

**i** For information



Leading learning and skills

# Learning and Skills Council South East Commissioning Statements 2009-10

## November 2008

Of interest to Local Authorities, providers  
and partner/stakeholders  
Consultation Draft

# National Targets

Our Statement of Priorities, *Government Investment Strategy 2009/10*, *LSC Grant Letter and LSC Statement of Priorities* (November 2008) sets out the Government's key strategic priorities and the contribution the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will make towards achieving them. The section below summarises the key points set out in the Statement of Priorities.

As part of the Comprehensive Spending Review, the Government has set out four new strategic priorities for the period 2008/09 – 2010/11:

- Sustainable growth and prosperity
- Fairness and opportunity for all
- Stronger communities and a better quality of life
- A more secure, fair and environmentally sustainable world

Under each of the priorities is a set of cross government delivery agreements, each containing a number of Public Service Agreement targets (PSA), which together play a vital role in improving the delivery of services. The LSC will indirectly support a number of these delivery agreements and targets. We will also directly contribute to and lead on the following targets:

## Young People

- **Raise the educational achievement of all children and young people**
- **Narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.**

While our focus must be on all young people, our delivery targets will be measured specifically by the proportion of young people achieving Level 2 and Level 3 by the age of 19 and will include a defined focus on young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who are not in education, employment and training (NEET). By raising overall achievement and also providing financial support through Education Maintenance Allowances and Care to Learn we will also focus on increasing the achievement levels of the most disadvantaged. The target levels are:

- to increase the proportion of young people achieving Level 2 at age 19 from 71.4 per cent (in 2006) to 82 per cent by 2011, and
- to increase the proportion of young people achieving Level 3 at age 19 from 46.8 per cent (in 2006) to 54 per cent by 2011.
- to reduce the percentage of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET), by 2 percentage points by 2010, from the 2004 baseline of 10%.

We are also asked to raise the attainment of those young people who come from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds.

In the South East 77.6 per cent<sup>1</sup> of young people had attained a full Level 2 qualification by the age of 19 in 2007, leading national levels of achievement.

For achievement of full Level 3 by aged 19 we had already surpassed the 2011 target of 54 per cent<sup>2</sup> in 2006.

The South East also has the highest proportion of young people participating in learning in the country at 83% and the lowest proportion of young people who are not in NEET at 5%.

## **Adult Skills**

- **Improve the skills of the population, on the way to ensuring a world-class skills base by 2020.**

The national delivery targets for 2020 are:

- 95 per cent of adults achieving the basic skills of functional literacy and numeracy
- More than 90 per cent of adults being qualified to at least Level 2, with a commitment to achieve 95 per cent as soon as possible
- 68 per cent of the adult population being qualified to Level 3
- over 40 per cent of the adult population qualified to Level 4 and above.

The LSC will also work to deliver England's share of the UK ambition for 500,000 Apprentices and improve the quality and success rates of their learning in order to increase further the supply of economically valuable skills.

Working towards these targets, Government has set interim targets for **2011** as follows:

### **Increase the proportion of people of working age achieving functional literacy and numeracy skills**

The national delivery target is **597,000 people of working age to achieve a first Level 1 or above literacy qualification, and 390,000 to achieve a first Entry Level 3 or above numeracy qualification.** These basic skills targets ensure we will continue to meet the target to improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010.

The South East saw an increase in the proportion of adults achieving one or more aims that count toward Skills for Life targets of 15.8 per cent between 2005/06 and 2006/07 from 27,600 learners to 31,900 learners. This is higher than the national increase of 12.8 per cent.

### **Increase the proportion of working age adults qualified to at least a full Level 2 and 3**

The national delivery target for 2011 is that **79 per cent of working age adults should be qualified to Level 2 and 56 per cent qualified to Level 3.** These targets ensure we also remain on track to reduce by 40 per cent the

---

<sup>1</sup> LSC Matched Administrative Dataset

<sup>2</sup> LSC Matched Administrative Dataset

number of adults in the workforce who lack a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 or equivalent qualification by 2010.

In the South East 73.9 per cent of adults were qualified to at least Level 2 in 2007 against the national performance of 70.6 per cent. We are the second highest performing region in this regard.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, 53.6 per cent of adults were qualified to at least Level 3 in 2007 against the national performance of 50.5 per cent. We are the third highest performing region in this regard, after London and the South West.

### **Proportion of Apprentices who complete the full Apprenticeship framework**

The national target is to have **130,000 learners completing the full Apprenticeship framework in 2010/11.**

In 2005/06, 98,000 learners completed an Apprenticeship; in 2006/07, we expect this to exceed 100,000 nationally.

In the South East 11,040 learners completed an Apprenticeship in 2006/07; this is the second highest number of any region in the country.

### **A new joint target with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)/Jobcentre Plus (JCP) to move more people into sustainable employment and progression**

Work will begin this year to clarify and set in train the new joint target with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)/Jobcentre Plus to move more people into sustainable employment and progression and will underpin the integration of employment and skills services.

In the South East we will continue to work with Jobcentre Plus to develop an integrated employment and skills strategy to support workless individuals to access training opportunities which will lead them into sustainable employment.

---

<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics, Labour Force Survey Q4, 2007

# Contents

	Page
Foreword	6
Investing in the South East	8
Our priorities	10
Key Ambitions and Challenges for the South East	15
Commissioning Intentions	31
Related strategies	38
Glossary	39

## Foreword

The year ahead will be a challenging one for us all and none of us will escape the impact of the current economic climate. Through this time we will be working with all our partners to support the economy, employers and our communities. We will be targeting raised skills levels and increasing opportunities for retraining as employment patterns change.

This Regional Commissioning Statement provides an update on the plan published in 2008/09 and reflects the recently published national statement which accommodates changes in the economy, the emerging change programme for educating young people incorporating both the 14-19 reforms and the funding transfer to Local Authorities.

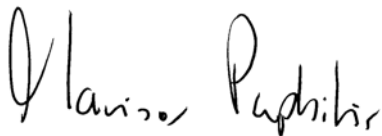
The South East is a high performing region and we are proud of our collective achievements. With all our partners we have worked to enable our young people to secure Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications by the age of 19. While we have the highest percentage of young people in the country achieving these levels, we recognise there is further to go in ensuring our future workforce is equipped to be globally competitive. We have also worked together to reduce the number of young people who are not in education, employment and training and have the lowest percentage of such young people.

These are great achievements. It is the Government's intent by 2015 to ensure all young people remain in some form of education or training up to the age of 18 and to meet these aspirations there is much to do. Apprenticeships and the Foundation Learning Tier will be more important than ever as we ensure that there are progression pathways for all young people, whatever their aspirations, and that they are on a pathway to success.

The South East can also boast of the second highest proportion of adults who have at least a Level 2 qualification and also has the fastest growing Train to Gain programme and programme of Adult Apprenticeships.

Although the South East currently has the highest economic activity and employment rates of all English regions, we cannot afford to relax. Present economic conditions, and the dramatic changes taking place to employment patterns, provide an additional set of challenges for us all. Delivery of our targets and emphasis on improved skills at all levels, will help us not only during the difficult period ahead, but will also provide us with the range and depth of abilities that we will need to accelerate into a new period of competitiveness and growth.

Together with our partners, Local Authorities, employers, public and private providers we are determined to continue to work with you to promote the message that learning pays. We continue to be ambitious for our region and for our people and look forward to working with you to secure the best possible future for all.



