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Leading learning and skills

Personal Best
launched at Wembley
page 12

the magazine

January 2008

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: Chair of the London 2012 Organising Committee Sebastian Coe and Olympics Minister Tessa Jowell at Wembley Stadium for the launch of Personal Best (see page 12)

the magazine

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David Hughes

Comment

Welcome to the first issue of *the magazine* for 2008. I hope you will enjoy reading about the many activities and developments that are taking place across the learning and skills sector in our region.

The big news story for us at the moment is the London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB) draft strategy (see article opposite). We share the Board's ambition to sustain and enhance our region's successful and globally competitive economy and will be helping to implement the strategy in many different ways.

We now know the funding for the next three years and we are working with the LSEB and Government to agree how it will be spent. Everyone is clear that London needs some flexibility to meet the unique needs of the capital. Some of this is set out already for improving the Train to Gain service (see article on page 5), and some of it will come later.

A key part of that service is being able to provide a single and coherent offer to employers, whether it is fully or part-funded by the employer or by Government. So that will be a big part of our work with the London Development Agency and Jobcentre Plus over the coming months.

Other critical challenges for us are to increase the volume of Apprenticeships and invest in more pre-employment training, as well as supporting our training and skills providers to deliver, in order to meet these challenges.

Our investment in capital projects will continue, as will our drive to improve provision for young people so that they develop the skills they need for work.

LSC investment alone will obviously not be enough to deliver the actions outlined in the draft LSEB strategy. So we particularly welcome the proposal for a joint investment plan, in which organisations such as the LSC, the London Development Agency and Jobcentre Plus work together to target resources and energy more effectively across the region.

Thank you to everyone who has responded to the LSEB consultation. It offers an unbeatable opportunity to put employers in the driving seat and ensure that London's adult skills provision is geared to our region's business needs.

David Hughes
 LSC London Regional Director



European Union
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LSEB strategy to boost adult skills

The London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB) has unveiled proposals for an ambitious strategy designed to reduce unemployment and boost adult skills in our region.

The LSC has been working with the LSEB since its inception to help determine how its £560 million adult skills budget for Londoners will be allocated in future. At the end of October 2007, the LSEB launched its draft strategy for public consultation.

Mayor of London Ken Livingstone highlighted the importance of ensuring that all Londoners have opportunities to contribute to and benefit from the success of the region. He said: "This draft strategy starts an important debate about how we make best use of all our resources to draw on the talents of all Londoners."

David Hughes, LSC Regional Director for London, added: "Having the Mayor, employers and public sector agencies working in partnership behind the LSEB strategy is a powerful force for change. Now, more than ever, we have the momentum and support to really tackle skills needs in the capital."

"The LSC will carry forward this exciting strategy, delivering a coordinated and comprehensive programme to boost skills for people and business in London. We will set this out in our Regional Commissioning Plan, which is due to be finalised by the end of January."



The LSC has published its consultation response, which can be downloaded from www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/London/Publications/Latestdocuments

work more closely with employers to ensure that the skills they provide continue to match the skills needed by the workforce.

4. **An integrated skills and employment infrastructure**, with funding and delivery agencies working together more closely, to enhance the effectiveness of services offered to employers and learners.
5. **Public funding for skills and employment in London** aligned to the challenges and priorities identified in the draft strategy.

To download the draft strategy, visit www.london.gov.uk/lseb/strategy.jsp
The closing date for comments is 21 January 2008.

Challenging targets

The LSEB's draft strategy includes many challenging targets, including achieving the following improvements in London by 2013 (comparisons with current figures are shown in brackets):

- 72% employment rate** (a 2% increase)
- 11% of Londoners with no qualifications** (a 2% reduction)
- 15% of London's workforce participating in training** (a 1% rise)

The draft strategy sets the following key challenges:

1. **A fundamental change to the employment and skills support available for Londoners**, including improved careers advice and support services to help people gain the confidence, motivation and skills needed to get a decent job.
2. **An ambitious new Employer Programme for London's employers**, who will be encouraged to broaden their recruitment processes and improve their workforce development in order to meet their skills needs.
3. **A new level of responsiveness from London's leading learning and skills providers**, who will be required to

National Apprenticeship Awards 2008

The search is on for the nation's top apprentices and employers.

The entry deadline for the LSC's National Apprenticeship Awards 2008 is 29 February. Entries for the national competition will also feed into the Skills for London Awards, which will be held in June.

To find out more, visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk/awards or call 0800 954 8896.

CoNEL's gift of learning

Tired of scouring the shops in search of the perfect present for family and friends, many people are opting instead for an FE course gift voucher.

The Perfect Gift initiative was launched in October by the LSC and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills as a way of increasing the accessibility of learning. David Lammy, Minister for Skills, described the project as "a superb example of the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit that runs through the FE sector".

