.08 M</b>                                       | <b>58.08</b>               | <b>56.30 M</b>                                    |

<sup>11</sup> East Midlands Capital Plan 2007-2014

## 4 Challenges, key actions and measures of success for the East Midlands

The LSC has three national priorities, which we deliver at both a Regional and local level. The key challenges for us of delivering these priorities are set out below:

### 4.1 Priority 1: Creating demand for learning and skills.

Our aim is simple – we want more people to demand more learning, because they are clear about the social and economic benefits it brings. We want nothing less than a cultural shift in the way we talk and feel about learning – seeing the acquisition and development of skills and qualifications as an essential part of a productive and fulfilled life.

#### 4.1.2 Key challenges for East Midlands Young people

| Challenges   | Actions  | Measures of success   |
|--|--|---|
| In 2006 East Midlands had the lowest proportion of its population aged 16 to 19 qualified to at least a Level 2, (53.4% - UK 59.8%.) | Work through 14-19 partnerships to reach the most disadvantaged and reduce sustained underachievement  | Proportion of young people qualified to Level 2 improves by 2% in 2008/09   |
|  | Target 14-19 partnerships to deliver greater than average achievement at Level 2 by 19 to help us exceed national averages                       |   |
| Apprenticeship participation has fallen for three years running.   | Dramatically increase the number and range of 16-18 Apprenticeship places available through delivery of a Regional WBL Strategy and Action Plan. | 5,689 young people completing Apprenticeships in 2008/09  |
|  | Roll out national vacancy matching system.   | 5,689 young people completing Apprenticeships in 2008/09  |
|  | Through 14-19 partnerships commission a wider vision of work related learning to meet local area need (for all 14-19 WRL elements)               | Work related learning strategy implemented in all Local Authority areas by 2008/09                                |
|  | Evaluate current provider network models to ensure they deliver what is required   | All Networks to have a Regional focus and a specific role for them in engaging young people with Apprenticeships. |
|  | Model what is required from a provider network to meet the Leitch plan.  | New model in place by September 2008  |

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|--|--|--|
| <p>Participation at age 17 in the East Midlands has remained below national performance for three years.</p> <p>Whilst the Regions NEET figures continue to be below national averages November 2006 (5.9%), October 2007 (6.7%)<sup>12</sup>, there still exist high levels of NEET in our three Cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby.</p> | <p>Through the 14-19 partnerships and our increased profiling and targeting, continue to reduce those classified as NEET.</p>  | <p>4,000 diploma places delivered during 2008/09</p> <p>September Guarantee at 16 and 17 achieved across the Region</p>                                  |
|  | <p>Invest in 4,000 Diploma places across the Region, working with local authorities and partners via LAA.</p>  | <p>Reduction in the number of those classified as NEET in our three Cities to remain below the national average.</p>                                     |
|  | <p>Work with providers to tackle the growing number of young people who are ENT</p>  | <p>Proportion of those who are ENT is reduced to 12% in 2008/09</p>  |
|  | <p>Utilise ESF funds to provide support for young people who are ENT</p>   |  |
| <p>Achievement of young people at Level 3 by 19 in the East Midlands is below national averages.</p>   | <p>Develop a clear progression framework through pre E2E and FLT to Diplomas and Apprenticeships as part of a coherent offer</p>   | <p>Progression framework in place by September 2008</p>  |
|  | <p>In partnership with Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) develop greater coherence for learning at Levels 4 and 5, and ensure there are clear links between Foundation Degrees, higher national courses emerging Level 4 apprenticeships and other Level 4 and 5 vocational and occupational provision.</p> | <p>New and Innovative routes developed with key partners to enable progression into high levels of learning</p>  |
|  | <p>Target 14-19 partnerships to deliver greater than average achievement at Level 3 by 19 to help us exceed national averages</p>  | <p>Proportion of young people achieving Level 3 is at national averages by 2008/09</p>   |
| <p>Cohort growth in some areas such as Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire of the Region is well above national averages and the planned growth in Northamptonshire will increase this further</p>   | <p>Ensure planning for differential growth in the Region is in place with resources to meet demand</p>   | <p>All young people in Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire and Rutland offered a place in learning at age 16 and 17 as part of the September Guarantee</p> |
| <p>Proportion of young people with Level 2 at 16 in Nottingham is well below national averages</p>   | <p>Utilise ESF funds in Nottinghamshire to provide support for young people leaving without a Level 2 to access courses leading to qualifications</p>  | <p>Proportion of those without a Level 2 at 16 in Nottinghamshire improves faster than national averages</p>   |

<sup>12</sup> Awaiting November 2007 figure

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|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| There is a gap in achievement between those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their peers. | Narrow the achievement gap for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities by focusing delivery on specific target groups and utilising ESF funds to support this group of learners. | Achievement gap narrows by 2% in 2008/09 |
|---|---|--|

