



Leading learning and skills

# the magazine

ESF awards  
celebrate  
excellence

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April 2007

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: Kevani Kanda was a winner at LSC London North's ESF 2005-2007 Programme awards ceremony (see page 6)



# Comment

### the magazine

#### Editorial

Editor: Lynn McSweeney  
 T: 020 7904 0663  
 E: londoninfo@LSC.gov.uk  
 W: www.lsclondon.gov.uk

The editor reserves the right to amend or cut submitted copy.

Published by the LSC in the London Region, where there are five local LSCs:

Learning and Skills Council London Central  
 Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DR  
 T: 0845 019 4144

Learning and Skills Council London East  
 Boardman House, 64 Broadway, Stratford, London E15 1NT  
 T: 0845 019 4151

Learning and Skills Council London North  
 Dumayne House, 1 Fox Lane, Palmers Green, London N13 4AB  
 T: 0845 019 4158

Learning and Skills Council London South  
 Canius House, 1 Scarbrook Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1SQ  
 T: 0845 019 4172

Learning and Skills Council London West  
 Central House, Lampton Road, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 1HY  
 T: 0845 019 4164

Written and produced by item ([www.item.co.uk](http://www.item.co.uk))

Publication reference LSC-P-LOR-07004

Right now it's a fascinating time to be working within the field of learning and skills.

There's so much going on. We're all still digesting the recommendations of the long-awaited Leitch Review of Skills, which was published at the end of last year. Yet many more projects are already underway: the sub-national review of economic development; the London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB), which we highlighted in the previous issue of this newsletter; and our *Delivering World-class Skills in a Demand-led System* consultation, which we're working on jointly with the DfES (see centre pages). Last but not least, we're all awaiting the outcome of the Government's spending review, which will be announced by the summer.

The pace is relentless. And it's worth bearing in mind that all this work is taking place against a backdrop of political change.

Although some might view all these activities and developments as cause for concern, to me they present a great opportunity. As a member of the LSEB I intend to go all out to ensure that the strategy being developed is one that will move the performance of London's learning and skills sector onto a far higher level.

The LSEB has the chance to provide the type of leadership which provides confidence for everyone in the sector. With that confidence, organisations can invest resources to deliver better, people can take longer-term decisions, and learning and skills can have more impact. We have the chance to ensure that the needs of employers and individual learners really do drive the system. I firmly believe that LSC London Region is in a unique position to influence the future direction of our sector. We will take every opportunity to use that influence wisely.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *the magazine*. As ever, I welcome feedback on any aspect of the LSC's work in driving up skills levels in our region, so please feel free to get in touch.

**David Hughes**  
 LSC London Regional Director



EUROPEAN UNION  
 European Social Fund

# eProspectus helps students make the right choice

LSC London Region has launched *Choice*, a comprehensive online guide to educational provision for young people in the capital.

For young people to succeed in making their own way in life, they need to play an active role in managing their own progression. Yet many are daunted by the prospect of choosing educational courses and programmes, which they view as a complex and laborious process. And for those living in London, the enormous range of learning opportunities available makes the task even harder.

However, since LSC London Region's eagerly awaited eProspectus went live at the end of February, things have become much easier. Students are no longer required to pore through lengthy course directories because all the information they need is now available at the touch of a button. *Choice* contains a searchable, up-to-date directory of courses and programmes delivered by London's schools, colleges and work-based training providers.

## Strategy

*Choice* was created in response to the DfES 14-19 Education and Skills Implementation Plan, which outlined the need for a strategy



Sean McMahon, LSC 14-19 Director and Chair of eProspectus Management Group; learner Dan Rouche; David Hughes; and Councillor James Kempton, London Councils Executive Member for Children and Young People, and Leader of Islington Council

to ensure that young people know what educational provision is on offer within their local area.

David Hughes, LSC Regional Director for London, said: "I am delighted to be a part of this pan-London project. Increasing cross-boundary patterns of learner movement, by alerting young people to all the learning opportunities and progression pathways open to them, is key to our goal of improving the skills of young people. This in turn will ensure that we have a workforce of world-class standard."

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools Lord Andrew Adonis is also a strong supporter of the project. He said: "This is a very valuable service to all young Londoners who will be able to identify at the touch of a button the full range of learning opportunities available to them. London has a significant number of young people who are outside both education and employment, and the online prospectus will help them to access courses and gain new skills. I am delighted that we are offering this excellent resource covering the whole of London."

The complete  
14-19 London  
prospectus

choice  
yourlondon.gov.uk/choice

## Choice: a collaborative venture

*Choice* has also driven up the level of collaboration between partners across the region who have got together to plan, communicate and deliver the full range of learning choices to all young people.

The eProspectus project is funded by the LSC, local authorities and London Challenge, which is a partnership that aims to provide a better deal for London's students, teachers,

leaders and schools, and to break the link between disadvantage and low attainment. It is managed by London Connects, a region-wide agency that brings together local, regional, and central government to support the delivery of the e-government agenda across the capital.

