

Breaking down barriers

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>LSC

Leading learning and skills

the magazine

January 2006

The magazine of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for partners and people interested in learning and skills issues in London



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Cover photo: Rakhia Ismail, from Account 3 ESF Pan-London Project partner organisation Back to Basics, at an event to celebrate the achievements of learners participating in the Pan-London Somali Employment and Training Project (see page 11)

the magazine

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David Hughes

Comment

Welcome to issue three of *the magazine*, the quarterly newsletter for LSC London Region's partners and stakeholders. In it we provide an insight into some of the many local, regional and national LSC-funded projects that are enabling us to achieve our strategic objectives.

I don't think I could have moved down to the London Region at a more interesting time. London is an exciting place at the quietest of times, but with the Olympics and the consultation on the mayor's powers, things are certainly not quiet! Both of these provide the LSC and partners with fantastic opportunities as well as challenges: for the Olympics, we are working closely with the London Development Agency to provide sound research on which the planning for skills and a real learning legacy for London can begin; and as far as the Mayor's powers are concerned, I am keen that the debate is based on facts about LSC performance in London, about the way we are changing to get even better, and about what the changes would mean for us all.

Starting afresh in London has been fascinating for me and many people have been keen to explain just how different the region is. What I have heard more than anything else is the need to spend more resources on Level 3 learning and on tackling the extreme problems of worklessness in parts of London. On both of these I am pleased to be able to report that we will be making big announcements in the new year – extra resources for London to address Level 3 skills needs, worklessness and the opportunity of the Olympics.

As if all that were not enough, we are also involved in very important dialogues with colleges and providers about their plans for next year, which will determine how we spend our £1.4 billion in London. Endorsed by the recent Foster Report, the *agenda for change* continues apace and will lead to simplified systems and processes, and a new-look LSC.

So a new year beckons with change across the board. Exciting it is and full of opportunities.

David Hughes
Regional Director



EUROPEAN UNION
European Social Fund

Flagship project

Thanks to the combined efforts of the LSC and the local education authority (LEA), a brand new, state-of-the-art sixth form centre is to be built in Haringey.

Part-funded by the LSC, the multi-million pound sixth form centre will operate in partnership with local schools and the College of North East London. It is scheduled to open its doors in September 2007 and will serve 1,200 students from the local area, offering a broad curriculum combining a wide range of traditional academic courses with specialist vocational subjects like theatre, sports studies and catering.

For the project to succeed in its objective of raising educational achievement, the buy-in of local young people is essential. The LSC and the LEA have jointly commissioned an agency to run focus groups with pupils from the four local schools that will feed into the new sixth form centre, so that they can become involved in developing its name and its brand.

An interim governing body has been established and met for the first time during the autumn term. It is responsible for the development of the new name and brand, overseeing the construction project, appointing the centre's new principal and developing the curriculum.

Lindsay Bates, who is leading the project for the LSC, said: "Above all, this new sixth form will be an aspirational centre, which we hope will attract a wide range of students. It's neither a one-stop shop nor a 'one size fits all' initiative – instead, it's a very exciting opportunity that will encourage young people to raise their aspirations and to stay on in post-16 learning."

An artist's impression of Haringey's aspirational sixth form centre



Be a winner!

Entries are now being accepted for this year's national Apprenticeships Awards, which will be held at the Hilton Park Hotel on 15 June. Employers, training providers and apprentices intending to submit an entry should act quickly because the 24 February closing date is fast approaching.

The national Apprenticeships Awards recognise employer commitment to developing young people and celebrate the achievements of apprentices who consistently exceed expectations. As last year, there are three main awards, each of which is divided into categories.

To accommodate businesses of all sizes and from all sectors, the **Employer of the Year Award** has four categories: micro, small, medium and large. Entrants should be able to demonstrate the benefits to be gained from a long-term commitment to work-based learning for young people.

The **Apprentice of the Year Award** has three categories: Young Apprentice (14 to 16-year-olds), Apprentice (NVQ Level 2) and Advanced Apprentice (NVQ Level 3). The judges will be looking for apprentice entrants to clearly demonstrate a strong commitment to personal development and progression through learning; provide examples of achievement and attainment in learning and work; and show how the skills gained through the Apprenticeship have made a difference to their employer.

The **Personal Achiever of the Year Award** seeks to acknowledge and celebrate inspirational young learners who have shown extra commitment and determination in overcoming obstacles while working towards their learning goals.

To find out more about the award categories and application procedure, visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk/awards

London Plus

England's largest value added project is set to drive up standards and achievements for 16 to 19-year-old learners right across London.

National research shows that students starting a course with the same qualifications can achieve widely differing results depending on the college or sixth form they attend.