### 4.1.3 Key challenges for East Midlands Adults

| Challenges  | Actions  | Measures of success  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>27% of the adult population have no Level 2 qualification</p> <p>Persistent and long-term deprivation is a continuing feature of the region, concentrated in the Cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby in addition to former coalfields and remote rural areas such as the Lincolnshire coast.</p> | Ensure each local area has a core adult offer and planning infrastructures that reflect and respond to the spectrum of adult need by implementing our Regional adult strategy.                                   | <p>1,912 more adult learners have a 1<sup>st</sup> Level 2 qualification at the end of 2008/09</p> <p>6,389 young people completing Apprenticeships in 2008/09</p> <p>Employment and Skills Boards are in place in each sub-regional area to deliver framework by September 2008</p> |
|   | Target public investment in Progression Pathways, Skills for Life, Level 2 provision and the Adult Learning Grant at priority groups of learners particularly in the regions most deprived districts             | <p>11,000 Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants are in employment by the end of 2008/09 <b>AND</b></p> <p>1,912 more adult learners have a 1<sup>st</sup> Level 2 qualification at the end of 2008/09</p>  |
|   | Use ESF investment (in collaboration with other strategic agencies) to target persistent and long term deprivation in the three Cities; former coalfields and remote rural areas such as the Lincolnshire coast. | <p>11,000 Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants are in employment by the end of 2008/09 <b>AND</b></p> <p>1,912 more adult learners have a 1<sup>st</sup> Level 2 qualification at the end of 2008/09</p>  |
|   | Implement joint plan between Job Centre plus and LSC to address skills and employment issues Regionally.   | Joint protocol in place between Job Centre plus and the LSC  |
|   | Ensure that adults are aware of financial support available (Career Development loans, Adult learning Grant) to help tackle financial barriers to skills development   | New IAG service is in place and working towards a more Integrated Employment and Skills offer.   |
|   | Development of a new Adult Advancement and Careers Service as a means of informing and engaging more adults  | New IAG service is in place and working towards a more Integrated Employment and Skills offer.   |
|   | In the East Midlands colleges only collect 39% of potential fees.  | Encourage colleges and providers to increase the range of full cost and part- subsidised provision they offer.   |

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|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | In dialogues with providers seek commitment to greater fee collection to free up resources for those most excluded from the labour market.  |   |
| <p>There is a low proportion of the workforce with Level 4 qualifications and the Level of graduate retention in the Region is not high enough to meet employer demand for higher-Level skills.</p> <p>Historically the East Midlands has the lowest number of Foundation Degree courses running, together with students participating</p> | Expand our Regional pilot on Skills Accounts for Level 3 learners to Nottinghamshire for 2008/09 to create a strong base for Level 3 work   | 18,466 Working age adults qualified to at least Level 3 by the end of 2008/09                 |
|  | Make the Region a more economically prosperous place to work for skilled migrants and graduates, to drive up employer demand for high level skills in the Region especially within SMEs | Increase the number of Foundation Degree courses in the Region to equal the national average. |
|  | Developing with key partners new and innovative routes to enable progression into higher levels of learning   | New and innovative routes in place by 2008/09   |
| There will be fewer young people entering the workforce in future.   | Encourage more older workers to develop higher level skills.  | 18,466 Working age adults qualified to at least Level 3 by the end of 2008/09                 |

### 4.1.4 Key challenges for East Midlands Employers

| Challenges  | Actions  | Measures of success   |
|---|--|---|
| The Public Sector is the largest employer in the Region, but there is insufficient engagement of the public sector with Apprenticeships and long term sustainable training. | Increase the numbers of public sector employers and their supply chains, including Public Sector Compacts, who offer Apprenticeships.  | All public service employers increase their proportion of Apprentices by 5%   |
| Operational effectiveness of Train to Gain (TtG) brokerage needs to improve if the Regional targets for TtG over the next few years are to be met                           | Develop our brokerage to ensure a seamless offer to employers and increase the number of employer engagements  | 5,000 employers engaged through TtG 2008/09   |
|   | Increase the volume of part funded Level 3 training available in the region through TtG  | 2,125 learners achieve a Level 3 on TtG programmes  |
| Skills for Life performance in TtG is well below expectations   | <p>Make revisions to the Skills for Life offer available within TtG so that it better meets employers' needs.</p> <p>Improve the capacity building of providers in respect of Skills for Life offers within TtG.</p> | 4,074 learners achieve Skills for Life qualifications through TtG   |
| The number of employees participating in training through TtG will need to increase if Leitch plan targets are to be met.   | Review the TtG provider base to remove poor performing providers below minimum levels of performance   | <p>2,125 learners achieve a L3 on TtG programmes</p> <p>4,074 learners achieve Skills for Life qualifications through TtG</p> |