*Choice* is supported by all 33 London authorities, Connexions and the Mayor of London.

# Using Inside Knowledge to overcome barriers

Inside Knowledge, a London Region ESF project, is drawing to a close.

As reported in the July 2006 issue of *the magazine*, Inside Knowledge is a structured programme of classroom training and supervised work placements aimed at long-term homeless people and ex-offenders.

Co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and LSC London Region, the two-year Inside Knowledge project had been scheduled for completion in December 2006, but was extended to the end of March. It is delivered by the City Lit in partnership with organisations from the sector including Novas Overture, Look Ahead, Turning Point, St Mungo's, English Churches Housing Group, NACRO and Hope Worldwide.

The results are impressive: 295 learners joined the course and the retention rate is 70 per cent. Successes include 119 full Level 2 City & Guilds certificates in Supporting the Development Needs of Homeless and Vulnerable People, 44 learners progressing to further study and 50 moving into paid or voluntary employment. By the end of March, a further 20 learners are expected to achieve full Level 2 qualifications.



Actor Kevin Spacey presents Inside Knowledge student Andrew Campbell with the London Region Individual Adult Learner Award 2006

Although the Inside Knowledge project is due to finish at the end of March, the same qualification will be offered under a new project called 'MOVE', also co-financed by the LSC and ESF.

**70%**  
is the retention rate for the Inside Knowledge project

## Managing our database – an uphill task



A huge thank you to all those who responded to our mailshot about cleansing the LSC London Region key partner and stakeholder database. Your help is greatly appreciated and please do bear with us while we update the system.

Like most large organisations, having a usable, reliable and secure contact database is absolutely essential for us to operate efficiently. We are in the process of finalising a far simpler database that will make it easy for us to extract data

for communications activities, as well as to change and maintain data.

Under the new LSC London Region structure there are 33 local partnership teams. Within each of these teams a nominated colleague will assist in keeping their borough's information current on our database, so we will be relying on all our partners and stakeholders to feed through information about address and personnel changes on a regular basis.

Thank you again for your continued support.

# LSC survey examines the impact of FE study

The findings of London's first learner tracker survey were revealed in March. They certainly make interesting reading.

The primary aim of the Learner Tracker project was to examine the impact of studying in further education (FE) for a full Level 2 or Level 3 qualification.

The research involved 1,400 telephone interviews with learners aged 19 to 50 who completed a full Level 2 or Level 3 course at one of six London FE colleges in the academic year 2005/2006.

The research focused on two types of learner benefit. Firstly, 'hard' benefits, relating directly to skills the learner has gained, including improvements in numeracy, literacy, teamwork, communication and social skills, and skills for current or future employment. And secondly, 'soft' benefits from completing

the FE course, including feeling more self-confident and enthusiastic about learning, improving job prospects and quality of life, and having a clearer idea of what the learner wants to do with their future.

The results are impressive, as can be seen from the statistics shown top right. LSC London Regional Director David Hughes welcomes the findings, because they confirm what's long been believed: namely that FE study really does open the doors to better job prospects, higher productivity in the workplace and progression to even higher skills.

He said: "One aspect of the report that I found particularly interesting was the insight into learner motivation: 59 per cent of

## Key research findings

- More than 40 per cent of learners participating in the survey continued onto a further course of study, which was nearly always a higher-level course.
- More than 80 per cent of those who continued in employment experienced some benefit in their work situation as a result of their studies: almost half say their pay has increased and a third say they are now working in a higher-level job.
- Nearly a third of those who were unemployed before starting their course are now working.

Level 3 learners were studying in order to help them progress onto another course (Level 2 learners: 34 per cent); and 17 per cent of Level 2 learners said they were taking the course because it was a job requirement (Level 3 learners: 5 per cent). This compelling evidence can now be used to help persuade people that further education is a very good route to follow."

## London entrepreneur scoops regional award

East London business owner Ciara McGarrity has won an award for being our region's most notable scholar on a national programme for entrepreneurs.

The New Entrepreneur Scholarships (NES) programme has been running for six years. Developed and funded by the LSC, it aims to encourage entrepreneurship in deprived areas by giving scholars access to part-time management education, support for various start-up costs and business mentoring.

Ciara McGarrity is the founding owner and creative director of Pupastudio, a contemporary event styling agency based in Bethnal Green. She is the regional winner of the 2006 NES New Entrepreneur of the Year Award. At a ceremony held in the British Library she received a cheque for £500 from Saira Khan, runner-up in television's hugely popular *The Apprentice* series.

Joining the NES programme in April 2004 proved to be a life-changing decision for Ciara. She said: "As a creative individual, the programme was my first insight into business terms and the first introduction to the structure of a business plan."

Once she had learned how to formulate a comprehensive business plan, things went from strength to strength for Ciara. She used the NES start-up grant to purchase essential equipment, which she still relies on today, and as part of the NES package she also completed an intensive two-week training programme at Babson College in Boston.