Value added measures the impact an institution has on the progress made by each learner. It takes the learner's starting point and then measures results against this. Because it is not based on raw results, value added creates a level playing field on which to judge the quality of teaching, learning, support and guidance provided.

Project Director Bob Greenwood said: "Currently institutions do not have access to a comprehensive set of value added measures across the region. The 'London Plus' project will address this by providing a set of robust and relevant measures for all London institutions offering Level 3 qualifications (about 30,000 learners). Measures for Levels 1 and 2 will follow through a new Learner Achievement Tracker, which is currently being piloted. We will compile a complete map of the breadth and quality of learning across the whole of London. This will give value added outputs for every course and provider, so teachers will be able to see what works best and why.

"We want to create a professional learning community so that people can share information, rather than having to reinvent the wheel or work in isolation. We will build upon what is already in place through easy access to national best practice and local professional and subject networks – in fact, we have already started with mathematics and psychology. All this will help London's teachers gain confidence and the tools needed to maximise their effectiveness in motivating young people to seize opportunities and realise their full potential. Because that's what it's all about: giving each learner the best possible chance.

"We are currently making courtesy visits to all colleges, local authorities and schools across London to discuss our proposals, listen, and shape what we do to meet local needs. Feedback to date suggests that people are very much in favour of this initiative."

The London Plus project is sponsored by LSC National Office and LSC London Region, and by the DfES through London Challenge.

For more information about the London-wide value added project, telephone Bob Greenwood on 0208 929 4704 (bob.greenwood@lsc.gov.uk).

Nearly
2 million

people accessed LSC-funded education and training in London last year.

Learning and Skills Beacon status awards

The DfES has awarded Learning and Skills Beacon status to City & Islington College, Tower Hamlets College and Four Counties Training Ltd. All were presented with the prestigious award by Bill Rammell MP, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, at a luncheon held in Central London in December.

Learning and Skills Beacon status recognises excellent post-16 providers that deliver high-quality teaching and learning, and are well led and managed. Beacon recipients are given support to enable them to share their good practice and take forward innovative activity for the benefit of the wider learning and skills community.

For more information on Learning and Skills Beacon status, visit www.beaconstatus.org

Capital celebration

A two-hour event held at the Tate Modern gave London's five local LSCs, along with their partners and stakeholders, an opportunity to celebrate the many successes achieved over the past 12 months.

To download *Celebrating Success*, a document produced for the event, visit www.londoncentrallsc.gov.uk

Robin Shreeve, Principal of City of Westminster College, celebrates at the Tate with Jill Lowery, Acting Executive Director, LSC London Central



Actors from CragRats Education communicated important career messages to pupils in London



Up, up and away!

Four superheroes, also known as 'The Frustrated Four', swooped into London schools during the autumn term to communicate important career messages to 15 and 16-year-old pupils.

Funded by the local LSCs in London East and London Central, *Future Calling* is a high-action drama featuring four zany characters from CragRats Education who stress the importance of staying on in learning.

The lively performance is designed to help pupils make informed choices about their future and encourages them to adopt a positive, proactive attitude towards their own personal development. It also informs pupils about the Education Maintenance Allowance and the availability of Connexions personal advisers to support them during their decision-making process.

The issues raised through the drama are then reinforced in workshops that enable young people to identify their preferred learning style and to explore the various post-GCSE options available.

This is a formula that works. One youthful participant said: "The information was portrayed in a way that was easy to digest and remember, and was also very entertaining." Another stated: "The message I got is that it's up to me to make my own choices for my own future."

Vivien Cutler, Executive Director of LSC London East, said: "It is essential that young people do not give up on learning at 16 and we believe the CragRats showcase, while being enjoyable in its own right, will play an important part in explaining the wide range of options available post-16.

"We want to encourage young people to think about their future as early as possible and to obtain plenty of advice along the way, from family and friends, as well as from school careers advisers and the Connexions Service."

Enterprise Zone launch

A new skills development programme will help London South's budding entrepreneurs succeed in today's highly competitive marketplace.

Funded by LSC London South and managed by Kingston Management Centre, the Enterprise Zone was launched in mid-November and offers a wealth of learning and personal development resources for people keen to start up and grow their own business. Online visitors can download a comprehensive package of useful information, including listings of practical workshops and networking events taking place in the local area.

Richard Carter, Chairman of LSC London South, said: "Despite being a largely prosperous sub-region of a great world city, one in 10 of the local workforce has no qualifications. Our vision is that by 2010, young people in London South will have world-leading knowledge and productive skills; the Enterprise Zone is a great way to engage people from every background with the spirit of enterprise."



