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Leading learning and skills

The LSC South West
celebrates skills in
the region

the magazine

June 2009

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

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Cover photo - St Michaels Mount, Cornwall



Malcolm Gillespie
Regional Director - South West

Welcome

Welcome to the fifth edition of the magazine, the newsletter for stakeholders throughout the South West.

This edition covers Apprenticeships and the second Apprenticeship Week.

We also have news on the South West Skills Awards 2009, which was held at Sandy Park, Exeter on 27 April and was hosted by Kenny Logan.

'the magazine' also covers information on Train to Gain and how it is now more flexible than ever.

We hope that you enjoy the magazine and look forward to hearing your ideas for future editions.

Malcolm Gillespie
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the magazine Editorial

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New opportunities for Sports Apprenticeships in the South West

The LSC has announced the launch of more than 100 new Sports Apprenticeships. This will mean that the South West will be one of the fastest growing regions for sports apprentices in England.

An independent report, commissioned by the LSC South West, Sport England and SkillsActive, found that there are a number of initiatives that could make a significant difference to the performance of employee and volunteers' skills in sport. Work is already underway to improve the skills landscape in the sector and Sports Apprenticeships is one such initiative. Young Apprenticeships in Sport Management, Leadership and Coaching will enable 125 students aged 14 to 16 to learn the practical skills and knowledge required by employers while studying for qualifications. The additional places will be available at six schools and colleges across the South West.

Running from September 2008 to 2010, the new crop of young apprentices will complete a Level 2 in Sport and Leisure, an NVQ Level 1 in sport and recreation and 50 days' structured work experience with an employer.

In addition, participation is growing in both the Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE) programme and Young Apprenticeships (YA), reflecting the increasing popularity of Sports Apprenticeships in the region. In 2006, there were no young people engaged in either Young Apprenticeships or the AASE Programme in the South West. Today, there 180 elite athletes taking the Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE) and training with some of the region's top sporting institutions, including Bristol, Bath and Gloucester rugby clubs.

The provision of the new Apprenticeships is being driven by the LSC and SkillsActive. This is the sector skills council for Active Leisure and Learning across the sport and recreation, health and fitness, outdoors, playwork and caravan industries.

Train to Gain has also provided a welcome boost to both the funding support and marketing of management and leadership programmes within the sector.



The report outlined a number of other key recommendations, including:

- Investing in a more integrated National Skills Academy (NSA) and Train to Gain offer to employers.
- Hiring a specialist sector specific skills broker to work across the NSA and Train to Gain.
- Using the NSA for Sport and Active Leisure to improve the current schools' offer, creating more coherent career pathways for young people.
- Creating an Apprenticeship focus team through the National Skills Academy, to ensure all opportunities are capitalised.

It is anticipated that the National Skills Academy for Sport and Active Leisure will take many of the findings forward to help create a skills legacy for sport in the South West.



Celebrating Apprenticeships in the South West



Apprenticeships are increasingly being identified as a key weapon to combat the current economic downturn and a cornerstone of the Government's skills strategy to boost the economy and increase UK competitiveness.

The LSC's second annual Apprenticeship Week (23 to 27 February) marked a national campaign to celebrate and recognise the essential role that Apprenticeships play in today's business world and to encourage more employers to enjoy the major benefits offered by the programme.

the magazine

To promote the benefits of Apprenticeships for business, the LSC organised a series of breakfast events in the South West. Local employers currently involved in the Apprenticeships programme talked about how Apprenticeships benefit their businesses, how the scheme works and support they receive.

John Chudley, Regional Director of the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), commented: "For many firms, finding the right employees with the right skills can be a challenge. Apprenticeships are designed by business for business, which means the training is always relevant and tailored to the needs of the industry. The fact that so many businesses are taking part in the Apprenticeship programme is testament to how successfully it is meeting employers' exacting demands and creating a valuable, skilled and willing workforce."

Apprenticeship Week also received support from entrepreneur Sir Alan Sugar, who became the public face of Apprenticeships by helping to promote the business benefits they bring. The star of TV's 'The Apprentice' fronted a high profile advertising campaign endorsing the advantages of taking on apprentices and championing work-based, on-the-job training and qualifications.

In the past, Apprenticeships were associated with more manual 'traditional' trades. However, with the increasing diversity of industry sectors in the UK economy and the growing numbers of young people taking up places, there is a wide range of more than 180 Apprenticeships available spanning 80 different industry sectors.

In 2007, the South West aviation industry experienced the largest growth in Apprenticeships followed by vehicle maintenance and repair. The most widespread industries offering apprentice places in the region were customer service, hairdressing and construction.

