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nw news

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The newsletter for stakeholders
of the LSC in the North West

winter 07

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Welcome . . . and Season's Greetings

Welcome to the third LSC North West stakeholder newsletter. As 2007 draws to a close we've taken this opportunity to produce this edition to communicate some important developments to you and, of course, to wish you season's greetings!

In this issue you'll find the latest updates on our plans for improving learning and skills across the North West over the next three years - a plan that will see us increasing our national investment from £11.15 billion in 2007-8 to £12.39 billion in 2010-11. This marks an important milestone in the achievement of the Leitch vision.

As we are all aware, this is a time of great change in the learning and skills arena. 2007 has unveiled major developments, not least creation of two new Government Departments; for Innovation, Universities & Skills and Children, Schools and Families.

Over the coming months we'll be consulting with Government and our partners and stakeholders on how best to implement the transition inherent in these Machinery of Government changes. We are responding to the changes positively and constructively, using our expertise to inform the development of the new arrangements. We want to continue with our programme of transformation, building on our excellent performance, to deliver the ambitions of Leitch and the FE and 14-19 reforms. More on this later in this newsletter.

As part of our strategy to further build the reputation of the FE sector we've now launched our regional Learner Awards which will enable us to showcase the wealth of talent we are nurturing across the North West. I'm confident that the Awards will highlight the skills and commitment of our apprentices, employers and FE learners and the colleges and providers that support them. These awards will be an inspiration to us all.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wholeheartedly thank you, our valued partners and stakeholders, for your continued support during 2007. Your dedication and hard work makes all the difference in striving towards our common goal of helping each and every young person and adult in the North West achieve their true potential.

This year, rather than sending out Christmas cards, the LSC will once again make a donation to the Helena Kennedy Foundation – an excellent organisation which tackles injustice and social exclusion through education by supporting disadvantaged students. On that note I wish you the very best for Christmas, a prosperous and safe new year and I look forward to continuing to work with you in 2008.

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Solid Foundation Paves Way for Future Success

A solid foundation, built on strong partnership working and an impressive performance across young people and adult learning during 2007, will be the key to meeting the challenges set out by the Government over the next three years.

According to John Korzeniewski, Regional Director North West LSC, the region is now well placed to meet the challenges outlined in the national 'Statement of Priorities' (see pages 4/5).

"Over the past year there have been some tremendous successes in the North West; successes based on innovative programmes, true collaboration and a firm commitment to quality provision" he said.

During 2007/8 the LSC is spending £1.3 billion on learning in the region and this investment is reaping some significant rewards. When it comes to young people, the North West's performance is ahead of the national average; 81% of 16-17 year olds are now in learning, 70% of young people now have a Level 2 qualification and 69% are qualified to Level 3, there have been major strides forward in work based learning, with a 65% success rate at Level 2 and 72% at Level 3 and the North West is the top performing region for e2e (Entry to Employment) progressions.

The region's record in relation to adults is also strong, with a huge improvement in the success rates of work based learning, up to 70% for both Level 2 and Level 3. Furthermore the North West leads the way with its Train to Gain performance, with almost 35,000 learners embarking on the programme since September 2006.

At the same time quality in learning across the region has improved. From April 2006 to September 2007, eight colleges in the region achieved outstanding inspection results and the North West now has 24 colleges and learning providers that have been awarded the QIA Learning and Skills Beacon status, the best record of any region in the country.

With quality in mind, in the last year alone the LSC gave Approval in Principle to six major FE projects at an estimated cost of £189.5 million. A further eight projects have been approved in detail at a cost of £44.5 million. Together these projects will provide 90,500 sq m of new accommodation, refurbishment of 39,600 sq m and demolition of almost 102,000 sq m of unsuitable buildings.

"It's a tremendous record of success which will crucially provide a springboard on which to launch our plans for achieving the targets of the next three years", adds John Korzeniewski.

"And whilst much has been done to deliver real progress, there is still a huge task ahead of us. In the North West there are 20,000 young people not in education, employment or training, commonly described as NEET, and 86,000 young people in jobs without training; there are 2.5 million adults with literacy basic skills needs and 3.5 million without adequate numeracy skills and we have one million adults in the workforce and half a million workless adults who are not qualified to Level 2.

"The task is clear; we must accelerate Level 2 and Level 3 growth, we must forge ahead with our initial Train to Gain success, we must maintain the momentum that has been generated across our 19+ FE sector, we must continue to make a difference to our NEET young people through our partnership work and our ESF investment and we must engage with providers to create pathways to work for our workless adults.

