

**Learning and Skills
Council East Midlands**

**Regional Commissioning
Statement
2009/10**

December 2008

Of interest to Local Authorities, providers
and partner/stakeholders

Further information

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FOREWORD

The principal challenge for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and its partners in the East Midlands, particularly in the current economic circumstances of a recession, is to present a convincing business case for skills development and training to all employers and individuals. By promoting the tangible benefits of learning delivered in the workplace, for both the individual and the employer, the LSC and its partners will be able to help businesses raise productivity, maintain employment, improve their ability to compete in global markets and build a sustainable economy to drive the region through recession.

This commissioning statement for 2009/10 sets out our intentions for bringing about further improvement and supports our *national Statement of Priorities: Priorities for Success 4: Better skills, Better jobs, Better lives* (published by the LSC in November 2008). In this document we describe the key priorities for investing public funding in opportunities that meet the needs and aspirations of learners and fulfil employer demand for a flexible, well-trained and highly-qualified workforce, whose contributions will boost the regional economy. The document also outlines our contributions to Local Area Agreements in the region.

Recently we have seen transformational investment in our schools and colleges coupled with major developments in our urban infrastructure. This investment, coupled with significant improvement in skills in the region in all age groups has created a strong foundation which the region can use to carry it through the more difficult times ahead. By providing leadership and direction to the learning and skills agenda, and by placing people at the heart of economic and social renewal, over the last year we have delivered:

- Record levels of young people aged 16 to 18 participating in learning at Levels 2 and 3.
- A 12 per cent increase in the volume of 16 to 18 year olds who started their Apprenticeship programme.
- Our Train to Gain starts and achievement targets at Full Level 2.

We do, though, clearly recognise that our future targets are challenging, and that we will need to achieve even more in 2009/2010 and beyond. We need to double the number of apprentices in the region by 2020 and quickly increase the number of adults in our workforce with Full Level 3 qualifications. In addition, the country's worsening economic conditions, and the prospect of rising unemployment after many years of stability create a new set of challenges. We will strive to both deliver our targets and use the economic downturn to encourage even more skills development, particularly amongst young people and those made redundant so that when conditions improve our region can recover faster and prosper better.

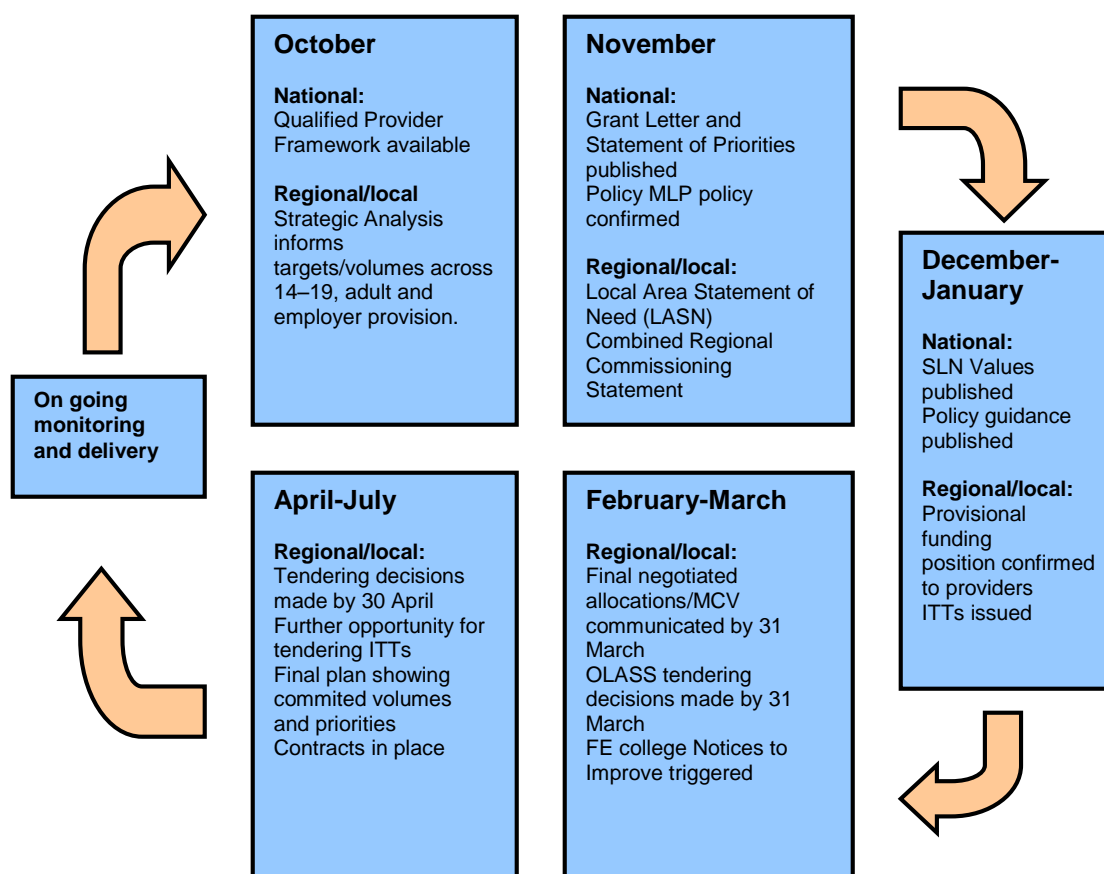
Together with our partners, employers, public and private providers we are determined to promote the message that learning pays. We are ambitious for our region and hope we can recruit you to our vision for a better future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Crompton'.A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Begy'.

Tom Crompton
Regional Director
LSC East Midlands

Roger Begy
Chair of the Regional Council
LSC East Midlands

1 INTRODUCTION



1. Commissioning is the term we use for all of our planning and purchasing activity across the learning and skills sector. The aim of the commissioning process is to allocate our budgets wisely, funding provision of the highest quality in order to contribute to the delivery of government targets and priorities and to provide value for money in an open and fair way. We will commission provision through both 'Open and Competitive Tendering' (OCT) and via 'closed negotiations' with our existing delivery network. We expect the majority of our provision to be commissioned via closed negotiations.

Commissioning principles

2. In commissioning provision in the East Midlands we will:
 - a) Put the needs of learners and employers first and ensure that they are engaged and consulted.

- b) Work in partnership to maximise effectiveness and value for money and reduce barriers to learning.
- c) Develop a long term strategic view of the needs of learners, employers and the economy to provide a basis for future policy and commissioning.
- d) Tell our providers what we expect in terms of standards.
- e) Provide timely information for providers and work constructively with them.
- f) Continuously evaluate provision, ensure that it meets our high standards and that outcomes impact positively on the regional skills base.
- g) Spend money wisely to secure effective and efficient services, decommissioning provision where necessary.
- h) Use open and transparent processes that build confident partnerships.