Marinos Paphitis  
Regional Director  
LSC South East



Norman Boyland  
Regional Chair  
LSC South East

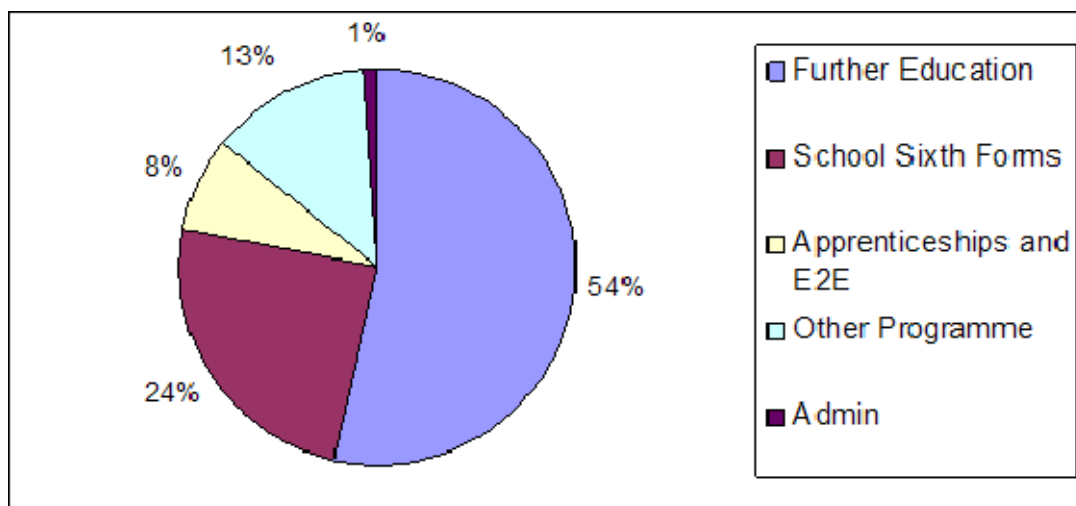
# Introduction

## Investment in the South East

The total LSC spending in the region in 2007/08 was £1.37bn, a 7 per cent increase on the previous year as a result of increased participation in learning. This was significantly higher than the national increase in spending (4.3 percentage points). Spending on school sixth forms, FE colleges and other providers, including those providing Apprenticeships and Train to Gain, increased between 2006/07 and 2007/08, reflecting the increases in participation in the South East.

Just over half of spending in 2007/08 was allocated to FE (53.5 per cent), followed in value by school sixth forms, Apprenticeships and Entry to Employment (E2E), and other programmes, such as Train to Gain and Offender Learning (see Figure 1.1). This spending pattern reflects the numbers of learners in the categories concerned.

**Figure 1.1 Profile of LSC spend, by type of provision, 2007/08**



*Note: Other programmes include PCDL, Adult Skills Reform, Train to Gain, ESF, Offender Learning and LLDD.*

*Source: LSC funding allocation records*

### Capital

We will continue to focus capital investment and on the renewal and upgrading of the college estate. Our investment in world class buildings will contribute to the regeneration of local neighbourhoods and local communities.

The total investment in the FE estate between 2007 and 2010 will be over £1.7 billion and will play a major part in transforming the FE infrastructure bringing benefits to learners, employers and the wider community.

We will continue to work with the Local Authorities, SEEDA and other local and regional partners in order to ensure our capital funding is targeted effectively, recognising spatial and other priorities in the region.

## Our Priorities

The *Government Investment Strategy 2009/10*, *LSC Grant Letter and LSC Statement of Priorities*, published in November 2008, outlines how the LSC's funds will be distributed.

2009/10 is the final year that the LSC as a single unitary organisation will be distributing funds for both the 16-19 and the 19+ system. This year will therefore be a crucial year of change when we will be working with providers and partners, as well as with the two Government departments: the Department for Innovation Universities and Skills (DIUS) and the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to prepare us all for new funding relationships in the future.

### **The Agenda for Change**

Details of the changes in funding relationships were announced by the Secretaries of State of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), in their publication *Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver* which was published in March 2007. During 2009/10 new organisations will be formed and new relationships will be developed but more importantly there needs to be stability in the provider base, quality needs to be maintained and provision for learners and employers needs to be more responsive than ever.

During the transition period, the LSC continues to have the statutory role for securing post-16 education and training, ensuring that a wide range of provision and the associated engagement and progression routes are available to both young people and adults to support economic and social inclusion across the region.

During this period of change we will seek to continue with our core objectives, whilst also preparing providers and partners for the new arrangements for the future.

### **Working with partners and stakeholders**

We will continue to develop our working relationships with South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), Government Office South East (GOSE) and the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and with Local Authorities to meet the economic and social needs identified in Local and Multi-Area Agreements, the Regional Economic Strategy and new needs that are emerging as a result of the economic downturn.

In this transitional year we will be working particularly closely with Local Authorities and providers across the region to ensure that the 16-19 Funding Transfer is implemented successfully and that provision in the South East will

support the 14-19 Reform agenda and is on a path to deliver full participation by 2013 for 17 year olds and 2015 for 18 year olds.

## **Reforming the FE System**

We will maintain our relationships with colleges and providers to support both the 14-19 collaborative agenda and the adult market driven agenda:

- Supporting providers to engage with Local Authorities, 14-19 Partnerships to deliver the 14-19 reforms and prepare for new funding and planning relationships.
- New, more sophisticated relationships with providers to achieve greater responsiveness.
- Develop capacity for growth.

We will support providers to develop their relationships with Local Authorities and with the emerging sub-regional groups.

We will continue to promote self regulation for providers, through improved self assessment and the effective roll out of Framework for Excellence.

We will work with External Institutions to review their role in the delivery of learning and skills and support them to re-focus where required.

We will also seek to secure the right capital solution in each local area, working with partners and providers and drawing on a wide range of funding sources

## **Developing the Infrastructure for Young People**

As laid out in the DCSF publication *Promoting achievement, valuing success: a strategy for 14-19 qualifications* we will continue to support curriculum reform such as foundation learning tier, diplomas and pre-apprenticeship provision and ensure that progression pathways are secure to meet the entitlement and ensure all young people progress and achieve.

We will work with Local Authorities and 14-19 Partnerships to develop 14-19 plans and jointly commission new provision to improve the curriculum offer, working towards the full National Entitlement by 2013.

## **Client Group Priorities**

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) remain a priority in the South East. We will work with Children's Trusts and Connexions to ensure that all young people have access to provision that is targeted to their needs, with appropriate support and guidance for those hard to reach and vulnerable young people. We will focus in particular on those with learning difficulties and disabilities, teenage mothers, young offenders, looked after children and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

We will respond to the adult skills agenda with a particular focus on the needs of workless adults and those in deprived communities. We will commission more flexible and tailored pre-employment provision to enable greater progression through learning into employment that supports disadvantage individuals into economic independence.

During 2009/10 we will increase learning and skills opportunities for learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities by expanding and building upon provision that meets need and as a result increases participation, achievement and progression into employment.

## **Social Inclusion**

We are developing an Integrated Employment and Skills service to ensure that all those who are facing redundancy, are unemployed or workless, have the support they need to access skills provision and employment opportunities.

Jobcentre Plus figures show people claiming Job Seekers Allowance has increased by 11 per cent between August 2007 and August 2008. Together with Jobcentre Plus the LSC will promote the role of advice and guidance through the careers service and ensure the delivery of employability skills programmes which meet the needs of employers and support Local Area Agreements.

To promote social inclusion we will also support those for whom work is not an immediate goal with a range of First Steps, Family and Neighbourhood Learning. We will continue to safeguard access to adult learning and we will work with partners including JCP, Local Authorities and the National Offender Management Service to prioritise provision for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals. This will include support for those with no qualifications, with low levels of skills and those with specific needs such as offenders in the community, those facing health and financial barriers to learning and the long term unemployed.

## **Employers**

Promoting the value and importance of skills during a period of economic uncertainty will be a particular focus of activity in the South East with particular attention to the needs of SMEs in the region. We will work with key stakeholders across the region to ensure appropriate pro-active multi-agency responses to employer need and demand.

## **Apprenticeships**

The region is implementing the development of a National Apprenticeships Vacancy Matching System (NAVMS) through a dedicated project team, to help to raise apprenticeship participation further. The national system will enable potential apprentices to apply for vacancies on line.

## **Public Sector**

The public sector workforce also remains a high priority due to its relative size in the region. We will continue to work with the National Health Service in the development of the Joint Investment Framework. We will also prioritise working with Local Authorities and other public sector employers to achieve a joint approach to addressing workforce skills needs, including engaging them in Train to Gain and expanding the number of apprenticeship opportunities they provide.