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|--|---|---|
|  | Work with TtG brokerage to raise awareness of Adult Apprenticeships as a core offer   | 10,600 learners achieve a 1 <sup>st</sup> Level 2 qualification through TtG programmes  |
| In 2005, 11,800 vacancies in the East Midlands were reported as 'hard to fill', of which 8,200 were due to a shortage of applicants with the appropriate education, training or experience.                                    | Use ESF to enhance and broaden opportunities available to employers through the TtG service.  | 4,074 learners achieve Skills for Life qualifications through TtG<br><br>18,466 Working age adults qualified to at least Level 3 by the end of 2008/09  |
| The East Midlands has an ageing population, and as a consequence predicted growth in the proportion of older workers.  | Extend eligibility and range of available qualifications in TtG in a variety of ways  | 10,600 learners achieve a 1 <sup>st</sup> Level 2 qualification through TtG programmes including Apprenticeships <b>AND</b><br><br>2,125 learners achieve a Level 3 on TtG programmes including Apprenticeships |
| Over 65% of the workforce in the East Midlands are employed by small and medium sized companies (SMEs) with fewer than 200 staff.  | Target SMEs for the wider range of Train to Gain activity, particularly in Leadership and Management  | 5,000 employers engaged through TtG 2008/09   |
|  | Ensure qualifications funded are those identified by Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) as the qualifications employers want and value.  | Core Level 2, Level 3 and Skills for Life targets are met 2008/09   |
|  | Make the Region a more economically prosperous place to work for skilled migrants and graduates, to drive up employer demand for high level skills in the Region especially within SMEs | 18,466 Working age adults qualified to at least Level 3 by the end of 2008/09   |
| The proportion of young people and adults participating in Apprenticeships has been falling for three years<br><br>There are insufficient employer places in the region to support current and future need for Apprenticeships | Develop a coherent Employer Engagement strategy linked to Apprenticeships for all age groups  | 5,000 employers engaged through TtG 2008/09   |
|  | Roll out national vacancy matching system   | 2,762 more Apprenticeships for young people and adults in 2008/09   |
|  | Develop a wider range of performance measures to better judge the quality of existing providers of Work Based Learning  | 5,000 employers engaged through TtG 2008/09   |
|  | Evaluate current provider network models  | Regional focus in the provider networks and a specific role for them in delivering more Apprenticeships   |

|  |  |                                      |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
|  | Model what is required from a provider network to meet the Leitch plan | New model in place by September 2008 |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|

## 4.2 Priority 2: Transform opportunities for individuals and employers through an effective supply side

As we raise demand, we need the FE system to be able to respond to the needs of more young people, adults and employers. We want to build on the transformation that has already been achieved and to see this as part of a wider journey towards self-regulation, which we strongly support – with the sector taking on much greater responsibility and control for its own direction and effectiveness.

### 4.2.1 Key challenges for the East Midlands

| Challenges   | Actions   | Measures of success  |
|--|---|--|
| The Region has no poor provision, but insufficient provision that is good or outstanding   | Increase the number of good and outstanding providers by working to help them improve           | Improve grade 1 and 2 provision by 10% within the CIF with no grade 4 inspection<br><br>10% of grades to be grade 1 and 50% of grade to be grade 2 in overall effectiveness by 2009/10       |
|  | Offer 3 year contracts to providers, where delivery remains above minimum performance standards | No college provision below Minimum levels of performance in 2008/09.   |
| Too many colleges still have poor accommodation, which is ill equipped to meet the skills needs of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century.                   | Invest against a refreshed Regional Capital Strategy  | Capital investment by LSC £435 million achieved by 2013  |
|  | Secure new National Skills Academies in the region  | At least one National Skills Academy established in the region by September 2009   |
| The Region lacks a full qualifications framework with small steps progression between levels of qualifications to aid all its learners to progress | Develop and build on our trial centres for the qualifications and credit framework              | Qualifications framework with credits rolled out during 2008/09  |
|  | Further develop FE to support HE, promoting widening participation with Aim higher              | Pilot project with HEFCE completed by March 2009   |
| Brokerage service is not fully meeting the region's needs and employer satisfaction with the service is not high enough                            | Offer a single improved brokerage service to employers  | Proportion of leads from brokers followed up by providers to increase by 50%<br><br>All providers to be working towards the new standard of employer responsiveness or equivalent by 2009/10 |
| Persistent and long-term deprivation is a continuing feature of the East Midlands, tending to be concentrated in the Cities of                     | Use ESF, enhance opportunity and access to programmes for the most disadvantaged                | ESF funding targeted at SOAs with highest index of deprivation   |

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| Leicester, Nottingham and Derby in addition to former coalfields and remote rural areas such as the Lincolnshire coast. | Work with the third sector, to encourage their involvement in our delivery | Proportion of delivery by Voluntary and Community Service organisations increases by 5% by September 2009 |
|---|--|---|

### 4.3 Priority 3: Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives

By raising demand and also enabling the FE System to respond to that demand we will deliver greater social and economic success.

