

STRAND 1: RAISING ATTAINMENT NOW

Getting young people to stay in learning now, getting them on the right courses, keeping them there, getting them to achieve.

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Widening the 14-16 curriculum offer

The 14-16 has been the subject of considerable curriculum activity to tailor learning to the needs of all learners. The programmes listed below represent specific interventions and should be seen alongside the major work on new and modified qualifications which are addressed in Strand 2. Taken together these various initiatives will contribute to a more coherent 14-19 phase.

1.0 Increasing Flexibility Programme (IFP)

From the **evaluation research** undertaken by National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) published in 2006:

The Increased Flexibility Programme for 14 to 16 year olds (IFP) was introduced in 2002. The aim of the programme was to 'create enhanced vocational and work-related learning opportunities for 14 to 16 year olds of all abilities who can benefit most' – this included supporting provision of the GCSEs in vocational subjects. The first cohort of Year 10 students

embarked on their programme in 2002 and this was followed by a second cohort in 2003 and subsequent cohorts in the following years.

The IFP was the first national programme which formalised partnership working between post-16 and pre-16 education providers to deliver a broader curriculum for young people at key stage 4. Since its inception, the programme has expanded in the context of a continuing focus on improving the curriculum and qualification routes for 14 to 16 year olds and integrating these into a 14-19 framework. Through the IFP, partnerships between colleges and training providers and around 2000 schools have been established along the lines set out in the 14-19 Implementation Plan, and these have continued to develop and mature since the second cohort embarked on their programme¹.

IFP stopped as a discrete programme from September 2007, although learners on two year programmes will be allowed to complete as planned in 2008. The wealth of experience gained will be carried forward into the wider 14-19 reforms.

2.0 Key Stage 4 practical learning opportunities

Schools receive additional funding for practical learning at Key Stage 4 through the Dedicated Schools Grant, but it is not ring-fenced. From the [summary guidance](#) for 07-08:

This funding is not ring fenced but it is our intention that it should enable secondary schools to secure a broader range of practical and specialist provision at Key Stage 4. We expect each area to align its use of DSG funding with other resources available for implementation of 14-19 change and to be conscious of the need to prepare for the introduction of Diplomas from 2008 and the new national entitlement from 2013.

The DSG resource is intended to support additional provision. Collective decision making will become increasingly important in the run up to Diploma delivery to prevent fragmented delivery and assure quality. ²

Local Schools Forums will decide on the mechanism for the distribution of this money. In a minority of local authorities, agreement has been reached that this funding should be pooled and delegated to the Local 14-19 Planning/Partnership Groups to purchase practical learning opportunities for 14-16 year olds.

3.0 [Key Stage 4 Schools Engagement Programme](#)³

¹ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR786.pdf>

² <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/documents/14-16fundingDSGguidance07-08summary.doc>

³ http://www.qca.org.uk/14-19/11-16-schools/downloads/14-16_EP_AS DAN.pdf

The 14-16 Engagement Programme is a personalised programme for those Key Stage 4 learners most at risk of disengagement. It has been developed in response to recommendations in the 14 – 19 Education and Skills White Paper (February 2005) that there should be a motivating and engaging alternative route for 14 to 16 year olds, comparable to the Entry to Employment (E2E) route for 16 to 19 year olds.

The White Paper stated that a strongly work-focused programme would be developed with an underlying commitment ‘to ensure that young people will be supported in developing the general skills, attitudes and behaviours so important to employment, progression and learning.’

The programme will:

- have a significant work focus of up to two days per week
- offer intensive advice and support for participants
- encourage learners to develop general skills, attitudes, and behaviours
- be tailored to the needs of the individual participant.

Participants will also continue to follow the Key Stage 4 statutory curriculum. The development of new Entry and Level 1 qualifications will support the programme by providing new opportunities for learners to gain accreditation where appropriate. The use of credit-based units and qualifications, allowing recognition of small steps of achievement should suit learners on the engagement programme.

An evaluation of the programme started in January 2007 and will be completed by July 2008.