**Ciara McGarrity proudly displays her award, accompanied by Saira Khan and Stephen Pegge, Head of Communications at Lloyds TSB Business**

Ciara now uses the business plan as a working document and described it as "an invaluable tool for the strategic planning of my business".

The NES programme is managed on behalf of the LSC by the National Federation of Enterprise Agencies in partnership with the Association of Business Schools and the Prince's Trust.

# ROSE project receives MP visit

John Hayes, Shadow Minister for Vocational Education, came to meet some of the beneficiaries of Havering College's ROSE project.

Part-funded by LSC London East, Havering College's ROSE (Realistic Opportunities for Supported Employment) programme aims to secure paid work placements for students with learning difficulties. This work experience gives the students unparalleled opportunities to gain skills and confidence, engage with society and earn money.

Under the programme, each ROSE student follows an individual learning plan to ensure that appropriate placements are secured. All this is done with the support of parents, guardians and Havering College staff, including job coaches who work alongside students until they are confident enough to operate independently, and who liaise with employers to ensure that tasks are completed to their full satisfaction.

Mr Hayes was impressed to learn that nearly 20 businesses are already participating in the programme, including Matalan, McDonalds, Alfa Cars and Sainsbury's. He said that his visit had given him the opportunity to learn more about the project and "the incredibly dedicated staff making a big difference to the kind of people who may not usually fulfil their potential".

Paul Davis, 23, is one of the ROSE programme's biggest success stories. He started working a few hours each week in the McDonalds restaurant at Havering's Liberty Shopping Centre, accompanied by his job coach Kathy Clarke. Although initially nervous at the prospect of working and of being with new people, Paul soon settled in. He said: "I felt happy that Kathy was with me when I started the job because I was a bit scared and sometimes I got stuck. But she was always there to help me. I really like working and am happy I have got the chance to do this."

Staff at the restaurant were so impressed with Paul's determination to do well that he was offered a six-hour shift, which he accepted. Paul has since scooped the Employee of the Month award and earned a bonus in his pay packet.

Restaurant Manager Debra Birch is full of praise for Paul. She said: "He really is helpful, reliable and polite. Paul has picked things up very quickly. The ROSE programme has made us as a business more aware of students who are disadvantaged or have learning difficulties."



Paul Davis is one of the ROSE programme's biggest success stories

Job Coach Kathy Clarke said: "It's lovely to see how much Paul has progressed. When employers are willing to give people with learning difficulties the opportunity to have real jobs, they are doing so much more than just giving them paid employment. It's about inclusion within society, which makes such a difference to their lives."

## Winning design

Apprentice Obeida McKerry won a competition organised by the Sector Skills Council for Creative and Cultural Industries.

As part of his studies at the College of North East London he designed a ticket for the Young Apprenticeship Variety Show, which was held at Stratford Circus in east London in February. The judges loved the "immediacy" of Obeida's design and felt that the abstract, roughly drawn images of stage curtains, microphones and shooting stars summed up the spirit of the occasion.

## ESF Awards celebrate excellence

The Science Museum was the impressive venue for LSC London North's European Social Fund (ESF) awards ceremony for 2005 to 2007.

The standard of entries was very high, which made deciding on the 10 category award winners a very difficult task. Indeed, the judges were so impressed with the entries submitted by Kevani Kanda and Jeyani Ratnamahesan for the Personal Achiever of the Programme award that they decided to award it to both individuals!

Mary Conneely, LSC Regional Director Regeneration London, said: "This event is testament to the fantastic achievements of these projects and individuals, made possible by ESF. Congratulations to all the winners: their hard work and dedication have paid off in a big way, and we are proud to recognise that."

The current round of ESF funding in London runs until July 2008.



# Driving up efficiency in transport and logistics

Training offered through LSC's Train to Gain programme has helped an Enfield-based courier company to boost the efficiency and confidence of its workforce.

Since The Courier Service (Same Day) Ltd started up in 2004, it has built a sound reputation for providing a professional and efficient service. In 2006 it won the Royal Small Arms Enterprise Enfield Business of the Year Award.

Late last year, although the business was thriving, with a reliable team of four employees and a fleet of dispatch drivers, the staff desperately needed forklift training as a legal requirement. Director Denise Fresco said: "As a small enterprise, money is always needed for all areas of the business, so the cost implications of this training were a real worry."

However, Train to Gain provided the ideal solution. The staff embarked on training for the Forklift Competency Certificate, and Specialist Plant and Machinery Operations NVQ Level 2. Denise said: "My employees now feel confident and are competent in operating the forklift, which helps them to do their job more efficiently. They feel



Train to Gain is helping to drive up efficiency for The Courier Service

valued by their employer and are happy that they are achieving qualifications in their specialist field."

Denise can't say enough about the support she has received from Train to Gain: "The training has been excellent and has

provided much-needed additional skills to help the efficiency and productivity of the business. We are looking to do IT training through this programme in the near future."