We will continue to deliver progress against targets whilst focusing on engaging more people from disadvantaged groups, protecting investment where necessary to achieve this.

We want to increase the sector's focus on Integrating Skills with Employment, so that more people get the training and qualifications they need to get off benefits, to enter and progress in work, thereby supporting greater social mobility. This is because sustainable work is the route out of poverty for most groups in society<sup>13</sup>. We intend to use more of our investment to give those, not in work the skills and support they need to become job-ready; enabling them to address skill shortages in local labour markets, with more of the learning we fund resulting in job outcomes.

This will mean delivering a more flexible curriculum offer below Level 2 and supporting an integrated and multi-agency approach to meeting the needs of individuals.

#### 4.3.1 Key challenges for the East Midlands

| Challenges   | Actions   | Measures of success   |
|--|---|---|
| Persistent and long-term deprivation is a continuing feature of the East Midlands, tending to be concentrated in the Cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby in addition to former coalfields and remote rural areas such as the Lincolnshire coast. | Help more learners by protecting places for learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities, and the Foundation Learning Tier.  | LLDD learners supported increases by (1,000) 2008/09  |
|  | Target our provision on those people and communities who are most excluded from the labour market   | 11,000 IB claimants are in employment by the end of 2008/09   |
|  | Ensure that adults are aware of financial support available (Career Development loans, Adult learning Grant) to help tackle financial barriers to skills development –                    | Employment and Skills Boards are in place in each sub-Regional area to deliver the adult framework by 2009        |
|  | Safeguard the investment in Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) and ensure planning for PCDL is an integrated element to overall planning, employment and skills provision | PCDL partnerships are fully contributing to the Regional Commissioning Plan and influencing provision by 2008/098 |

<sup>13</sup> Opportunity, Employment and Progression: Making Skills Work (November 2007)

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|  | Increase the number of people taking numeracy courses  | Number of adults qualified in numeracy increases by 3% in 2008/09                                      |
|  | Ensure funding for adults is planned in a coherent way so the overall offer is achieved and duplicate provision is eliminated, whilst ensuring equality of access of opportunities across the Region | FLT offer is in place by September 2008<br>Level 2, 3 and Skills for Life targets achieved for 2008/09 |
|  | Develop Information, Advice and Guidance Services as a forerunner to the new universal Adult Careers service in the East Midlands as a means of informing and engaging more adults                   | A refreshed adult IAG service is in place by September 2008.   |
| In 2007 there were approximately 16,000 individuals in the East Midlands in custody or under supervision by the Probation Service.   | Work with partners to reduce re-offending through developing learning and skills opportunities into work.  | Learners in sustained employment increases by 3% in 2008/09  |
| There is a low proportion of the workforce with Level 4 qualifications and the level of graduate retention in the Region is not high enough to meet employer demand for higher-level skills. | Increase those qualified to Level 4 and above to meet demands from employer for higher level skills to continue to develop the economy as a knowledge based economy                                  | 18,466 Working age adults qualified to at least Level 3 by the end of 2008/09                          |
| Respond to employment opportunities resulting from MKSM to promote higher skills.  |  |  |
| Work with providers to define more accurately Integrated Employment and Skills activity  |  | 11,000 IB claimants are in employment by the end of 2008/09  |

#### 4.4 Priority 4: Improving participation and attainment through equality & diversity

This is in response to high levels of diversity in the Region, particularly in the urban areas of the three major Cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby, and the need for parity of participation and achievement for all ethnic minority groups. The Region needs to reflect the increasingly complex and diverse needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD).