2. THE DEMAND FOR SKILLS: AN EAST MIDLANDS CONTEXT

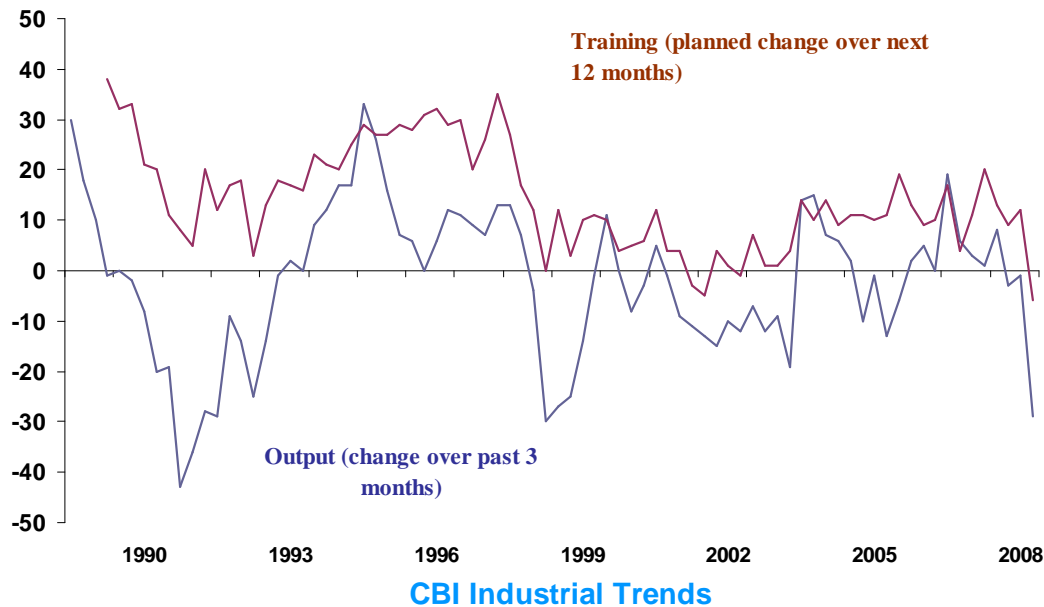
The demand for skills

- 3. We are experiencing unprecedented economic conditions in this early part of the twenty first century. As figures 1 and 2 below demonstrate, the economic downturn is already severe, affecting training expectations for businesses in line with the economic downturn pattern.

Figure 1. Employment/unemployment trends (national).



Figure 2. Output and training changes 1990- 2008. (national)



4. It is the intention of this Regional Commissioning Statement to make clear what steps the Learning and Skills Council will be taking to assist employers and learners in the region to counteract some of the effects of that economic downturn and continue to invest in the skills of the actual and potential work force. We will look to achieve this through increasing our capacity to respond to employers' needs, increasing our flexibility and giving providers the capacity to work with employers and learners to meet their needs as far as possible.
5. Employment forecasts show that there is demand for both low and high skilled occupations in the East Midlands. The public sector is the largest employer in the region, accounting for 26 per cent of all employees. Financial and business services are also key employers (17 per cent). The region has a significant manufacturing sector, in particular in the high-tech and specialist light engineering markets, which account for 16 per cent of employment in the region, compared to 11 per cent in the UK as a whole.¹
6. However the region's high proportion of employment in low skilled occupations, in manufacturing and in financial/business services exposes the economy and employers to the effects of the global slowdown, the recession in the British economy and to competition from low-cost imports from around the world. Thirty-three per cent of our workforce has no Level 2 qualification.²

¹ Annual Business Inquiry, 2006

² DIUS (Annual Population Survey, 2007)

7. Employment forecasts until the recession showed that demand for low skilled occupations would remain constant but would increase for higher skilled occupations. A large part of this demand will be to replace retirees and others who leave the workforce. The recession however alters this picture. The roles of lower skilled workers may be exactly those that are lost in a recession, and the number of roles available for young people entering the employment market with low skills sets will be minimal. We need to take the opportunity within the recession to increase the proportion of young people engaging in further learning to increase their qualification levels before they enter the job market. We must also focus on providing opportunities for workers made redundant to upgrade their skills.

Disadvantage and deprivation

8. The region has significant numbers of people facing disadvantage. Our region is fortunate in the broad range of ethnicity represented in our population. However, representation within our communities varies considerably from 38 per cent of the population in Leicester City being from an ethnic minority background to three per cent of the population³ from Lincolnshire, placing upon the post-16 system the responsibility to ensure equality in access and achievement.
9. Over 50 per cent of the working age population face some degree of disadvantage in education or training or employment and nearly a fifth identify themselves as having a disability.⁴
10. We have areas of persistent and long-term deprivation in the region, where some communities experience poor housing, deep-seated inter-generational unemployment and poverty. In the main, these are concentrated in the three large urban centres, the former coalfields, remote rural areas and the Lincolnshire coast. Unemployment levels in some of these areas are three times higher than the regional average; they also have high concentrations of young people categorised as 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) and older people who have not worked for long periods and who claim incapacity benefits. Some of these areas are also experiencing population decline, as people move away to more prosperous areas with better employment opportunities.

Rurality

11. The East Midlands is the third most rural region in England, with almost 30 per cent of people living in rural areas, which comprise 88 per cent of the

³ Office of National Statistics Experimental Ethnicity population estimates, 2006

⁴ Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec 2007

total land area of the region.⁵ Over the last three years, jobs in the rural economy have increasingly been filled by migrant workers. In an economic downturn, rural businesses and the prosperity of small rural towns are more likely to be threatened by lack of available labour. We need to engage closely with employers and providers to ensure that a flexible and responsive approach is taken to accreditation of existing skills and to encouraging progression to higher level skills to help the rural economy weather the changing conditions.

Our workforce

12. The workforce is ageing, in line with the rest of England. Most of the workforce of 2020 is already employed; the population growth for 16-19 year olds in the region has already started to flatten off and will reduce within five years. In times of recession, older people may need to stay in the workforce for longer, but will be competing for jobs with younger, perhaps less qualified people. Part of the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) role will be to provide support and encouragement for older workers to pass on their skills through mentoring and assessor roles as well as developing the necessary skills to maintain their employability and earning power over a more prolonged working life.

Improving skills levels

13. The Regional Economic Strategy is ambitious and describes a vision of sustainable economic growth underpinned by three themes; raising productivity, ensuring sustainability and achieving quality. Our role is to ensure that our shared ambitions for a more highly qualified workforce continue to be met, particularly in a period of recession, so that we can recover faster and maximise opportunities for development as economic conditions improve.
14. We have a relatively low proportion of the workforce who are qualified to Level 4 and above. Despite the presence of ten (including the Open University) Higher Education institutions in the region, the level of graduate retention in the region is still not high enough to meet employer demand for higher level skills.
15. Due to the demographic trend towards fewer 18 and 19 year olds coming up into full-time Higher Education, it is likely that part-time work place learning for higher level qualifications will adopt a more prominent profile than at present.