## **Quality**

Quality improvement will continue to be a key driver of our commissioning decisions to ensure that we secure good quality provision for learners and employers and continue the drive towards eradicating poor provision.

We will support colleges and providers in their efforts to achieve and sustain excellence, and will challenge colleges and providers that are satisfactory but not improving.

We will use Minimum Levels of Performance to identify failing provision. These minimum levels will be used by Ofsted as part of the college and provider performance report. Where a substantial proportion of provision is identified as inadequate or underperforming, a 'Notice to Improve' will be issued. We will address mediocre and declining provision through provider dialogue, and seek to agree improvement indicators that will focus on areas that are in danger of slipping.

We will lead the sector towards embedding the Framework for Excellence as a performance assessment framework for colleges and FE providers. The framework will be an essential component in the drive towards self-regulation.

We will encourage and support providers to use the framework in self assessment, and quality improvement planning.

### **Equality and Diversity Impact Measures**

The LSC's 2007-2010 Single Equality Scheme (SES) attempts to create a clearer line of sight to our statement of priorities through identifying a set of core Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) based on our Public Sector Agreement Targets. In the South East Region we will contribute to the national scheme through the following four regional EDIMs:

- Raise the success rates for 16–19 year olds taking full Level 2 and Level 3 for all learners irrespective of ethnicity, gender, learning difficulty and/or disability
- Work towards parity of access and achievement for all groups of learners in Apprenticeships and vocational programmes
- Increase participation in learning for those groups who appear to be over-represented as NEET
- Improve the basic skills of any groups of adults that are currently under-represented in learning, by ethnicity, disability or gender. Tackle any gaps identified by ethnicity, disability or gender in the achievement of an NVQ at Level 2

In the South East we will impact assess our local and regional policies. We will also assure ourselves that providers comply with statutory requirements in respect of their provision and services, assessing compliance based on learning outcomes. We will focus on the difference made as a result of implementing Equality and Diversity Impact Measures and improving learning outcomes for identified groups, and pay due regard to this area as part of our strategic conversation with providers.

## Section Two – Key Ambitions and Challenges for the South East

### Meeting the Needs of Young People

In the South East our **Young People’s Programme** will focus on working with Local Authorities and providers to engage and inspire young people to continue to participate in learning and achieve their potential. We aim to provide an increasingly inclusive, flexible, personalised and engaging high quality curriculum offer which will motivate young people, increase their aspirations, improve their success and help them to progress to a productive and fulfilling adult life.

<p><b>Strategic planning for Young People</b></p> <p><b>Key Ambitions and Challenges</b>  Our ambition is to develop the infrastructure needed to implement the Raising of the Participation Age and to secure the effective transfer of funding to Local Authorities. Working with key partners including Local Authorities and 14-19 Partnerships we will work towards securing the full entitlement and meeting the needs of all learners across the South East. We will also support Local Authorities during the tracking and transition phases of the funding transfer programme through to 2010.</p>
<p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work with Local Authorities and Children’s Trusts to embed our priorities within Children and Young People’s Plans and Local Area Agreements.</li> <li>• We will work with Local Authorities to support the development of 14-19 plans and inform commissioning of new provision to improve the offer across the four curriculum suites, working towards the full entitlement by 2013.</li> <li>• We will work with Local Authorities to review the 14-19 infrastructure and to secure appropriate facilities to deliver the 14-19 entitlement in every area.</li> <li>• We will work as part of the South East shadow Regional Planning Group preparing for the transfer of responsibilities in 2010.</li> <li>• We will work with Local Authorities and sub-regional groupings to ensure they receive consistent and effective information and support.</li> <li>• We will produce comprehensive data for Local Authorities, to inform them about the range and quality of provision and progress towards targets and trajectories.</li> <li>• We will work with Local Authorities to develop new processes and products to support the evolving commissioning needs.</li> <li>• We will also support Local Authorities and the emerging sub-regional groups to establish effective relationships with the National Apprenticeship Service.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outputs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Children and Young People’s Plans to include 16-19 targets.</i></li> <li>• <i>Local Authority areas to have a 14-19 Plan supported by a robust strategic analysis.</i></li> <li>• <i>Local Authorities to have an understanding of the 16-19 commissioning role and have coherent plans to deliver.</i></li> <li>• <i>New commissioning products developed in line with new systems and roles of Local Authorities and the LSC/Young People’s Learning Agency.</i></li> <li>• <i>All South East Local Authorities/Sub Regional Groups effectively briefed on LSC</i></li> </ul>

*processes and equipped with sufficient data and information to ensure a smooth Transition to September 2010.*

### **Increase young people's participation and reduce those not in education, employment and training (NEET)**

#### **Key Ambitions and Challenges**

Our ambition is to continue to deliver a participation trajectory that takes us towards compulsory participation of all students up to the age of 18 by 2015. Despite the South East having the highest percentage of young people in education and training at 82%, there are particular challenges to engage with hard to reach young people in some geographical areas, including many parts of the coastal strip, Brighton, Portsmouth, Southampton, Medway and Reading. We need to continue to support engagement programmes, Entry to Employment (E2E) and the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT) in order to ensure that all young people have access to progression pathways to enable them to engage, progress and achieve. We also need to ensure that we close the gap for young people from deprived backgrounds or from vulnerable groups so that all young people have the opportunity to progress and achieve.

#### **Actions**

- We will work closely with partners and providers to deliver the provision required to deliver the September Guarantee with a particular focus on the needs of 17 year olds.
- We will work with providers to develop more inclusive, flexible access and engagement programmes to include January starts, roll on/roll off provision and provision targeted at specific vulnerable groups.
- We will work in new and different ways to target young people who are NEET in 'hotspot' areas of the South East, working with Local Authorities, providers and other partners to establish and deliver NEET action plans.
- We will review the performance and added value of learner support initiatives in the South East to support participation, achievement and progression, particularly for vulnerable learners.
- We will work with providers to increase the opportunities available locally for learners who have not achieved a full Level 2, by the expansion of Progression Pathways within the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT), and extended Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes.
- We will develop the capacity of Local Learning Networks and Aim Higher partnerships to interface with 14-19 Partnerships across the region, building up new routes, through practical and vocational learning programmes, including Apprenticeships, progression into HE and Higher Skills programmes.
- We will implement with key partners, the actions focussed on young people in the South East Education, Skills and Employment group (SEESSEL) for London 2012 Games plan, particularly those relating to raising the level of vocational skills in preparation for the 2011 World Skills competition and the South East's participation and medal chances in 2011.

#### **Outputs**

- *Increase the delivery of the guarantee for 16 year olds by 1% and for 17 year olds by 3%.*
- *Increase in participation overall by around 2% with particular improvements at aged 17 contributing to the national indicators relating to participation in learning*

(NI 117 NEET, NI 91 participation at 17).

- *Reduction in NEET overall with targeted reductions in hotspot areas including Brighton and Hove, Portsmouth, Southampton, Medway and Reading.*

### **Improve progression and achievement for young people in the South East.**

#### **Key Ambitions and Challenges**

Our ambition is to further improve attainment of full Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications by age 19, and maintain a focus on continuous improvement and achievement of targets. Our challenges are the inconsistent success rates in all forms of provision both geographically across the region and in some subject sectors. Achievement is improving in the South East, but there is also an unacceptable proportion of South East provision that is only satisfactory. We also need to build effective relationships with Local Authorities to support their work in raising the performance of School Sixth Forms.

#### **Actions**

- We will encourage providers to improve learner success rates for Further Education and Apprenticeships.
- We will support the implementation of the Framework for Excellence in a way that develops a self-critical provider network with a focus on quality improvement.
- We will use Minimum Levels of Performance and Notices to Improve to identify and manage underperformance, and inform the commissioning process.
- We will also use the outcomes of annual performance assessment, Inspection and Framework for Excellence, to identify areas of success and weakness and agree improvement indicators with providers.
- We will work alongside Local Authorities and School Improvement Partners to identify the priorities for improving outcomes and quality in school sixth forms, and the application of Framework for Excellence.

