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Leading learning and skills

The London Learning and Skills Plan – a summary

April 2008 to March 2009

May 2008

Of interest to everyone involved in improving
skills and learning opportunities across London



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David Hughes

Foreword

It is hard to write this foreword without using the 'transition' word. The announcement on the changes to the Machinery of Government last summer has profound consequences for the further education (FE) sector. Those consequences will become clearer over the coming months as Government consults on how the transfer of 16-18 funding to local authorities will be implemented. At the same time there will be a consultation on how the post-19 landscape will be arranged to deliver a fully demand-led system.

Equally important are the consequences of the establishment of the London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB). Under the new legislation, we now operate within the LSEB strategy (see page 5), working with other agencies to deliver on its ambition and objectives. During the 2008/09 transition year we will work with colleges and providers, re-modelling learning and skills provision to better meet the LSEB ambitions, including a new focus on career and job outcomes.

The agenda for young people is also moving fast. We are working very closely with local authorities at local and regional levels to make the transition to their strategic leadership in London as smooth as possible. In the discussions and work carried out so far, I have been heartened by the strong focus we all have on continuing to improve the system during that transition.

This plan sets out how we will invest considerable resources in London to meet the needs of Londoners and employers and to contribute to a more just, inclusive and successful economy and society. I look forward to working with you as we go through what will be a fascinating period.

David Hughes
LSC London Regional Director

Our strategic direction

LSC London Region has established a robust set of funding priorities.

Intelligent planning and a clear direction have enabled us to set funding priorities that will benefit young people and adults across the capital, employers of all sizes and from all sectors, as well as our region's economy.

We aim to raise the educational achievement of all young Londoners, while at the same time narrowing the gap between the achievements of young people from low-income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.

We will do this by:

- commissioning high-quality, relevant provision
- aligning our 14-19 funding with our 33 boroughs' Children and Young People's Plans
- increasing both the proportion of young people studying at Levels 2 and 3, and the quality of outcomes.

For adults and employers, we share the ambitions of the LSEB (see page four).

Investing in Londoners

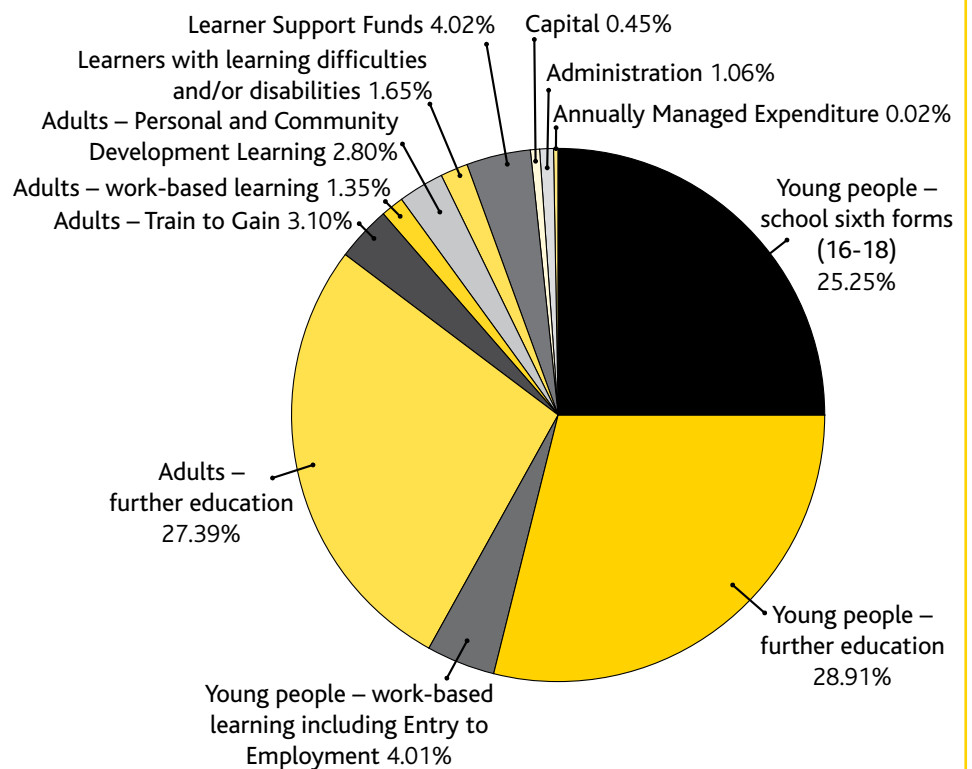
In 2007/08 we invested more than ever before in learning and skills in the capital. We want to continue buying top-quality provision to meet London's needs and withdrawing provision that fails to meet our requirements, investing instead in providers that can deliver.