⁵ Office of National Statistics, *Key statistics for the rural and urban area classification, 2004*, March 2005 used in *emda, The Rural East Midlands in 2007*, p.5

3 KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

Young People

16. The challenges facing us in 2009/10 are considerable:
- to ensure that 82 per cent of the 16-18 year old population gain a Full Level 2 qualification, and;
 - 54 per cent of 16 to 18 year olds gain a Full Level 3 qualification by 2010, and;
 - 84 per cent of all 17 year olds are participating in education or employment with training.
17. The 16-18 cohort across the region will continue to grow for a further year, but there are regional variations. Nottinghamshire, for example, has already begun to see a decline in its cohort; whereas Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire are experiencing growth.
18. The East Midlands has a participation rate (74 per cent in 2006/07) below the national average for 16 and 17 year olds and this has been the case for the last three years. However, aspects within overall participation have shown improvements:
- Participation volumes in 2007/08 on all LSC funded learning streams and the numbers of enrolments at both Level 2 and 3 in priority sectors in our FE Colleges have increased.
 - The proportion of young people who are NEET (6 per cent) fell below target in 2007/08 and fell below the national rate.
 - Our success in delivering the 2007 September Guarantee⁶ is already showing evidence of being repeated in 2008.
19. Achievement of Level 2 qualifications (GCSE) at 16 has been improving in most sub-regional areas but remains below national average. Achievement is lower in the cities, amongst boys and amongst some ethnic groups. Low achievement of Full Level 2 by the age of 16 impacts on the numbers of young people achieving Full Level 2 and Level 3 by 19. Achievement at 19 has been improving:
- Full Level 2 attainment by the age of 19 is increasing in the East Midlands (71 per cent), but is still below national averages (74 per cent).

⁶ September Guarantee; that all young people completing year 11 are entitled to an offer of a suitable place in learning by the end of September each year. From 2008 the guarantee has been extended to 17 year olds.

- Our Full Level 3 achievement rate by the age of 19 (45 per cent) is below the national average (48 per cent) and the gap between these averages has increased.
20. FE college success rates increased last year from 73 per cent to 76 per cent. Apprenticeship completion rates have also increased and are now on par with the national average. Positive outcomes increased in e2e from 47 per cent in 2006/07 to 50 per cent in 2007/08, which is 2 per cent below the national average.
 21. In 2007/08 we invested a further 8.2 per cent in 2007/08 in learning for young people, to match the rise in participation and cohort growth. With the projected decrease in the size of the cohort, we expect that during 2009/10 any budget increases will be used to drive up the participation rate and concentrate any developments in additional qualifications in English and maths.

Adults

22. Given the currently low levels of qualification in the region, the challenge to improve the skills of adults is a particularly demanding one. By 2010/11, 79 per cent of adults need to be qualified to Level 2 and 56 per cent to Level 3. We need to target more of our investment to help those with no qualifications achieve their first Level 2.
23. Achievement of proficiency in numeracy and literacy skills is a strong predictor of subsequent learning achievement. Ensuring that we promote quality provision for Skills for Life (SfL) is an essential part of supporting achievement at Full Level 2 and beyond. Achievement of Skills for Life numeracy qualifications need to more than double if we are to fulfil the 'Leitch' ambitions. Achieving numeracy targets within Skills for Life will prove extremely challenging as we need to both increase capacity and demand for these courses in the East Midlands.
24. In 2006/07, we recorded a 35 per cent reduction in adult participation. This trend slowed in 2007/08 where we invested £163M (a five per cent increase on 2006/07) in adult learning in the region. Twenty-nine per cent of this was investment in Level 2 qualifications and 18 per cent in Level 3. An analysis of participation trends provides the following messages:
 - Participation in Full Level 2 programmes in FE grew just ahead of national averages.
 - The numbers of adults in Full Level 3 provision grew by 9 per cent in 2006/07 and a further increase is evident in the preliminary data for 2007/08.

- Our provision of Level 3 qualifications is not yet sufficient to meet our regional targets. There is a capacity issue within some of our providers.
 - We need to develop further capacity to increase our delivery of numeracy courses.
25. Overall success rates for adults were at 76.6 per cent in 2006/07:
- Success rates at Level 2 continued their upward trend, improving by 6.8 per cent in 2006/07 following increases from the previous year. This improvement was the best in the country and three times that of the national average increase. The region's success rate (72.3 per cent) is now above the national average.
 - Success rates for adults at Level 3 reflect the same pattern. Our improvement (6 per cent) was the second best in the country and leaves the regional success rate (67 per cent) above the national average.
26. We are committed to aligning our provision with Jobcentre Plus and the Flexible New Deal (for those reaching six months unemployed) to ensure that there exists an appropriate Integrated Employment and Skills (IES) offer to all Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA) claimants and Lone Parents on Income Support (IS).
27. We aim to deliver an IES model where a single provider (where able) can provide for a seamless journey through pre-employment provision into employment. Once an individual is employed, provision can continue to be delivered in the work place (through Train to Gain and/or Apprenticeships). We will align our European Social Fund (ESF) funding to support existing pre-employment and work place oriented activity.
28. Provision development and delivery will be aligned with our partners in the Employment, Skills and Productivity (ESP) partnership and will directly support the six priorities set out for the region within the ESP action plan. Within this alignment it is our intention to put in place a range of local provision based on 'travel to work' and 'travel to learn' accessibility.
29. The NextStep Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) service is being developed to align with and complement our existing strategies and programmes. These include:
- Skills for Jobs
 - City Strategies
 - Local/Multi Area Agreements

- Regional Economic Strategy
 - Regional Statement of Skills Priorities
30. In preparation for the launch of the Adult Advancement and Careers Service (AACCS) in 2010, and to support the IES trials, Nextstep will play a key role in trialling of aspects of the new service, particularly in relation to Skills Accounts and our work with Jobcentre Plus. We will ensure that the service supports our priority groups of potential people and learners, aligning itself with other information and advice services and that the necessary staff capacity and competence is available to launch the full service in 2010.
31. We will continue to support the Joint Investment Framework (JIF - signed between the Strategic Health Authority, the LSC and Skills for Health) by providing match funding over the next financial year to support the education and development of healthcare staff working in Bands 1 - 4. Our focus will be on skills and qualifications at Levels 2 and 3, Apprenticeships and Skills for Life. We will also be working closely with our provider base to ensure provision is tailored and can respond flexibly to training demands.

Employers

32. Our region's employers face the increasing prospect of skills shortages. The recession will alter the dynamics of the regional economy and include the need to re-train workers made redundant in particular sectors as unemployment rises.
33. Participation in Train to Gain at Level 2 in 2007/08 met the regional target. Level 3 participation was below our expectations against the reported employer demand⁷. Skills for Life performance improved significantly as the year progressed, but was below target levels. Brokerage performance exceeded the target, having engaged over 4,500 East Midlands businesses. The proportion of these businesses that were classed as 'Hard-to-Reach' was 86 per cent, above the national average (74 per cent).
34. Train to Gain has already demonstrated its power to increase qualification levels in the region. In 2007/08 13,230 more employed individuals gained a Level 2 qualification through this programme, and 1,280 people without basic skills added to their literacy and numeracy knowledge. The new flexibilities within the Train to Gain programme will ensure that the needs of the region for skills at Level 4 will be enhanced starting in 2008/09 and that in the future, the needs of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) for a range of skills support can be met.