#### **Outputs**

- *2 percentage point increase in the proportion of young people with a full Level 2 at 19 (NI 79).*
- *1 percentage point increase in the proportion of young people with a full Level 3 at 19 (NI 80).*

### **Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities**

#### **Key Ambitions and Challenges**

In the South East the LSC is delivering the national priorities of *Learning for Living and Work* through its Action for Inclusion programme. Our ambition is to continue to build local capacity for this learner group in collaboration with other agencies and the third sector to ensure high quality provision and support for all young people with disabilities across the region. Our challenges lie in meeting the needs and cost of an increasing number of young people with high support needs, including those with profound and/or complex physical or sensory needs, those with an autistic spectrum disorder, those with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties and mental health needs. There will be a focus on progression pathways for those in need of supported employment and we will look to support providers to facilitate progression into both open and supported employment.

**Actions**

- We will continue to work with partners to develop multi agency processes to support young people with disabilities in their transition from school to adult life.
- We will work with Local Authorities and partners to identify learner need and map local and specialist provision.
- We will develop the capacity of providers to support more learners to access high quality local provision (Action for Inclusion networks/projects).
- We will support providers, working in partnership, to facilitate learner progression to both open and supported employment.
- We will further develop the region's Getting a Life project which aims to extend multi-agency working to improve outcomes for young people in terms of employment and independence.
- We will support the work of the national institute for mental health in the region to improve access to education and training and improved employment support for people with mental health problems.
- We will use our resources, with those of other partners, to get better value for money whilst helping more learners develop skills for independence and work.
- We will work with Local Authorities and 14-19 partnerships as they develop the 14-19 entitlement for learners which is inclusive and provides access to the full range of provision and support up to the age of 25.
- We will continue with our programme of investment in professionalising the workforce.
- We will support mainstream and specialist providers in sharing and developing practice in curriculum design and delivery which contributes to the Foundation Learning Tier.
- We will work with Local Authorities to co-ordinate capital investment plans to provide flexible and appropriate facilities to meet learner demand and needs.
- We will support Local Authorities in preparing to take the lead in commissioning provision for the client group from 14-25 years of age.

**Outputs**

- *High quality specialist provision available for young people with complex needs.*
- *Additional places for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (LLDD) students in their local communities.*
- *Improved structures for planning provision across Local Authority boundaries.*

## Young People's Apprenticeship Programme

### Improve Apprenticeship Provision

#### Key Ambitions and Challenges

In 2007/08 there was a 2% decline in the number of young people starting an Apprenticeship. The specific challenge for 2008/09 will be to reverse this decline, increasing participation and employer commitment to recruiting Apprentices, as well as continuing to improve completion rates. In the longer term, Apprenticeships need to be recognised as one of the four key routes for young people, alongside the more traditional academic mainstream options. There will be a specific challenge to strengthen relationships with the Local Authorities, schools and the Connexion services during the transition year, to ensure that this ambition can be realised. Improvements to the quality of information, advice and guidance is key to improving the perceived value of Apprenticeships, and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will aim to develop strong relationships with Local Authorities and their Connexions Services in order to improve the value placed on Apprenticeships. As we manage employer engagement in a more difficult economic climate, there will need to be an increase in the number and range of Apprenticeships if we are to increase and meet young people's expectations. The NAS will respond to this challenge by seeking to develop Apprenticeships across all occupational areas, and also with a focus on those sectors and parts of the region which have been offering proportionally fewer places. Measures will also be put in place to support providers to sustain and improve completion rates as well as to encourage the expansion of Programme Led to ensure that the individual needs of learners can be met.

#### Actions

The NAS will:

- Ensure the successful roll out of the Vacancy Matching Service so that all contracted vacancies are included and all key stakeholders engaged,
- Seek to commission additional Apprenticeships and strengthen the Pre-Apprenticeship and Programme-led routes leading to more Apprenticeship opportunities for young people,
- Work with Connexions and 14-19 Partnerships to improve the range and quality of information, advice and guidance to young people promoting the full breadth of opportunities available.
- Improve progression routes for all ranges of ability, including progression from FE programme led, and;
- Through the September Guarantee, work with Local Authorities and schools to provide an appropriate place for every young person who wants to pursue an Apprenticeship, ensuring that issues relating to equality of access for under-represented groups are identified and addressed.

#### Outputs

- *South East strategic plan agreed with key partners.*
- *Increased access to Apprenticeships for young people.*
- *Increase in Apprenticeship starts.*
- *Improvement in framework completion rate.*

## Adult Skills

In the South East our **Adult Programme** is developing an Integrated Employment and Skills service to ensure that all those who are facing redundancy, are unemployed or workless or are locked into a cycle of short term insecure jobs have the support they need to access skills provision and employment opportunities.

We will continue to work with local and regional partnerships to prioritise skills and employment within development and growth strategies, especially those related to, responding to, and recovering from, the economic downturn.

### Integrated Employment and Skills

#### Key Ambitions and Challenges

Our ambition is to help equip those facing or experiencing redundancy and others who are workless or dependent on benefits with the work related to skills to enter or return to employment and economic independence, and those adversely affected by the downturn; such as those with backgrounds in construction or financial services and those from SMEs.

Across the region, unemployment is rising, employment options are changing and there is much uncertainty about labour prospects. We will work closely with partners and providers to maximise individuals' employment prospects and their skills levels. Currently 869,000 people of working age are economically inactive (not in employment or unemployed) and in the period July - September 2008 there were 202,000 unemployed people aged 16+ living in the region, an increase of 29,000 on the previous 6 months.

#### Actions

- We will ensure that there is a comprehensive offer of pre-employment training and retraining for unemployed and workless adults, across a range of skills levels and sectors. We will maximize the use of European Social Funds and flexibilities in mainstream programmes.
- We will fund Skills for Life and employability skills and a personalised packaged of support and skills development for the most disadvantaged and low skilled adults.
- We will work with partners in JCP to deliver sector based learning, utilising sector pathways where appropriate, in support of Local Employment Partnerships.
- We will continue to develop the Integrated Employment and Skills service with the roll out across the region from the pilot in Hampshire and the IOW. We will continue to implement the Accord, now in place with SEEDA and JCP.
- We will continue to work closely with SEEDA and JCP to implement the regional recovery plan, ensuing effective local coordination of plans with Local Authorities and other partners.
- We will ensure that all priority learners are aware of the universal service provided by Next Steps and we will build on the Adult Advancement and Careers Service prototypes.
- We will continue to work with the probation service to improve access by offenders in the community to a range of provision, including employment related training funded through Train to Gain.
- We will work with NOMS to improve the quality and range of learning

opportunities for offenders in custody. Re-commissioned provision for the region's prisons will have an increased focus on vocational learning and engagement.

- We will trial new models of support and learning for offenders on community sentences to increase their ability to gain and stay in employment.

#### **Outputs**

- *Increase in the number of learners to be engaged on Skills for Jobs programmes including pre employment for Local Employment Partnerships.*
- *More learners engaged on Employability Skills Programmes.*

### **Increasing Level 2 Achievement**

#### **Key Ambitions and Challenges**

Our ambition is to raise skill levels so that there is a significant increase in the proportion of residents with a Level 2 and higher levels of basic skills, in line with the targets set out in the Leitch report.

Too many people in the region (1.23 million people) still do not have a Level 2 and many have low levels of basic skills. With an increasingly competitive labour market it is as important as ever that those individuals raise their skill levels.

We need to focus on the needs of individual adults and remove the barriers for pathways to work by targeting public funds on those who need it most. Some 350,000 adults of working age still have not achieved functional English, (equivalent to GCSE Grade G) and 800,000 currently have functional maths skills below those expected of an 11 year old. Low levels of literacy remain a real barrier to gaining employment for many adults and poor numeracy has significant impact on the accuracy, efficiency, and competitiveness of the workforce as well as impacting people's opportunities and success in an economic downturn.