The Schools Engagement Programme has been running in Essex, Thurrock, Southend and Norfolk during 2006-07, and has been extended to Peterborough and Luton for 2007/08.

4.0 Work related learning

Successive governments have introduced measures to reduce the gap between the world of employment and schools. These include:

- Work-related curriculum initiatives
- Employer/school partnerships, such as Education Business Partnerships (EBP)
- Specialist schools
- Academies

Currently, there are about 100 EBPs supporting 200,000 employers.

'Building on the Best' – the 14-19 Work-related learning review (2007)⁴

The report of this review starts by pointing out that work related learning has been a statutory part of the Key Stage 4 school curriculum since 2004. Work related activities have included enterprise projects, case studies and simulations, taster workshops, mentoring, mock interviews, work experience and work shadowing, and visits to places of work. Every year, 14-16 year olds are involved in 550,000 work experience placements.

Supporting the relationship between education and the workplace is a network that includes Education Business Partnerships and other Education Business Link Organisations (e.g. **Trident**⁵), schools, colleges and independent learning providers.

Work-related learning is reported as having a 'strong positive impact on learners' attitudes, motivation and levels of achievement'. The introduction of the Diploma will increase the demand for both the number and the type of work experience placements.

The report sets out a number of priorities:

- Prepare a new vision and fresh guidance
- Develop a new approach to funding through 14-19 partnerships
- Build capacity and capability through the wider 14-19 workforce development
- Introduce new quality standards for work experience and intermediary organisations
- Improve how impact is assessed

The report includes an action plan.

DCSF will continue to route Education Business Link (EBL) funding via LSC in 2008-09 as a transitional measure to avoid disruption as they seek to build Work Related Learning (WRL) capacity in time for Diploma introduction in 2008. Planning and

⁴ http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/documents/14-19workrelatedlearning_web.pdf

⁵ <http://www.trident-edexcel.co.uk/>

commissioning of WRL will be undertaken in consultation with 14-19 partnerships. In the longer term, it is expected that funding will flow through local authorities.

5.0 Progression Pathways

Progression Pathways will be built from a menu of Entry Level and Level 1 qualifications within the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and are an integral component of the Foundation Learning Tier. A full set of progression pathways will be in place within the Foundation Learning Tier by 2010. Each Progression Pathway will include three distinct components:

- vocational knowledge, skills and understanding
- Functional Skills
- personal and social development

These components will be supported by effective initial assessment, information, advice and guidance, comprehensive ongoing review, and provider collaboration. Progression Pathways are specifically designed to promote progression as well as helping learners to achieve formal qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1. Phased implementation of Progression Pathways will begin from 2007/08 with a small set of priority **Progression Pathways**⁶:

- progression to Level 2, so that a learner is ready to access a full Level 2 qualification on completing the pathway
- progression to apprenticeship (pre-apprenticeship), so that a learner is ready to access apprenticeships
- progression for 14-19 year olds from Entry Level so that a learner is ready to access a Level 1 Diplomas, GCSEs or other further study
- progression to independent living and, where appropriate, the provision of a platform for employability or supported employment. (Targeted at learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and age-appropriate for both 16 to 18 year olds and 19 to 25 year old learners.)

The first Progression Pathways will be delivered In 2008/09, with expansion due in 2009/10. LSC has published a **draft Prospectus**⁷.

6.0 **Apprenticeship Online**⁸

Apprenticeship Online is an internet based service that offers the following features;

- It provides a range of information about Apprenticeships for young people and employers.

⁶ <http://qfr.lsc.gov.uk/flt/vpp/>

⁷ <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-prospectusprogressionpathways-dec07.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.apprenticeshipsonline.org/>

- It will enable employers to promote specific vacancies to Apprentices.
- It enables young people to search for and apply for vacancies.
- It enables young people to submit an expression of interest form to the Apprenticeships Team if there are no current vacancies to interest them. This will result in updates and alerts to these young people as opportunities arise.
- It enables the Apprenticeships Team to monitor the progress of all applications.
- It supports training providers to manage the recruitment process within pre-set time frames.