We offered more and better provision in 2007/08, including:

- an additional 1,300 FE places planned for 16 to 18-year-olds
- more than 10,000 young people participating in work-based learning
- more than 83,000 young people supported by the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to remain in learning and achieve
- 5,000 extra full Level 2 FE places for adults
- 3,000 extra full Level 3 FE places for adults
- more than £479 million of capital projects to provide world-class buildings
- more than 18,500 employees to start a Level 2 qualification (via Train to Gain)
- more than 2,600 employees to start a Skills for Life qualification (via Train to Gain)
- nearly 6,000 workless Londoners on employability programmes.

Where the money goes

LSC London Region's headline participation expenditure*



*Total participation expenditure = £1,570,579

Delivering the LSEB Strategy

The London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB) was created in 2006 to provide a voice for London's skills needs and to increase the flexibility of skills funding across our region. LSC London Region will play an important role in ensuring the successful implementation of the LSEB Strategy.

The Board's primary responsibility is to set the strategic direction of the LSC's adult skills budgets in London (approximately £603 million in 2008-09). Although 2008-09 will be a transition period as we move towards aligning our objectives with those of the LSEB, we have been tasked

with targeting more of our investment this year on:

- workless Londoners – helping them to gain the skills needed to get a job
- people in employment – helping them to become more productive by improving their skills.

We share the Board's ambitions to help London employers improve their competitiveness by enabling them to recruit local people with the right skills and by developing their existing workforce. Linked to this, the LSEB has also asked us to redouble our efforts to increase the employability

of Londoners, giving them the skills that will enable them to access sustainable employment.

Achieving all of this will of course require greater collaboration across agencies, aligned commissioning and a common sense of purpose. In response to the LSEB priorities the LSC London Region has more than £600 million available for adult skills delivery in 2008/09. We have increased the funding available for the Skills for Jobs programmes and the Foundation Learning Tier, and introduced additional flexibilities around the Train to Gain service.

Addressing the capital's ESOL needs

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is a key element of the basic skills offer in London and cuts across all the challenges set out in the draft LSEB Strategy.

The Board has agreed the following expectations in this area:

- providers should improve the quality and success rates of ESOL courses
- demand should be managed effectively to allow those furthest from the labour market to access ESOL
- provision should become sustainable, given known funding constraints
- an understanding of what effective provision looks like should continue to be developed – 'what works' differs for each individual and employer receiving the training.



Measuring our success

We intend to continue making progress in increasing participation and attainment levels across London. Over the coming year we will again be measuring our success, both directly and by working with regional and local partners, as outlined in the table below.