For more information about Train to Gain, visit [www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk)

## High-scoring students raise the benchmark

Two London students were joint winners of the Securities & Investment Institute – Introduction to Investment Award for Further Education Colleges.

Gowri Reesue from Westminster Kingsway College and Sabine Sebastian from Tower Hamlets College were presented with their award by the Lord Mayor at a ceremony in February. They were singled out for scoring the highest marks in their category.

Simon Culhane, Chief Executive of the Securities & Investment Institute, said: "Each year our award-winners' achievements raise the benchmark higher and this year is no exception. Our winners have proved

themselves outstanding in their fields of expertise and I know their firms are delighted with their success.

"We look forward to helping them maintain their competence so they become ambassadors for the industry and examples of professionalism, integrity and excellence."



Sabine and Gowri proudly display their award certificates, which were presented by The Lord Mayor of London, Alderman John Stuttard

# Delivering world-class a demand-led system

College directors, principals, training providers and other key stakeholders from London's learning and skills sector came together to help plan the next steps in delivering the Leitch Review recommendations and transforming further education.

In February London hosted the first of nine regional roadshows organised by the LSC and the DfES. The purpose of the event was to engage the learning and skills sector in planning how to respond to the recommendations of the *Leitch Review of Skills, Prosperity for all in the global economy – world-class skills*.

Leading figures in London's learning and skills arena were keen to get involved in the discussion, evidenced by the strong turnout of 76 delegates, including representatives from the Confederation of British Industry, the Greater London Authority, colleges and training providers across the region.

The event started with an introductory talk by Rob Wye, LSC National Director of Strategy and Communications. The link between the Leitch Review and the creation of a demand-led FE system was then explored in depth by LSC Chief Executive Mark Haysom and Stephen Marston, Director General of the DfES Lifelong

Learning and Skills Directorate. Professor Mike Campbell also delivered a fascinating presentation about the importance of providing economically valuable skills.

Plenary and interactive Q&A sessions, supported by electronic touchpad technology, gave delegates ample opportunity to voice their opinions.

Subjects discussed included Lord Leitch's recommendations and their implications for London, providers' readiness to take on this new learning and skills challenge, and the most effective way to deliver the Leitch ambition in our region.

The feedback obtained during the nine regional roadshows will be used to create a formal report. This will be used by the DfES and other stakeholders to influence thinking and to reinforce the role of the LSC and the learning and skills sector in the Treasury's response to Leitch and the Comprehensive Spending Review.

## A wide-ranging set of recommendations

The recommendations contained within the Leitch Review will potentially have an enormous impact on the UK learning and skills sector. They include the following.

- Meet the need for higher skills across all levels by increasing government investment. Treasury support up to Level 3 should rise by £1.5 billion to £2 billion a year by 2020.
- Route all public funding for adult vocational skills through Train to Gain and Learner Accounts by 2010, with the exception of community learning.
- Increase employer investment in Levels 3 and 4 within the workplace by expanding Train to Gain to higher levels and dramatically increasing Apprenticeship numbers.
- Strengthen the employer voice by creating a new Commission for Employment and Skills that reports to central government. The Commission will manage the Sector Skills Councils and a new network of Employment and Skills Boards.
- Increase employer engagement and investment in skills by reforming and re-licensing Sector Skills Councils, publicly funding only the vocational qualifications they approve and expanding skills brokerage services.
- Launch a new Employer Pledge for employers to commit voluntarily to train all employees up to Level 2 in the workplace.
- Create a new integrated employment and skills service that will increase sustainable employment and progression, and will improve basic skills for those out of work.
- Create a new universal adult careers service offering a 'skills MOT'.



Mark Haysom explores the link between the Leitch Review and FE reform at a regional roadshow organised by the LSC and the DfES

# skills in

## The Leitch Review



Lord Leitch

Back in 2004 Lord Leitch was asked by the Government to consider what the UK's long-term ambition should be for developing skills in order to maximise economic prosperity and productivity, and to improve social justice. In the Budget 2006 report last March, Chancellor Gordon Brown also asked him to consider how best to integrate skills and employment.

*The Leitch Review of Skills* was published in December 2006. It offers a long-term view of the country's skills needs and reveals that the UK is running to stand still: even if the current, ambitious targets to improve skills are met, the national skills base will still lag behind that of many comparator countries in 2020.

## Transforming the system to achieve the 2020 vision

The driving ambition behind the Leitch Review is for the UK to commit wholeheartedly to becoming a world leader in skills by 2020. This is a big task, and one that can only be achieved by dramatically increasing adult skills across all levels.