⁷ NESS 2007

35. Level 2 achievements through the Train to Gain programme in 2007/08 met the regional target. Achievement at Level 3 was below what was expected reflecting the slow progress with the Level 3 pilot in the region. Significant progress in Skills for Life participation was made in the latter half of 2007/08, but due to a slow start, achievements within year were below expectations and target.
36. Targets for 2009/10 are even higher than those successfully achieved in 2007/08. In particular, in line with the region's requirement for higher skilled workers, we can expect a 300 per cent increase in the number of employed adults qualified to Level 3.
37. Over a third of the region's Public Sector employers have now signed the Skills Pledge and we will urge all public sector organisations to make the commitment to ensure that their staff have the skills they need to be more effective and efficient in serving the community. We will also continue to encourage more employers overall to make a commitment.
38. Participation in Apprenticeships had been steadily falling in the region up to 2006/07. Through the successful implementation of our regional Apprenticeships strategy and the commitment and hard work by providers and their network, performance in 2007/08 has dramatically improved, with an overall increase of 12 per cent amongst young people and 24 per cent amongst adults. Participation has increased in both Apprenticeship programmes and follows the national picture of resurgent interest in work based learning.
39. Our increase in Apprenticeship programme participation in 2007/08 has been significant and amongst the highest in the country. Successfully building on this progress would enable us to deliver the 'Leitch' ambitions⁸ early.
40. The Raising of the Compulsory Participation Age (ROCPA) and the implementation of the Apprenticeship entitlement will require us to ensure that there is a range of frameworks available for young people within reasonable travelling distance by 2013, which will be a challenge in the current economic climate.
41. The introduction of Apprenticeships for learners aged 25 and over has had a considerable impact on the number of adults taking up the programme,

⁸ The 'Leitch' ambitions are that:

- 95% of adults achieve functional literacy and numeracy by 2020. Total 7.4 million adult attainments
- Over 90% of adults qualified to at least Level 2, with commitment to achieve 95% as soon as possible. Total 5.7 million adult attainments to 2020
- Shift balance of intermediate skills from Level 2 to Level 3; 1.9 million additional Level 3s (4 million total) to 2020 and increase Apprentices to 500,000
- Over 40% of adults qualified to Level 4 and above. Total 5.5 million attainments to 2020.

demonstrating that there is both individual and employer demand in the region. Robust provider management has also made sure that regional performance in recruitment and retention has made significant strides forward.

42. In addition, the region has put in place a National Apprenticeships Vacancy Matching System (NAVMS) project team, to help to raise participation further. The project team will put in place the national system to match employer vacancies with potential apprentices.
43. Overall Framework completion rates⁹ have improved in the region over the last two years and currently stand at 64 per cent with an expectation of further improvement.
44. The National Skills Academy (NSA) network will be a key element of addressing skills shortages in specific sectors and industries. We are funding the provision in the manufacturing NSA in 2008/09: the East Midlands 'spoke' of which is chaired by Rolls-Royce and supported by the University of Derby, Derby College, the LSC, the East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) and a range of regional businesses. The NSA ensures the delivery of globally competitive skills for manufacturing companies. We are also in discussion with key employers from three other sectors to consider the possibility of funding provision for NSAs in food and drink manufacturing, retail and construction

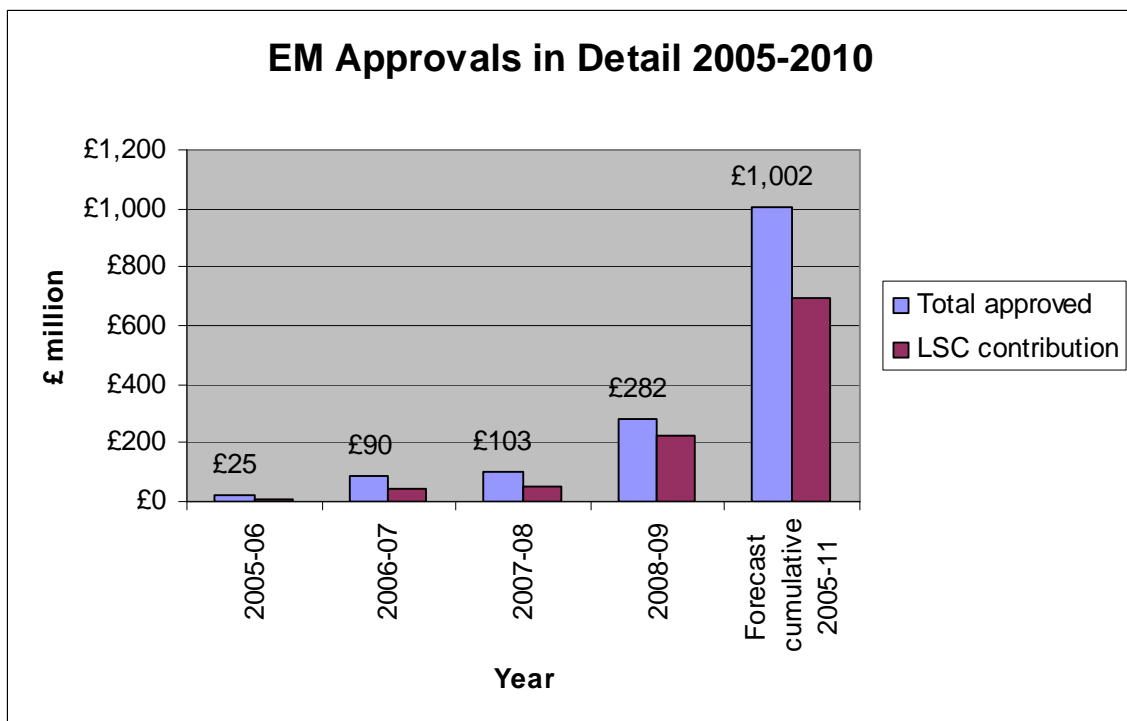
Infrastructure and Capital

45. We want to invest in the capacity of the FE system so that it is continually able to respond to future challenges. Where necessary, we want to encourage a diverse provider base, thus increasing choice and quality and stimulating the delivery of innovative provision. In addition, we want to continue modernising and renewing the FE estate to world class standards.
46. Currently there are a range of projects in stages of preparation across the region. In the light of new flexibilities, the economic downturn and diminishing 16-18 cohorts, we want to work with our providers to ensure that any new projects are developed in line with key standards that take into account these future changing conditions.
47. During 2007/08 the region had £102M of capital projects approved. The LSC contribution to this was £52M (51 per cent). This has provided a

⁹ **Framework completion rates:** Numbers completing a full Apprenticeship (including NVQ, Key Skills, Technical Certificates and other required sector knowledge) against those commencing the learning programme.

number of landmark buildings opening in the region, in Nottingham (Castle College Chilwell campus and the Toyota Academy at Highfields), Leicester (Leicester College Abbey Park campus), Kettering (the Tresham Institute's Windmill Avenue campus) and in Derby (Derby College Joseph Wright Centre).

48. In 2008/09, this more than doubled to £282M. The LSC contribution has also increased to 80 per cent. This includes approving/approving in principle projects in East Northamptonshire, South Wigston and Loughborough in Leicestershire, Mansfield in Nottinghamshire, New College Stamford in Lincolnshire and Wirksworth in Derbyshire.