Measure	2006/07	2007/08 estimated	2008/09 projected
16–18-year-olds (Young People Delivery)			
Number of young people participating in learning	175,119	176,056	177,066
Number of young people participating in Apprenticeships or Advanced Apprenticeships	10,729	10,448	10,866
Percentage of young people reaching Level 2 at age 19	73%	75%	77%
Percentage of young people reaching Level 3 at age 19	51%	52%	53%
Adult Learning (Learner Responsive)			
Number of adult learners, of which:	350,568	310,183	295,201
Number of adults participating in full Level 2 (in FE)	16,362	23,000	23,954
Number of adults participating in full Level 3 (in FE)	17,632	19,398	20,600
Adult Learning (Employer Responsive)			
Total number of learners, of which:	47,517	67,210	81,397
Number of adults participating in Apprenticeships or Advanced Apprenticeships	8,736	10,412	11,664
Number of adults participating in full Level 2 (NVQs in the workplace)	10,438	13,868	14,726
Number of adults participating in full Level 3 (NVQs in the workplace)	4,050	4,207	5,041
Number of adults participating in full Level 2 (Train to Gain)	17,020	29,690	36,459
Number of adults participating in full Level 3 (Train to Gain)	2,341	4,084	8,110
Number of employers engaged through Train to Gain	6,300	8,300	10,500
Skills for Jobs	5,000	6,563	22,163
Overall Adults			
Number of Skills for Life achievements overall for adults	6,902	6,828	7,094
Number of First Level 2 achievements overall for adults	8,253	8,867	10,544
Number of First Level 3 achievements overall for adults	4,952	4,540	5,290
Number of adults accessing adult safeguarded learning	94,725	90,936	87,299
Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)			
Total number of learners supported by the LLDD safeguard	59,464	59,550	59,550
Total number of learners in specialist residential colleges	480	454	470
European Social Funding (ESF)			
ESF Delivery	28,476	34,234	17,274

The challenges ahead for London

Global competition rewards businesses that adapt and innovate. London's learning sector must change to support businesses, unlocking future economic growth through investment in skills.

Detailed below are our four priorities for London in 2008/09, along with the key challenges we face for each of them.

Priority 1: Improve educational opportunities for all Londoners

Key challenges

- At 71.3 per cent, achievement of Level 2 (five GCSEs at grades A* to C or equivalent) by age 19 matches the England average. However, we need to continue this to get to 82 per cent by 2010/11.
- Although the proportion of young Londoners who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is now below the national average, around 15,000 still fall into this category. We need to do more for our most disadvantaged groups.
- There is a mismatch between the jobs available in the labour market and the skills levels of residents, with 40 per cent not having a Level 2 and 14 per cent having no qualifications.
- Approximately 900,000 residents (19 per cent) have literacy levels below Level 1; 2.3 million (48 per cent) have numeracy below Level 1; and 600,000 have ESOL needs.
- Work-based learning programmes, such as Apprenticeships or Train to Gain, need to be better tailored to meet the needs of Londoners and London employers.

Priority 2: Raise the effectiveness and performance of the learning and skills sector

Key challenges

- Only 13 per cent of employers use an FE college for training. This figure is below the national average of 18 per cent and is the lowest of any region.
- While London has the lowest proportion nationally of employers reporting skills shortage vacancies (13 per cent), this is a 2 per cent increase from 2005.
- The amount of fees collected by providers has fallen. London collects more than other regions, but this is largely due to high levels of collection by specially designated institutions.
- Learner success rates have risen significantly over the last three years. However, overall rates often mask under-performance within sector subject areas and between institutions.

Key actions for London in 2008/09

Now more than ever before, LSC London Region and our wide range of partners need to share a clear strategic direction. On this four-page spread we provide a handy overview of what we will be doing over the coming year to achieve our four priorities, as well as our key milestones.