7.0 Level 4 in sixth forms⁹

The 2005 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper raised the issue of how to ensure that the curriculum challenges sufficiently able students.

Using HE units for 16- to 19-year-olds in schools and colleges is seen as a means of achieving this. For these purposes, HE units or modules are defined as being:

- produced and assessed by an HE provider (university, university college or approved further education (FE) college)
- normally above Level 3 (advanced level) of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Legislation has been passed to enable schools to offer these units, and to allow the use of Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funding for the purpose. Sixth form and FE colleges already had this flexibility.

In addition, the 2005 Nuffield Review of 14-19 education found that HE staff regard many students as lacking some of the skills needed for HE study. These skills include adequate communication and mathematical competence as well higher-level skills such as independent learning, research, note taking and essay and report writing.

The Open University's (OU) Young Applicants in Schools Scheme (YASS) enables young people to take selected units of various lengths and in a range of subjects, including mathematics, technology, science and languages. They can take them at various times in the academic year. Numbers have grown from around 10 students in 1996 to 2000 students in 2006 and further growth is anticipated. The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) supports the scheme.

In 2006, QCA commissioned detailed research into how Level 4 is used in schools¹⁰. Survey questions were not restricted to the use of HE units but required details of any HE-style experience that students had access to. The picture that emerged indicated widespread use of a range of HE-linked activities, but little use of specific HE units.

⁹ http://www.qca.org.uk/14-19/6th-form-schools/68_2465.htm

¹⁰ http://www.qca.org.uk/14-19/6th-form-schools/68_2464.htm

The 2005 survey asked respondents for their views on whether taking HE modules would enhance the progression of able students. Just under half agreed; around 40 per cent were neutral on the issue, while 11 per cent disagreed. When asked if they agreed that there was time in the curriculum for a substantial number of students to do this, nearly three-quarters disagreed, with fewer than 10 per cent agreeing. This suggests that, unless the units replace an existing aspect of the curriculum, they will continue to be pursued by a small minority of committed students.

8.0 Progression to Higher Education/AimHigher

Aimhigher is a programme run by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) with support from the Department for Innovation, Universities & Skills (DIUS). In October 2007, Higher Education Minister, Bill Rammell, confirmed that Aimhigher would continue to receive funding allowing its work to continue to 2011.

Originally launched in September 2001, Aimhigher aims to widen participation in higher education (HE) by raising the awareness, ambitions and attainment of young people from under-represented groups. The programme works in close partnership with schools, colleges and universities to break down the barriers of disadvantage that can prevent young people from non-traditional backgrounds from progressing to higher education.

The role of Aimhigher is to:

- Raise aspirations and motivation to enter HE among young people from under-represented groups, in line with the Government's target that by the year 2010, 50% of those aged between 18 and 30 should have the opportunity to benefit from HE
- Raise attainment of potential students from under-represented groups so that they gain the academic or vocational qualifications that will enable them to enter HE
- Raise awareness and understanding of the different progression routes into HE via vocational courses – so that prospective students understand that A-levels are not the only option
- Offer information, advice and guidance to potential students and their teachers and families

In *Guidance for Aimhigher partnerships: Updated for the 2008-2011 programme*¹¹, stronger emphasis is placed on targeting:

¹¹ [http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk/sites/practitioner/resources/Aimhigher%20guidance%20\(web%20version\).doc](http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk/sites/practitioner/resources/Aimhigher%20guidance%20(web%20version).doc)

The target group was clearly identified as young people from lower socio-economic groups and those from disadvantaged backgrounds who live in areas of relative deprivation where participation in higher education is low.

9.0 Connexions/IAG Standards

The Connexions service was launched in 2000 to provide young people with information and advice on learning and careers, as well as targeted outreach and guidance for those with more complicated needs. Currently, there 47 Connexions partnerships in England have been responsible for a 14% reduction of young people not in education, employment or training.