49. Our future plans will need to take into account three major aspects of policy:

- Prioritising and staging capital projects against available budgets, in order to deliver a sustainable programme of renewal and modernisation of the FE estate.
- Widening participation, particularly for adults, which will require localised provision that will meet the needs of areas with low skills and high unemployment.
- The increasing trend towards specialisation and innovation at Levels 4 and 5 requires the development of high quality facilities,

either in colleges, or in Apprenticeship providers, or on employers' premises, to improve progression from level 3 learning.

50. This will require the establishment of new funds. The Skills Capital Projects Fund and the Regional Skills Capital Development Fund will support more specific activities focussed on engaging private providers and Third Sector organisations in order to ensure that an infrastructure is in place to support our Apprenticeship and Train to Gain skills priorities, so that businesses can access industry-specific facilities for current and future employees. The application process will run over December 2008/January 2009 with final decisions made in June/July 2009.
51. Taking into consideration the policy drivers described previously, it is our intention to develop our capital plans and our future commissioning to focus on the following for the future:
 - National Skills Academy (NSA) provision by strengthening the delivery network, or by developing specialist provision which addresses the needs of the sector.
 - Specialist provision, through networks which create partnerships with others such as schools, HE and employers and support both mainstream provision and the needs of offenders
 - Increased number of Apprenticeship opportunities for young people and adults including that developed on employers' premises
 - Innovative activities delivering knowledge and technology transfer between providers and employers.

Quality

52. We will work with colleges and providers to establish the Framework for Excellence as the mechanism for assessing providers in a simplified and coherent performance management framework that complements inspection and self regulation. The Training Quality Standard creates a means through which those providing training can demonstrate their commitment and capability to deliver provision which meets employer's needs. With twenty one providers currently registered for the Training Quality Standard we seek to encourage our providers and employers to recognise TQS as a quality mark that ensures that a provider will offer training and development solutions that can positively impact on their business needs.
53. Quality and improvement of training provision is now a matter of self-regulation by providers, with intervention by public agencies by exception. In the East Midlands, the LSC has already made important improvements to the quality of provision, both through investment in Further Education (FE) and in closer management of Apprenticeship provision.

54. Minimum Levels of Performance (MLP) were introduced in 2007/08 as a minimum threshold for the performance of programmes and qualifications. For 2009/10 the MLP rates have increased by 5 per cent except for AS and A2, FE short qualifications and Train to Gain provision.

Minimum Levels of Performance	2009/10
FE long qualification Entry and Level 1	60 %
FE long qualification Level 2	60 %
FE long qualification Level 3	60 %
AS and A2 Qualification	75 %
FE long qualification Level 4 or higher	58 %
FE short qualification (all levels)	62%
Apprenticeships (full framework)	50%
Advanced Apprenticeships (full framework)	50%
Train to Gain (transition/development year)	65%

55. MLPs will be used by Ofsted as part of the college and provider performance report. Where a substantial proportion of FE provision is identified as inadequate or underperforming, a 'Notice to Improve' will be issued.
56. We will address mediocre provision using contractual improvement indicators that focus on areas that are already below the MLP and non-contractual improvement indicators where there is a danger of slipping below the MLP. We will continue to promote TQS to our providers as way of measuring employer engagement activity and as an assurance to employers as a quality mark which identifies providers that can deliver tailored business solutions.
57. We will maintain focus on the following priorities:
- Promote and support the sharing of best practice through peer review and development.
 - Support colleges and independent providers to develop their capacity for self-improvement and self-assessment.
 - Increase the proportion of provision that is either good or excellent.
 - Reduce the proportion of provision that is satisfactory but not improving, and will remove inadequate provision.
 - Continue to focus on provision that responds to the needs of employers and encourage the achievement of the Total Quality Standard for Employer Engagement.
 - Promote and support the roll out of Framework for Excellence which assesses the quality performance of FE colleges, Apprenticeship providers and Train to Gain providers.

Learner health, safety and welfare

58. Health and safety is an integral part of quality, implicit in the Framework for Excellence and is essential in order to maximise learners' experience and achievement. All learners have a basic entitlement to a safe, supportive environment in which to undertake learning.
59. We will use our assurance work to increase the number of providers categorised as good or excellent and thus raise standards across all provision. We shall also integrate the requirements of the 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act' 2006 into every aspect of our assurance work with providers.

Inclusion

60. In 2009/10 we will be paying particular attention to our most vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. Within our duty to collaborate on cross cutting PSA targets we will be focussing on the needs of the learners identified within PSA 16. These are learners who:
 - Are under the supervision of probation services
 - Former care leavers
 - Learners with disabilities
 - Are receiving support from secondary Mental Health services.
61. We will be looking to review our programmes particularly Entry to Employment, the new Foundation Learning Tier and appropriate Level 2 provision to ensure our most vulnerable are catered for. To support these special learners, innovative approaches will be required.

Equality and Diversity

62. Increasing the proportion of socially excluded young people and adults in 'employment, education and training' remains a priority. To ensure that this is achieved we will address the disadvantage that individuals experience because of their gender, race, disability, age or sexual orientation. In our region there are key areas of focus within these strands:
 - **Age.** We will support the development of new skills to maintain employability in older workers, as well as enable them to pass on their skills to younger workers through the support of mentoring schemes, particularly in Apprenticeships.
 - **Ethnicity.** We will focus our attention on ensuring that take up of different programmes and sectors is more evenly distributed across the ethnic groups (inclusive of gypsies and travellers) in our region.

- **Carers.** We will ensure flexible learning and employment opportunities are made available to those carers of working age in the region, 36,290 of whom are under the age of 24.¹⁰

63. For 2009/10 we will update our Equality and Diversity action plan and set Equality and diversity impact measures at a regional level across our priority areas of provision with a focus on Mental Health and Skills for Life. We shall work closely with the provider networks to influence impact measuring at a provider level.

Learners with Learning Difficulties and or Disabilities (LLDD)

64. During 2009/10 we will encourage young people to reach their potential by concentrating our investment on promoting improved transition pathways between schools, Further Education colleges and Apprenticeship providers, in order to improve the learning experience for learners with LDD and to improve their curriculum choice. Working effectively with our partners is key to achieving these ambitions, so we will concentrate on increased collaboration with major stakeholders including Connexions, Local Authorities and Health Authorities.

65. To ensure that we provide the pathways for adults to maximise their skills and then move on to employment or sustainable independent living, we will concentrate our investment on improving the learning experience and curriculum choice. We will work with our partners and Jobcentre Plus to further develop supported employment opportunities for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and encourage our providers to develop and share excellence and best practice.

66. We will also respond to the key messages from our strategic analysis and ensure that we provide sufficient mainstream provision in FE to meet the increased demand for learning opportunities from those learners with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Development needs (BESD), profound and multiple learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder and moderate learning difficulties.