The number of Apprenticeships in the UK has risen from 75,000 to 240,000 in the last 10 years. In the South West alone, there are more than 42,000 learners on Apprenticeship programmes offered by over 13,000 companies across the region.

Recently Gordon Brown has announced an extra £140 million of funding to create an additional 35,000 new Apprenticeship places. This funding is over and above the £1 billion increase in spending the Government has already committed to investing in the next year to deliver new Apprenticeships across the UK, in both the public and private sectors.

Over the next decade, more employers will be encouraged to offer Apprenticeships with the aim of supporting one in five young people. By 2013 the number of places on offer to 16 to 18 year olds will be increased by 90,000. The Government has also committed investment of more than £11 billion per year into education, employment and training initiatives, including expanding the Apprenticeship programme to include adults aged over 25.

Further information can be found at www.apprenticeships.org

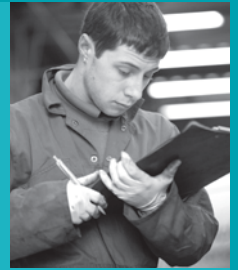
Exeter College celebrates Apprenticeship Week



Colleges and providers throughout the region promoted Apprenticeship Week with a vast array of activities. Exeter College marked the week with 70 apprentices and students parading through Exeter city centre dressed as Sir Alan Sugar. Local business leaders were also invited to have breakfast with celebrity chef and former Exeter College student Michael Caines at the college's training restaurant, @34. The Apprenticeship Guide 2009-2010 was officially launched at the event. Employers in hospitality, hair and beauty attended a networking event at the college and workshops on catering, hairdressing and automotive training were staged.

Rob Bosworth, Assistant Principal for Skills at Exeter College, said: "This was an opportunity for us to do something engaging and innovative to raise awareness of the need for successful apprentices, as well as to engage with young people who are crucial to the future of the local economy."

Advanced Mechanic Apprenticeship at Bath and North East Somerset Council



Joe Lewis initially joined the Fleet Management department at Bath and North East Somerset Council on a work experience placement. Following a three year Apprenticeship, he is now a full member of the team. Joe said: "I was unsure what I wanted to do when I left school but thought that an Apprenticeship would be a really good introduction to a career, I was lucky enough to be appointed to the local council. I have taken NVQ Levels 2 and 3, attended Radstock College to learn some of the theory of mechanics, as well as undergoing practical assessments."

Joe completed his Apprenticeship in September 2008 and was offered a full time job in the Fleet Management department at the Council. "I feel like my hard work has paid off now," said Joe. "I enjoy being part of the team and it's great to know I have a future here."

A Unified Voice For Skills

**Our future.
It's in
our hands.**

The Summer of Skills 2009 builds on last year's successful campaign which focused on reducing barriers to learning. After last summer's activity, the number of people believing that they were too busy at work to take courses went down and the number who said that their employer wouldn't support their training or that it was hard for them to pay the fees for courses was also reduced.

This summer, the campaign will bring together national and regional marketing and PR activities, including the Careers Advice Service (CAS) and the 'Get On' Skills for Life campaigns, to raise awareness of the benefits of skills and the support available in the run up to September enrolments.

By working alongside national activity, partners are likely to see increased impact form their own campaigns and budgets will go further as "Our future" messages and materials are free to download from the Skills Campaign section of the campaign resources site (CRS): www.lsc.gov.uk/campaignresources.

More materials to support the Summer of Skills will be made available shortly. To keep in touch with the latest developments, subscribe to the Skills Update e-Newsletter by emailing skillscampaign@lsc.gov.uk.

Over the next few weeks, Band and Brown, the LSC's PR agency will be contacting partners about the next Summer of Skills Campaign 2009 to see how we can work together to make the campaign even more successful.



SMEs set to benefit from funding boost

New funding and flexibility of skills support for businesses will help Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) survive the current economic difficulties.

Thanks to extended funding, the LSC's Train to Gain campaign has launched a new initiative that includes a more flexible training and development package for SMEs. Companies across the South West will be able to benefit from the service, which provides help for businesses of all sizes and sectors to train and develop their employees.

The package of extra support means that companies can now get fully funded training in a range of qualifications including NVQ Level 2 for employees, even if they already have qualifications at this level. There is also more funding for training to Level 3.

Chris Minett, Skills Development Director at Train to Gain, said: "Businesses need to keep a tight rein on costs, yet research shows that businesses that do not train their workforce are over twice as likely to fail than those that do".

Train to Gain provides impartial, independent skills advice at no cost to businesses.

To find out more about Train to Gain visit www.traintogain.gov.uk or call 0845 6009966

Train to Gain now offers funding to SMEs for bite-sized chunks of training in business-critical areas including:

- Business improvement
- Business systems and processes
- Team working and communications
- Sales and marketing
- IT
- Customer service
- New product design
- Finance and credit
- Cash flow and profit management and risk management

Winners in the 2009 South West Skills Awards are announced!