However, the Connexions service has now been subsumed into an integrated youth support service, under local authority control. Although the aim is for councils to become the main planning and commissioning body for youth services, they should not automatically commission themselves. The problem is that in many cases, the Connexions service covers several council areas, and the tendency might be for local authorities to do their own thing. The situation is more straightforward where the Connexions service covers the same area as the local authority, as is the case in Hertfordshire.

In October 2007, DCSF published *Quality Standards for Young People's Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)*¹², together with a *User Guide*¹³. Support for IAG professionals is available through a *dedicated website* developed for the DCSF.¹⁴ The new IAG quality standards will be Government's only lever to protect current provision, and it has included provision in its new education and skills Bill to cover these standards. Whether this will be sufficient to safeguard impartiality remains to be seen.

As from April 1 2008, Connexions funding ceases to be ring-fenced with the risk of cuts by councils wishing to cut budgets. An *article in the Guardian of 11 October 2007*, concerning threats to raise council tax by more than 5%, fans these flames:

Ms Blears said the claims were nonsense as from April councils would be able to spend as they want money from 29 ring-fenced budgets such as the £467m for Connexions services for young people, and £535m for the neighbourhood renewal fund.¹⁵

¹² http://www.cegnet.co.uk/files/CEGNET0001/ManagingCEG/QualityStandardsforIAG/quality_standards_young_people.pdf

¹³ <http://www.iagworkforce.co.uk/files/IAGXXX0001/HOME%20Page/4743-1%20Young%20People%20IAG%20User%20Guide.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://www.iagworkforce.co.uk/site/iag/home>

¹⁵ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2007/oct/11/counciltax.localgovernment>

10.0 Integrated Youth Support System

11.0 Targeted Youth Support¹⁶.

The Youth Matters green paper (2005) sets out a vision of integrated youth support services helping all young people achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes through the coherent, young person-centred delivery of information, advice and guidance, support, development opportunities and positive activities.

Targeted youth support is central to this - it is integrated delivery in action for vulnerable teenagers. It aims to ensure that the needs of vulnerable teenagers are identified early and met by agencies working together effectively, in ways that are shaped by the views and experiences of young people themselves

12.0 Area 14-19 Prospectus¹⁷

The 14-19 Area Prospectuses enable a complete picture of local learning opportunities available to a young person. Local partnerships have developed their online prospectuses, and these are now accessible via the National Portal¹⁸. By 2010, Area prospectuses will be linked to a Common Application Process (see Strand 3), and an Individual Learning Plan.

13.0 Individual Learning Plans (ILP)¹⁹

Individual learning plans are a progression tool. They come in various formats, including electronic, and:

- record young people's plans, progress, experiences and achievements by age 14 and continuously thereafter
- identify personal choices – including entitlement subjects, work-related options, enrichment activities and ideas for work experience
- establish broad learning and career goals for the 14-19 phase and support the continuous monitoring and review of progress towards them throughout the phase
- support smooth transitions by facilitating effective data and information sharing 14-19.

Most 14-19 Pathfinders used individual learning plans as an integral part of IAG activities to encourage and help young people take ownership of their learning journeys and personal progress. Evidence suggests that such plans have a key role to play in helping to support the implementation of the 14-19 reforms.

¹⁶ <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00206/>

¹⁷ <http://www.children.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=27&pid=259&ctype=TEXT&ptype=Single>

¹⁸ <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=41&pid=331&ctype=None&ptype=Contents>

¹⁹ <http://www.iagworkforce.co.uk/content/default.asp?PageId=105>

14.0 National NEET Strategy and Action Plan²⁰

Confronting the problems of young people who are not benefiting from either education or a job requires more than just getting the systems right. It means managers and practitioners having the imagination to see the individual behind the statistics, understand just who the customer is, and then take personal responsibility. These qualities are not always seen in great profusion in traditional public sector bureaucracies. To quote Andrew (now Lord) Mawson:

'All the people in the room were incredibly well meaning. But, somewhere along the way, they had lost touch with the realities of the lives of the people with whom they were dealing.' ([The Society Guardian, 9 January 2008](http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/jan/09/socialenterprises.regeneration))²¹.