More specifically, fulfilling the Leitch ambition will require the following improvements:

- 95 per cent of adults to achieve basic skills of functional literacy and numeracy (2005 rates: 85 per cent literacy and 79 per cent numeracy)
- more than 90 per cent of adults to be qualified to at least Level 2 (2005 rate: 69 per cent)
- shifting the balance of intermediate skills from Level 2 to Level 3, including an additional 1.9 million Level 3 attainments by 2020 and boosting the number of apprentices to 500,000 a year
- more than 40 per cent of adults to be qualified to Level 4 and above, with a commitment to continue progression (2005 rate: 29 per cent).

Underpinning all of this are three important principles. Government, employers and individuals must share responsibility for upskilling the nation.

There has to be a sharp focus on economically valuable skills, with an emphasis on portable skills that encourage mobility in the labour market.

And finally, the skills system must be developed so that it meets the needs of individuals and employers, is demand-led rather than centrally planned, and builds on existing structures by raising performance.

If Lord Leitch's ambition is achieved, the UK economy will benefit to the tune of £80 billion over 30 years.

This will come about through a boost in the productivity growth rate of up to 15 per cent and an increase in the employment growth rate of around 10 per cent (equivalent to 200,000 jobs).

These improvements will in turn drive down levels of social deprivation, poverty and inequality across the country.

## Piecing together the learning and skills jigsaw

**It really is a very exciting time for all those involved in the learning and skills sector.**

The March 2006 Government White Paper, *Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances*, set out the commitment to develop a new approach to funding for 14 to 19-year-olds, and to move to a position where more funding is driven directly by employer and learner choice. The Leitch Review, published at the end of last year, endorsed this approach.

Naturally, all of this has a knock-on effect for the LSC, which has responded to the White Paper commitments by reviewing the *agenda for change* funding methodology to see how it can incorporate an increasingly demand-led approach.

The DfES and the LSC are working together on the details of how purchasing power can be put into the hands of employers and individual learners to ensure that the system meets their needs. The two organisations jointly published a consultation paper in January 2007: *Delivering World-class Skills in a Demand-led System*, which sought stakeholders' views on:

- the proposed reforms required to deliver the adult skills, employer skills and 14-19 challenges
- how a demand-led FE system would work in practice
- funding models for young people, adults and employers which would be implemented for 2008/09 in support of the wider reform programme.

**The consultation period closed on 30 March 2007. To view the consultation paper, visit [www.lsc.gov.uk/publications](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/publications)**

# In my view: finance

Raza Raheem is LSC London Region's newly appointed Finance Director. We spoke to him about the many challenges presented by his new role.



**Q: What attracted you to the LSC?**

I worked previously in the NHS, where I commissioned education and training funds for health professionals in south London. So I've seen how the skills escalator works and understand the value of training. My new role at the LSC is very similar, but on a larger scale: whereas I used to deal with one employer in a part of London, I'm now working with all employers across the region. And with the 2012 Games approaching, London's skills needs are very much in the spotlight, so it will be nice to help make a positive difference.

**Q: What do you see as your biggest challenge?**

It's vital that all London's residents have access to skills and training. Equality of access will lead to equality of work opportunities. There shouldn't be an underclass. My main challenge is to ensure that every penny is spent with that objective in mind.

**Q: So are you going to channel the LSC's money in a new direction?**

We need to ensure that we get the best value for money from all our contracts. We're working in a new marketplace, one that's demand led. Delivering education for education's sake simply won't do: all our providers must ensure that their training is linked closely to employer requirements. That's why

funding will move from the current situation, where it's rolled over each year, to one that's firmly based on meeting employer needs.

**Q: The emphasis is very much on efficiency then?**

Definitely. I believe we can save a lot of money by sharing expertise within the learning and skills sector. This is particularly true where capital bids are concerned: when a college submits a successful bid, I'd like those people who've been involved in the process to give a 'heads up' to those who have yet to go through it. Sharing knowledge across the region in this way will save a lot of time and money. Nationally, the LSC is moving towards framework

agreements for property consultants and contractors, which will also be helpful. In other areas establishing regional purchasing consortia among further education providers will allow them to achieve economies of scale and save money for the front line.

**Q: How will you know that the LSC's money has been well spent?**

Each year LSC London Region has around £1.8 billion at its disposal. Because the budget is so large, and because we have contracts with so many different providers, risk-based auditing is absolutely essential. It's the only way we can provide management assurance that taxpayers' money is being spent appropriately.

# Fit for purpose

Successful capital bids from Westminster Kingsway College and South Thames College have paved the way for other London providers to follow suit.

## Raza's top 10

Raza Raheem's LSC finance team is focusing its efforts on addressing 10 key issues:

- improving the financial health of providers that are financially challenged
- tighter financial management of providers deemed to be at high risk
- assisting all providers to deal with the new demand-led, employer-focused marketplace
- examining the ability of providers to manage their cost base in light of the requirements of this new marketplace
- encouraging the sharing of good practice across the sector to drive up taxpayers' value for money
- encouraging better planning and collaborative working in respect of capital bids
- ensuring capital projects meet the strategic requirements of the region
- developing a slick, leading-edge LSC team for contracting and procurement
- ensuring that the LSC's provider financial assurance (PFA) team adds value for its customers
- managing LSC funds efficiently to ensure that we get the most out of every pound we spend.