Twenty learners and nineteen companies from across the region were recognised in the LSC South West Skills Awards for their skills achievements.

The third South West Skills Awards in April sparked a particularly high standard of entries, as individuals and businesses increasingly recognise the benefit of learning and training and its positive impact. The awards celebrate the success and achievements of individuals and companies who are working towards increasing skills levels in the region. Entries are open to learners and organisations that have completed courses or projects funded by the LSC in the past year.

The event this year was sponsored by Flybe and Rolls-Royce with support from the European Social Fund and Train to Gain.



Kenny Logan congratulates Keith Miller and Frank Hamill from Bonnet Electrical and Mark Tapp from M.D Tapp Builder Limited

The winners and finalists were presented with their awards by Scottish rugby and Strictly Come Dancing star Kenny Logan.

Kenny said: "I am extremely proud to be part of these awards as I know how difficult it is to learn new skills. I have been through many of the same situations as many of these award winners and they have achieved a great deal. I would like to congratulate each and every one."

Summing up the event, Malcolm Gillespie, Regional Director of the LSC said: "The Awards are a fantastic celebration of the achievements of all our finalists, individuals and companies alike. From overcoming great odds to excelling in their Apprenticeships – our individual learners should be extremely proud. Employers have also demonstrated the fantastic contribution they have made to skills development across the region and it was wonderful to see them receive the recognition they deserve."

The winners were:

- Young Apprentice of the Year
Chandler Tyrrell, Bristol 
- Apprentice of the Year
Sinead Smith, Gloucestershire
- Advanced Apprentice of the Year
Wayne Manton, Bristol
- South West Employer of the Year
- **Micro Employer of the Year**
(1 to 9 employees):
M.D. Tapp Builders Limited, Devon
- **Small Employer of the Year**
(10 to 49 employees):
Bonnet Electrical, Devon
- **Medium Employer of the Year**
(50 to 249 employees):
Housing Repairs,
Plymouth City Council, Plymouth
- **Large Employer of the Year**
(250 to 4,999 employees):
Princess Yachts International plc, Plymouth
- **Macro Employer of the Year**
(5,000+ employees):
Dorset County Council, Dorset
- Achieving Skills for Life in the South West
Arkadiusz Czapiewski, Exeter
- Inspiring Others to Learn
in the South West
Andrew Wall, Somerset
- Learning Against the Odds
Jason Thorne, Somerset
- South West Learner of the Year 
Deborah Hungerford, Exeter
- Train to Gain Employer of the Year 
- **Small Business:**
Pultec Ltd, Bristol
- **Medium Business:**
Unwin Safety Systems, Somerset
- **Large Business:**
Royal Bournemouth & Christchurch NHS
Foundation Trust, Somerset
- Skills Pledge Employer of the Year
Cornwall Partnership Trust, Cornwall
- Success in Leadership and Management
Yapp Brothers Ltd, Wiltshire 
- Third Sector Employer of the Year
Domestic Team at St Margaret's
Somerset Hospice, Somerset

New funding for South West leaders and managers

Business leaders in the South West are being offered a new opportunity to develop leadership and management skills through the new Leadership and Management Advisory Service (LMAS).

The importance of training leaders and managers to reach their full potential is critical to harness strong and effective business leadership. This has been central to a £9 million investment made by the LSC for the new Leadership and Management Advisory Service.

The new service will focus on raising the leadership capabilities of managers in SMEs across the South West and the positive impact that it can have on key areas such as sales, profits and staff retention.

With £3 million funding each year for the next three years, LMAS is positioned at the heart of the existing Train to Gain service. Significant support is available for Leadership and Management development activities from Train to Gain, which offers businesses impartial advice on training and up to £1,000 in funding to help develop key skills. Funding can be used to access any support or training identified in the owner or senior manager's Personal Development Plan (PDP).

Each business taking part is appointed a Leadership and Management Specialist Advisor who carries out a skills analysis with the manager and helps to create their personal action plan. The Specialist Advisor then finds appropriate development activities ranging from formal training (where managers work towards specific

qualifications) to more informal or bespoke options, such as coaching and mentoring. The LMAS service will be offered on a referral basis by Skills Brokers, Training Providers, Business Link and Sector Skills Councils or accessed directly by employers.

Train to Gain plans to help nearly 8,000 businesses through this new service over the next three years, representing around a third of all SMEs in the South West.

For further information visit www.traintogain.gov.uk



National Apprenticeship Service is launched



The newly launched National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) has assumed complete responsibility for the delivery of Apprenticeships. Dr. John Chudley, formerly Area Director for the LSC in Devon, Cornwall and the West of England, has been appointed Regional Director of NAS for the South West.