##### 4.4.1 Key challenges for the East Midlands

| Challenges  | Actions  | Measures of success  |
|---|--|--|
| There is a need to increase levels of participation and achievement in for LLDD learners in the Region to enable parity of learning   | Ensure LLDD provision matches identified needs   | Learning opportunities for LLDD learners are protected, including places to bridge the gap between Skills for Life and Level 2<br><br>LLDD learners supported increases by (1,000) 2008/09 |
|   | Work with stakeholders to develop a strategy linked to the Regional strategic analysis of need   | Regional LLDD strategy updated and implemented by July 2008  |
| There is a need in the Region to improve progression for LLDD learners to enter sustainable employment.   | Work with other agencies (especially Connexions and the Adult Learner Service), providers and employers to develop learner centred progression routes. | Increased numbers of LLDD learners progress to sustainable employment, particularly from FE  |
|   | Develop capital investment plans for the LLDD estate   | Capital investment by LSC £435 million achieved by 2013  |
| The BME population within the region varies considerably. There is also increasing representation of other ethnicities including Eastern European, Middle Eastern, North African and Far Eastern. | Work with providers to promote learning as a way of improving social cohesion in local communities   | Reduce data indicating 'ethnicity unknown' from 3.3% (11,988 learners) to under 1%   |
|   | Identify data illustrating local 'ethnicity' variation   | Increase Raise 'Ethnic Minority FE success rates' from 68% to 73%  |
|   | Through the regional Action Plan, influence and support Providers to adopt tailored EDIMS  | Raise 'Work Base Learning (WBL) ethnic minority participation' from 3.6% to 7%   |
|   | Allocate resources to fund tailored programmes and projects targeting the promotion of community cohesion  | Raise ethnic minority 'Work Base Learning' success rates from 57% to 61%   |
|   | Promote and raise awareness of Community, Social and Faith Cohesion legislation and good practice  |  |

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|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | With 14-19 partnerships, explore opportunities available through the 'Duty to Promote Community Cohesion' (for schools and School Sixth Forms)  |   |
| Working to remove the gender bias in participation in particular sectors | Target resources to fund programmes and projects which promote awareness and support the A-typical career choices made available to learners  | Increase female participation in construction, engineering and other priority areas   |
| Reduce levels of exclusion through economic and social disadvantage      | Collect and monitor data evidencing the impact of 'exclusion through economic and social disadvantage' upon individuals and communities<br><br>Utilise data to influence Providers to adopt tailored Equality and Diversity Impact Measures | Raise ethnic minority FE success rates from 68% to 73%<br><br>Increase FE LLDD participation from 9% to 15%<br><br>Increase WBL LLDD participation from 6.7% to 13.4% |
| An increasing 'mature' population in work aged 45-65 years.              | Explore data evidencing 'multiple disadvantage' faced by individuals and communities<br><br>Work with Providers to raise access, participation and success levels of disadvantage groups  | Target older qualified learners through TtG for second level 2 qualifications<br><br>Work with older workers to target re-training                                    |

Our challenges and actions are based on our Regional *Strategic Analysis*; a robust analytic view of supply, demand and need; as well as ongoing dialogue with key partner organisations. This analysis is available at [www.lsc.gov.uk/eastmidlands](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/eastmidlands)

## 5 Commissioning Profile

We will continue to measure our success – either directly or by working with Regional and local partners – as outlined below in **Table two**

| Measure   | 2006/07              | 2007/08 estimated | 2008/09 projected <sup>14</sup> |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>14–16-year-olds</b>  |                      |                   |                                 |
| Total number of learners aged 14–16   | 115,350              | 112,820           | 110,600                         |
| <b>16–18-year-olds</b>  |                      |                   |                                 |
| Number of young people participating in learning  | 110,977              | 114,217           | 115,028 <sup>15</sup>           |
| Percentage of young people reaching Level 2 at age 19   | 71%                  | 74%               | 77%                             |
| Percentage of young people reaching Level 3 at age 19   | 45%                  | 47%               | 49%                             |
| Number of young people completing Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships                    | 4777                 | 5418              | 5689 <sup>16</sup>              |
| <b>Adult learner responsive</b>   |                      |                   |                                 |
| Total number of adults participating in learning  | 215,751              | 217,993           | 224,622                         |
| Number of Skills for Life achievements overall for adults   | 1845                 | 7335              | 12,448 <sup>17</sup>            |
| Literacy  | 1794                 | tbc               | 4149                            |
| Numeracy  | 51                   | tbc               | 4788                            |
| Number of first Level 2 achievements overall for adults   | 6480 <sup>18</sup>   | 8054              | 9966                            |
| Number of first Level 3 achievements overall for adults   | 5728 <sup>19</sup>   | 6917              | 9727                            |
| Number of adults accessing adult safeguarded learning   | 39,479               | 52,000            | 52,000                          |
| <b>Employer responsive</b>  |                      |                   |                                 |
| Total number of learners  | 59,464 <sup>20</sup> | 52,118            | 53,190                          |
| Number of first Level 2 achievements  | 9,367                | 10,409            | 10,600                          |
| Number of adults completing an Apprenticeship (including Advanced Apprenticeships)                | 3781                 | 3898              | 6389 <sup>21</sup>              |
| Number of employers engaged through Train to Gain   |                      | 4647              | 5000                            |
| <b>Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD) – young people &amp; adults</b> |                      |                   |                                 |
| Total number of LLDD learners supported   | 37,391               | 38,408            | 39,411 <sup>22</sup>            |
| Total number of learners in specialist residential colleges                                       | 305                  | 300               | 300                             |
| <b>European Social Funding (ESF)</b>  |                      |                   |                                 |
| Total number of learners supported by ESF   | 47,400               | 36,195            | 10,908 <sup>23</sup>            |

<sup>14</sup> 2008/09 figures are not based on affordability but are based on trajectories to reach the PSA targets

<sup>15</sup> Includes FE; WBL; SSF; ufi;

<sup>16</sup> Assumes 5% improvement in success rates

<sup>17</sup> Taken from National Statement of Priorities, based on 9% Regional share of total participation 923,000, applying a 45% (MLP) achievement factor ratio.