So, local systems for reducing the NEET numbers should be measured against how far they meet these requirements. Where young people are being helped to get off the NEET statistics, we see these qualities at work.

The new National NEET Strategy sets out the government's efforts to get local partners to co-ordinate their work better, and has ensured that NEET features in all the critical local processes, such as Local Area Agreements, Annual Performance Assessments, and 14-19 Progress Checks. Local targets are in place in all areas, monitored through data from the Client Caseload Information System (CCIS).

The Strategy is based on the core elements of :

- Tracking
- Support
- Provision

The Strategy highlights the success of the Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes which provide work-based learning for those young people not yet ready to enter an apprenticeship, employment, or other further education opportunities. From 2010 The elements of E2E will 'sit within' the forthcoming Foundation Learning Tier (FLT). The FLT will offer learning below Level 2 and will include:

²⁰ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/documents/NEET%20%20Strategy.pdf>

²¹ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/jan/09/socialenterprises.regeneration>

- skills for life and work (including functional skills)
- vocational and subject-based learning
- personal and social development

Financial incentives are also an important component of government policy:

- The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is already in place. Enhancements to EMA for E2E will be made, and pilots used to extend to more courses.
- Care to Learn (C2L) supports young parents through financial help with the cost of childcare and associated transport.
- Activity Agreements are being piloted which will give 16 and 17 year olds who are long term NEET an allowance for 20 weeks if they comply with a personalised action plan agreed with a Personal Adviser.

For the most vulnerable young people and families, the targeted youth support service is available.

Further changes will ensure that, by 2009, young people who have been NEET for at least 26 weeks by the time they reach their 18th birthday will be mandatorily 'fast-tracked to the intensive support and sanctions regime of the New Deal'.

15.0 NEET Toolkit

In March 2007, the DfES produced a revised 'Aligning Provision Toolkit' (version 2) to promote collaborative working in **addressing NEET**²².

16.0 **September Guarantee**²³

The September Guarantee is an offer, by the end of September, of a place in learning to all young people completing compulsory education. The guarantee was implemented nationally in 2007. The guarantee is being extended to 17 year olds in 2008 to give those who enrol on one year or short courses, or who leave the activity they chose when leaving school, further opportunities to engage in learning. The 2008 Guidance can be found here²⁴.

The September Guarantee is currently being reviewed across the LSC East of England.

²² <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/localauthorities/index.cfm?action=content&contentID=8363>

²³ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=42&pid=347&ctype=TEXT&ptype=Single>

²⁴ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/documents/2008%20September%20Guarantee%20Guidance%20for%20local%20authorities%20and%20delivery%20partners.doc>

17.0 Entry to Employment (E2E)

The E2E programme began in England in August 2003. It is an entry to a level 1 work-based programme for young people aged 16 to 18 not yet ready or able to enter an Apprenticeship, sustained employment or further vocational learning opportunities.

It is designed to help learners enhance their motivation and confidence, personal effectiveness and basic and key skills, and give them opportunities to gain vocational knowledge, skills and understanding. The aim is that they will progress into an Apprenticeship, further learning and/or a job. There is no set time limit for E2E; courses are usually between 16-30 hours per week. **European Social Fund (ESF)**²⁵ money is used to boost NEET-prevention activity in this area of the curriculum.

The young people undertake learning in basic and key skills, vocational development, and personal and social development. They study in a range of settings and according to their preferred learning styles and interests, including classrooms, one-to-one coaching, group activities and discussions, work placements and experience, external visits, and volunteering. A range of qualifications is available, but the programme is not qualification-driven.