¹⁰ DWP: Number of claimants of Carers' Allowance aged under 24, May 2008, from NOMIS

4. COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS FOR 2009/10

Introduction

67. We have already introduced three year contracts and prioritised funding for qualifications identified by Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). In addition we have removed geographic restriction to delivery, artificial caps on growth and streamlined our contracting documentation.
67. The majority of our provision for 2009/10 will be negotiated, including provision identified under the MLP policy. Negotiated commissioning involves us agreeing plans with the colleges and providers that currently deliver LSC-funded provision. Open and Competitive Tendering will be undertaken when there is a need to ensure sufficient matched funding for the ESF delivery or where value can be added to our provision. We will only routinely tender competitively every three to five years.
68. In 2009/10 we will improve our commissioning processes through the development of a qualified provider framework in conjunction with a re-designed tendering process. We will establish a contract management framework, coupled with clearer communication to providers. We will also aim to establish a national contract register and develop new joint commissioning models with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
69. In 2009/10, for the youth programme, we will use our funding model to ensure that available funding is directed towards increased participation and that English and maths qualifications are prioritised where there is any opportunity for growth in programme breadth.
70. We will ensure an enhanced focus on investment in adult developmental learning, by establishing priorities for its use and enabling flexibilities that will assist with pre-level 2 learning to help vulnerable learners with the economic downturn.
71. In each of the following sections we set out our intentions for the commissioning of provision in 2009/10. Provision that is to be tendered for is described in each section.

Young People

72. In 2009/10 we intend to **focus our investment and commissioning activities** on the following priorities:
 - With our Local Authority partners we will **encourage the uptake of Apprenticeships and Diplomas** and ensure that through the

production and implementation of robust and up-to date entitlement policies **each young person has access to at least the minimum entitlement** to education and skills in order to maintain our focus on raising participation and reducing numbers in the NEET group.

- Putting in place a combined strategy between all nine Local Authorities and the LSC to **focus on improving achievement at both 16 and 19 years of age for Levels 2 and 3**. This will ensure that young people are well placed to gain sustained employment as the country emerges from the recession.
- Making **use of our ESF funds to add value to mainstream provision**, and target the additional national funds on supporting young people in areas of multiple deprivation, particularly those classified as NEET and who have multiple barriers to learning.
- **Ensuring that progression pathways are used where practicable to develop more provision below Level 2** and support the NEET group back into learning.
- **Ensuring that the learning opportunities we commission provide progression for young people, not only into and from Level 2 and into Level 3, but beyond into Higher Education** and other National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 4 programmes.
- Continue our work to **improve the outcomes from the delivery of education and training for young people in custody at Foston Hall** and work with Derbyshire County Council to transfer provision to the LA and the YPLA.

73. In order to maintain the region's progress towards the Public Service Agreement (PSA) target of 84 per cent of 16 – 18 year olds in learning by 2010/11, **we will commission a 2 per cent increase in participation over the volumes planned for delivery in 2008/09.**
74. In 2008/09 we purchased 26,600 **Full Level 2** places from our FE, SSF and Apprenticeship providers. **In 2009/10 we anticipate that we will purchase a 2 per cent increase overall, the greater proportion of this being within Apprenticeships.**
75. In 2008/09 we purchased 68,385 **Full Level 3** places from our providers. **In 2009/10 we anticipate that we will purchase a 2 per cent increase overall, the greater proportion of this being within Apprenticeships.**
76. To assist with the **development of the 14-19 curriculum**, the region and its Local Authority partners intend to **commission the following Diploma places** in new curriculum areas to commence in 2009;
 - 4407 places at level one across all subject areas
 - 6092 places at level two across all subject areas
 - 3068 places at level three across all subject areas

77. Our region was one of the top performers in increasing 16-18 **Apprenticeship** participation in 2007/08. We intend to build upon this success to increase our progress towards the Leitch ambitions and plan to **increase participation by 9 per cent in 2009/10 over 2007/08, subject to the change in economic conditions.**
78. In order to continue the **reduction in the NEET group**, the region and its Local Authority partners intend to commission **2396 places in the Key Stage four Engagement Programme.** This represents a 15 per cent increase on 2008/09. In addition we intend to **commission 793 places in the Young Apprenticeship programme,** inclusive of the new Diploma Young Apprenticeship pilot. This represents maintenance of the volumes in 2008/09.
79. The proportion of young people at 16 in the region who do not have English and Maths at Level 2 is higher than the national average. In 2006/07 36,700 young people took **Skills for Life** qualifications, and of these 21,300 achieved. The number of young people achieving literacy qualifications rose by 28 per cent. In numeracy, the number of successful learners rose by 14 per cent. **In 2009/10 we intend to commission sufficient participation to improve achievements by a further 15 per cent in both literacy and numeracy.**
80. Our Local Authorities are ambitious in their plans to deliver targets and increase participation and achievement. **This commissioning statement has taken cognisance of the common priorities of our local 14 to 19 plans and our Local Authority Area Statements of Need.**
81. There are also some priorities which are more specific to our Local Authorities, as follows:
82. The City of **Derby:**
- Improve participation at ages 16 and 17.
 - Continue to prioritise a reduction in the volume of young people categorised as 'in Employment Not in Training' (ENT).
83. **Derbyshire:**
- Improve FE success rates at Level 3 to at least the regional and national averages.
 - Facilitate the merger process between South East Derby College and the University of Derby.
84. The City of **Nottingham:**
- Ensuring appropriate curriculum and progression pathways are developed for all learners supported by appropriate information to enable informed decision making.

- Ensure IAG alerts young people to training which matches job opportunities in the local area early enough to influence choice.
- Ensure employer engagement continues locally to assure sufficient apprenticeship places in line with 'Leitch' growth plans.
- Ensure that the physical and partnership infrastructure supports the priorities in the City 14-19 plan.

85. Nottinghamshire:

- Ensure sufficient training supply in health and social care, retail distribution, business services and education sectors, sales and administration to meet forecast demand and that young people are made aware of these opportunities.
- Future commissioning of training places in sectors such as transport equipment, manufacturing and postal/telecommunications will need to match falling demand and young people will need to be made aware of the changing demand patterns.
- Ensure that up-to-date and impartial IAG is available for all learners.
- Improve employer engagement to ensure that planning, delivery and outcomes of applied qualifications are enhanced.
- Increase the capacity for Diploma delivery during the pilot years to ensure that by 2013 learners will be able to access the full Diploma range.

86. Lincolnshire and Rutland:

- To secure sufficient provision and funding for FE/SSF; Entry to Employment (e2e); and Apprenticeship to meet continued cohort growth of 0.5 per cent (having regard to displacement on existing Lincolnshire and Rutland providers).
- To secure sufficient provision and funding to meet planned growth of 4 per cent in Apprenticeship participation.
- To secure sufficient provision and funding to meet planned growth due to 16-18 capital investment (having regard to any displacement on existing Lincolnshire and Rutland providers and North East Lincolnshire - LSC Humberside):
 - Year 11-13 growth at three new School Sixth Forms (SSF) arising from 'school sixth form presumptions'.
 - Year 11-13 growth at the Wolds College including 'spoke' SSF centres.
- To secure sufficient provision and funding to meet the growth in 16+ Diploma provision in SSF and FE colleges.