Sir David Howard, Chairman of the Securities & Investment Institute Examination Board and a former Lord Mayor of London, with students at Hackney Community College

NVQ milestone

What stronger evidence of London Underground's long-term commitment to learning could there be than the presentation of the organisation's 7,000th NVQ certificate by Phil Hope, Skills Minister?

The presentation marks the conclusion of London Underground's phenomenally successful bespoke skills development programme which, having achieved a remarkable pass rate of 98 per cent, has established a new benchmark in training.

Funded by the LSC, the NVQ Level 2 programme was the result of a strategic partnership between London Underground, City & Guilds, Barnet College and Four Counties Training. It adopted a demand-led approach to improving skills, while at the same time creating greater choice and flexibility in terms of training provision.

Iain Smith, London Underground's Head of Operational Skills, commented: "This programme has seen London Underground staff get the recognition they deserve, for delivering the highest levels of customer satisfaction ever seen on the network. The NVQ is now integral to how we do things."

The presentation coincided with the official launch of the Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) in Rail Competence.

Widening access

London East is home to many financial services organisations, yet a lack of qualifications often means that its residents miss out on the jobs that are available within the sector. A new course is helping to redress the balance.

Early in 2005, LSC London East was instrumental in brokering and funding an ambitious project that involved the Financial Services Skills Council and the Securities & Investment Institute joining forces to launch the *Introduction to Investment* qualification.

The first cohort of students has now completed the course, which is designed to widen access to the financial services industry for local young people and to provide them with the tools needed for a career in the sector.

Hackney Community College was the first institution to run the introductory course and achieved an impressive 85 per cent pass rate. Two more London East colleges, Havering and Tower Hamlets, have since followed suit with pass rates of 92 per cent and 80 per cent respectively, and plans are already in the pipeline to roll out the course to other regions during 2006.

Ruth Martin, Managing Director of the Securities & Investment Institute, said: "We are delighted with the results from these colleges and it is on this basis that we are delivering the award to selected FE colleges across the UK.

"The *Introduction to Investment* award will offer students an understanding of the finance industry and act as a stepping stone for them to develop their careers in this area."

Ministerial visit

Lord Andrew Adonis, DfES Minister for Schools, met students and staff at the new Harrow Skills Centre shortly after it opened its doors in September 2005.

Funded by LSC London West, Harrow Skills Centre offers practical training for 14 to 19-year-olds in a range of disciplines, including construction, electronics, manufacturing and engineering.

During the visit Lord Adonis discussed with education professionals, students and council representatives plans to develop a Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate for post-16 education provision. He said: "I am delighted to see for myself all the good work that is going on in Harrow. The creation of the Harrow Skills Centre is a great example of how Harrow is extending opportunities for young people and raising standards – objectives that are at the heart of this government's agenda.



LSC London West Executive Director Peter Pledger with Lord Adonis at the new Harrow Skills Centre

"GCSE results in Harrow have been improving steadily, year on year, demonstrating the hard work and commitment put in on a daily basis by teachers, pupils and parents across the borough. The development of a collegiate sixth form across schools will enable the borough to respond to parental demand and help raise standards further."



Partnership approach: (back row, left to right) Laura Gander-Howe, Director of Learning Programmes, with Stephen Gardner and John Fletcher, Partnership Manager, East London Training Association; (front row, left to right) Vivien Cutler, LSC London East Executive Director, and Anita Bonnyman, Head of Havering, Barking and Dagenham, Lead on Work-Based Learning

Collaborative working

Seven work-based learning partnerships were formally launched at the start of November as part of a strategy to increase collaboration and drive up quality among London East's LSC-funded work-based learning providers.

Work-based learning, which includes Apprenticeships and the Entry to Employment programme, is at the forefront of the Government's educational policy. As the preferred option for many young people, it has to be of high quality and responsive in order to meet the needs of employers and learners alike.

The new geographically-based partnerships intend to make this happen. They comprise 32 London East training organisations from the private, public and voluntary sectors that, between them, have an impressive track record and extensive experience of training young people in a variety of vocations.

Stephen Gardner, National Director of Work-Based Learning, said at the launch event: "The formation of these partnerships will assist in the sharing of best practice between training organisations and help to make the improvement in the quality of Apprenticeship training that we need.

"However, no matter how hard these partnerships work, Apprenticeships can never be completely successful without committed employers who will dedicate time and effort to help young people."

For more details, contact Tony Young, Learning and Development Manager, on 020 8929 3962 (tony.young@lsc.gov.uk)

Inspection result

Education provision for 14 to 19-year-olds in the London boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark is good overall, according to the results of the latest 14-19 Ofsted Area-wide Inspection Report. Schools, colleges and training providers in both boroughs were shown to have improved dramatically their offer to young people.