If London is to have world-class, 21st century learning facilities available to all learners, much work needs to be done in rebuilding the region's FE capital estate.

Regional Finance Director Raza Raheem said: "When we reviewed our FE capital estate last year, it was clear that up to 45 per cent of buildings were not fit for their current or future purpose.

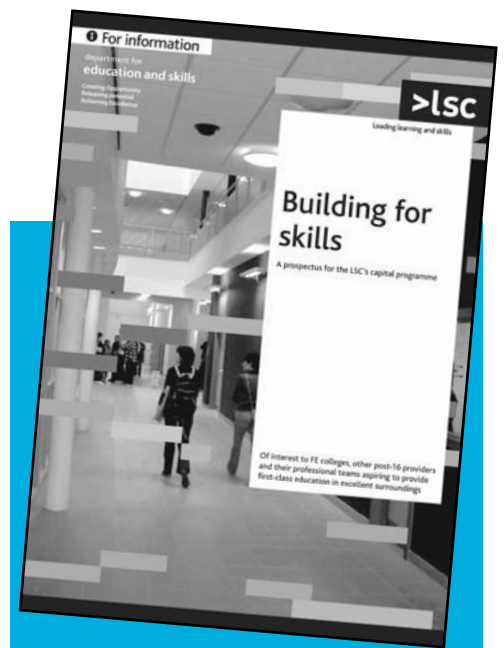
"In recent years London has received a relatively small percentage of the national 'pot' available. But now we're starting to see a reversal of this trend, with many more London colleges starting to bring new capital schemes to the table."

Three major capital projects for London were approved by the National Capital Committee and the LSC Council in January.

- **Westminster Kingsway College:** £54 million, including £27 million funding from the LSC
- **South Thames College:** £69 million, including £28 million from the LSC
- **Lambeth College:** £21 million, including more than £5 million from the LSC.

External research has shown that capital expenditure impacts positively on participation and attainment for 16 to 19-year-olds and adults.

London's capital investment is sure to result in similar improvements, because students will be more responsive, attentive and enthusiastic in bright, airy and stimulating, state-of-the-art learning environments. Rebuilding learning facilities also has a very positive effect on the wider community.



## LSC launches its National Capital Prospectus

Capital investment is a vital part of the Government's efforts to implement the Leitch Review of Skills and the recommendations of the FE White Paper.

In February, as promised in the FE White Paper, the LSC launched its National Capital Prospectus, *Building for Skills*, which sets out how the LSC's capital programme will underpin the Government's 14-19 and skills reform agendas.

To download the prospectus, visit: <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-buildingforskills-pu-feb07.pdf>

The LSC has launched an activity costs information website to inform sector skills councils, providers and other national stakeholders of funding policy changes and rates.

You can access the website at: <http://aci.lsc.gov.uk>



# Learning and skills in London:

Great progress has been made across our region's learning and skills sector in recent years. Our track record for delivering against each of London's five priorities is something we should all be proud of.

## Priority 1: Improve educational opportunities for all young people

More and more young Londoners are participating in education each year. At 82 per cent (2004 provisional), our region's rates remain consistently higher than the national average (79 per cent).

The table above shows the rise in learner numbers within the 16-18 group in London. This increase is a direct consequence of prioritising investment in further education (FE).

Following a 19 per cent increase in investment by the LSC over the past three

Further education		2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07 Planned
16-18	All	92,858	96,787	98,205	100,947
	Full Level 2	15,297	15,329	17,998	18,937
	Full Level 3	26,357	27,633	29,198	31,851

years, London's school sixth form student numbers have also risen steadily: 58,028 in 2004/05, 60,449 in 2005/06, and 61,168 planned for 2006/07.

The achievement of a Level 2 or a Level 3 at 19 is a key measure of success and London's performance is getting better all the time in this respect too. During 2005/06, 71.3 per cent of 19-year-olds had

achieved a Level 2, which is on a par with the national average – a great achievement (2004/05 figure for London: 67.7 per cent).

It is an even better story for Level 3, with 48.6 per cent of 19-year-olds achieving this in 2005/06, which is almost two percentage points higher than the national average (previous year's figure for London: 45.9 per cent).

## Priority 2: Tackle London's skills and employment gap

The most reliable way to measure progress in improving basic skills among Londoners is by looking at the number of Skills for Life achievements. The LSC was established in London in 2001 and during its first three years 156,156 learners gained their first Skills for Life qualification. We are on course to exceed this volume in the period running from 2004 to 2007.

Labour Force Survey data suggests that 25.6 per cent of the London workforce does not have an NVQ Level 2, compared to 26.8 per cent nationally.

However, the LSC's prioritisation of funding has helped drive up the number of adults undertaking full Level 2 learning in our region from 16,161 in 2004/05 to 20,285

in 2005/06. This 25.5 per cent increase is significantly above the national average increase of 15.7 per cent.