Priority 1: Improve educational opportunities for all Londoners	
Action	Milestones
1.1 Develop a regional 14-19 vision for 2008-12	Consultation with London partners and practitioners by spring 2008 Agreement and publication by May 2008
1.2 Consider 14-19 transition (and in the case of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to the age of 25) from the LSC to London boroughs	Approach agreed with London partners by September 2008
1.3 Commission high-quality provision that forms an integral part of local 14-19 entitlements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14-19 learning • accredited Skills for Life • numeracy entry Level 3 • full Level 2 • full Level 3 • Apprenticeships 	Access to Diplomas from September 2008
1.4 Reduce NEET numbers and align provision to meet demand by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commissioning quality provision to meet the September Guarantee • improving the accuracy of NEET data and tracking, through our partners • improving access to impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG) • delivering the European Social Fund (ESF) co-financing plan (2008-10) 14-19 objectives, including launching a tracking programme by April 2008 	Updated e-prospectus with additional functionality launched in April 2008 September Guarantee Voucher scheme extended into 2008/09 (subject to evaluation of the pilot and the availability of funds) Targeted take-up of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and additional support among the NEET group ESF programme to deliver approximately 12,000 participants over the three years of the programme, of whom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7,710 move into education, employment or training • 1,100 enter employment
1.5 Develop IAG services as a forerunner to the new universal Advancement and Adult Careers Service (AACS) in Greater London as a means of informing and engaging more adults	Service delivery pilot commences summer 2008
1.6 Make the national skills campaign a London skills campaign in line with the LSEB strategy to stimulate greater demand from employers and learners	London campaign launched in 2008
1.7 Secure the role of learning in the community (including provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities) by agreeing a clear approach to all leisure-related and community-related learning	Planning approach agreed and reflected in new partnership arrangements from May 2008

Priority 2: Raise the effectiveness and performance of the learning and skills sector	
Action	Milestones
<p>2.1 Launch a London Train to Gain Plan for Growth, which increases the number of businesses and individuals we help to up-skill by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capitalising on the Skills Pledge to engage more employers, especially those larger employers in Train to Gain • supporting the development of a new compact with each sector skills council (SSC) that will tailor Train to Gain to meet the skills needs of employers in each sector • rolling out the Joint Investment Framework (JIF) to support the take-up of Train to Gain by NHS employers in London • developing and expanding the Local Authority Train to Gain Pilot • expanding the programme to include volunteers 	<p>Develop Train to Gain Plan for Growth by March 2008</p> <p>10,500 employers engaged</p> <p>250 of the top 1,200 companies contacted</p> <p>200 skills broker referrals to the leadership and management programme</p> <p>Number of learners participating in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full Level 2 to be 36,459 • full Level 3 to be 8,110 • Skills for Life to be 4,144
<p>2.2 Raise the quality and relevance of learning in construction, manufacturing, financial services and fashion retail through the National Skills Academies (NSAs)</p> <p>Work with those NSAs in development to launch in 2008</p>	<p>Learner numbers delivered in line with business plans by July 2009</p> <p>Approved NSA business plans meet the needs of London employers</p>
<p>2.3 Work with partners and providers to continue improving the quality of all provision in London</p> <p>Develop a strategy to support the Third Sector to bid to deliver learning and skills programmes</p>	<p>FE overall success rate increased to 79% in 2008/09</p> <p>Apprenticeship success rates increased by 5% in 2008/09</p> <p>Entry to Employment (E2E) positive destinations increased to 55% by the end of 2008/09</p> <p>Strategy developed by May 2008</p>
<p>2.4 Improve employer responsiveness and vocational excellence through the roll-out of the new standard and expansion of specialist networks</p> <p>Invest £5 million to build the capacity and responsiveness of providers to employer need</p>	<p>20 further providers to gain the new standard by March 2009</p> <p>Capacity-building funds invested by August 2008</p>
<p>2.5 With support from SSCs, develop and implement a strategy that will expand the number of employers offering high-quality Apprenticeship places to young people and adults, including Young Apprenticeships, Pre-Apprenticeships, Apprenticeships, Advanced Apprenticeships and Adult Apprenticeships</p>	<p>Apprenticeships to Level 2 and 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the number of starts by 10% <p>Adult Apprenticeships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the number of starts by at least 13%
<p>2.6 Work with London Development Agency (LDA), Jobcentre Plus and other partners to better integrate employment and skills by investing £1 million in capacity building</p>	<p>Capacity-building plan agreed by summer 2008</p>
<p>2.7 Fast-track qualifications within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), beginning with the pilot 10 SSCs</p>	<p>Impact assessment completed by spring 2008 for delivery from September 2008</p>
<p>2.8 Improve the financial health of our providers</p>	<p>Set fees collection targets for all institutions by May 2008 and aim to raise an additional £9 million in fees by July 2009</p>
<p>2.9 Invest in capital projects that help improve the quality of delivery</p>	<p>£363 million LSC contribution to committed projects</p>