The College of North East London (CoNEL) is one of nine English colleges taking part in the initiative. Principal Paul Head is certain that the gift vouchers will appeal to a wide range of people. He said: "This is the ideal gift for a friend or family member keen to develop a hobby, learn a new skill or even update existing skills."



David Lammy (centre) thinks CoNEL's gift voucher initiative is a great idea

56% of people would like to receive a gift voucher for a course as a present (Source: ICM)

Building a future in construction for ex-offenders

The brand new Transition Skills Centre at Kensington and Chelsea College (KCC) is providing training in construction skills to young people, adults and ex-offenders.

For two days a week the centre will be devoted to teaching construction skills to ex-offenders through the Skillsweb project. Training in construction and the built environment to pupils aged 14 to 16 will take up the rest of the week. The centre will also offer NVQs, Apprenticeships and intermediate construction awards for people of all ages who are working or planning to work in the industry.

LSC London Regional Director David Hughes opened the centre at the end of November. He said: "The Transition Skills Centre will help people make the move from prison into proper, sustainable jobs. It will also equip young people with new skills that are going to be crucial to the London economy over the next few years."



KCC Chief Executive Mike Jutsum said: "We can make a difference to people's lives by raising skill levels and supporting learners to become more employable, confident and empowered to improve their future. We are building a workforce to meet the challenging shortages of skills in the UK construction industry."



European Union
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ESF 2007-10 update

As outlined in the previous issue of *the magazine*, the European Social Fund (ESF) is a vital source of finance for London's regeneration activities and is used to fill the gaps left by mainstream provision.

In partnership with three other co-financing organisations, LSC London Region will be using the ESF 2007-10 funding to purchase activity in three key areas: young people, adults, and employer responsiveness. In the two weeks leading up to the launch of the invitation to tender, five local events were held for 516 organisations interested in delivering skills, training and employment initiatives in London. All had passed the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire and were keen to find out more.

The tender process for the ESF 2007-10 funding round closed on 11 January.

Shattering the glass ceiling

Women across the London Region will be helped to progress up the career ladder, thanks to a £20 million training pilot funded by the LSC.

The Train to Gain Level 3 pilot offers businesses funding to train female employees to the equivalent of two A-levels in vocational skills.



Going from strength to strength

Multi-disciplined construction contractor FM Conway Ltd was one of the first organisations to participate in the Level 3 pilot.

After joining the organisation in 1989, the commitment and common-sense approach of Sharon Field (pictured above) enabled her to work her way up through the ranks, starting off as a receptionist and finishing up as General Manager in charge of the company's Investors in People and Safety, Health, Environment and Quality (SHEQ) teams.

The Train to Gain pilot appealed to Sharon because, although she had the knowledge, experience, training and ability to manage her teams, she had no formal management qualification.

The evidence presented by Sharon during her three-day NVQ assessment was so compelling that she passed at Levels 3, 4 and 5. This is an outstanding achievement that reflects her position on the senior management team. She said: "Gaining qualifications has renewed my self-confidence. I'm sure that it will strengthen my ability to support the company in its future growth."

Sharon has now applied to the Chartered Management Institute to become a fellow.

By increasing the number of women with higher-level skills, this initiative will help tackle gender segregation in the workplace, which will in turn help them to progress in their careers. Targeted sectors include construction, engineering, business and finance, manufacturing, transport, logistics, IT and management.

Philippa Langton, LSC Regional Director for Skills, believes that tapping this previously

underdeveloped pool of talent is good news for London's women and their families, as well as for employers and the economy. She said: "There is a lot of wasted talent in our society at the moment. I believe that, with appropriate training and support, women could move up and take on many of the high-level job opportunities that will arise in London as a result of major projects like Crossrail and the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games."

Supa Sharon wins everywoman award

As part of the Train to Gain Level 3 women's pilot, the LSC sponsored the Athena Award at the national NatWest everywoman awards event in December. The award recognised the most inspiring woman aged between 36 and 49 who is running a business, and was won by Sharon Winter of Supa Scaffolding Ltd.



Sharon Winter is pictured (left) along with fellow nominees Laura Tenison MBE (right) and Emma Harrison, and LSC London Regional Skills Development Manager Peter Davies

Expanded service offers training for all

The Government plans to expand the Train to Gain scheme so that it offers greater flexibility for employers and a bespoke skills brokerage service.

Train to Gain funding for England will be doubled to £1 billion and the national expansion plans for the service include:

- more funding offered for a broader range of skills
- no funding cap for the best providers
- a budget boost for SME management training
- an expanded LSC National Employment Service
- enhanced support for unemployed people
- closer links with Sector Skills Councils.

London has many changes in the pipeline too: Train to Gain's skills brokerage element will be reformed and extended to focus on working with more of our region's medium and large employers; adult Apprenticeships will be funded through the service; Skills for Life will be available as a standalone option at all levels; London will be piloting new ESOL for Work qualifications; and the service will also encompass the self-employed and voluntary sectors for the first time.