#### **Actions**

- We will continue to work with providers to focus public funding on Government priorities: participation and achievement in provision leading to a full Level 2, full Level 3 and Skills for Life, including a significant increase in the volumes of numeracy, focussing especially on those who are marginalised from the workforce or learning and those with no or low skills.
- We will work with partners to support adults into learning by:
  - securing Information, Advice and Guidance services that enable adults to make informed choices relevant to the needs of the local economy
  - evaluating and building on the AACS pilots
  - raising awareness of the Adult Learning Grant and other support mechanisms
  - ensuring that individuals are offered economically valuable skills that will maximise their opportunities for employment
- We will continue to work with providers and learning networks to develop a coherent FE and HE offer to adults and to raise participation in higher level learning.
- We will work with FE providers to improve learner success rates, especially where they fall below regional or sector averages.
- We will continue to implement the national roll out of Skills Accounts offering the Accounts throughout the region (through the Next Steps/ IAG service). Skills Accounts will be available through all colleges and will give learners access to a wide range of learning opportunities. We will use Skills Accounts to engage those least likely to take up learning opportunities and to trial new and innovative

ways of supporting non traditional learners to access Level 3 training opportunities.

- We will raise individual skills levels through targeted work for volunteers and Third Sector Organisations as part of the SESC.
- We will maintain the levels of adult literacy engagement and we will significantly increase the demand for and delivery of numeracy provision.
- We will also support adults progressing towards technical and managerial roles to develop higher level mathematical skills to support the higher Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) needs of employers.
- Through working with Local Authorities and with JCP we will ensure the supply of provision in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) meets the needs of those whose English language skills places them most at risk of isolation from society, education and economic independence.

#### **Outputs**

- *Colleges and External Institutions to increase the proportion of adult funding on priority learners and priority provision.*
- *Volume and range of provision maintained using a variety of funding routes.*
- *Successful implementation and evaluation of the Skills Accounts trial.*
- *Increased number of learners receiving advice and information through Nextstep, including through the differentiated and personalised service.*
- *27,000 adults of working age engaged in developing their literacy skills.*
- *Significant increase to 20,000 adults engaged in developing numeracy skills.*

### **Increasing Participation and Inclusion**

#### **Key Ambitions and Challenges**

Over 900,000 people in the South East live in the 20% most deprived super output areas in England, (in terms of Education and Skills deprivation). We will maintain a comprehensive programme of adult learning and improve access to personal and community development and learning in those localities with the greatest need. In 2006/07, 121,000 South East LSC funded adult learners participated in personal and community development learning (PCDL) provision.

#### **Actions**

- We will maintain participation in adult learning for priority groups encouraging the development of a comprehensive programme of high quality adult and community learning with higher levels of full cost recovery.
- We will continue to safeguard PCDL, by supporting PCDL partnerships and other local partnership arrangements.
- We will maximize opportunities through the European Social Fund (ESF), including community grants, to provide learning and progression opportunities for the most disadvantaged adults and communities.

#### **Outputs**

- *100,000 PCDL learners*
- *16,000 PCDL in FE learners*
- *15,000 first step learners.*
- *22,000 family learning starts.*

## **Improving Strategic Influence**

### **Key Ambitions and Challenges**

Our ambition is to improve economic prosperity and tackle social exclusion, including integrating skills with employment support, through delivering measurable improvements in learning, skills and economic development within Local Area Agreements and other regional and sub regional partnership arrangements.

### **Actions**

- We will improve economic competitiveness through building the skills and employment offer so that it better re-skills and develops the workforce, including through Skills for Growth projects as part of the SESC and focused activities linked with the economic downturn.
- We will raise the level of adult skills to improve productivity through work with Sector Skills Councils, employers, Local Authorities, SEEDA and partnerships, including through local employment and skills boards and Local and Multi Area Agreements.
- We will tackle exclusion and promote equality and progression through integrated employment and skills services for priority groups, particularly through joint work with Jobcentre Plus.

### **Outputs**

- *Increasing the working age population qualified to at least Level 2 by 1 percentage point and Level 3 by 0.6 percentage points (NI 163/164).*
- *Increasing the percentage of learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy (NI 161).*
- *Increasing Entry Level 3 qualification in numeracy (NI 162).*

## **Maximising the Opportunities and Legacies of the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2012**

### **Key Ambitions and Challenges**

Our ambition is to inspire young people, employers/employees and communities to advance their learning and skills through the opportunities and legacies of World Skills 2011 and the Olympic and Paralympic Games in London 2012.

### **Actions**

- Through the South East Education, Skills and Employment for London 2012 (SEESSEL) plan and its collaborative regional and local approaches, we will develop and implement activities that encourage people to develop skills and experiences so that they can contribute to and benefit from the 2012 mission, including through community learning and volunteering.

### **Outputs**

- *Successful skills competitions for 17-19 year olds in vocational sectors to secure a competitive team for World Skills 2011.*
- *A number of 2012 related community learning activities linked with 2012, supported by the 'GO Learn' toolkit.*
- *Delivery of the 2011 and 2012 employer engagement programme as per the SEESSEL Plan.*
- *500 "Personal Best" pre-volunteer programme participants (2008-10).*

## Adult Skills (Employers)

In the South East our **Employer Skills** programme will focus on improving the responsiveness of learning and skills provision to meet the needs of employers and their staff. The programme will develop skills of those in the workforce using Train to Gain, Apprenticeships brokerage and employer responsiveness as key components of our strategy.

### Employer engagement

#### Key Ambitions and Challenges

Our ambition is to drive up employer sponsorship and investment in qualifications for their staff, in particular the take up of Skills for Life and full Level 2/3 programmes through Train to Gain.

Employers have a key role to play in achieving the South East's skills ambitions. A high proportion of employers in the South East are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Over 5,600 employers were engaged with Train to Gain, with 78 per cent employing between 1 and 49 employees, slightly more than nationally (76 per cent). Low levels of employer awareness and negative perceptions of Government learning and skills programmes remain despite high satisfaction levels being reported by employers who do take up provision and the services offered by the South East Brokerage Service. There is a particular challenge in engaging them, particularly in sectors where there are no legislative drivers to upskill the workforce.

Continuing to promote the value of upskilling employees within the Public Sector and Diamonds for Growth areas will also be a key component of our plans for 2009/10.

#### Actions

- We will participate in a national marketing campaign to raise awareness amongst employers of the value in investing in the skills of their workforce.
- We will build significantly on the second year of Train to Gain in the South East and respond to the additional flexibilities outlined in the Plan for Growth.
- We will continue to seek out appropriate additional provision to support the additional flexibilities outlined for Train to Gain but will ensure that we grow our existing provider base. We will invest in a comprehensive provider capacity building programme for optimum employer take-up.
- We will market Train to Gain as a universal service for all employer needs.
- We will work with Sector Skills Councils to raise demand for skills within their sectors and deliver sector compact targets in the region.
- We will work with employer affinity groups and stakeholders to emphasise that Train to Gain provides access to a full range of training opportunities and qualifications at all skills levels.
- We will make employers and individuals more aware of learning opportunities at Level 3 and above. A larger proportion of employees in the South East work in higher order services and hi-tech manufacturing, compared to other regions.
- We will expand the Leadership and Management programme to support the development of SMEs and stimulate demand for full Level 2 and 3, Apprenticeships and Skills for Life.
- We will increase the number of adult Apprenticeships through a focussed marketing campaign and by developing our apprenticeship offer so that it is more readily accessible to meet employers' needs.

**Outputs**

- *Increased employer engagement demonstrated through higher usage of the Train to Gain service.*
- *20% increase in first Level 2 through Train to Gain.*
- *50% increase in first Level 3 through Train to Gain.*
- *80% increase in Skills for Life through Train to Gain.*

**Effective Brokerage system****Key Ambitions and Challenges**

The satisfaction rate with the brokerage service in the South East was 91 per cent, compared with 83 per cent nationally.

There needs to be a more consistent approach to engaging and referring employers by regional employment and skills agencies, brokers and their provider networks.