Priority 3: Integrate skills within economic development and employment	
Action	Milestones
3.1 Build a more integrated skills offer for adults in London, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the employability of disadvantaged Londoners • move more Londoners into employment • improve the skills of London employees • work with Jobcentre Plus through local employer partnerships to support the delivery of sector employability toolkits • work towards aligning targets in city strategy pilots with Local Area Agreements 	Employability Demonstration Pilot (EDP) evaluations conducted in December 2007, April 2008 and August 2008 using the Employability Evaluation Framework Additional £22 million for Skills for Jobs allocated by May 2008 Employability Skills programme increased to £11 million in 2008/09
3.2 Develop with the LDA a transition plan to merge the Train to Gain skills brokerage service with Business Link's information, diagnostic and brokerage (IDB) service	Merged skills and business support brokerage operational under the Business Link brand, from April 2009
3.3 Pilot through the London Accord partnership an integrated employment and skills offer to medium and large employers	Pilot to commence April 2008
3.4 Remodel the balance of provision among London's providers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining investment in ESOL, while remodelling the nature and type of provision • encouraging the embedding of literacy and numeracy • protecting the investment in the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT), while channelling it into the agreed pathways 	At least 10 providers delivering FLT priority progression pathways by September 2008 90% of FLT provision to be on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) or the QCF by 2008/09
3.5 Deliver the £30 million adult ESF co-financing programme , which commenced in spring 2008 and will run for two years	18,480 people over the three years of the programme, including 7,665 who are workless, of whom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,600 to achieve Skills for Life qualifications • 1,150 to achieve Level 1 qualifications • 3,445 to achieve Level 2 • 1,080 to achieve Level 3 • 2,103 to enter employment
3.6 Agree stretching skills indicators with London boroughs as part of their Local Area Agreements	Targets agreed by May 2008
3.7 Agree a commissioning plan for the Thames Gateway	Plan agreed by spring 2008

Priority 4: Equip Londoners with skills to benefit from investment in the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games	
Action	Milestones
4.1 Increase our investment which directly contributes towards Olympic skills needs by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocating £7 million on participation (£2 million more than in 2007/08) • Investing in a series of legacy buildings for 2012 	£7 million allocated for 2008/09 by July 2008 500 apprentices in learning by July 2009 Open and competitive tendering (OCT) for legacy buildings launched by summer 2008
4.2 Develop a National Skills Academy for Construction on the Olympic site	High-level skills plan agreed by January 2008 Plant Training School established and delivery commenced in December 2007
4.3 Implement the London Education Delivery Plan for 2012 on behalf of the Mayor. Facilitate interventions targeted at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools • 14-19 learning • communities 	180 London schools visited by April 2008 – impact evaluated by July 2008
4.4 Implement the London Employment and Skills Taskforce (LEST) Plan for 2012 by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rolling out the next phase of Personal Best (formerly known as PVP) • piloting a new Joblink programme within the five boroughs • establishing a Customer Service Gold Standard • increasing the number of employers signed up to public sector Apprenticeships • rolling out the next phase of the Employer Accord • establishing an Olympics section on the new <i>Choice</i> website 	2000 Personal Best graduates by March 2009 165 learners within the five host boroughs with work placements by March 2009 Customer Service Gold Standard research completed by April 2008 Public sector employer engagement strategy reviewed and evaluated by July 2008 30 employers signed up to the Accord and 1,000 residents participating by March 2009 Olympics weblink launched in spring 2008