<sup>18</sup> Firstness in EM at level 2 in FE is 50%

<sup>19</sup> Firstness in EM at level 3 in FE is 70% based on ILR field L35

<sup>20</sup> Includes TTG; WBL and NVQ2/3 delivered in employers premises

<sup>21</sup> Based on achievement required to meet PSA targets

<sup>22</sup> Assumes 2% annual increase 07/8 and 08/9

## **6 Commissioning**

The Leitch Review of Skills, *Prosperity for all in the global economy: World-class skills*, published in December 2006, set out new ambitions for developing world-class skills. To achieve the report's vision, we have implemented a demand-led approach to commissioning, coupled with a strong emphasis on quality.

Commissioning is the term we use for all of our planning and purchasing activity across the learning and skills sector, including purchases that are negotiated or competitively tendered for. All of our commissioning decisions are rooted in a firm commitment to allocating our budget wisely, targeting provision of the highest quality, contributing to Government targets and priorities, and giving value for money.

### **6.1 Negotiated commissioning**

Negotiated commissioning involves us agreeing plans with colleges and providers that currently deliver LSC-funded provision. Our negotiated commissioning plans for 2008/09 include the following.

#### **6.1.1 16–18-year-olds**

Most provision for young people will be secured through planning dialogues with colleges, providers and schools (via local authorities). These discussions will result in agreed plans to deliver the following.

- 115,028 places for 16–18-year-olds, of which:
  - 13,913 places are for Apprenticeships (includes an additional 321 places – an increase on last year of 2%); and
  - 38,015 are for School Sixth Forms
  - 57,187 places are for FE colleges
  - TBC of places for Foundation Learning Tier
  - 5,100 places for Entry to Employment (includes an additional 100 places – an increase of 2%)

#### **6.1.2 Adult learner responsive provision**

As agreed with our partners, we need to deliver the following in 2008/09:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Full Level 2: 13,842 places in total.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Full Level 3: 13,145 places in total.
- Foundation learning Tier: TBC places in total.

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<sup>23</sup> The overall participant figure for ESF is 30,010 for 07 – 10 inclusive.

Based on 33 months available for ESF programme, this equates to 909 participants per month – total **10,908** for 12 months.

### **6.1.3 Employer responsive provision**

As agreed with our partners, we need to deliver the following in 2008/09:

- Level 2: 32,165 places in total.
- Level 3: 7,470 places in total.
- Skills for Life: 4,780 places in total.

### **6.1.4 Adult safeguarded learning, including personal and community development learning**

We will secure this provision locally and ensure it is aligned to Local Area Agreements.

- Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL): 52,000 places in total.
- Family Learning, Literacy and Numeracy: 6,760 places in total.
- Wider Family Learning: 3,640 places in total.
- Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities: 1,560 places in total

## **6.2 Tendered commissioning**

Tendered commissioning is a competitive process that is open to any new providers wanting to enter the market. It is also open to existing colleges or providers wanting to extend their provision or enter new markets or geographical areas.

In order to drive up the quality and responsiveness of the provision that we fund, we will be introducing more competition within our commissioning activity. Key triggers for competition include new investment, restructuring of provision or a new delivery model, significant gaps in provision, and failure to meet minimum levels of performance. In 2008/09, we plan to tender for the following:

### **6.2.1 16–18-year-olds**

- Apprenticeships for Young People
- European Social Fund
- 16–18 competition
- Entry to Employment

### **6.2.2 Adult learner responsive provision**

- European Social Fund
- Apprenticeships for Adults
- Offender Learning and Skills Service
- Information, Advice and Guidance

### **6.2.3 Employer responsive provision**

Train to Gain is a service that seeks to meet the employer demand for skills. In the East Midlands it is delivered through 48 providers. It will continue to be our flagship programme during 2008/09.

