

Thousands more Londoners are getting the skills they need to succeed

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The number of young people and adults in London that are staying on in education or learning new skills has increased dramatically according to new figures revealed by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

There are more young Londoners than ever before staying on in Further Education with approximately 100,000 currently taking courses to improve their skills. Plus, figures reveal that a higher percentage of those completing Further Education courses are gaining qualifications, with success rates increasing to 73 per cent last year (3 per cent higher than the previous year). The number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) has decreased by 2.1 per cent, to 7 per cent, and is now below the national average.

In line with the Prime Minister's ambition to increase the number of Apprenticeships in England to 500,000 by 2020, the number of young people successfully completing an Apprenticeship Framework has risen by 9 per cent, to 50 per cent. This is excellent news for employers, meaning that there are more skilled apprentices in key sectors such as business administration and construction.

Adults have also performed well, with a third more undertaking a Level 2 qualification (equivalent to 5 GCSEs A-C), giving them the skills they need to find work. FE success rates for adults were also up, at 78 per cent (a 4 per cent increase). There was also a massive 22 per cent increase in the number of adults taking vital numeracy and literacy (target bearing) Skills for Life courses.

The LSC in London is beating every target set for it by Government with more Londoners than ever before improving their skills and job prospects.

David Hughes, LSC Regional Director in London said:

“I am delighted with the figures, they show that more young people are engaging in learning than ever before. It is vital that every young person entering the workforce is equipped with the skills they need to fulfil their potential in work and life. This is why the LSC is targeting vulnerable socially excluded learners and we are particularly pleased that for the first time the number of young people not in employment, education or training in London has dropped below the national average.

“We are also very pleased with the increase in the number of adults gaining qualifications. London suffers from a high level of worklessness and the LSC in London is targeting disadvantaged individuals through an innovative programme of Employability Pilots, as well as various programmes to ensure people have the necessary skills to take advantage of the 2012 Games and other regeneration projects.

“As part of our service to employers, the introduction of Train to Gain in April 2006 has continued to drive up skills in the workplace and by July 2007 approximately 20 990 learners and 7,060 employers in London had engaged with the programme, 74 per cent of which were hard-to-reach (had not engaged in training during the previous 12 months). These figures support the Government’s decision to invest £1 billion in the service by 2010/11. The recently announced Train to Gain Plan for Growth will expand the service and allow for greater flexibility, giving more people the chance to improve their employability skills.”

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

This press release applies to London only.

Figures refer to the 2006/07 academic year unless indicated.

Within FE, there has been a 9.8 per cent increase in the number of young people participating on full Level 2 programmes (19,630 learners) and a 4.7 per cent increase in the number of young people participating in full level 3 programmes (30,691 learners).

NVQ Level 2 is equivalent to 5 GCSEs at A-C; NVQ Level 3 is equivalent to 2 A-levels.

Learning and Skills Council (LSC)

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. It is responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. It has a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Its vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. It works nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

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