Priority 3: Integrate skills within economic development and employment

Key challenges

- At 69 per cent, the capital's employment rate is the lowest in the country and 5 percentage points below the national average.
- London has an estimated 1.2 million economically inactive working-age residents, including 750,000 who are claiming benefits.
- 18 out of London's 33 boroughs feature in the 'top 30 per cent most deprived' category in the 2004 Indices of Multiple Deprivation.
- An additional 250,000 Londoners in work would be needed for our region to achieve the same proportion of its working-age population in employment as the England and Wales average.
- London experiences far higher levels of migration than any other part of the UK: 8 per cent of the workforce is renewed annually, with an estimated 180,000 international migrants added each year. This presents both an opportunity and a challenge in terms of integrating skills and employment.
- Around 730,000 employees (26 per cent) do not have a Level 2.

Priority 4: Equip Londoners with skills to benefit from investment in the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games

Key challenges

- The baseline forecasts for the period leading up to the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games show substantial underlying employment growth in London, with an overall increase of about 240,000 jobs between 2006 and 2012, and a further 440,000 jobs between 2012 and 2021.
- The preparation and construction of the 2012 site and venues will lead to a growth in demand for specialist construction, customer service and audio-visual skills, while the actual staging of the Games will require 70,000 trained volunteers.
- The Olympics also provide us with an opportunity to address the chronic shortage of sports coaches across London by raising the profile and improving the quality of training.

Our regional priorities and key actions are based on a robust strategic analysis of supply, demand and need, and dialogue with key partner organisations. See page 15 for details of how to access the analysis.

Meeting London's needs

Ours is a unique and highly complex region. Although meeting the skills needs of Londoners and employers is a tough nut to crack, implementing the range of measures outlined below will give us a good start.

Increasing the learning and skills sector offer

Our approach to public investment will be increasingly focused on priority learning and priority client groups including Skills for Life, Level 2 and people who receive benefits payments.

Fee income

Our new focus does not mean that other learners' skills needs will not be met. On the contrary, we expect that providers will progressively broaden their income base by moving away from public funding and delivering directly to the market. We also expect learners and employers to contribute towards the cost of their learning.

London's FE fee income is expected to rise from £73 million to £81 million in 2008/09. Around 42.5 per cent of this income will be paid by the individuals and/or organisations benefiting from the training, and their fees will be collected by providers. We aim to raise this to 50 per cent by 2010/11.

Clearly, this represents a significant shift in our funding arrangements. But it is a necessary change that will eventually create a joined-up service offering real progression for learners, where employers can form relationships

Capital investment

Our capital investment in London will underpin the wider development of the FE infrastructure, bringing benefits to learners, employers and the wider community.

By the end of 2009, the LSC will have supported capital investment projects worth £863 million in London. To date, approximately 25 per cent of the total floor space within our region's FE estate has benefited from this.

In 2008, we will also seek to invest in a series of 2012 legacy buildings across east London – centres of excellence that focus on key sectors and specialise in the delivery of work-based learning, Train to Gain and other employer-funded training.

Engaging employers

The National Skills Academy (NSA) network enables employers to become directly involved in the design and delivery of learning. It will be a key component of the supply infrastructure to address skills shortages in specific sectors and industries.

In 2008/09, we will fund delivery by NSAs in fashion retail, financial services, manufacturing and construction. We will also provide support to NSAs in development and to those planning to deliver in London from 2009/10.

London's diverse communities

In our planning dialogue with providers we will help to review their performance on equality and diversity measures (EDIMs) and help set appropriate improvement targets relating to gender, ethnicity and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

We want providers to continue improving the accuracy of data collection around the measures relating to ethnicity and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, reducing the number of learners for whom no information is provided. We will maintain the overall number of learning places for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and, subject to funding, improve the local access to provision and the quality of this provision in terms of its relevance for employability and progression.

We will work collaboratively with our partners in the Offender Learning and Skills Service, to improve opportunities for offenders and ex-offenders through learning, and to reduce re-offending rates by increasing the skills and qualifications of offenders, improving their employability and helping them move into work.