- The full Train to Gain programme will be re-tendered for 2008/09
- 5,000 employers will be engaged in Train to Gain by 31 July 2009

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- 44,415 employees will start their first Level 2 or Skills for Life qualifications by 31 July 2009.
- Train to Gain funding will focus on the East Midlands' priority sectors, to help employers in the Health and Social Care, Construction and Engineering. There are also a number of local priority sectors:
  - Leisure and Tourism – Derbyshire and Leicestershire
  - Public Sector - Derbyshire
  - Retail - Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire
  - Food & Drink - Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire
  - Land Based Industries – Lincolnshire and Rutland
  - Performance-Engineering Logistics – Derbyshire and Northamptonshire
- In the East Midlands, £X million (10%) of the Train to Gain budget will be available as a responsiveness fund, which will be commissioned throughout the year in response to employers' needs.
  - European Social Fund
  - Leadership and Management

### **Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)**

We will increase learning and skills opportunities for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities by expanding provision to meet the needs of the cohort and we expect participation and achievement to increase for learners with LLDD.

Based on the Regional strategic analysis we are focussing on:

- Development of supported employment opportunities
- Seeking to match the demand of learners with provision in the region
- Continuing to improve the quality and choice of curriculum
- Recognising and sharing excellence or best practice
- Identifying centres of excellence for 16-24 year olds
- Ensure ALS funding is strategically embedded in the business cycle

### **Offender Learning and Skills**

We will work collaboratively with OLASS partners to improve opportunities for offenders and ex-offenders through learning and reduce re-offending rates by increasing the skills and qualifications of offenders, improving their employability and helping them move into work. We will tender for **provision for offenders**, every five years, unless there is a failure of service for which we need to re-tender.

In the East Midlands we will tender for offender learning and skills activity in the Region's 15 public sector prisons, for delivery from 2009/10. The tendering will be in line with 'Developing the Offender's Learning and Skills Service.'

**National Skills Academies (NSA)**

The National Skills Academy network is a unique structure of employer-led excellence for skills training. They provide a means for direct involvement by employers in the design and delivery of learning. The NSA network will be a key component of the supply infrastructure in addressing skills shortages in specific sectors and industries. In 2008/09 we have agreed that we will fund delivery of an NSA in Manufacturing. In this NSA, the East Midlands 'spoke' will be chaired by Rolls-Royce plc and supported by a range of Regional businesses along with University of Derby, Derby College as well as the LSC and *emda*. The academy will ensure the delivery of globally competitive skills for manufacturing companies.

In addition we are also in discussion with three other sectors and key employers to consider the possibility of Skills Academies in Food and Drink Manufacturing; Retail and Construction. As more NSA's are approved it is our desire to work with those SSC's to ensure that we have appropriate and responsive demand-led provision to meet the needs of employers in the sector. We would also expect those providers delivering provision under a National Skills Academy model to have the new standards accreditation.

NSAs will be a key part of our overall strategy to commission high-quality, employer responsive provision in a demand-led system.

## **7 Infrastructure**

We are a responsible Government-funded organisation: rather than funding the same providers year after year, we take great care to test the market. This ensures that our learning and skills provision continues to meet the changing needs of learners and employers.

We take an active interest in the overall volume, pattern and range of learning and skills activity that individual learners and employers can choose from in each area. We also analyse delivery to ensure that no group is disadvantaged and that equality of opportunity exists throughout our learning and skills provision in the East Midlands. The chart on the right shows the wide range of organisations that we contracted with in 2006/07.

### **[Awaiting chart]**

We want to invest in the capacity of the FE system so that it is continually able to respond to future challenges and where necessary, we want to encourage a diverse provider base to increase choice, quality and stimulate the delivery of innovative provision. One way we will achieve this is through the use of open and competitive tendering processes where this will result in improved quality or choice for learners and employers. Where we have good and excellent providers, we will help them to grow so that they can continue to offer the breadth and depth of provision we need in the Region.

## 8 Quality

Quality improvement will be a key driver of our commissioning decisions to ensure that we secure good quality provision for learners and employers and continue to eradicate poor provision from the market.

We will support colleges and providers that are performing well to perform even better, and we will challenge colleges and providers that are satisfactory but not improving. As part of this more rigorous approach to securing the best provision, we will assess performance against minimum levels of performance from the 2006/07 academic year, based on the new measures for calculating success rates. Minimum levels of performance (MLPs) were introduced in 2007/08 to establish a minimum threshold for performance of programmes and qualifications. For 2008/09 we will extend MLPs to a wide range of provision.