At an event held in September to celebrate the inspection result, Yvonne Thompson, Chair of LSC London Central, said: "This is a great outcome for Lambeth and Southwark. It recognises the good-quality and innovative work that's taking place in both boroughs in the 14-19 field. It also shows that they have the capacity, skill and vision to work effectively together and with the LSC."

To view the inspection report, visit www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports/servicereports/674.pdf

Raising our game

Nearly a year has passed since we issued our first ever *LSC London Region: Statement of Priorities*, an important document explaining our key objectives and how we will achieve them. Here Regional Director David Hughes looks back at the progress made to date, and ahead to the priorities for 2006/07.

“ If the raft of innovative projects currently underway throughout the capital is anything to go by, last year’s *Statement of Priorities* (accessible at www.londoncentrallsc.gov.uk) certainly ‘does what it says on the tin’.

We now need to build on the progress made against our stated priorities to equip London with the world-class skills it requires in order to be able to compete effectively at a global level.

Our priorities for the coming year, shown opposite, remain largely unchanged. Yes, there are some minor ‘tweaks’ here and there, but these merely reflect the need for our priorities to evolve in response to changes in London’s business and community environments.

Of course, one major change is the addition of a seventh priority so that London maximises the fantastic opportunities presented by the city’s successful Olympic bid. It’s critical that London’s Olympic legacy is about people and not just about buildings. We have already commissioned research to identify and benefit from the lessons learned by previous Olympic host nations in terms of the skills needed to develop the infrastructure and deliver the Games successfully. Many new employment opportunities will be created as a result of the Olympics and we want local people to be able to access as many of them as possible.

“We now need to build on the progress made against our stated priorities to equip London with the world-class skills it requires in order to be able to compete effectively at a global level.”

The Olympics aside, I see *agenda for change* as our biggest challenge. It’s transforming the way we do our business: simplifying our systems; establishing new, more strategic relationships with colleges and providers; and focusing more on the quality of delivery and its appropriateness to the local economy, community, employers and learners.

While strengthening our leadership role at a local level, we will also be building on our existing partnerships at a regional level, collaborating with organisations like

the London Development Agency and the Greater London Authority so that we invest wisely to transform the learning and skills sector and to support London as a successful world city.

Clearly there is a lot to achieve over the next 12 months. However, I remain confident that, with the continued commitment and support of our partners and stakeholders, we can do it. ”

David Hughes
Regional Director

Making progress

It’s clear that LSC London Region has made considerable progress against each of its stated priorities for 2005/06. The AddMore and BOSS initiatives shown below provide a flavour of the many different activities taking place across the London Region.

Priority: Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers and individuals

The AddMore initiative is a ground-breaking, two-year LSC contract with Business Link for London and Reed in Partnership. The project is transforming the way in which the LSC delivers skills advice to SME employers across the region. Since it was launched a year ago, AddMore is helping to drive productivity improvement within the SME sector, inspiring 530 employers to sign up to the skills programme; 968 firms to work towards Investors in People accreditation; 359 business leaders to personally undertake management and leadership development; and 1,200 employees to engage in learning.

Priority: Strengthen our role in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into sustained employment

Based at Wembley, the Building One-Stop Shop (BOSS) is a partnership agreement between the LSC, the College of North West London, the London Development Agency, Jobcentre Plus and the London borough of Brent. BOSS provides an environment for employers to identify and address their training needs, and for local people to acquire the skills required for them to seize available employment opportunities within the construction sector.

Over the past year, more than 85 employers have recruited 137 unemployed people into sustainable jobs; 162 people were awarded industry-standard qualifications; and 187 people gained the Health and Safety CSCS card. The BOSS model has proved so effective that it has been used to create a virtual BOSS network for the whole of London, which will be implemented by the end of March 2006.



67% of London's 17-year-olds are currently in education or training, compared to 59% nationally.

20,000 fewer Londoners were in the 'not in employment, education or training' category last year.

£1.3 billion was invested by the LSC during 2004/05 to provide London's young people, adults and employers with the skills they need – an average of £40 million per borough.

London's priorities for 2006/07

- 1 Ensure that all 14 to 19-year-olds have access to high-quality, relevant learning opportunities
- 2 Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers and individuals
- 3 Transform the learning and skills sector through *agenda for change*
- 4 Strengthen our role in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into sustained employment
- 5 Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services
- 6 Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally
- 7 Equip Londoners with the skills they need to contribute to and benefit from the investment in the 2012 Olympics

In my view: equality and diversity

Philippa Langton, Executive Director for LSC London North, is leading LSC London Region's efforts to apply a coherent and consistent approach to equality and diversity issues.