For more information, see *Train to Gain A Plan for Growth* at http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-ttg-plan_for_growth.pdf

Bromley opens new Business and Professional Centre

The A21 now has an eye-catching new landmark, following the unveiling of the Business and Professional Centre at Bromley College of Further and Higher Education.

The centre contains state-of-the-art conference rooms, teaching rooms, IT suites, a new café and a circular, glass-walled learning resource centre. It will house the college's vocational courses in management, personnel, accounting, marketing and counselling, and will provide access to HE and degree courses in business studies.

At the opening ceremony, College Principal Peter Jones said: "We are delighted to have been able to create such a high-quality building as a professional training centre for local businesses and local people."

LSC London Region contributed nearly £12 million towards the project, which cost a total of £20 million to complete. Vic



Standing beside the plaque commemorating the opening of the centre are (left to right): Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe, Mayoress of Bromley; Peter Jones; and Robert Neill, MP for Bromley & Chislehurst

Grimes, Area Director for LSC London South, said: "The LSC is committed to transforming the FE estate by investing millions of pounds each year in capital investment projects. This will create world-class buildings that will inspire learners, improve retention and achievement rates, and provide better

training facilities for employers, young people and adults."

A further phase of work at the college is scheduled for completion in 2009 and will include new, industry-standard workshops in construction, electrical installation and motor vehicle maintenance.

LLU+ tackles dyslexia in the workplace

A project led by LLU+ at South Bank University has succeeded in raising awareness about dyslexia among central London's SMEs.

Many dyslexic individuals have the creative and practical skills to make excellent employees at all levels of an organisation. However, they can often face considerable barriers to success at work, because the way their brain processes information differs from the norm.

The Dyslexia and Employment Project, which was jointly funded by the LSC and the European Social Fund, tackled some of those barriers. It ran for two years and included dyslexia assessments, support, advice, information, staff training and accredited dyslexia awareness courses.

By the end of the project, LLU+ had succeeded in raising awareness of dyslexia among 359 small and medium-sized organisations in central London. More than 1,100 people contacted LLU+ for

support, which resulted in 619 diagnostic assessments for dyslexia. In addition, 110 individuals achieved an accredited Level 2 or 3 qualification in Dyslexia Awareness in the Workplace, and a further 107 achieved unaccredited qualifications in this area.

LLU+ Assistant Director Dr Ross Cooper, who heads up the Dyslexia, Literacy and Learning Styles Division, said: "Almost all of the people who gained a diagnostic assessment would not have been able to afford it themselves. Many have told us that understanding more about their dyslexia has completely transformed their life.

"Working with the SME sector was challenging. We made good progress in raising awareness about dyslexia, but changing work practices proved very difficult for some because it requires a whole-organisation approach. Many were surprised to learn that dyslexia can count as a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)."

London colleges learn from Beijing

Principals from Hackney Community College and Greenwich Community College joined their Chinese counterparts and John Denham, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, at a meeting in Beijing. The main topic for discussion was vocational education and training for local people in preparation for the 2008 and 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The visit came out of the London-Beijing skills project established by Hackney Principal Ian Ashman. It was part of a wider delegation looking at partnership working between the cities' colleges.

Nadine Collins, Senior Olympic Skills and Employment Manager at the LDA, highlighted the importance of Olympic host cities sharing what they have learned, and described the initiative as "an exemplary model of global partnership working".



Rugby apprentices aim for sporting excellence

The LSC and its partner SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for active leisure and learning, have jointly developed a nationwide series of Advanced Apprenticeships in Sporting Excellence (AASE) covering a wide range of elite sports skills.

London is getting in on the action. In partnership with the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and LSC London West, an AASE programme between Acton-based London Wasps rugby team and its neighbour, Twford Church of England High School, now offers promising young athletes the opportunity to combine their rugby development with the acquisition of meaningful academic qualifications. The LSC has awarded the

school a capital grant of £5 million to expand its campus and provision for a range of programmes, including AASE.

London Wasps is actively involved in the programme and members of the first team act as 'buddies' to the apprentices, supporting their development. England and Wasps player Lawrence Dallaglio said: "London Wasps is a great club for any aspiring young player. I came here as a teenager and still consider it home today. I'm sure the apprentices will have a part to play in the future of this great club."

The RFU's David Shaw is delighted with the AASE programme. He said: "For the

first time we can ensure that the work undertaken by the athletes within their academy programmes can be recognised as part of their academic achievement."

Candidates for the AASE programme in rugby have a number of traits in common; they are all promising athletes aged between 16 and 18 who dream of pursuing a rugby career and are capable of achieving excellence their chosen sport.

Across the country more than 200 learners are taking part in the programme, through 12 academies attached to major club sides, in partnership with the Rugby Football Union, school sixth forms and FE colleges.