All E2E learners starting a programme of study on or after 30th of June 2008 will receive the maximum £30 weekly EMA payment, regardless of their household income. It will ensure that **financial support**²⁶ is not a barrier to young people wishing to enter training. The extension will be available to learners aged 16 to 18 who enrol on LSC funded E2E programmes. Learners who progress from E2E onto other programmes will be reassessed for EMA according to their Household Income; they will not automatically carry the £30 eligibility onto other programmes such as FE or WBL.

18.0 **Young Parents and 'Care to Learn'** (C2L)²⁷

The aim of Care to Learn is to give financial support to teenage parents (including dads) who want to continue their education or training and need help with the cost of their childcare. Manchester City Council (MCC) is the national delivery agent for C2L

²⁵ http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/EastofEngland/EE_Specification_Youth.pdf

²⁶ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=42&pid=357&ctype=TEXT&ptype=Single>

²⁷ <http://caretolearn.lsc.gov.uk/>

It is vital to engage young parents and young parents-to-be in lifelong learning and to develop their confidence and self-esteem, and raise expectations for themselves and for their children. Courses²⁸ can provide a non-judgmental environment that nurture young people's self esteem as well as serve a useful purpose to encourage them to meet with others.

In November 2007, the Institute of Employment Studies published a suite of evaluation studies²⁹ providing helpful background to this particular issue.

The *Teenage Parents: Next Steps (2007)*³⁰ is a refreshed strategy, presented in the form of guidance for local authorities and primary health care trusts. It deals with the learning needs in an holistic manner.

19.0 Activity and Learning Agreement Pilots

The Activity and Learning Agreements Pilots were launched in 12 areas of England in April 2006.

Activity Agreements are designed for young people (aged 16-17) not in employment, education or training (NEET) and operate in eight of the 12 areas. Young people have to be NEET for 20 weeks to be eligible. They receive an allowance (three variants of which are being tested in different pilot areas) and in return receive continuous support and agree to take part in flexible packages of learning designed to help them progress towards an employment or education and training outcome. They are designed to meet individual needs and are not outcome-driven in terms of qualification attainment.

Learning Agreements are aimed at 16-17 year olds in jobs without training (JWT) and also operate in eight of the 12 pilots areas (i.e. both pilots operate in four areas and they each operate separately in four others). Under a Learning Agreement, young people take part in agreed activities, which must include undertaking a designated course. If successful, young people may receive a monetary bonus (in two areas their employers receive wage compensation).

²⁸ <http://www.basic-skills.co.uk/content/documents/?FileID=1873680638>

²⁹ <http://caretolearn.lsc.gov.uk/evaluation/>

³⁰ <http://www.gos.gov.uk/497666/docs/434065/174092/459387/572369>

These agreements are a personal contract between 16 and 17 year olds and their respective personal advisor. The learning may be funded through WBL or FE main stream funding or through discretionary funding. The pilots are taking place in the following areas: Greater Manchester, Greater Merseyside, Lancashire, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Central London, East London, Kent & Medway, The Black Country, Cornwall and Devon, Tyne & Wear, and Essex, Southend and Thurrock.

The Key Findings of the **Evaluation of the first year**³¹ are as follows:

- The Activity and Learning Agreement pilots (AAP) are generally functioning well.
- Project managers played a crucial role in the management and local implementation of both initiatives.

- Young people are flowing onto the programmes, although take-up rates were significantly lower than anticipated, particularly on the Learning Agreement pilots (LAP).

20.0 ESF Support

The **2007-2013 Youth Specification Programme for the East of England**³² sets out project specifications seeking tenders to provide a package of intervention activities and programmes for those aged:

- 13-16 (i.e. 13-14 and 14-16) who are already or are at risk of becoming disengaged from education and training
- 16-19 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or who are at risk of becoming NEET

..... with the aim of moving these young people out of the NEET category and on to an appropriate destination of further education, training or employment.

21.0 **Financial help/EMA**³³

There is a range of **financial help**³⁴ available for disadvantaged young people, including:

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

Designed for young people from low income families, EMA offers financial support to 16 or 17 year olds, provided they sign and stick to an EMA contract with their school or college.