"We want each and every individual to gain the skills they need to prosper. We urge all our partners and stakeholders to work with us to ensure that the North West plays its part in meeting the exciting and ambitious challenges ahead."



24 North West colleges and learning providers have been awarded the QIA Learning and Skills Beacon status

The Next Three Years - Our Statement of Priorities

Our Statement of Priorities, '*Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives*', was launched on 16 November and sets out the LSC's focus for 2008/9 to 2010/11.

The targets contained in the Statement of Priorities reflect an aim to raise the educational achievement of all children and young people, and to narrow the gap in achievement between children from low income families and their peers. For adults, the aim is to improve the skills of the population and deliver a world class skills base by 2020, improving the skills of those in work and importantly those currently not working and excluded from the labour market.

National Targets – 2010/11 milestones

Young People	Increase participation of 17 year olds to 86% by 2010/11, en route to 90% by 2014/15
	82% of 19 year olds in 2012/13 to achieve at least a Level 2, and 54% to achieve at least a Level 3 qualification
Adults	89% of people of working age with functional literacy and 81% with functional numeracy skills
	79% of working age adults qualified to at least full Level 2
	56% of working age adults qualified to at least full Level 3
Apprenticeships	130,000 apprentices to complete the full Apprenticeship framework in 2010/11

The Statement of Priorities outlines how the LSC will work with its partners to deliver these targets by focusing on three key priorities:

1. Creating demand for learning and skills

Our aim is simple: we want more people to demand more learning, because they are clear about the social and economic benefits that it brings.

2. Transforming the FE system to meet demand

As we raise demand, we need the FE system to be able to respond.

3. Delivering better skills, better lives, better jobs

By raising demand and also enabling the FE system to respond to that demand, we will increase skills levels and employability, which will in turn deliver greater social and economic success.

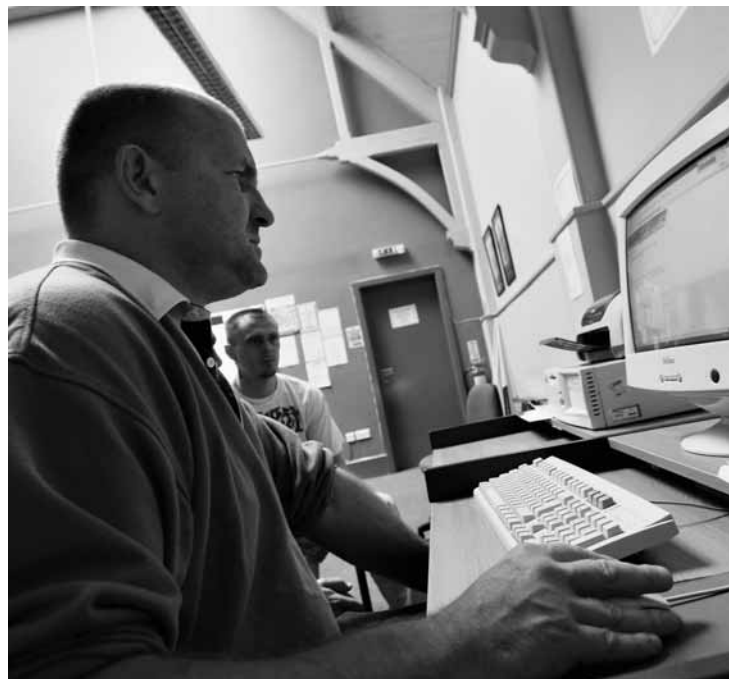
Delivery of the targets and achievement of our priorities in the North West will be underpinned by a major investment programme in the region. In 2007/08 the LSC North West is investing £1.3 billion in education, employment and training initiatives for young people and adults and this figure is set to rise significantly based on the recent announcements around national funding.

Key features of this future national investment programme include:

- A major expansion of Apprenticeships with over £1 billion to increase overall places from 250,000 today to 400,000 by 2010/11.
- For the first time, funding targeted specifically at expanding Apprenticeships for adults aged over 25.
- The rapid expansion of Train to Gain with a widened scope to include Level 3 qualifications with a budget of over £1 billion supporting 872,000 learners in 2010/11.
- A reduction in the number of NEET (not in education, employment or training) young people.
- A right to basic skills training where needed, including 3.6 million learners on 'Skills for Life' courses over the spending period.

Welcoming the increased investment in learning John Korzeniewski, Regional Director North West LSC said: "This is great news for learners, employers and the wider North West community. The investment will enable us to make great strides towards achieving the vision laid down by Lord Leitch.

"However, these are challenging targets which will require a concerted effort from all those organisations operating in the education and training arena. In the North West, the LSC is committed to working even more closely with its partners to help every young person and adult achieve their true potential through learning so that we can equip employers with the skills and expertise to compete in a global economy."