**Actions**

- We will seek support in developing a regional skills strategy in partnership with SEEDA and other key regional partners (Jobcentre Plus/Chambers of Commerce/Business Links/Federation of Small Businesses/Sector Skills Councils) to ensure there is a common understanding and agreement as to how skills issues will be tackled within the South East.
- We will work with Sector Skills Councils and other employer representative groups to establish specialist provider networks for all major employing industries in the South East and ensure that the offer to employers (including fully and part costed provision) meets employer needs.
- The LSC and its provider network will work with the Sector Skills Councils to forge stronger working relationships with business affinity groups and support agencies to better communicate the skills offer to employers, including the implementation of sector compacts.
- The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will work with Skills South East to ensure that we maximise opportunities for Apprentice growth through developing effective referral protocols.
- Over 2009/10 we will continue to work with SEEDA to support the integration of skills brokerage with Business Link brokerage ahead of the launch of a single integrated brokerage service.
- We will ensure employers and employees are aware of the service available through an Integrated Employer Service, specifically through Local Employer Partnerships.
- We will continue to use the Skills Pledge as a key leverage tool to engage with employers.
- We will utilise intelligence and information gathered from brokerage to inform and shape existing provision available through LSC for employers.
- We will work with the Trade Union movement to ensure that employees are aware of the training opportunities available to them through Train to Gain.

**Outputs**

- *More employers engaged through Train to Gain.*
- *Minimum of 50% of employers engaged to sign up to the Skills Pledge.*
- *Skills strategy developed.*
- *30% of PSA learner starts.*

<p><b>Public Sector</b></p> <p><b>Key Ambitions and Challenges</b>  In the South East 27% (1.1 million people) of the workforce is employed in public sector and quasi-public sector organisations, a rise of 3% since 2000. We need to engage with them to up-skill their workforce at regional and local levels.</p>
<p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will continue to work with the National Health Service to develop the joint investment framework and address skills issues in the NHS workforce.</li> <li>• We will also work with other major public sector services, in particular Local Authorities and the justice sector to agree commitments to the Skills Pledge and joint commitment to upskilling their workforces.</li> <li>• We will ensure that the public sector provide increased opportunities for their workforce through Apprenticeships and Train to Gain.</li> <li>• We will encourage Local Authorities to promote the value of learning and skills to employers providing services to them through their procurement processes.</li> <li>• We will promote the benefits of skills to employers working through brokers and other intermediaries such as TUC representatives in large employers, business affinity groups and Sector Skills Councils.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outputs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>More employers signed up to the Skills Pledge.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increase the number Apprenticeships starts in the public sector.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increased Skills for Life achievements in the public sector.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increased number of employees from the public sector engaged in Train to Gain provision.</i></li> </ul>

<p><b>Adult Apprenticeships</b></p> <p><b>Key Ambitions and Challenges</b>  A key challenge in the current economic recession will be to increase Apprenticeships for 19+ as well as respond to the current demand for 25+, whilst continuing to grow 16-18 participation. 21% of the Apprenticeships in the South East are currently delivered by organisations with 2-4 employees, so there will be a further challenge to support this type of organisation given that they are more likely to reduce their investment in skills training than larger ones. Although reported cases of Apprentice redundancies are low, indications suggest that this is likely to increase in 2009, particularly in the construction/housing sector. In this context, there will be a need to focus on quality and ensure completion rates continue to improve, identifying alternative solutions to supporting learners.  In responding to this challenge, the NAS ambition will be to stimulate employer demand by building provider capacity to increase Apprenticeships to meet new and replacement needs across a broad occupational spectrum. There will be a focus on a number of key sectors where there is the potential for employment growth, where Apprenticeship take-up is low, or where new frameworks are coming on stream. In this context, the NAS will work with the Sector Skills Councils and providers to build the capacity to respond, trialling incentives to support SMEs. The Public Sector and larger employers will be two areas where NAS will have specific plans for growth as part of the South East Skills Challenge. In continuing to drive up completion rates, the NAS will work with individual providers and also the regional and local provider</p>
--

networks to support quality improvement, sharing of best practice, and to monitor the impact of redundancies. In developing the range and availability of Adult Apprenticeships, NAS will also work with Jobcentre Plus and the LSC's own employability provision to identify ways of supporting adults into employment with an Apprenticeship opportunity.

**Actions**

- Establish the National Apprenticeship Service to provide capacity to engage with new employers and improve the range and volume of Apprenticeships.
- Engage the Public Sector in delivering 4,500 Public Sector Apprenticeships over the next three years.
- Target sectors to increase demand for Apprenticeships including Retail, Hospitality, Travel & Tourism, Transport & Logistics, Business, IT and other services.
- Trail innovative ways of supporting employers, particularly SMEs, through Group Training Associations.
- Work in partnership with Skills South East to ensure that there is a focus on promoting Apprenticeships to large employers.
- Work with SSCs and Sector compacts to maximise the opportunities for growth linked to Apprenticeship frameworks.
- Understand the nature and demand for Train to Gain to help develop progression opportunities from Level 2/3 onto Apprenticeships.
- Link with the Adult Advancement and Careers Service pilot areas to identify ways of improving information, advice and guidance, and with Skills South East to continually update and improve information and advice for employers.
- Strengthen relationships with Jobcentre Plus, Local Employer Partnerships and other key agencies to trial support to help people into employment through the Apprenticeship route, including those recently made redundant.

**Outputs**

- South East strategic plan agreed with key partners.
- Increase in Apprenticeship starts 19-24 and 25+.
- Improvement in framework completion rates in line with the national average.

## Reforming the further education (FE) system

In the South East we will focus on the **reformation of the FE system** to respond to the changing landscape, raise performance and improve the quality of provision. We will use the Framework for Excellence as a tool to encourage a self-critical, self regulating provider network with a focus on quality improvement. We will work with providers to help them identify and meet the needs of young people, employers and communities in a changing landscape and will invest in the improvement of the FE estate.

### Key challenges and ambitions for the South East

<b>Quality improvement</b>
<b>Key Ambitions and Challenges</b> Quality is improving in the South East with success rates for young people and adults rising substantially and almost half (48 per cent) of FE providers inspected judged to be outstanding or good, but there is still much to do. Success rates are variable across the region and in particular the success rates for external institutions remain low. There is also an unacceptable proportion of South East provision graded satisfactory (48 per cent of FE provision) with some specialist provision remaining less effective (55 per cent of non-college provision graded as Satisfactory). We also need to build effective relationships with Local Authorities and School Improvement Partners in order to raise the performance of School Sixth Forms. We will work collaboratively with partners and stakeholders to meet the challenge of self regulation and the development of a self improving sector.
<b>Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will support provider peer review initiatives to improve self assessment and the dissemination of good practice.</li><li>• We will encourage the attainment of quality standards such as TQS, Matrix and Beacon Status.</li><li>• We will lead the implementation of the Framework for Excellence to further develop a self-critical provider network with a focus on quality improvement.</li><li>• We will work with a wide range of partners, including LSIS, Ofsted and Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) to actively support providers to improve the quality of provision and develop their workforce.</li><li>• We will challenge all providers to improve success rates with a particular focus on External Institutions and Adult Level 2.</li><li>• We will use Minimum Levels of Performance and Notices to Improve to identify and manage underperformance, and inform the commissioning process.</li><li>• We will also use the outcomes of annual performance assessment, Inspection and Framework for Excellence, to identify areas of success and weakness and agree and monitor appropriate improvement indicators.</li><li>• We will work alongside Local Authorities, and School Improvement Partners to identify the priorities for improving outcomes and quality in school sixth forms.</li></ul>
<b>Outputs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Increase in success rates for External Institution.</i></li><li>• <i>Local Authorities have access to comprehensive data sets to inform the setting of improvement indicators for school sixth forms.</i></li><li>• <i>Higher percentage of providers graded good or excellent at Inspection for effectiveness and capacity to improve.</i></li></ul>

- *Reduction in provision falling below Minimum Levels of Performance.*
- *Improved Adult Level 2 success rates.*

### **Provider development in an emerging landscape**

#### **Key Ambitions and Challenges**

The further education (FE) system in the South East is facing important challenges to raise performance and succeed in an increasingly commercial environment. Colleges and providers will need to deliver more innovative and flexible provision and operate within the new demand-led funding system. LSC relationships with colleges and private training providers will be complex to support both the 14-19 collaborative agenda and the employer responsive market for Train to Gain. We will need to work with providers in new ways and encourage them to work differently with each other to respond to new economic realities.