Enfield teaching facility wins national prize

The architects responsible for designing Enfield College's flagship building came out on top at the Building Design Architect of the Year award ceremony, held in November.

Kingfisher House is a state-of-the-art teaching facility that opened in 2005 and comprises two storeys with 24 teaching spaces and a reception area. Architects van Heyningen and Haward won the Education Building Architect of the Year Award for their work on the project, which now serves as an iconic landmark for the local community.

LSC London Region contributed 35 per cent towards the capital costs involved in the



project, which cost around £5 million to complete. Since it opened in 2005, Kingfisher House has made a significant contribution to the quality of resources available to staff and students at the college.



Getting our priorities right

Following the publication of the LSC's national Statement of Priorities document, we take a look at what this means for learning and skills in our region.

The targets contained in *Our Statement of Priorities: Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better lives* reflect the LSC's aim to raise the educational achievement of all children and young people across England, and to narrow the gap in achievement between children

from low-income families and their peers. London's priorities are aligned with the national targets. In particular, they have a strong focus on improving outcomes for young people and for adults and employers, as outlined below.

To view the national Statement of Priorities document online, visit www.lsc.gov.uk

Inspiring young Londoners to stay on in learning

Target: increase educational achievement with the aim of preparing every child and young person with the knowledge and skills to succeed in education and life

Our region really is starting to fulfil its promise to young people. LSC London Regional Director David Hughes said: "For many years now we've been working hard to drive up participation rates among London's young people (see page 10).

"Our participation rate of over 80 per cent is above the national average, but as we get down to that last remaining fifth, things get much more difficult. The young people in that band are the hardest to reach, so it's down to us to be more creative in engaging them in learning. The traditional academic routes offered by schools and colleges won't suit everyone, so we need to broaden our net, working with other providers like local voluntary organisations to inspire young people to stay in learning."

Work-based learning offers the key to future success for many young people. London's biggest obstacle to boosting Apprenticeship numbers and the successful roll-out and take-up of the new Diplomas is employer engagement. David said: "We need more employers to offer Apprenticeships, engage with Diplomas and understand the value



of investing in their workforce and growing high-quality, skilled staff to drive their business forward."

With two major London-based international events on the horizon, our region must gear learning provision carefully in order to reap maximum benefit from it. David said: "London was sorely under-represented in the British team at the 2007 WorldSkills event. We cannot allow this to happen again in 2011, when London will be the host city and the eyes of the world will be upon us. The following

year, of course, we will be hosting the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, which will create many opportunities for young people, particularly in retail, hospitality, construction, media, transport and sport."

There's clearly a lot of work to be done. And all of this is happening against a backdrop of change, with local authorities set to take on a more strategic role in 14-19 learning from around 2010. LSC London Region is working in partnership with local authorities to achieve a seamless transfer of responsibilities.

Creating the right skills solution for adults and employers in London

Target: improve the skills of the population by 2011, consistent with the aim of having a workforce that has a world-class skills base capable of sustaining economic competitiveness by 2020

Learning has a massive impact on an individual's ability to earn, and on the ability of a business to be profitable. David said: "It's a continuous circle of learning and work: skills to get work in the first place, skills in work to remain in employment, and skills to progress at work. I see it as two sides of the same coin: learning to work and working to learn."

London is unique among the English regions. We have high rates of worklessness, massive competition for jobs and a greater percentage of jobs that require higher-level skills. The annual Grant Letter to the LSC from Secretary of State John Denham recognises our region's distinct challenges and heralds a rise in our adult skills budget from £588 million to £603 million next year and to £672 million by 2010-11.

David said: "London is the first region ever to have flexibility built into its funding settlement and we are very fortunate to have the London Skills and Employment Board taking the lead in determining the most effective way to spend it.

"This means we'll have flexibilities in programmes like Apprenticeships and Train to Gain to better meet the needs of Londoners, which will in turn ensure greater success in meeting government targets. The settlement also includes a stable line of funding for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision, to meet London's growing needs in this area. This is excellent news."

The LSC's primary aim for adults is to help them enter employment and progress in work through the acquisition of better skills. So we will continue to focus on



supporting disadvantaged individuals who are considered 'hard to reach', particularly Jobcentre Plus clients, which is why 11 innovative Employability Demonstration Pilots (see page 15) are currently exploring ways to achieve an integrated employment and skills service.

"All of this comes at a price, however," said David, "and in future we expect those who can pay to pay more. London's colleges and providers will be applying the notion of a 'blended' offer to learners and employers: some provision will be fully funded by the LSC; some learners will pay fees; and some employers will pay the full costs involved. I see this as the fairest way to enable those adults who are most excluded from the labour market and society to progress into learning and employment.

"As ever, we can rely on the help of London's colleges, providers and employers in London to meet the ambitious targets set by Government."