Q: Why are equality and diversity so high on London's agenda?

London is one of the most diverse places in the world. We need to capitalise on this potential strength by providing equal access to education and training opportunities for all.

Q: What's the benefit of taking a regional approach?

Previously, there were many small and medium-sized equality and diversity projects going on across the region's five local LSCs, but they tended to be rather disjointed and locally based. Our new regional approach, which includes a focus on equality and diversity within our own structure as part of *agenda for change*, will have a far greater impact.

By pooling our knowledge we will gain an overview of London's equality and diversity issues, while at the same time identifying the needs of particular groups who find it difficult to access education and training. We will then be in a better position to start implementing improvements at both local and regional levels.

Q: So you'll still be meeting local needs?

Most definitely. Each local LSC has been allocated three equality and diversity impact measures for its providers to report against so that we can pinpoint and address specific areas of need:



increasing success rates, challenging stereotypes, and improving monitoring of learning difficulties and disabilities on individual learning records. All of this is vital because we need to understand fully what's happening at the moment before making plans for future provision.

Q: Are any regional projects up and running?

Yes. We've taken the radical approach of segmenting the English for speakers of other languages market in order to

respond more effectively to the needs of learners and employers across the region. We are also helping the capital's learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to access placement opportunities at age 16 and to continue in appropriate education and training.

Q: A final word?

London's diversity is one of its greatest challenges. I'm confident that the LSC's new regional approach to equality and diversity will help turn this to everyone's advantage.

Breaking down barriers

The LSC's strong commitment to equality and diversity does not merely spring from our legal obligations. It has always been about creating an inclusive learning society, free from discrimination and prejudice.

Here in London, the LSC is at the forefront of new and innovative ways to engage disadvantaged learners, challenge the causes of discrimination and promote the benefits of diversity. Shown on this page are some of our equality and diversity projects that are underway across the region.

Clarifying responsibilities

LSC London East has commissioned management consultants Clariant Associates to develop a series of race equality leaflets. These documents outline college staff responsibilities under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000. Members of London East's newly established Further Education Equality and Diversity Network, which was set up to ensure that colleges have the opportunity to feed into LSC projects and policy, were involved in the planning stages of the leaflet project.



James Plaskitt, Minister for the European Social Fund, with learner Hinda Mohammed, who proudly displays her Level 1 National Award for Working With Children

Fostering integration

The Pan-London Somali Employment and Training project, co-financed by the London LSCs through the European Social Fund (ESF), is a two-year initiative that started in January 2005.

The project is addressing the training and development needs of unemployed Somalis across London who wish to train for work in the childcare and youth sectors. It has already inspired more than

100 Somali women, many of whom are lone parents and former refugees, to embark on NVQ Level 1 and 2 training in Childcare and Youth Work, along with work experience placements.

Two women have already secured part-time employment as a direct result of the project, an achievement proving that ESF really does offer employment opportunities for all.



In November Cherie Blair presented Actor Jackie Chan with the 2005 World Diversity Award in recognition of his charity work and global role model status. The LSC was one of many organisations sponsoring the event

350,000
learners have improved their basic skills in literacy and numeracy over the past year in London.

Refugee support

The London Refugee Economic Action (LORECA) project is co-financed jointly by the London LSCs and the London Development Agency through ESF. It is helping to alleviate the region's skills shortage by tapping the existing qualifications and vocational skills of migrants and refugees, to whom it offers support in entering employment, accessing training and enterprise.

Creating world-class

The LSC's capital investment strategy is an essential element in helping learning providers become excellent businesses.

At present, too many of London's learners and teachers work and learn in old-fashioned buildings that are no longer fit for this purpose. Where they exist, these outdated colleges and centres of education and training fail to reflect the LSC's vision of a vibrant 21st century environment that can inspire a spirit of learning.

Research has demonstrated the importance of capital expenditure in increasing recruitment, retention and achievement, reducing running costs and improving access for learners with disabilities.

That is why one of our top priorities is to upgrade the college estate, build well-designed new campuses and redevelop existing sites. Providing the further education (FE) sector with modern centres of vocational learning that are equipped with the latest technology will bring many benefits: our colleges will be able to attract and retain more young people on their courses; the learning and skills sector will be far more attractive to employers; and colleges and training providers will be able

The stylish teaching block at Sir George Monoux College, Walthamstow, boasts a range of outstanding student facilities



to forge strong relationships with their business communities. This will make a major contribution to meeting employers' skills and workforce development needs at local, regional and national levels.