Planned national LSC investment funding between 2007-08 and 2010-11 (£000)

	2007-08	2008 09	2009-10	2010-11
Participation – young people				
School sixth forms	2,022,918	2,054,284	2,082,360	2,101,397
16-19 further education	3,045,790	3,300,077	3,416,064	3,556,140
16-18 Apprenticeships	624,299	636,847	705,251	776,153
Entry to Employment	197,810	185,170	186,010	190,714
Specialist provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	185,869	196,311	236,311	275,647
Total participation – young people	6,076,686	6,372,689	6,625,996	6,900,052
Participation – adults				
19+ further education	1,612,655	1,576,452	1,504,867	1,510,199
Ufi/learnirect	113,625	122,100	122,000	122,000
Employability skills programme	24,409	29,102	35,529	41,770
Adult learner-responsive subtotal	1,750,689	1,727,653	1,662,396	1,673,968
19+ further education	194,287	208,275	214,352	230,559
Apprenticeships	275,010	290,068	317,024	333,646
Train to Gain	520,527	657,073	777,287	1,023,240
Employer-responsive subtotal	989,824	1,155,416	1,308,663	1,587,445
Adult Safeguarded Learning	210,000	210,000	210,000	210,000
Offender Learning and Skills Service	113,038	122,203	124,770	127,933
Total participation – adults	3,063,551	3,215,272	3,305,830	3,599,346
Learner support and development				
Learner Support Fund	811,874	759,279	739,279	739,279
14-19, adult skills and quality reform	548,247	270,816	253,368	239,514
Capacity and infrastructure	69,840	62,758	62,967	65,814
Total learner support and development	1,429,961	1,092,853	1,055,614	1,044,607
Capital grants				
Total capital grants	584,480	694,400	819,800	849,800
Total planned LSC investment	11,154,678	11,375,214	11,807,240	12,393,805

Source: LSC grant letter 2008-09

Continuing to Make a Difference

In the summer, the Prime Minister announced a series of Machinery of Government and other changes to sharpen the focus of Government on the new and very different challenges that Britain will face in the years ahead.

The key changes from the learning and skills sector's perspective were:

- a new **Department for Children, Schools And Families (DCSF)**, for the first time bringing together all key aspects of policy affecting children and young people up to the age of 19. Funding for school sixth forms, sixth form colleges and the contribution of FE colleges to 14-19 will transfer from the LSC to local authorities' ring-fenced education budgets.
- a new **Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)**, providing a strong integrated voice across Government for effective investment in research, science, innovation and skills, embedding these into the heart of the Government's competitiveness strategy. Plans for post-19 education and training are being considered to determine the best way to deliver the functions and services that support the FE system. The Government has stated that they would like to build on the progress made with the LSC over recent years in developing a demand-led approach, particularly through the successful Train to Gain service.
- a new **Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (DBERR)**, with a clear focus to promote productivity, enterprise, competition and trade – vital for a strong and strengthening British business sector.

Ministers estimate that it will not be possible to give effect to the full legislative changes until the academic year 2010-11. In the three academic years between now and then, the LSC will retain the legal responsibility for securing and funding all forms of post-16 education and training outside higher education. In particular, it will retain the duty to secure the proper facilities for young people aged 16 to 19.

Meanwhile the work the LSC is responsible for remains vital to delivering the Government's agenda. The depth and breadth of this work can be seen from the recent launch of our Statement of Priorities, covered elsewhere in this newsletter. A key success factor in this work will be ensuring that learners and employers are not adversely affected by any organisational changes.

So we will be working closely with officials to develop the details of any changes and ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements. The LSC held a series of roadshows in November where Chief Executive Mark Haysom and Regional Directors communicated with colleges, providers and stakeholders in every region. The LSC is responding to the changes positively and constructively, using our expertise to inform the development of new arrangements. And we want to continue with our programme of transformation – building on our excellent performance to deliver the ambitions of Leitch and the FE and 14-19 reforms.

Government officials are developing ideas with Ministers and we have been actively supporting this. On the 14-19 transfer, Rob

Wye, LSC Director of Strategy and Communications has been working closely with DCSF and DIUS, the Local Government Association and the Directors of Children's Services to take forward the development of and transition to new arrangements. In addition we have seconded a number of senior LSC staff into DCSF to support their work on 14-19.

Similarly, on the post-19 delivery review David Way, LSC Director of Skills, has been working closely with DIUS colleagues to support and inform their proposals for future working.