#### **Actions**

- We will support providers to respond to the complex new agenda, working through 14-19 Partnerships within a collaborative agenda for 14-19 provision, developing their contribution to the community agenda of Local Authorities whilst also sustaining and developing their position as providers of choice for the business community.
- We will encourage providers to engage with the 16-19 Transfer and explore new business models to respond to the changing landscape.
- We will encourage providers to specialise in areas of provision that they are strong in delivering and work with emerging and established National Skills Academies.
- We will support and encourage providers to attain the Training Quality Standard and become the first choice for employers by improving their responsiveness and flexibility of delivery, develop tailored programmes for employers and to increase income generation.
- We will work with the FE improvement agency (currently QIA/CEL), Lifelong Learning UK and other organisations to ensure that providers have access to appropriate development opportunities to improve their effectiveness, manage change and we will monitor the impact.
- We will encourage providers to increase the range of full cost and part subsidised provision for those who can pay, targeting public funding on priority groups.
- We will encourage professional development within the sector through the implementation of the workforce reform and leadership programmes.
- We will target provider development support on new providers and existing providers moving into new areas of provision, to ensure effective, high quality new provision is introduced in the South East.

#### **Outputs**

- *New business models developed that meet the needs of the new landscape.*
- *Increased strategic involvement between providers and Local Authorities.*
- *Increased employer engagement in FE.*
- *Increased in employer satisfaction with FE.*
- *Increased level of fee income in colleges.*

**Capital investment****Key Ambitions and Challenges**

Significant progress has been made to improve the FE estate. We will need to secure the right capital solution in each local area drawing on a wide range of funding sources all with different priorities and timelines. The capacity of the LSC and the colleges to deliver this ambitious programme remains a challenge.

**Actions**

- We will lead a major capital improvement strategy for the Further Education sector with appropriate investment to ensure learners have access to world class learning environments in buildings and facilities fit for purpose in the 21st Century.
- We will seek to link LSC capital investment to the infrastructure developments and investments of other parties and to support the Regional Economic Strategy Education-led Regeneration Transformational Action.
- In return for our investment, we will expect more learners to participate and college success rates to continue to improve.

**Outputs**

- *Develop the FE estate to be world class.*

## Section Three – Commissioning Intentions

Commissioning is the term we use for all of our planning and purchasing activity across the learning and skills sector – including purchases that are negotiated or competitively tendered for. All of our commissioning decisions are based on a firm commitment to allocating our budget wisely, funding provision of the highest quality, contributing to Government targets and priorities, and providing value for money.

### **NEGOTIATED COMMISSIONING**

Negotiated commissioning involves us agreeing plans with colleges and providers that currently deliver LSC-funded provision. Our negotiated commissioning plans for 2009/10 include the following.

#### **16–18-year-olds**

Most provision for young people will be secured through planning dialogues with colleges, independent providers and schools (via Local Authorities).

In 2008/09 we plan to deliver a further 3% of places for young people above the 2007/08 delivery. For 2009/10 this trend will need to broadly continue at around 2 per cent if we are to continue to make progress towards the PSA target of 84% of 16-18 year olds in learning by 2010/11 with a particular focus on 17 year olds. We will focus our commissioning on our priorities:

- Foundation learning tier with a particular focus on increasing Progression Pathways and developing Entry to Employment (E2E)
- Full Level 2 (to include diplomas and a particular focus on Apprenticeships)
- Full Level 3 (to include diplomas and a particular focus on Apprenticeships)
- Provision that supports those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Skills for Life, in particular Entry Level 3 numeracy and Literacy/ESOL Level 1

Although the budget is increasing it will be needed to consolidate and fund participation and will not be used to fund a growth in breadth of provision.

#### **Adult learner responsive provision**

In 2008/09 we plan to deliver 170,000 places for adults. For 2009/10 we are looking to commission adult learning provision in response to the current economic climate. This will be a greater focus on learning below Level 2 for those adults that are most vulnerable. In particular, we will be commissioning additional Skills for Life provision in Level 1 literacy and Entry Level 3 numeracy, Foundation Learning Tier, as well as some developmental learning. Funding for NQF vocational qualifications ceases July 2010 and 2009/10 will be the first year of aligning funding to qualifications nominated by Sector Skills Councils.

We are also still committed to the Leitch targets of adults qualified to 90% and 68% Level 2 and Level 3 respectively and therefore our commissioning priorities for 2009/10 will be growing in the following priority areas:

- Foundation Learning Tier (approved provision below Level 2) including progression pathways
- Full Level 2
- Full Level 3
- Provision for Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Skills for Life, in particular Entry Level 3 numeracy and Literacy/ESOL Level 1

### **Employer Responsive provision – Train to Gain**

As agreed with our partners, we will need to respond to the Government's continued drive to ensure that Train to Gain meets the needs of employers, especially during the current economic downturn.

Given the increased flexibilities associated with the programme, we need to deliver the following in 2009/10

Level 2	65,800 in total, including 30% repeat qualifications
Level 3	22,600 in total, including 20% repeat qualifications
Skills for Life	10,800 in total.

We will also need to build upon the positive employer response to Adult Apprenticeships into 2009/10.

### **Adult safeguarded learning, including personal and community development learning**

We will maintain participation in adult learning through encouraging the development of a comprehensive programme of high quality adult and community learning with higher levels of full cost recovery.

We will continue to safeguard personal and community development learning (PCDL), by supporting PCDL partnerships and other local partnership arrangements.

- 100,000 PCDL learners
- 16,000 PCDL in FE learners
- 15,000 first step learners.
- 22,000 family learning starts.

### **Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**

We will increase opportunities for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by expanding high quality learning provision to meet the needs of

the cohort and support the development of skills for employment and independence.

Our regional strategy, Action for Inclusion, focuses on building provider capacity and working with statutory agencies and the third sector so that more learners can access local provision:

- Support networks of providers in extending their expertise and practice to meet the needs of specific learner groups.
- Develop provision and support to help more learners to progress to open and supported employment.
- Improve transition from 14 – 25 by working with other agencies.
- Invest in the development of the workforce.
- Support mainstream and specialist providers to share expertise in curriculum design and delivery.
- Align capital investment plans to provide flexible and appropriate facilities to meet learner demand and needs.

We will be seeking to increase the local provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to embed the needs of these learners firmly within our capital strategy.

### **Offender Learning and Skills**

We will work collaboratively with Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) partners to improve opportunities for offenders and ex-offenders through learning and reduce re-offending rates by increasing the skills and qualifications of offenders, improving their employability and helping them move into work. We will continue to tender for **provision for offenders**, every three years, unless there is a failure of service for which we need to re-tender.

## TENDERED COMMISSION

Tendered commissioning is a competitive process that is open to any new providers wanting to enter the market. It is also open to existing colleges or providers wanting to extend their provision or enter new markets or geographical areas.

In order to drive up the quality and responsiveness of the provision that we fund, we will be continuing to include competition within our commissioning activity. Key triggers for competition include new investment, restructuring of provision or a new delivery model, significant gaps in provision, and areas where existing provision failed to meet Minimum Levels of Performance.

The LSC will, where required, go out to open and competitive tendering where we need to secure matched funding for European Social Funded programmes.

In 2008/09, we plan to tender for the following:

### **16–18-year-olds**

#### **Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships**

We are committed to ensuring that our resource is targeted towards provision of the highest quality, contributes to Government targets and priorities for 16-18 year olds, and is delivered at an appropriate unit cost.

We need the following changes to provision to be delivered by providers:

- Increased volumes of *Apprenticeships*.
- Increase in the volumes of Apprenticeships in the Public Sector.
- Improved completion rates.