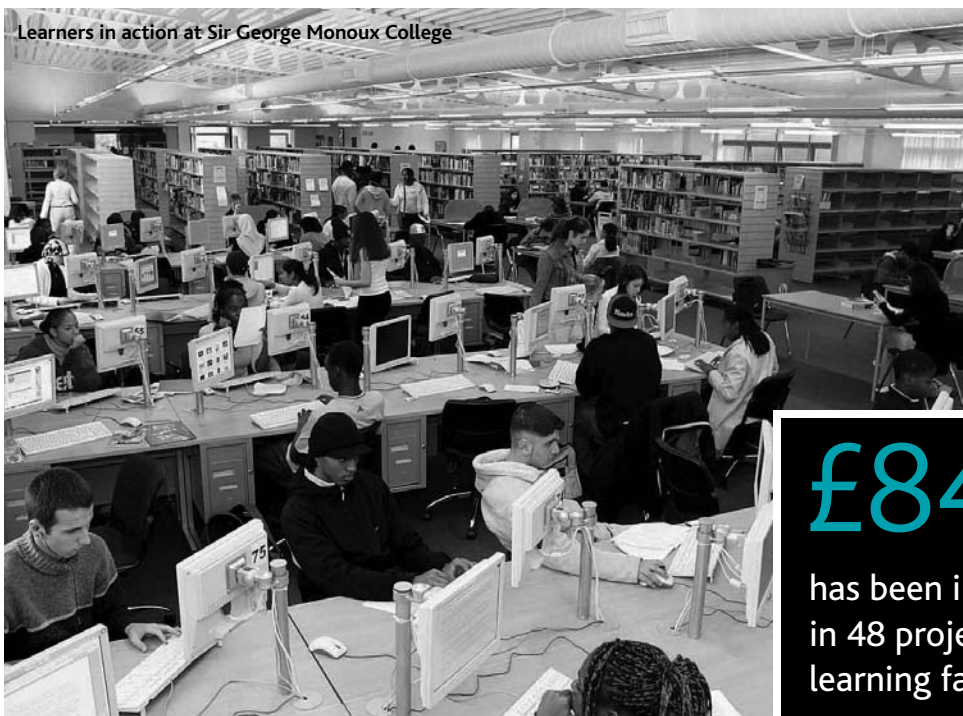
Over the past four years, nationally the LSC has approved grants of £829 million to support 468 building projects across England's learning and skills sector, worth a total of nearly £2.5 billion. In 2006/07 the LSC will increase capital development

across the country's FE sector, introducing a new 16-19 Capital Fund that will benefit schools and colleges, including support for the 14-19 agenda. Specialist colleges and the adult and community learning sector will also continue to receive capital development support from the LSC. Our capital budget will increase from £394 million in 2005-06 to £480 million in 2006-07, and is expected to rise to about £600 million by 2007-08.

As part of the new regional approach to infrastructure investment, the LSC in London is helping to create world-class facilities for learners. We have already invested more than £84 million in 48 projects across London that are designed to improve learning facilities.

World Class Buildings: Design Quality in Further Education, which covers the 12 elements of good design, can be downloaded from the LSC website at www.lsc.gov.uk

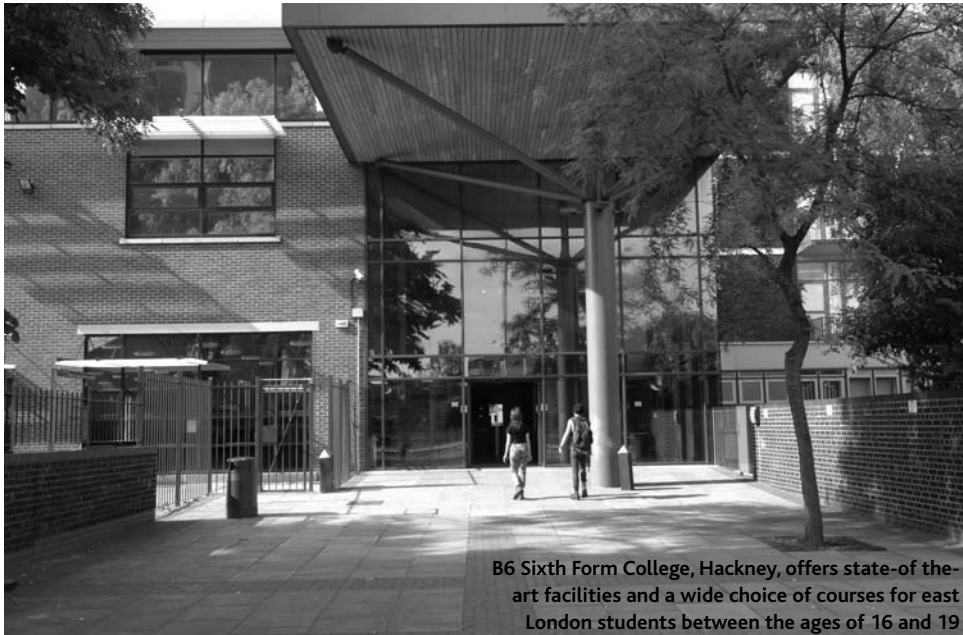
Learners in action at Sir George Monoux College