³¹ <http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/summary/summary.php?id=rw027>

³² http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/EastofEngland/EE_Specification_Youth.pdf

³³ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=42&pid=357&ctype=TEXT&ptype=Single>

³⁴ <http://www.connexions-direct.com/parentcarer/year10/financialHelp/>

Payments can rise to £30 per week with bonus payments for learners who achieve personal learning goals.

Activity agreement pilots

Activity Agreements target young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) offering them a weekly payment to commit to a plan of activity designed to reintegrate them into learning. 12 pilots began in April 2006 for two years.

Learning Agreement pilots

These are directed at young people who are in jobs with no accredited learning. Three types of financial incentives and brokerage are being tested, e.g. compensating employers for their employees' study time, completion bonuses shared between employee and employer..

12 pilots began in April 2006 for two years.

Care to Learn

Care to Learn (C2L) provides financial support for teenage parents (under 20 at the start of the learning programme) who want to continue in, or return to learning. It helps with the cost of their childcare and travel. Care to Learn will pay up to £160 per child each week from August 2007 - July 2008 for registered childcare and additional travel costs.

Hardship Funds³⁵

Discretionary funds administered by colleges and local authorities to help students in need with ad hoc support, e.g. books or transport.

Transport Partnership Funds

Local Transport Partnerships led by local authorities can use this pot to help with the costs of planning transport and support for travel costs for 16-19 year olds.

Residential Bursaries

Help for students to attend specialist courses not available at local colleges, e.g. agriculture. LSC are piloting a scheme to broaden scope of this Bursary.

Dance and Drama Awards

Scholarships for talented young people to enable them to attend high quality dance or drama training.

³⁵ <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-discretionary-lsc-guidance-0708.pdf>

22.0 Additional Learning Support (ALS)

Additional learning support (ALS) is any activity that provides direct support for learning to individual learners, over and above that which is normally provided in a standard learning programme that leads to their learning goal. ALS is required to help learners gain access to, progress towards and successfully achieve their learning goals. The need for additional learning support may arise from a learning difficulty and/or disability, or from literacy, numeracy or language support requirements.

ALS has been reviewed and there will be a new approach to funding additional learning support (ALS) across the further education (FE) sector. ALS forms part of the funding formula and has two levels, low cost and high cost. The changes will be implemented in two phases – in 2008/09 and then in 2009/10. The following extract from *The 16-18, Adult Learner and Employer-Responsive Funding Models*³⁶ (November 2007) provides some of the detail:

Additional learning support is divided into ALS for lower-level support needs and ALS for higher-level support needs – learner needs requiring lower cost support (up to £5,500) will, for providers other than schools, be partially (60 per cent in 2008/09 and 75 per cent thereafter) allocated using the formulas described in the Technical Annex for all young people; this is based on the learners' GCSE English and maths points profile from the previous year's cohort. The remaining allocation (40 per cent and 25 per cent) will be based on negotiation, taking account of historical allocations and anticipated needs. The principles for negotiating this element are given at paragraph 196 onwards.

This method is readily applicable to all provider types. For example, applying this correlation to data from sixth form colleges implies that around 2 per cent of current sixth form funding is spent on ALS, and therefore we will transfer approximately 2 per cent of the school sixth form budget to ALS and allocate it back to school sixth forms using the formula. However, so that the minimum funding floor is maintained for schools, 100 per cent of ALS will be based on the formula and be included in transitional protection. For FE provision, the existing ALS budget will be redistributed based on the formula. For Apprenticeships, the existing 2007/08 ALS arrangements will continue to apply.

³⁶ <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-16-18-adult-learner-and-employer-responsive-funding-models.pdf>

Learners on progression pathways will generally attract ALS using this formula. Therefore there is no additional funding for learners on progression pathways, other than programme funding and ALS.

Higher-level support will, for 2008/09, continue to operate as it has for 2007/08, with claims of between £5,500 and £19,000 being accommodated within allocations, and claims of over £19,000 being considered on an individual basis (see further details in the Technical Annex and the crosscutting themes section).