Fast facts

756,215 learners were in LSC-funded post-16 education and training in London during 2005/06

£1.4 billion was spent on learning provision for London's young people and adults in the year to March 2007

£466 million has been spent on capital projects in London's FE sector since 2001

£53 million was spent on ESF projects in London during 2006/07

1% ahead – that's how London compares to the national FE success rate

In my view: the 14-19 agenda

Big changes are afoot for 14-19 learning in London. Sean McMahon, LSC London Region's 14-19 Director, describes the challenges he faces.

Q: What impact did the Queen's speech in November have on London's 14-19 agenda?

The new education bill will raise the school leaving age to 17 by 2013, and to 18 by 2015. That implies a participation rate of 100 per cent in education, employment or training, which is a completely new ball game for us. At the moment London has the highest ever number of young people staying on post-16 (it peaks at around 84 per cent), but despite this we still have some way to go if we are to reach 100 per cent participation.

Q: So how do you plan to drive participation rates even higher?

The 14-19 entitlement already includes access to the 14 Diploma lines and to Apprenticeships, as well as increased access to the International Baccalaureate and a broader range of offers within Levels 1 to 3.

Although we welcome this diversification, if London is to achieve anywhere near a 100 per cent participation rate we believe we need to be even more creative, with more innovative and personalised offers that will attract, engage and retain greater numbers of young people. We also need young people to access accurate opportunities information through the 14-19 prospectus, *Choice*. Therefore, it is important that providers keep their information up to date.



Q: How does all this fit within the context of the LSC passing on its 14-19 role to local authorities in 2010?

In the summer, Government announced that the management of 16-19 funding would transfer from the LSC to local authorities. In London that's over a billion pounds. So we are beginning now to plan a smooth transition while at the same time trying to improve on current numbers of young people in education, employment or training; introducing changes to the delivery of the 14-19 entitlement; and accommodating the implications of a higher compulsory school leaving age.

Q: Do young Londoners' travel-to-study patterns add a further complication to the planning mix?

Definitely. We have a high number of local authorities (33) in our region, offering a very wide range of options to learners. Now that the Mayor has extended free transport to include post-16 learners, more than half travel across borough boundaries to study. It's fascinating stuff, but it also means that we have to be super flexible in order to respond to changing travel patterns and ensure that our funding best follows learner needs, wherever in London they choose to study.

Q: That's a tall order. What's the main risk involved?

As I see it, the biggest risk we face is that, with so much change occurring, we might take our eye off the ball and lose momentum. Statistically London's position is the strongest yet, with more post-16 learners than ever before, but we mustn't become complacent; we need to manage things very carefully to avoid getting blown off course by wider political changes.

Prince's Trust award for London entrepreneur

The efforts of a young entrepreneur, who overcame severe dyslexia to set up a successful jewellery design business, were recognised at the Celebrate Success Awards ceremony, when she was presented with the LSC Enterprise Award.

Hampered by severe dyslexia, Catherine Byshiem found it very difficult to secure employment. After spending a year living on a friend's sofa, failing to find work, she became extremely anxious. The future looked very bleak indeed.

Prompted by a friend, Catherine contacted the Prince's Trust to ask for help. This proved to be a life-transforming decision, because the financial support and business advice provided by the Trust led to her establishing her own jewellery design business. She now sells bespoke gold and silver jewellery inspired by her Norwegian homeland and is a regular face at Broadway Market in Hackney. Catherine has also travelled to New York as part of a jewellery trade delegation.

Thrilled to have won the award, which was sponsored by LSC London Region, she said: "Just three years ago, I couldn't even get on a bus. This year I went to New York! Having my own business has brought back my confidence and I feel a real sense of



An inspirational winner: Catherine proudly displays her award, flanked by (left) Jenni Falconer, Prince's Trust Ambassador, and Mary Conneely

achievement. Thanks to all the support and encouragement I've received from the Prince's Trust, in particular my mentors David Lane and Jill Finlay, my business is going from strength to strength."

Mary Conneely, LSC London Regional Director – Regeneration, who presented the award, was hugely impressed. She said: "Catherine is a great example of the incredible difference the Prince's Trust is making to the lives of disadvantaged young

people, providing invaluable support to help them succeed against the odds, improve their chances in life and have a positive impact on the local community.

"She is one of more than 3,000 young people across London to have benefited from the outstanding dedication and commitment of Trust volunteers and staff, who work tirelessly to develop skills, confidence and motivation among the region's 14 to 30-year-olds."

Spreading the word about demand-led funding

The regional LSC team organised five conferences towards the end of last year to explain the demand-led funding that will be introduced during 2008/09 to schools.

Turnout for the events was high, with an average of 60 for each conference. Delegates included headteachers from nearly all of London's schools and representatives from its 33 local authorities.

The audience listened attentively to detailed explanations of the new way of

working, which will entail major changes for schools and their relationships with the LSC. The new methodology includes more robust data linked closely to the curriculum learners study. It also includes, for the first time, a planning meeting between the school and the LSC. During the conferences all these developments were linked to the emerging local 14-19 delivery plans.