A demand-led approach to commissioning

To achieve the vision outlined in the 2006 *Leitch Review of Skills*, we have implemented a demand-led approach to commissioning, coupled with a strong emphasis on quality*.

Negotiated commissioning

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

1. Young people

There will be a total of 177,066 places for 16 to 18-year-olds. This figure includes more than 10,500 Apprenticeships (an increase of 500), 7,500 E2E places and 600 more places delivered by schools and colleges.

2. Adult learners

As agreed with our partners, we need to deliver the following adult learner responsive provision in 2008/09: 23,954 places at full Level 2; 20,600 at full Level 3;

103,860 for Skills for Life; 85,000 for FLT; 22,160 for Skills for Jobs (an increase of 15,600 from the previous year); and 4,000 for Offender Learning.

Provision for adult safeguarded learning will be aligned to Local Area Agreements and will include 65,610 places for personal and community development learning; 9,530 for family learning, literacy and numeracy; 10,380 for wider family learning; and 4,000 for neighbourhood learning in deprived communities.

3. Employer-responsive delivery

The figures for employer-responsive provision are equally challenging. As agreed with our partners, we need to deliver the following in 2008/09: 57,070 places at Level 2; 18,930 at Level 3; 4,140 for Skills for Life; and 11,660 for Apprenticeships.

Tendered commissioning

Tendered commissioning is a competitive process open to any new providers as well as to existing colleges or providers wanting to extend their provision or enter new markets or geographical areas.

To drive up the quality and responsiveness of LSC-funded provision, we will be introducing more competition within our commissioning activity. Key triggers for competition include new investment, restructuring of provision or a new delivery model, significant gaps in provision, and failure to meet minimum levels of performance. In 2008/09, our tenders are likely to include a broad range of provision.

Within our tendered commissioning, we have allocated £7 million during 2008/09 to support provision to meet Olympic skills needs. This will include rolling out the next phase of the Personal Best programme, purchasing 500 new Apprenticeships, building the capacity of work-based learning providers and delivering employer-led construction training through the newly established NSA for Construction.

** Some of the figures quoted above are taken from the full Regional Commissioning Plan for London (see page 15 for web address).*

Keeping a close eye on effectiveness

Throughout the delivery of our business cycle we take great care to test the market, to ensure that our learning and skills provision continues to meet the changing needs of London's learners and employers.

We take an active interest in the overall volume, pattern and range of learning and skills activity. We also analyse delivery to ensure that equality of opportunity exists throughout the provision we fund.

By investing in the capacity of the FE system, we will ensure that it is able to respond to future challenges. And by having a diverse provider base, we aim to increase choice and quality for learners and employers while at the same time stimulating the delivery of innovative provision. Open and competitive tendering has an important part to play in all of this.



Driving up quality across our provision

We have made it very clear that we will support good colleges and providers to perform even better, and will challenge those that are satisfactory but not improving.

As part of this more rigorous approach, we will assess performance against minimum levels from the 2006/07 academic year, based on the new measures for calculating success rates.

These minimum levels will be used by Ofsted as part of the college and provider

performance report. Where a substantial proportion of provision is identified as inadequate or underperforming, a 'Notice to Improve' will be issued. We will address mediocre provision through a regional approach that will focus on areas in danger of slipping below minimum performance levels.

We are committed to a continuous improvement in quality, which is why we will only fund provision that meets our performance benchmarks. To ensure that we secure good-quality provision

for learners and employers, quality improvement remains a key driver of our commissioning decisions.

The National Improvement Strategy sets out how we intend to improve the support offered to colleges and providers. It also includes the expectation that our contracts and funding agreements ensure that providers have appropriately qualified and trained staff.