87. The City of Leicester.

- Augmenting and developing the Apprenticeship routes, to ensure a match of supply and demand.

- Ensuring an efficient and effective mix of provision at both 16 and 17 to provide young people with appropriate courses to ensure progression.
- Developing sufficient Diploma provision, and balancing the transition from other provision.

88. **Leicestershire.**

- Ensure that programmes of study are funded based on quality IAG, and have agreed progression routes.
- Ensure courses at 17 are sufficient to meet the needs of the cohort, to support increased participation rates.

89. **Northamptonshire.**

- Ensure employer engagement continues locally to assure sufficient apprenticeship places in line with Leitch growth plans.
- Ensure there is sufficient emphasis on transferable skills including literacy, numeracy, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and personal learning and thinking skills to support young people in a changing economy.

90. We shall ensure that the commissioning of available funds responds to the priorities described above as far as their capacity permits.

91. **Tendered provision.** In 2009/10 we intend to tender for the following provision:

- We are considering the implications of tendering all of our e2e provision for 16 – 18 year olds. This is required to ensure there is sufficient match for ESF provision.
- Priority One European Social Fund for 16 – 18 year olds.
- Provision for the Young women’s unit at HMP Foston Hall for a new contract beginning in August 2009.

Adults

92. **In 2009/10 we intend to focus our investment and commissioning activities on the following priorities:**

- **Increasing our IES aligned activity** so that individuals receive tailored skills and employment support to enable them to progress.
- **Developing our Skills Account pilot** to provide support for individual adults to access adult learner responsive provision.

- **Invest increased proportions of our funding in priority provision at Full Level 2 and 3.**
 - **Reviewing our Skills for Life provision to commission the appropriate courses in sufficient quantity to meet our targets** and in particular, subject to available funding, we will look to **increase provision for numeracy tutors**, creating capacity to offer increased numbers of numeracy courses.
 - **Continuing to invest in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision**, but with an expectation that our funding is used to support community cohesion.
 - Continuing our **work with the FE sector in targeting funds so that appropriate proportions are met by employers and individuals as well as the public purse.**
 - **Commissioning jointly with Jobcentre Plus, projects funded by the ESF** to provide innovative ways of both stimulating and meeting the demand for learning from poor and disadvantaged communities, addressing barriers to learning and adding value through programmes such as Skills for Jobs and pre-employment Train to Gain.
93. In order to maintain the region's progress towards the PSA targets of 79 per cent of adults in the region holding a Level 2 qualification and 56 per cent holding a Level 3 qualification by 2010/11, **we will commission a 5 per cent increase in participation over the volumes planned for delivery in 2008/09.**
94. In 2008/09 we purchased 10,424 **Full Level 2** places at a cost of £24.4M from our FE providers. This represented 23 per cent of our Adult Learner Responsive budget. **In 2009/10 we anticipate that we will purchase a 4 per cent increase overall.**
95. In 2008/09 we purchased 8,892 **Full Level 3** places at a cost of £25M from our FE providers. This represented 25 per cent of our Adult Learner Responsive budget. **In 2009/10 we anticipate that we will purchase a 10 per cent increase overall.**
96. We shall continue our focus on the delivery of **Skills for Life** and respond to the new literacy and numeracy targets and priority approved provision. ESOL funding will be maintained at 2008/09 levels with provider delivery more focussed upon support for community cohesion. In 2008/09 we purchased 8,751 places for learners in literacy and 2,774 places for learners in numeracy. **In 2009/10 we are expecting to increase our overall Skills for Life provision by 3%. We need to work with providers to rebalance our Skills for Life commissioning to meet our 'Leitch' aspirations.**

97. In 2008/09 we purchased 31,812 **Foundation Learning Tier (FLT)** places at a cost of £24M from our FE providers. This represented 24 per cent of our Adult Learner Responsive budget. In 2009/10 we anticipate that we will purchase a 1 per cent increase overall.
98. In 2008/09 the region invested £22.3M in **Developmental Learning**, which represented 22 per cent of the Adult Learner Responsive budget. This covered a range of qualifications, including Skills for Life, and support for LLDD. In 2009/10, all Skills for Life funding will be separated from the developmental learning aspect of our provision. Our priority areas of provision for our developmental funding, in order, are:
- Provision for Learners aged 19-24 with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities
 - Learners aged 19 on 16-18 programmes
 - Union learning provision
 - Teacher Training
99. We will commission **Adult Safeguard and First Steps Learning** through our existing provider network, ensuring an appropriate mix and balance of provision across each of the component programme areas in order to:
- Allocate funding to geographical areas against an element of need.
 - Provide learning for personal fulfilment, civic participation and community development/cohesion.
 - Continue with the development of Family Learning programmes (including Family Learning Impact Funding - FLIF) in order to increase overall participation and progression.
100. We will work collaboratively with our partners at the **Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS)** to improve opportunities for offenders and ex-offenders through learning. We will strive to reduce re-offending rates by increasing the skills and qualifications of offenders, improving their employability and helping them to move into work.
101. We will tender **European Social Fund (ESF)** to add value and to enhance existing IES, Skills for Jobs and OLASS provision. We will use ESF not just to increase learner volume but to also provide the support that learners facing multiple barriers to learning need in order to access and progress in learning and into sustainable employment. Key areas for this activity will be to support Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs) and 'pre-employment Train to Gain'.

102. In 2009/10, **we intend to tender** for the following provision:

- Priority One European Social Fund for adults.
- Priority two European Social Fund for adults.
- LSC Offender Learning and Skills Service “in custody” provision for contract start dates in August 2009.

Employers

103. In 2009/10 we intend to **focus our investment and commissioning activities on the following priorities:**

- In the light of the changing economic conditions and by using **the flexibilities within Train to Gain we will provide Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) with the opportunities to access units of accreditation** rather than a full level programme and help **those who face redundancy to improve their skill levels.**
- Via Train to Gain we will support the new integrated Brokerage Service (transferred to Business Link and managed by *emda* from 2009) and work hard at **increasing the demand for skills from employers through our provider network** to the benefit of our businesses and their staff.
- We will **increase our Train to Gain provision at Level 3** and use the capital strategy to work with providers and employers to **address the shortages in capacity at Level 3.**
- Ensuring that the **National Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service is delivered in the region on time** will enhance opportunities for employment for our young people and adults, particularly in the difficult times ahead.
- Use our Public Sector Compacts and the Skills Pledge to **ensure that the number of available Apprenticeships, particularly within the public sector, continue to grow.**
- Make best use of our funding to **increase participation of 16-24 year olds in Apprenticeship programmes**, to meet the ‘Leitch’ ambition of one in five young people starting an Apprenticeship.