Similarly, our investment has resulted in the number of adults undertaking full Level 3 learning shooting up from 14,283 in 2004/05 to 21,550 in 2005/06.

## Priority 3: Raise the effectiveness and performance of the learning and skills sector

Clearly, improving the learning and skills sector is not just a matter of increasing intakes; it is also about improving the quality of outcomes. The recent increases in 16-18 and adult full Level 2 success rates provide the proof of the pudding, as shown on the right (the national comparison is shown in brackets).

			2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 (estimated)
Further education success rates	16-18	All	66% (69%)	70% (72%)	72%
		Full Level 2	57% (58%)	62% (64%)	N/A
	Adult	All	66% (72%)	74% (75%)	76%
		Full Level 2	59% (56%)	63% (62%)	N/A
Work-based learning success rates	16-18	All	39% (46%)	31% (41%)	46% (54%)
	Adult	All	40% (45%)	33% (38%)	48% (52%)

# getting better all the time



## Priority 4: Integrate skills within economic development and local and regional regeneration

Much of our work in this area is measured through Local Area Agreement targets and other multi-agency agreements, so it is difficult to measure progress at a London level. Our primary focus in this area has been on supporting the NEET (not in education, employment or training) group and tackling worklessness across the region.

It is also worth noting that engaging employers with work-based learning remains a challenge for our region. This means that we are struggling to meet demand for programmes like Apprenticeships, as reflected in the 2005/06 figures shown above right.

The downward trend is partly the result of LSC London Region's renewed drive for

Work-based learning		2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
16-18	Apprenticeships	4,606	5,456	5,398
	Advanced Apprenticeships	2,318	2,265	2,210
19+	Apprenticeships	2,818	2,898	2,739
	Advanced Apprenticeships	2,739	2,610	2,815

excellence among its provider base: failure to meet minimum targets for success rates now results in contract termination.

This new approach has already given rise to new efficiencies: the 6 per cent reduction in volumes was delivered on the back of a 14 per cent reduction in funding.

By reinvesting these funds with higher-performing providers during 2007/08, we should see volumes start to rise.

## Priority 5: Equip Londoners with skills to benefit from investment in the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games

The Olympics are five years off, so work in this area is still at a relatively early stage for meaningful measurements to be carried out. For example, the Pre-Volunteer Programme is at pilot stage.

# Five minutes with... Mike Jutsum

Since the middle of 2006 the LSC has been responsible for planning and funding offender learning and skills. Kensington and Chelsea College is west London's lead provider in this field, so we spoke to Principal Mike Jutsum to find out more.

**Q: Which prisons do you deal with?**

We have four: Wormwood Scrubs, Wandsworth, the Young Offender Institution and Remand Centre at Feltham and Latchmere House, an adult male prison that operates as a resettlement establishment in conjunction with Wormwood Scrubs.

**Q: At what point do you offer learning to offenders?**

We can deliver education and skills on the prison premises, ensuring that it's relevant to London's employment opportunities. But it's also vital that we

pick up prisoners who are returning to our region – most sentenced prisoners serve their time in prisons outside of London. Our new transition centre will have a big part to play in this.

**Q: Where will your transition centre be located?**

It's based on the Park Royal estate in Ealing. We'll be signing the lease as soon as we receive planning permission for a change of use on the site, from industry to education. The LSC has been very supportive of the project, which we hope to kick off in the summer term.

**Q: What difference will the new centre make?**

Prisoners who are eligible for release on a temporary licence will be able to come to the centre to learn new skills in areas like construction. We also hope to attract people who are returning to London after serving their prison sentence. In both cases, by raising skill levels we can help them become more employable. We will also have employment mentors at the centre to help people take up local long-term job opportunities. Many of the 600 employers on the Park Royal estate have recruited ex-offenders and found them to be loyal, productive members of staff.

**Q: Why are you so passionate about offender learning?**

Because of the difference you can make to people's lives. For some offenders, prison is the first time they have ever had any formal education that interests them. If we can capture that interest, we stand a chance of helping them to break the cycle of re-offending, get a job and gain some self-respect.

**Q: Will the centre be used solely by offenders and ex-offenders?**

No. We will also be using the centre to link with 14 to 16-year-olds in local schools in Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. These sessions will run on days when offender learning is not being undertaken. Another tri-borough initiative in the pipeline is a joint Gateway application for the specialised diploma in construction for 14 to 19-year-olds.



# Malaika embarks on a brand new LSC role

LSC London Region has appointed its first Economic Development Director – Regeneration.

Malaika Culverwell is a woman who likes a challenge. She joined LSC London Region in mid-February after several years within the Department for International Development: "In my former role, I focused on private/public sector partnerships, enabling the private sector to work more effectively with governments in developing countries so that investment agreements contributed to sustainable economic growth."