Delegate feedback confirms that the conference events provided a useful introduction to the new funding

arrangements. The next step will be for partnership teams to visit all of London's schools with sixth forms, to discuss their 2008/09 plan and any possible growth or decline in student numbers.

Over time, demand-led funding should result in increased levels of participation among young people, who will have a wider curriculum offer. It should also result in more stability among providers, along with enhanced opportunities to plan ahead, because of the absence of any in-year adjustments.

Skills boost for 2012 Games

LSC London Region is investing an additional £5 million this year to improve skills and training opportunities in four key sectors for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

This extra funding is being used to expand vocational training in four key areas in which employer demand for skilled workers is expected to grow in the run-up to 2012 and beyond: sport, construction, customer service and media/audio-visual.

Skills Minister David Lammy announced the funding on a visit to the Building Crafts College, which provides young people and unemployed adults with training in specialist construction skills. He said: "Working in

partnership, the LSC can meet the challenges for London and the country. This £5 million package of measures will help reach out to Londoners and give them the skills they need to benefit from the Games."

LSC London Regional Director David Hughes said: "Our aim is to use the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games as an opportunity to raise skills levels and aspirations across London. It's about providing the right training in the right skills so that we can match the right people to the right jobs. It's about ensuring that education provides the skills businesses want. And it's about working with local communities to enable people who are disadvantaged or out of work to gain new skills."

During the 2007/08 academic year, spending will include the following:

Sport

- 50 new Advanced Apprenticeships in Sporting Excellence
- 188 new sports and leisure Apprenticeships
- bursaries for 400 future sports coaches

Media/audio-visual

- increasing the number and quality of work-based learning programmes on offer in the media/audio-visual industry

Construction

- training people on incapacity and health benefit to become employed construction trade A1 assessors
- preparing local residents for construction Apprenticeships at King's Cross station
- Olympic site to become National Skills Academy for Construction

Customer service

- 200 new Apprenticeships in customer service and hospitality
- development of new gold standard in customer service.

Support for 400 sports coaches

LSC London Region and Sport England have joined forces to provide SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for active leisure and learning, with £250,000 to help develop sports coaching activities. The money will be used to help subsidise coaching qualifications for London's part-time and full-time coaches, and to promote coaching excellence in the run-up to 2012. The qualifications will be endorsed by the new UK Coaching Certificate and accredited by the QCA and the national qualifications framework.

20,000 Londoners to achieve Personal Best

Launched in October, Personal Best is a landmark programme that will give 20,000 Londoners a major job boost as a direct result of the capital staging the 2012 Games.

Formerly known as the Pre-Volunteer Programme (PVP), Personal Best was trialled in 11 London boroughs during 2007. It is based on the programme implemented for the 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games and was developed by the LSC and the London Development Agency.

The training includes literacy, numeracy, health and safety, first-aid awareness, customer relations, computer skills and an appreciation of the Olympic spirit, and leads to a Level 1 qualification. Mary Conneely, LSC London Regional Director – Regeneration, said: "Personal Best aims to offer some of the most disadvantaged people in our region the opportunity to develop a range of skills needed not just for the 2012 Games, but also for life in general."

The early signs are very promising. Of the 370 Londoners who took part in the PVP



Wembley provided an ideal setting for the launch: (left to right) London Development Agency Chief Executive Manny Lewis, Mary Conneely, Sebastian Coe, Tessa Jowell MP and Mayor Ken Livingstone with Personal Best achievers

pilot, 15 per cent have moved into jobs, 42 per cent have taken up further training and 33 per cent are involved in volunteering. Graduates of the programme attended a special ceremony at Wembley Stadium in October, where they were congratulated by Mayor of London Ken

Livingstone, Olympics Minister Tessa Jowell and Chair of the London 2012 Organising Committee Sebastian Coe.

Personal Best will be rolled out across London from April 2008 and will be offered nationally later in the year.

PM backs LSC's Thames Gateway skills initiatives

More than £9 billion will be spent on the Thames Gateway, Europe's largest regeneration project, by 2011. The money will be invested to secure jobs, better education, transport schemes and affordable homes.

Speaking at the Thames Gateway Forum, Prime Minister Gordon Brown gave his backing to a number of skills initiatives led by the LSC which will ensure that local people in the Gateway area get the skills they need to gain employment. He said: "In the Thames Gateway there are 190,000 people of working age who are not in a job or education. This represents a real opportunity to be at the cutting edge of skills and welfare policy. There's no point in creating new jobs if there are no skilled workers to fill them, so the LSC has created a skills plan to help local people develop the skills needed to fill the new jobs on offer."