£84 million

has been invested by LSC London Region in 48 projects designed to improve learning facilities.

buildings



B6 Sixth Form College, Hackney, offers state-of-the-art facilities and a wide choice of courses for east London students between the ages of 16 and 19

Realising the vision

Many of LSC London Region's major capital investment projects have already come to fruition. Examples of successful building projects include:

- B6 Sixth Form College
- Carshalton College
- City & Islington College
- City Lit
- Crossways Academy
- Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College
- Enfield College
- Hackney Community College
- Merton College
- Sir George Monoux College
- Uxbridge College

468

building projects across England's learning and skills sector have benefited from LSC-approved grants over the past four years.

View from the top

“In the Chancellor's March 2005 Budget, Gordon Brown committed an additional £350 million of capital investment in the further education estate to be made over 2008-09 to 2009-10. This level of investment is really encouraging and, if sustained, could see the upgrade of the further education estate completed by 2011 – five years earlier than expected.

However, money is only part of the solution. Alongside investment there must be a shared vision: the vision of design professionals, project managers, college leaders and partners throughout further education to create inspirational building projects that will revitalise our colleges, demonstrate value for money for public investment, and provide exciting and stimulating learning environments.”

Mark Haysom
LSC Chief Executive



Inside B6 – an ideal learning environment

Five minutes with...

Rod Kenyon

As Chair of LSC London Region, Rod Kenyon is passionate about creating opportunities for people to transform their lives through learning. Here he talks about his role and why he took it on.

Q: How did your career background prepare you for your current role?

I've spent much of my working life in the energy sector, where I specialised in industrial relations and human resources. I'm deeply committed to the learning agenda and have been a director of the British Gas Engineering Academy since 2002; Secretary of the Government's Apprenticeships Task Force since 2003; and Chair of LSC London West since 2003. Taking on the role of London's LSC Regional Chair in January last year was the logical next step, and I continue to view it as a very exciting and challenging opportunity.

Q: What is the role of the Regional Board?

The Regional Board is an overarching body that looks at what's happening in London as a whole. Whereas the five local LSCs focus on local planning, funding and delivery, the Regional Board has a coordinating overview that enables the LSC to deal with regional partners in a coherent way. This is essential for large projects, like the 2012 Olympics, which transcend local council areas and require us to link in with the work of other organisations such as the London Development Agency.

Chairing the Regional Board is a bit like being the conductor of an orchestra: my job is to make sure that all the instruments are heard, that they all



play the same tune, and that the result is a harmonious one.

Q: What do you see as the key issues for the London Region?

Ensuring that all people have access to good, relevant learning opportunities; making learning a demand-led system; contributing to the economic development of the region by providing the skills needed to make London successful; and tackling equality and diversity.

Q: What achievement makes you most proud?

Apprenticeships are now at their highest ever level – more than 255,000 are up and running across the country at the moment. I think that the Apprenticeships Task Force, of which I was the Secretary, contributed significantly to raising people's awareness of the importance of vocational training and it's good to see that the Government is implementing many of the recommendations contained in our report.



Blueprint for regeneration

According to the *Thames Gateway Skills Action Plan: Skills for Sustainable Communities*, published by the LSC's cross-regional Thames Gateway directorate, people remain at the heart of the Thames Gateway regeneration process.

Skills play a vital role in ensuring the success of regeneration initiatives and the realisation of sustainable communities. Some 194,000 new jobs are expected to be created in the Thames Gateway area as a result of the planned development. Yet many local people lack the skills needed to seize these employment opportunities: 18 per cent have no qualifications and 34 per cent are qualified below Level 2.

A framework for meeting the area's skills challenge, the Thames Gateway Skills Action Plan is based on skills and knowledge economy audits conducted in 2004. Additional input came from the local LSC Strategic Area Reviews and from dialogues about sector and Olympic skills conducted by the LSC in consultation with local stakeholders including Skills Sector Councils, the London Development Agency, regional development agencies, learning providers and employers.

The Thames Gateway Skills Action Plan has been created to ensure that LSC investment

in skills will successfully underpin the delivery of the Thames Gateway regeneration, and that the planned investment in physical regeneration provides employment opportunities for those that live in the area. The Action Plan outlines the LSC's objectives in relation to the Thames Gateway for the next three to five years, and the key actions for 2005-06.