But now Malaika is facing a new challenge, as LSC London Region's Economic Development Director – Regeneration. "London is poised to take advantage of the many opportunities that regeneration projects offer to upskill the workforce," she said. "The UK is entering a more competitive arena, because India and China are rapidly becoming a force to be reckoned with. To maintain the competitiveness of our region we need to seize the employment opportunities presented by large-scale regeneration projects, and support young people and adults in the community who are willing

to enter into work and gain further qualifications."

It's still relatively early days for Malaika, but what she describes as her "broad brush plans" include providing intelligence on the gaps and opportunities for LSC provision around regeneration activities, particularly for excluded and disadvantaged adults. She said: "I want us to raise the profile of existing learning programmes and initiatives in London related to employability, and to remove the ambiguity about the LSC's role in helping to regenerate local areas."

In the longer term, Malaika intends to "follow the lifeline of regional regeneration projects, ensuring that the LSC is well positioned to make education and training provision available so that local people can benefit." She believes that her strong

understanding of partnerships, private sector engagement and sustainable development will be helpful in her new LSC role, and said: "I look forward to applying that experience in my new job."



Malaika Culverwell

## ESF programme to run to 2013

Planning is underway for England's new European Social Fund (ESF) programme, which will run from 2007 through to 2013.

Our region will receive around £330 million for this period under the Competitiveness and Employment Objective, which has two priorities:

1. developing the employability of unemployed and economically inactive individuals
2. developing a skilled and adaptable workforce.

LSC London Region will continue to be a co-financing organisation (CFO), along with the London Development Agency, Jobcentre Plus and London Councils. There will be a single co-financing plan for the LSC London Region.

Negotiation on CFO allocations and the development of a regional ESF strategy and co-financing plans is expected to take place between March and September 2007.

It is anticipated that tendering rounds will start from September so that delivery can begin from January 2008.

## Conference lends a helping hand to the third sector

The third sector makes an important contribution to the delivery of learning and skills within our region. However, anecdotal evidence suggested that voluntary and community sector organisations were struggling to secure contracts following changes to public sector commissioning arrangements.

But help was at hand, in the form of a mid-March conference at the British Library, sponsored by LSC London Region and partner organisation Futurebuilders England.

During the event, delegates were encouraged to work together as a sector in a more formal way, with shared expertise and a strong infrastructure capable of delivering the good governance, quality management and information systems that are needed to support successful contracting.

# Take4

## It's never too late to learn

Research commissioned by the LSC reveals that the gritty reality of life in unskilled work is driving more and more people back into learning, to get the qualifications needed for them to succeed in life.

**Vic Grimes**  
**Area Director**  
**LSC London South**

"Returning to learning gives people an invaluable second chance to improve their job prospects and life chances. This is something I can associate with: I didn't do particularly well at school because at that time the educational offer did not suit my needs, but later on in life I returned to learning and went on to gain an MBA.

"Learning is not just about gaining important qualifications; it's also about personal fulfilment and development. That's why the LSC is working in partnership with local authorities, colleges and training providers to put in place a broad range of vocationally based learning opportunities for people of all ages."

**Peter Ibrahim**  
**Work-based Projects Coordinator**  
**Richmond Adult and Community College**

"I left school after GCSEs at 16. My grades were okay, but not brilliant. I then did a GNVQ intermediate qualification in Leisure and Tourism at sixth form. I didn't really know what I wanted to do, so I went from job to job, working in telesales and in shops, including working at Blockbusters for five years. But I knew retail wasn't really for me.

"Next I did some temping at Richmond Adult and Community College, which led to a full-time job as a work-based learning administrator and an Advanced Apprenticeship qualification – my first certificate in eight years! I haven't looked back: following our recent restructure, I'm now the Work-based Projects Coordinator and am going to train to become an NVQ assessor."

**Andrew Slade**  
**Vice Principal**  
**Richmond Business School**

"We're finding that a lot of people who dropped out of school at an early age are coming back into education. Interestingly it's not just 16 to 18-year olds who are doing this – some of our learners in this category are in their 50s.

"There's a lot of interest in Apprenticeships among the 19 to 24 age group. A great thing about this programme is that good news travels fast, so success stories like Peter Ibrahim really help encourage buy-in from other young people. I see Train to Gain as an extension of the Apprenticeships programme. It's fantastic, because it's allowing us to work directly with employers in widening the participation agenda, and is enabling working adults to gain what for many is their first learning qualification in years."

**Steve Farrow**  
**Partnership Manager**  
**Jobcentre Plus, South London District**

"People of all ages come to Jobcentre Plus for support and advice. With our encouragement they can start to direct their own life, gain qualifications and get a job.

"A great example is a prolific offender who came to us after a five-year prison stretch to try and do something different with his life. We helped him to gain a job in construction and to undertake training, which did a lot to restore his self-esteem and confidence. He has since turned his life around completely and is now a successful trainer with one of the largest construction companies in the country."



Vic Grimes



Peter Ibrahim



Andrew Slade



Steve Farrow