

## **Views needed on plans for learners with learning difficulties and / or disabilities**

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### **The organisation making England better skilled and more competitive is consulting on a new strategy for learning for Londoners with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities.**

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) launched a consultation on the draft strategy, 'Learning for Living and Working in London' at City Hall on Thursday 21 June.

The draft contains policies on providing learning opportunities for people with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, who, according to research, make up one fifth of the working-age UK population.

The LSC and its strategic partners are seeking the views of individuals, parents, disability groups, carers, training providers, public sector bodies and others before the end of July.

They will use the responses to ensure London plays its part in making England an international exemplar of post-16 training and education for people with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities by 2015.

In an appeal to potential respondents, LSC London Regional director, David Hughes said:

"We want your ideas for improvement, but also your vision of what part you or your organisation will play in making it happen. We urge you to discuss this consultation draft with other partner organisations and to respond to it.

"The strategy is, quite deliberately, designed to be owned by partner organisations of all kinds," he added.

The draft strategy was drawn up by a London regional strategy group that includes representatives from organisations such as FE colleges, Connexions, local authorities, the London Development Agency and the Quality Improvement Agency.

The strategy sets out five priorities for action over the next three years to set a joint agenda for the major public sector organisations in London.

It recognises that people with disabilities and/ or learning difficulties are under-represented in the labour market and further education and training. It draws on research and findings from extensive consultation with stakeholders and learners, including young people still at school.

The strategy group was chaired by Caroline Allen, Principal of Orchard Hill College in Wallington and chair of London South LSC.

She said: "For the benefit of the capital, it's vital we make the most of the skills and abilities of Londoners with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities. At present, there are too many barriers and we need to help people to overcome them."

-Ends-

**For further information and attendance requests please contact:**

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***Notes to Editors:***

'Learning for Living and Working in London' is available on [www.livelearnwork.org](http://www.livelearnwork.org). It contains a response form and completed responses should be sent by 31 July to [sllp@prospects.co.uk](mailto:sllp@prospects.co.uk). An alternative format, e.g. easy read, audio or Braille, is on the site or available from [londoninfo@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:londoninfo@lsc.gov.uk)

'Learning for Living and Working in London' has five broad goals. These are to:

- understand what learners with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities want, what is currently on offer and what changes might have to be made,
- increase job and promotion opportunities,
- change the curriculum so that people's potential to live independently and work is realised,
- build a network of high-quality training, and
- use partnership to deliver better services.

The launch takes place on Thursday, 21 June at City Hall, Greater London Authority, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA. Speakers include: Caroline Allen, Principal Orchard Hill College, Wallington, Surrey, David Hughes, London Region Director, LSC, and Barbara Waters, Chief Executive of Skill, who will give the closing address.

'Able to Work - Report from Employers Working Group on Disability' was produced in 2005 by the government advisory body, the National Employment Panel. It is available on <http://www.nationalemploymentpanel.gov.uk/publications/index.htm>

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), in its national strategy published last year, set out an ambition that by 2015 England should be an international exemplar in providing high quality post-16 learning provision for people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

### **LSC**

The Learning and Skills Council exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our 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. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.