Useful information

Our key partners

Aim Higher Partnerships	London Train to Gain skills brokerage organisations
Association of Colleges (AoC)	National Offender Management Service
Association of Learning Providers	Nextsteps providers
Business Link 4 London	Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA)
Children's Trusts	Olympic Skills and Employment Task Force
Confederation of British Industry	Prison Service
Connexions	Private sector providers
ECOTEC	Probation Service
Employers	Quality Improvement Agency (QIA)
FE colleges	Schools
Government Office for London (GoL)	Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA)
Greater London Authority (GLA)	Sector Skills Councils (SSC)
Jobcentre Plus (JCP)	SERCO
Lifelong Learning Network	SERTUC
Local authorities	Sixth form colleges
London Councils	Specialist providers
London Development Agency (LDA)	Trades Union Congress (TUC)
London First	Voluntary and community sector (VCS)
London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG)	Work-based learning providers
London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB)	Youth Justice Board

Further reading

- **LSC London Region**
www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/London/
- **LSC London Regional Commissioning Plan 2008-09**
http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/London/LSC_London_Regional_Commissioning_Plan_2008-09.pdf
- **Strategic Analysis for the London Region**
www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/London/Publications/Latestdocuments/Detail.htm?id=7bffc80e-8d13-4d5e-a454-cc38e19cb097
- **LSC Strategy for Equality and Diversity**
<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-singleequalityscheme-30apr07.pdf>
- **Learning for Living and Working in London**
http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/London/Learning_for_Living_and_Working_in_London_-_FINAL_version_28_01_08.pdf
- **Draft LSEB Strategy**
www.london.gov.uk/lseb/docs/proposalboardstrategy.pdf
- **Evidence base for the draft LSEB Strategy**
<http://www.london.gov.uk/lseb/docs/thelondonstory.pdf>
- **Skills for Life strategy**
http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/London/London_Skills_for_Life_Strategy_Oct_06.pdf
- **Train to Gain**
<http://london.traintogain.gov.uk/>
- **Offender Learning and Skills Service**
www.gos.gov.uk/gol/Community_safety/Londonresettlementstrategy/
- **Offender learning**
www.dfes.gov.uk/offenderlearning/
- **Building Colleges for the Future March 2008 – the LSC's National Capital Strategy 2008-2011**
<http://www.dius.gov.uk/publications/LSCLayout.pdf>
- **Raising our game: Our Annual Statement of Priorities**
<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/publications/recommended/Raising-our-game-our-annual-statement-of-priorities.htm>
- **Raising expectations: enabling the system to deliver**
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/Raising%20Expectations%20pdf.pdf>
- **Pursuing Excellence: the National Improvement Strategy for the further education system**
<http://www.qia.org.uk/pursuingexcellence/pdf/qiaPublication.pdf>

Glossary

EZE	- Entry to Employment
EDIMs	- Equality and Diversity Impact Measures
EDP	- Employability Demonstration Pilot
EMA	- Education Maintenance Allowance
ESF	- European Social Fund
ESOL	- English for speakers of other languages
FE	- further education
FLT	- Foundation Learning Tier
Full Level 2	- equates to five GCSEs at grades A* to C
Full Level 3	- equates to two GCE A-level passes or equivalent
IAG	- information, advice and guidance
JIF	- Joint Investment Framework
LDA	- London Development Agency
LEST	- London Employment and Skills Taskforce
Level 5	- foundation degree-level learning
Level 6	- degree-level learning
LSEB	- London Skills and Employment Board
NEET	- not in education, employment or training
NQF	- National Qualifications Framework
NSA	- National Skills Academy
NVQ	- National Vocational Qualification
OCT	- open and competitive tendering
Progression pathways	- a high-quality, coherent curriculum offer for entry and Level 1
QCF	- Qualifications and Credit Framework
SSC	- Sector Skills Council

Learning and Skills Council
London Region

Centre Point
103 New Oxford Street
London WC1A 1DR
T 0845 019 4144
www.lsc.gov.uk

London Central	T 0845 019 4144
London East	T 0845 019 4151
London West	T 0845 019 4164
London North	T 0845 019 4158
London South	T 0845 019 4172

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