**Table Three: Minimum Levels of Performance 2008/09**

| <b>Programme/Qualification Type</b>            | <b>Minimum Level</b> |
|--|----------------------|
| FE Long Qualification Level 1                  | 55%                  |
| FE Long Qualification Level 2                  | 55%                  |
| FE Long Qualification Level 3                  | 55%                  |
| A-Levels                                       | 75%                  |
| FE Long Qualification Level 4 or higher        | 55%                  |
| FE Short Qualification (5-24 weeks all levels) | 62%                  |
| Apprenticeship (full framework)                | 45%                  |
| Advanced Apprenticeship (full framework)       | 45%                  |
| Train to Gain                                  | 65%                  |

These minimum levels will be used by Ofsted as part of the college and provider performance report. Where a substantial proportion of provision is identified as inadequate or underperforming, a 'Notice to Improve' will be issued. We will address mediocre provision through a Regional approach to improvement indicators that will focus on areas that are in danger of slipping below minimum performance levels if the bar is raised.

The National Improvement Strategy sets out how the Quality Improvement Agency and partners such as the LSC will provide support to colleges and providers. The Strategy includes the expectation that the contracts and funding agreements we hold with providers ensure that they have appropriately qualified and trained staff in accordance with new requirements.

Through the East Midlands Regional Quality Improvement Partnership, we have established six Regional key priorities:

- Promote and support the sharing of best practice through peer review and developments within the Framework for Excellence pilots
- Support colleges and independent providers to develop their capacity for self improvement and self assessment
- Increase the proportion of provision good or excellent
- Reduce satisfactory but not improving and remove inadequate provision

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- Sharpen the focus on responsiveness to the needs of employers including the achievement of the New Standard
- Extend the quality and choice of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

### **Learner Health, Safety and Welfare**

All learners are entitled to learning that takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. Health and safety is an integral part of quality and is essential to maximise learners' experience and achievement.

Our key ambition is to ensure that all provision meets the standards necessary to secure learning that takes place in safe, healthy and supportive environments. This can be particularly challenging for new providers, or those delivering provision in new 'higher risk' occupations. Currently most providers are rated as satisfactory. Our challenge is to improve the proportion of good health and safety ratings.

All prospective new provision will go through the health and safety evaluation and scoring framework as part of OCT. For existing provision, the learner health, safety and welfare quality assurance procedure is used to review the arrangements in place with a view to enhancing or improving the current systems in place.

## **9 Related strategies**

- Local Area Statements of Need Derbyshire
- Local Area Statements of Need Leicestershire
- Local Area Statements of Need Lincolnshire and Rutland
- Local Area Statements of Need Northamptonshire
- Local Area Statements of Need Nottinghamshire
- A Strategy for LSC funded Adult Learning Provision in the East Midlands
- East Midlands Apprenticeship Strategy and Action plan
- East Midlands Employer Engagement Strategy
- East Midlands Capital Plan
- East Midlands Regional Quality Strategy 2007/2010
- Regional Equality and Diversity Action Plan
- LLDD – East Midlands Strategy
- 14-19 Plans
- RES
- Children and Young Persons Plans for 9 Local Authorities

**[Links to the above strategies will be providing in January]**

## **10 Glossary**

**CoVE:** Centre of Vocational Excellence  
**CWDC:** Children’s Workforce Development Council  
**DCFS:** Department for Children, Schools and Families  
**DWP:** Department for Work and Pensions  
**E2E:** Entry to Employment  
**ECDL:** European Computer Driving Licence  
**EMA:** Education Maintenance Allowance  
**EMDA:** East Midlands Regional Development Agency  
**ENT:** Employment not in Training  
**ESF:** European Social Fund  
**ESOL:** English for speakers of other languages  
**FE:** Further Education  
**Full Level 2:** equates to five GCSEs at grades A\* to C  
**Full Level 3:** equates to 2 GCE A-level passes or equivalent  
**HE:** Higher Education  
**IB:** Incapacity Benefit  
**ITQ:** Information Technology Qualification  
**JCP:** Jobcentre Plus  
**LAA:** Local Area Agreement  
**LEPS:** Local Employment Partnerships  
**Level 5:** Foundation Degree-level Learning  
**Level 6:** Degree-level learning  
**LLDD:** Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities  
**MKSM:** Milton Keynes and South Midlands  
**MLPs:** Minimum Levels of Performance  
**NEET:** Not in Education, Employment or Training  
**NSA:** National Skills Academy  
**NVQ:** National Vocational Qualification  
**OCT:** Open and Competitive Tendering  
**OLASS:** Offender Learning and Skills Service  
**OSAT:** On-Site Assess and Train  
**PCDL:** Personal and Community Development Learning  
**Progression Pathways:** a high-quality, coherent curriculum offer for entry and Level 1  
**PSA:** Public Service Agreement targets  
**QCF:** Qualifications and Credit Framework  
**RES:** Regional Economic Strategy  
**SMEs:** Small and Medium Enterprise  
**SSA:** Sector Skills Agreement  
**SSC:** Sector Skills Council  
**Third Sector:** This is the Voluntary and Community Sector  
**TtG:** Train to Gain  
**WBL:** Work Based learning