Mr Brown went on to reveal that, as part of the Thames Gateway Skills Plan,

£1.6 billion will be invested in teaching and learning, and £850 million will be spent on building new further education facilities. He announced that the Olympic site would become a site for the National Skills Academy for Construction, which will help to ensure that 10 to 15 per cent of the Olympic Park construction workforce comes from London's five local boroughs.

He also stated that the Creative Way lifelong learning network would generate hundreds of additional student places for local residents with vocational qualifications.

"Together, this represents an unprecedented effort to give Thames Gateway residents new opportunities to move into work,

improve their skills in the workplace and progress into higher-paid jobs," he said. "In total, this will involve 13,500 Apprenticeships and at least 10,000 college places for local people."

David Hughes, LSC London Regional Director, believes that the Thames Gateway regeneration project and the 2012 Games have provided an unparalleled opportunity to raise skills levels and aspirations across London. He said: "These projects are not just about economics; they are about changing people's lives and equipping them with the skills they need to get better jobs."

The new National Skills Academy for Construction will feature in a future issue of *the magazine*.

Celebrating business success for the Gateway

More than 400 guests attended the 10th annual Thames Gateway Business Awards, held at The O2, where keynote speaker Lord Charles Falconer highlighted the opportunities opening up for local businesses as a result of the regeneration project and the 2012 Games.

The event was hosted by television personality Esther Rantzen, who assisted LSC London South Area Director Vic Grimes in presenting the LSC-sponsored Train to Gain Award for Training and Development to Dagenham-based car bodyshop repair centre AJC Wilson. The runners-up were Lakehouse Contracts (Romford) and Utilize (Hornchurch).



Esther Rantzen and Vic Grimes (third and fourth from right) celebrate with the award-winning team from AJC Wilson

Five minutes with... Derrick Jones

Business advisory firm Deloitte was one of the first organisations to sign up to the Government's Skills Pledge when it was announced last summer. We spoke to Associate Partner Derrick Jones to find out why.

Q: How strong is Deloitte's passion for learning and skills?

It's a key part of our strategy: we believe that only through training can we all aspire to improve the skills of our nation's workforce, which will in turn result in sustained business growth and a healthier national economy.

Q: Why did Deloitte commit to the Skills Pledge?

The Skills Pledge is about raising the bar so that more people develop basic literacy and numeracy skills and gain Level 2 qualifications to improve their employability. Signing up to it enabled us to focus on new ways of harnessing the potential of all our employees. It also enabled us to make a public statement about our long-standing commitment to improving the country's skills base.

Q: So it was a welcome opportunity to reinforce Deloitte's existing commitment to learning and skills?

Yes. We've been working with nine further education (FE) colleges across Britain on a project designed to develop employability skills within the 16-19 age group. Through The Deloitte Foundation, over a four-year period we will be providing £2.5 million funding to train 800 new trainers who will teach employability skills to up to 5,000 young people, alongside their



vocational studies. We are also working with FE practitioners to deliver the Support for Excellence programme, in anticipation of the move towards self-regulation across the FE system.

Q: What difference will the Skills Pledge make to your organisation?

Deloitte is the largest graduate employer in the UK private sector, so many of our employees are already highly skilled. The people who stand to benefit most from our Skills Pledge are our support staff – the secretarial, reception and estate management teams, for example. We are fully committed to including them in our continuing professional development planning and activities, in exactly the same way as we do for our professional staff, to help improve their skills, performance and prospects. The Government's Train to Gain programme

will play an important role in helping us implement this across the firm.

Q: And will the training stop at Level 2?

No. We have made it clear to our workforce that Deloitte will fund training for employees to complete national vocational qualifications at Levels 3 and 4, if this will enhance the skills needed for them to achieve career progression within our firm.

Q: Have you looked beyond the Deloitte team too?

We are keen to demonstrate our commitment to improving the skills of our own workforce and those of other organisations. So we have made our subcontractors and clients aware of the fact that we have signed the Skills Pledge, and have encouraged them to follow suit.

Supporting employability and inclusion across London

London LSC has established Employability Demonstration Pilots across the region to trial new approaches to training provision, and to develop a more integrated and demand-led skills and employment offer.

As outlined in the October 2007 issue of *the magazine*, the LSC has provided an additional £2.2 million to 11 large further education colleges to test out innovative skills and employment interventions over a two-year period.

The Employability Demonstration Pilots programme was established for three key reasons:

- to help get providers ready to meet the challenges presented by Lord Leitch's review of skills
- to prepare for the national Skills for Jobs programme
- to engage the provider base in wider partnership working with other agencies on the skills and employment agenda.

A one-day Welfare to Work convention, held at The Oval at the end of November for around 100 stakeholders, enabled the programme and its objectives to be explored in detail. Discussions centred on the urgent need to drive up skills levels and respond to business needs across the region; ways to increase sustainable employment opportunities; how local agency



collaboration is starting to work; and what London's future integrated employment and skills service might look like.