104. 2008/09 saw a significant increase in capacity and infrastructure with all FE colleges now delivering **Train to Gain** and 40 new providers joining the delivery network. In 2009/10 we intend to increase our total number of learners by 10 per cent. Of these, we will commission:

- 10 per cent increase at Level 2
- 9 per cent increase at Level 3
- 9 per cent increase in Skills For Life

- 11 per cent decrease in Foundation Learning Tier provision.
105. Our region increased **adult participation in Apprenticeships** by 24 per cent in 2007/08. We intend to build upon this success to increase our progress towards the 'Leitch' ambitions and plan to **increase participation by 18 per cent in 2009/10 over 2007/08, subject to the changing economic conditions.**
106. The targets for the investment of our Employer Responsive funds in 2009/10 remain challenging. There will be a lower volume trajectory at Level 2 within this area of investment, but that at Level 3 will increase. In order to ensure that adults in low skilled jobs can achieve a Level 2 we will continue to fund Foundation Learning Tier provision within Train to Gain for those for whom this is appropriate and we will increase the flexibilities introduced in 2008/09 to give providers more freedom to respond to employer demand.
107. We will focus our funding where appropriate on the region's priority sectors, helping employers in construction, health and social care, high-performance engineering and the public sector.
108. There are also a number of LSC sub-regional priority sectors:
- Tourism/leisure/hospitality (Derbyshire and Leicestershire).
 - Retail (Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire).
 - Food and drink manufacturing (Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire).
 - Land-based industries (Lincolnshire and Rutland).
 - Logistics/distribution (Derbyshire and Northamptonshire).
109. **Skills for Life.** In 2008/09 the region's target for participation in Skills for Life provision funded within our Employer Responsive budget was 7,918 learners. In 2009/10, we intend to commission a 4 per cent increase in this participation.
110. **Tendered provision.** In 2009/10 we intend to tender Priority Two European Social Fund for adults and to prioritise learning provision to support those employees who are facing, or who are at risk of, redundancy.

5. FURTHER READING

Government Investment Strategy 2009–10, LSC Grant Letter and LSC Statement of Priorities

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/aboutus/lscstrategy/statementofpriorities/>

LSC East Midlands (November 2008) *Regional Strategic Analysis 2008/09: Part 1 14-19 Participation and Achievement in the East Midlands*, Leicester: LSC East Midlands.

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/EastMidlands/Regional_Strategic_Analysis_2008-09_-_Part_1_14-19_Participation_and_Achievement_in_the_East_Midlands.pdf

LSC East Midlands (November 2008) *Regional Strategic Analysis 2008/09: Part 2 Adult Skills in the East Midlands*, Leicester: LSC East Midlands.

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LSC East Midlands (November 2008) *Regional Strategic Analysis 2008/09: Part 3 Apprenticeships in the East Midlands*, Leicester: LSC East Midlands.

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/EastMidlands/Regional_Strategic_Analysis_2008-09_-_Part_3_Apprenticeships_in_the_East_Midlands.pdf

East Midlands Development Agency (July 2006) *A Flourishing Region: Regional Economic Strategy for the East Midlands 2006–2020*, Nottingham: East Midlands Regional Development Agency.

www.emda.org.uk/res/docs/RESflourishingFINALA4.pdf.

LSC East Midlands (February 2008) *A Strategy for LSC-funded Adult Learning Provision in the East Midlands*, Leicester: LSC East Midlands.

LSC East Midlands (February 2008) *East Midlands Apprenticeship Strategy and Action Plan*, Leicester: LSC East Midlands.

LSC East Midlands (February 2008) *East Midlands Regional Capital Plan 2007–2012*. Leicester: LSC East Midlands.

LSC East Midlands (January 2008) *East Midlands Regional Quality Strategy 2007/2010*, Leicester: LSC East Midlands.

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/EastMidlands/QI_Strategy_updated-03Dec2007.pdf

LSC East Midlands (March 2007) *East Midlands Strategy for LSC-funded Post-16 Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities*, Leicester: LSC East Midlands.

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/EastMidlands/East_Midlands_Regional_LLDD_Strategy.pdf

LSC East Midlands (November 2008) *Race Equality Scheme and Regional Action Plan 2007–2010*, Leicester: LSC East Midlands.

Children and Young People's plans for our 9 Local Authorities:

Derby City Council

<http://www.derby.gov.uk/HealthSocialCare/integratingchildrenservices/cypp.htm>

Derbyshire County Council

http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/Social_health/services_for_children/childrens_trust/childrens_plan/

Leicester City Council

<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council--services/social-care-health/young-peoplesfamilies/leicester-childrens-trust-arrangements/children-and-young-peoples-plan>

Leicestershire County Council

http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/social_services/children_young_people/ecm/ecm_professional/ecm_cypp_plan.htm

Lincolnshire County Council

<http://microsites.lincolnshire.gov.uk/children/section.asp?docId=38738&catId=7784&pageTitle=Children+%26+Young+People's+Plan>

Northamptonshire County Council

http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Learning/E-Key+Documents/key_home.htm

Nottingham City Council

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ics-home/ics-cypp.htm>

Nottinghamshire County Council

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeoplesplan.htm>

Rutland County Council

<http://www.rutland.gov.uk/pp/gold/viewgold.asp?id=4551>

Government documents:

DCSF (2007) *Raising Expectations: Staying in education and training post-16*, London: TSO. <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/raisingexpectations/index.shtml>

DCSF (2006) *Raising Expectations: Enabling the system to deliver*, London: TSO. <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/raisingexpectationswhitepaper/>

DIUS (July 2007) *World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England*, London: TSO. <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/skillsstrategy/uploads/documents/World%20Class%20Skills%20FINAL.pdf>

6. GLOSSARY

Level 1: equates to GCSEs at grades D to G

Level 2: equates to five GCSEs at grades A* to C

Level 3: equates to 2 A-level passes or equivalent

Level 4: Foundation Degree-level learning

Level 5: Degree-level learning

Progression pathways: a high-quality, coherent curriculum offer for entry and level 1 learning

Third sector: the voluntary and community sector

7. LIST OF ACRONYMS

AACS	Adult Advancement and Careers Service
BESD	Behavioural, Emotional and Social Development needs
COVEs	Centres of Vocational Excellence
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DIUS	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
e2e	Entry to Employment programme
EDIMs	Equality and diversity impact measures
<i>emda</i>	East Midlands Development Agency
EMHSSA	East Midlands Health Sector Strategic Alliance
ENT	In employment not in training
ESA	Employment Support Allowance
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FE	Further Education
FLIF	Family Learning Impact Funding
FLT	Foundation Learning Tier
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
IAG	Information Advice and Guidance
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IES	Integrated Employment and Skills
IS	Income Support
ITT	Invitation to Tender
JIF	Joint Investment Framework

JSA	Job Seekers Allowance
KS4	Key Stage 4
LAs	Local Authorities
LEPs	Local Employer Partnerships
LLDD	Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MCV	Maximum Contract Value
MLP	Minimum Levels of Performance
NAVMS	National Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service
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 Services
PCDL	Personal and Community Development Learning
PLA	Programme-Led Apprenticeship
PSA	Public Service Agreement
QCF	Qualifications and Credit Framework
ROCPA	Raising of the Compulsory Participation Age
SfL	Skills for Life
SLN	Standard Learner Number
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SSC	Sector Skills Council
SSF	School Sixth Forms
TtG	Train to Gain
WBL	Work Based Learning
YPLA	Young People's Learning Agency

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