We will work with our existing provider base and, if necessary, open up provision to competition where there are significant gaps in delivering against the priorities identified in the '*South East Plan: Driving up Demand for Apprenticeships*'. The region will need to increase provision following the introduction of new frameworks including IT & Telecomms, Financial Products, Supporting Teaching & Learning, and New Creative.

Where provision is removed as a result of the application of MLP it is not expected that the provider will be successful in securing this provision through commissioning. Providers who wish to start delivering an area removed under MLP will need to tender in the following commissioning year.

#### **Entry to Employment (E2E)**

For Entry to Employment (E2E) we will negotiate volumes with providers where their provision is of high quality and meets the needs of young people. We will go out to tender for additional places where gaps in provision generate the need to secure new provision or where current provision is not of

high quality and meeting the progression needs of young people. Provision will be tendered by geographic area, the four E2E options and the occupational areas.

## **Adult Skills**

### **European Social Fund (ESF)**

In October 2008, the Secretary of State announced a package of support to help workers affected by redundancy. Each LSC region will be working with Jobcentre Plus, their RDA and other relevant regional partners on a joint plan to set out how providers and local services will join up to offer a rapid response service to those affected. These plans will be available from January 2009 and will set out the offer (including pre-employment provision) that will need to be secured in each region. The LSC is likely to secure its elements of this offer through an invitation to tender process, beginning in January 2009.

### **Employability Skills**

The LSC in the South East will support further the integration of employment and skills under an umbrella term 'Skills for Jobs'. This will consist of a range of services and programmes, both new and existing, to increase skills interventions in support of our existing targets and to counter the potential effects of the economic downturn such as those facing redundancy.

These may be new services developed to tackle specific gaps or may extend existing good practice by geographical location or by client group. We will select and build on areas relevant to employer demand, labour market forecasts and priority client groups and tender for provision when and where budgets become available. This activity will support existing worklessness priorities including those in local area agreements, joint delivery plans with Jobcentre Plus and Local Employment Partnerships.

## **Employer responsive provision**

### **Train to Gain**

There will be a requirement to tender for additional provision in order to meet the Train to Gain targets set out in the negotiated section above.

We will be looking for providers who can deliver programmes in a flexible, employer responsive way, in order to meet the increased flexibilities of the Train to Gain programme. In particular we will be looking at the provision of units and other part qualifications, in addition to the full range of Skills for Life, Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications.

The South East region is looking to secure the services of an organisation that will act as 'Prime Contractor' or 'Managing Agent' with the strategic objective

of supporting and managing the involvement in, and delivery of, Train to Gain provision by small independent providers.

We will look to commission high quality provision that meets the needs of employers across a broad range of sectors, but with particular emphasis on the following:

- Construction and the Built Environment
- Children's Services and Child care
- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Retail
- Transport, Warehousing and Logistics
- Public sector services.

In addition, we will focus on IT user skills, by looking to increase the provision for the Information Technology Qualification.

Approximately £7m is being made available through Train to Gain and European Social Fund in the South East to support new services to assist those at risk of redundancy and those that have recently been made redundant. The fund will also look at providing some support to those who have been unemployed for a longer period of time. The fund is aimed at including advice and guidance, re-training and help with identifying new job opportunities.

### **Apprenticeships for Adults**

We are committed to ensuring that our resource is targeted towards provision of the highest quality, contributes to Government targets and priorities, and is delivered at an appropriate unit cost.

We need the following changes to provision to be delivered by providers:

- Increased volumes of *Apprenticeships*.
- Increase in the volumes of *Apprenticeships* in the Public Sector.
- Improved completion rates for both *Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships*, in line with the national average.

We will work with our existing provider base and, if necessary, open up provision to competition where there are significant gaps in delivering against the priorities identified in the '*South East Plan: Driving up Demand for Apprenticeships*'. The region will need to increase provision following the introduction of new frameworks including IT & Telecomms, Financial Products, Supporting Teaching & Learning, and New Creative.

Where provision is removed as a result of the application of MLP it is not expected that the provider will be successful in securing this provision through commissioning. Providers who wish to start delivering an area removed under MLP will need to tender in the following commissioning year.

**Learner Health, Safety and Welfare**

The health, safety and welfare of learners are fundamental values of the Learning and Skills Council. All learners are entitled to learning that takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment.

All prospective new provision will therefore go through the health and safety evaluation and scoring framework as part of the Open Competitive Tendering process. Existing provision will be subject to the learner health, safety and welfare quality assurance procedure in order to review the arrangements in place.

## Related Strategies

- Strategic Analysis 2008.
- Local Area Statements of Need.
- Equality and Diversity Strategy.
- [Action for Inclusion](#).
- Capital Strategy.
- European Social Fund 2007-13; South East Framework 2007-10.

# Glossary

**AACS:** Adult Advancement and Careers Service  
**ADCS:** The Association of Directors of Children's Services  
**BME:** Black and Minority Ethnic  
**CEL:** Centre for Excellence in Leadership  
**CSR:** Comprehensive Spending Review  
**CYPP:** Children and Young People's Plan  
**DCSF:** Department of Children, Schools and Families  
**DIUS:** Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills  
**DWP:** Department for Work and Pensions  
**E2E:** Entry to Employment  
**ECDL:** European Computer Driving Licence  
**EDIMS:** Equality and diversity impact measures  
**EMA:** Education Maintenance Allowance  
**ESF:** European Social Fund  
**ESOL:** English for speakers of other languages  
**ESP:** Employability Skills Programme  
**FE:** further education  
**FLT:** Foundation Learning Tier  
**FSB:** Federation of Small Businesses  
**Full Level 2:** equates to five GCSEs at grades A\* to C  
**Full Level 3:** equates to two GCE A-level passes or equivalent  
**GOSE:** Government Office for the South East  
**HE:** higher education  
**ITQ:** information technology qualification  
**JCP:** Jobcentre Plus  
**LA:** Local Authority  
**LAA:** local area agreement  
**Level 5:** foundation degree-level learning  
**Level 6:** degree-level learning  
**LLDD:** Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities  
**LLUK:** Lifelong Learning UK  
**MAA:** Multi-area agreement  
**NEET:** not in education, employment or training  
**MLP:** Minimum Level of Performance  
**MOG:** Machinery of Government  
**NAS:** National Apprenticeship Service  
**NIS:** National Indicator Set  
**NLDC:** Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities  
**NOMS:** National Offender Management Service  
**NSA:** National Skills Academy  
**NVQ:** National Vocational Qualification  
**Ofsted:** Office for Standards in Education  
**OLASS:** Offender Learning and Skills Service  
**PCDL:** personal and community development learning  
**Progression pathways:** high-quality, coherent curriculum offer for entry and Level 1  
**PSA:** Public Service Agreement  
**QCF:** Qualifications and Credit Framework  
**QIA:** Quality Improvement Agency  
**RDA:** Regional Development Agency  
**RES:** Regional Economic Strategy  
**RoCPA:** Raising of Compulsory Participation Age  
**RQIP:** Regional Quality Improvement Partnerships

**S6F:** School Sixth Forms  
**SES:** Single Equality Scheme  
**SEEDA:** South East England Development Agency  
**SEERA:** South East England Regional Assembly  
**SFA:** Skills Funding Agency  
**SME:** Small and Medium-sized Enterprise  
**SSC:** Sector Skills Council  
**WBL:** Work Based Learning



**Learning and Skills Council  
South East Regional Office**

**Learning and Skills Council  
Princes House  
53 Queens Road  
Brighton  
BN1 3XB  
T: 01273 783555  
F: 01273 783507  
[www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)**

© LSC November 2008  
Published by the Learning and Skills Council

Extracts from this publication may be reproduced for non-commercial educational or training purposes on condition that the source is acknowledged and the findings are not misrepresented.

This publication is available in electronic form on the Learning and Skills Council website: [www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)

If you require this publication in an alternative format or language, please contact the LSC Help Desk: 0870 900 6800

Publication reference: LSC-P-NAT-XXXXXX