There will of course continue to be new initiatives and changes for the FE sector – the recent announcements about the Government's plans to raise the age of participation in education and training are a good example. But the LSC will continue to work with our providers and partners to build on the progress that we and the FE system have already made and, above all, we will continue to make a difference.



From Competence to Excellence

The UK has won the bid to host the WorldSkills Competition in October 2011 and this has created a unique opportunity to bring world class skills to London just a few months before the most prestigious international competition of all – the London Olympics.

The WorldSkills Competition provides the opportunity to raise the status of vocational skills and dramatically change public perception that this is a valid route to a successful career or continued education at a higher level.

The Deloitte Consortium has been commissioned by the LSC to deliver the Competence to Excellence project which is one of several designed to support our WorldSkills vision.

The Competence to Excellence project will help to raise the aspirations of all of those engaged in the acquisition of skills and in particular those of young people, employers, trainers and apprentices.

It will do this by delivering 60 master classes in a range of vocational areas to about 600 learners and 120 tutors in each of the nine LSC regions by the end of March 2008.



Gary Tuddenham from Longtown, Cumbria, who won a gold medal with the third highest score at Worldskills 2007, recently held in Tokyo

In a master class a tutor or experienced craftsperson/tradesperson from industry will provide a live demonstration in a vocational area such as motor vehicle body repair or hairdressing to up to 10 young people and 2 tutors. The aim is to raise the aspirations of all of those engaged in the acquisition of skills and in particular that of young people, employers and trainers.

The aim subsequently is to encourage increasing numbers to participate in local, regional and national skills competitions, and for national winners to represent their country in the WorldSkills competitions of 2009 and 2011.

We are looking for Colleges, Training Providers and young people to get involved in the master classes. If you would like further information about how you can participate in the Competence to Excellence project, please contact Christopher Butterworth on 0161 261 0435, or email Christopher.butterworth@lsc.gov.uk.

Vouchers for Learning Top Christmas Wish List

If you're looking for that 'Perfect Gift' for Christmas, then Blackpool and The Fylde College might have just the solution you're looking for!

The College is one of nine across the country to be involved in a new scheme that enables people to buy gift vouchers towards the cost of Further Education (FE) courses for the first time.

The pilot promotes FE courses as 'the Perfect Gift' for people to give to friends and family to help loved ones learn brand new skills. The trial comes as independent research, commissioned by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) reveals that over half (56%) of people would like to receive a Gift Voucher for a training course as a present.

The Gift Vouchers can be used to enrol on a variety of academic courses and are redeemable during the 2007/8 academic year. Each Gift Voucher has a value of £50 and may cover the full course cost or a contribution towards it.

Ian Haworth, Director of Area for the LSC in Lancashire said of the scheme: "This is the ideal gift for a friend or family member whom you know is keen to develop a hobby, learn a new skill or even update existing skills. This innovative project presents an exciting opportunity and I am certain it will appeal to a wide range of people."

For further information contact Liz Wilson at Blackpool and The Fylde College on 01253 504334.



Left to Right:
Blackpool and The Fylde College students Maggie Nichol; Ben Slater; Suzie Scott, Bev Fryers and Vice Principal Resources and Planning Ruth Paisley holding some learning gift vouchers.

Learner Awards Will Make Local Talent Shine



The LSC's 2008 National Apprenticeship Awards were launched on 3 December and, for the first time this year, we'll be running five sub-regional competitions across the North West that will culminate in 'Oscar' style finals in May 2008.

Local award programmes will run in Cheshire & Warrington, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Greater Merseyside and Lancashire, and the winners of these will feed into a North West regional final. All North West winners will have a chance to shine on a national stage as they compete for a place in the LSC's National Apprenticeship Awards Final in July.

The competition's growth is no surprise as the 2007 National Awards attracted more than 1,000 entries, including Jonathan Pearson, 22, an apprentice at Lancashire based Schwan's Consumer Brands, who scooped the Apprentice of the Year title.

Now in their fifth year, the Awards are designed to recognise the hard work and commitment of young people currently on, or who have recently completed, an Apprenticeship along with employers who are successfully using Apprenticeships to improve business performance.

Categories in the North West Awards will reflect the national competition. In addition there will be two Further Education (FE) categories, where North West colleges will be invited to send their nominations for the FE Academic Learner of the Year and FE Vocational Learner of the Year.

To enter the awards you can request forms by calling 01229 400219 or you can download entry forms at www.apprenticeships.org.uk All entries must be received by the 29 February 2008.

If you have any queries regarding the LSC's North West Awards please contact Janis@resourcemarketing.co.uk or phone 01229 400219

Jonathan Pearson, Apprentice of the Year 2007, with TV presenter Nick Knowles



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Going Green

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