The programme is summarised in a new report, *London's Employability Demonstration Pilots*. The report identifies the four key issues for our region as skills gaps, employee recruitment, worklessness and social inclusion. It states that, because all four are closely interrelated, they must be addressed together using new, joined-up solutions.

Achieving this will require a number of fundamental changes within London's learning and skills sector, in which all future provision will be geared to establishing clear routes into employment for workless individuals. It will include job brokerage and employment systems that are built around a commitment to skills as a route to work and a gateway to personal and business development.

The end goal in coordinating London's skills and employment services is to increase sustainable employment for our region's working-age population.

Visit [http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/London/Employability_Demonstration_pilots\(final_web_version\).pdf](http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/London/Employability_Demonstration_pilots(final_web_version).pdf)

Taking stock of our achievements

Developed in consultation with key partners, our *London Strategic Analysis 2007* report demonstrates the progress made in delivering learning and skills to young people and adults, and in raising the quality and choice of provision. It also highlights key challenges across the learning and skills sector in London. The document will inform the London Commissioning Plan, which will be published early next year.

To access the document, visit http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/London/london_strat_final.pdf

News in brief

New standard

Five London providers are among the first in the country to achieve an important new standard. Newham College, Lewisham College, Uxbridge College, the London College of Beauty Therapy and Happy Computers all achieved the voluntary quality mark, which recognises high-quality training delivered to employers.

Norwegian delegation explores inclusion

LSC London Region and the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) hosted a visit by a group of Norwegian tutors involved in providing educational opportunities for people with mental health problems. The delegation visited local providers and learned about the LSC's work for Londoners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and a NIACE social inclusion programme.



The Norwegian delegation learned a great deal during the two-day visit to London

Shop, Cook & Eat at Bexley

LSC London Region is fully funding a £35,000 Shop, Cook & Eat programme at Bexley's Adult Education College. The project will help 16 individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities learn how to live independently. During the course the learners, who are aged 19 or over, will develop a range of skills including personal time management, numeracy, literacy, interpersonal skills and healthy eating on a fixed budget.

Beacon Award for Lewisham

Lewisham College has won the LSC Award for College Engagement with Employers. This Beacon Award recognises the college's innovative teaching and learning practices within the further education sector. Lewisham's business development unit takes a cross-college approach to employer engagement and provides training solutions to more than 5,000 employers across a range of industry sectors.

Take4

Offender learning

The LSC has been managing the planning, funding and commissioning of the new integrated Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) since summer 2006. Here we provide four views about how things are going, 18 months on...

Michael Heaune
OLASS Development Manager
LSC London Region

"The LSC committed to managing the transition to OLASS without disrupting existing prison regimes; this was achieved and the new service is now well recognised by those involved in offender learning. So far, we've invested more than £14 million in the service, which has enabled us to support learners across the eight London prisons, as well as some offenders in the community.

"We have now published a prospectus detailing our proposals for the future of the service. These include a series of Offender Curriculum Skills Area Reviews (OSCARS) that will look at what's delivered presently and how we can ensure that education and training continue to play an effective role in reducing re-offending and aiding resettlement."

Cathy Lewer
HMPS Reducing Re-Offending Team

"There have been some great highlights, such as the enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated at the OLASS Practitioners' Conference and the work of the job developers. SkillsTrain and the use of Adult Learner Support have also been welcome.

"But some of the proposals in the OLASS prospectus are of concern to me, because they focus largely on prisoners due for release. I don't believe that it recognises the needs of some of the other prisoner groups such as remands – who make up more than half of the London prison population – as well as indeterminate sentenced offenders, older prisoners and women."

Frank Hough
Ex-offender Community
Liaison Officer
Hertfordshire A4E 'Job Mates'

"In prison, I made a conscious decision to get involved in education. I'd had enough of my life of crime and recognised that the only way out was to educate myself, so I started studying for an Open University degree in geosciences, which I'm still working towards.

"I also taught literacy and numeracy skills to my fellow inmates, which I found really rewarding. Following a move to Latchmere House open prison I worked at South Bank University's family learning division, LLU+, as a tutor and lecturer. I've been out on parole since the start of November and am now working for an organisation that helps ex-offenders learn employability skills, regain their self-esteem and move into work. Education has completely turned my life around."

Sue Teller
Education Manager
HMP Holloway

"We approach learning in an efficient, joined-up way that responds to learner needs: this is particularly important, given that our learner participation rates are at 90 per cent. Around two-thirds of the women at Holloway leave within 28 days, so we concentrate our efforts on those who are here for a longer period.

"We cater for all categories of sentence. New inmates are now invited to undertake a range of 'taster' sessions in subjects ranging from dyslexia support to knitting. After their first three weeks, we encourage them to commit to the subject that most interests them. We've been particularly successful in delivering British Industrial Cleaning Service qualifications, a V&A textiles project and a creative writing course."



Michael Heaune



Cathy Lewer



Frank Hough



Sue Teller