Many significant projects are in the pipeline as part of the Thames Gateway regeneration process. In addition to the construction of the Olympic village in the lower Lea Valley, around 120,000 new homes are expected to be built in the Thames Gateway by 2016.

This will inevitably place considerable pressure on the region's construction sector. However, help is at hand: a Thames Gateway Construction Skills Directory has been set up to ensure that the sector has the appropriate workforce to make the regeneration successful. The directory helps individuals and businesses to understand the employment and learning opportunities available within construction in the Thames Gateway, and highlights the importance of upskilling the workforce.

To find out more, visit www.lsc.gov.uk/thamesgateway

£16 billion

is the estimated investment required for the planned Thames Gateway development.

Diary dates

A wide range of informative, LSC-sponsored events will be available across the London Region for learners and employers over the coming months, including those shown below.

Effective teams: Key to High Performance – 22 February

This informative employer seminar, in Enfield, will focus on creating competitive advantage through team working. (Contact Ruth Oakey on 01727 813 613 or email her at rutho@exemplas.com)

The following three events are aimed specifically at members of the teaching profession in the LSC London East area. For more information, contact John Duxbury on 01484 686 451 (info@yourworkforce.co.uk).

• Coaching for Improvement – 17 January

A workshop to review the roles and responsibilities of the team leader, and to investigate on-the-job training opportunities.

• Investors in People: Looking at the New Standard – 28 February

Relevant to schools that are considering signing up for the Investors in People programme, as well as those that are preparing for their review before the New Standard is introduced.

• Developing the Role of the Subject Leader – 22 March

This session looks at the roles and responsibilities of the subject leader within performance management.

Enterprise in Schools – 13 March

Following the success of Enterprise Education in Schools, which ran last summer, the DfES, in collaboration with LSC London West, has arranged an Enterprise Education in Schools Conference 2006, to be held at the Holiday Inn in Regents Park. A further event for London North and East will be announced shortly. To register, telephone 020 8481 3303 or visit www.livegroup.co.uk/EnterpriseEducation2006

Take4

Public sector Apprenticeships

Responding to the growing trend for careers within the public sector to span numerous organisations, the LSC has developed a new public sector Apprenticeships pilot programme to help young Londoners acquire a transferable skills set.

Neill Scott
Regional Policy Manager
LSC London Region

"Public sector employers have played a vital role in developing the new London-wide Apprenticeships pilot programme. It will broaden the knowledge of the young people taking part, help them understand what it means to work in the public sector and enable them to gain essential transferable skills for their future career.

"Since launching the pilot in October 2005 we have already achieved our target figure of 100 new apprentices, including existing young public sector workers and new recruits. We will be running three events to enable apprentices from all the public sector organisations involved in the pilot to share their knowledge and experiences. Phase two will start in September 2006, when we hope to be able to introduce mainstream public sector Apprenticeships across the region."

Veronika Harris
Head of Training and Development
V & A Museum

"The London-wide public sector Apprenticeships pilot offers us a real chance to bring young non-graduates into our organisation, which will in turn allow us to more accurately reflect our audience through our staff.

"The programme will help create the more flexible, skilled workforce that will be critical for London's future. It will give apprentices many opportunities to meet up with their counterparts in other government-funded organisations. I particularly like the emphasis on citizenship and understanding the role played by the public sector in society."

Sylvia Perrins
Vice Principal, Business Development
and Planning
Westminster Kingsway College

"We were awarded Centre of Vocational Excellence status for Public Administration earlier this year. This pilot was seen as a great opportunity to become involved with some government departments and expand Apprenticeships. Staff work-shadowed the employer prior to the delivery of the programme to ensure they were fully conversant with the culture and training requirements.

"Close employer engagement is key: for the IT framework, each apprentice is given an individual programme that fits the framework to meet their individual needs. Progress reports on each apprentice are regularly provided to the employer, together with a monthly monitoring meeting to ensure success and continuity."

Lucy Rouillon
Advanced Apprentice
North Central London Strategic
Health Authority

"I'm doing an Advanced Apprenticeship in Business Administration. I like it because at work I'm not really seen as an apprentice; I'm treated as a normal member of the team, with responsibilities just like all my colleagues. This experience has helped me become 'work ready', because I'm now much more able to be independent, make my own decisions and prioritise my workload.

"The Apprenticeships pilot sounds like a great idea to me. Meeting up to share experiences with other apprentices will help young people to understand more about the public sector and the range of career opportunities available within it."



Neill Scott



Veronika Harris



Sylvia Perrins



Lucy Rouillon