NAS has ultimate accountability for Apprenticeships. This includes the national delivery of targets, coordination of the funding for places, assessment of providers, coordinating and leading a national marketing and information service. It coordinates a national matching service for employers and would-be apprentices and the development of a model Apprenticeship agreement.

NAS has responsibility for the administration of the Apprenticeship 'credit' initiative, and management of a task force to overcome barriers to the growth of the programme. It is responsible for promoting Apprenticeships and their value to employers, learners and the country as a whole.

Dr. John Chudley oversees the new developments. John is well placed for the move, having started his working career as a mechanical engineering apprentice before progressing on to higher education and gaining further qualifications in Marine Engineering. He has a strong belief in the benefits and opportunities vocational education brings to young people.

For further information about Apprenticeships visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Dr John Chudley, the new Regional Director of the National Apprenticeship Service for the South West

West at Work expands to meet recession needs



The West at Work Partnership has been expanded to facilitate more joint working during the current economic downturn and incorporate the work of the Regional Development Agency Area Action Force.

Area action forces have been created across the country to help tackle the economic challenges of each sub region and West at Work will now take on this remit for the Bristol and West of England area.

As a result, the existing Project Board for the region has been renamed the West at Work Action Group, and the membership is now as follows:

- ACAS
- Bath & North East Somerset Council
- Bristol City Council
- Business Link
- City of Bristol College (representing all training providers)
- Connexions
- Government Office South West
- Jobcentre Plus
- LSC
- Nextstep
- North Somerset Council
- Regional Development Agency
- South Gloucestershire Council
- TUC
- West of England Partnership

The group has recently produced a new 'Support for Businesses' leaflet aimed at informing companies across the region about the range of services that are on offer to help them through the recession and plan for the future.

Around 30,000 South West businesses have already received the leaflet, which includes information about how to get help with finance, redundancy situations or training and skills. There are also details about recruitment support and how to access free business health checks.

The West at Work Action Group reports directly to the West at Work Employment and Skills Board.

More information for both businesses and individuals in the West of England, and a copy of the 'Support for Businesses' leaflet, is available by visiting www.westatwork.co.uk

Businesses in the South West rewarded with training accolade

Developed by the LSC in conjunction with employers, the Training Quality Standard is an employer endorsed mark of excellence in training provision. It highlights exceptional performance in the two areas that employers say are most important: responding to employer needs and excelling in a particular sector. The standard is hard to achieve, with just 65 organisations in England having received the accreditation. A total of twelve organisations in the South West now hold the standard.

The latest organisations to achieve the standard are:

- City College Plymouth has added excellence in Construction, Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism to its standard accreditation
- Clarkson Evans and Rapido Training Ltd in Gloucester
- Protocol Consultancy Services, W&P Assessment and White Horse Training in Bath
- S&B Automotive Academy and Lifetime Health and Fitness in Bristol
- Truro and Penwith College and Avon Vale Training in Wiltshire

Organisations that achieve the first part of the standard are eligible to seek 'sector excellence' which demonstrates industry specific expertise and acknowledges the providers' ability to serve the needs of businesses in their respective sector. The standard is not attached to public funding or investment and is open to both publicly and privately funded organisations providing Higher and Further Education.

To find out more about the Training Quality Standard, please visit www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk



Explaining Apprenticeships in Somerset



An LSC campaign in Somerset is aiming to dispel myths about Apprenticeships and is encouraging young people to see the benefits.

A campaign to promote work based learning through schools is underway across Somerset. As part of the campaign, the LSC produced a booklet explaining how Apprenticeships work and how varied the opportunities are – for example,

there are currently 240,000 apprentices in England, working in more than 180 different trades and professions. The booklet explains the value of Apprenticeships and also features case studies of people who have achieved great professional success via this route. It also dispels the myth that Apprenticeships aren't for people who want to progress to Higher Education, providing examples of young people who have achieved or who are working towards degree qualifications. For further information about Apprenticeships and the benefits they offer visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Cornwall set to benefit from investment package

A multi-million pound investment package from Europe, promising better skills, jobs and lives for people in Cornwall, has been launched at a special networking event.



A host of Cornish organisations celebrated at the launch event of the ESF investment package

Organisations in Cornwall recently celebrated receiving 13 contracts worth nearly £32 million from the European Social Fund (ESF) Convergence Programme, through the LSC South West.

The money will be used to provide better education and training opportunities for Cornwall's current and potential workforce, as well as helping to break down the barriers preventing many social groups from getting into employment or training.

At the launch event, delegates from the respective organisations were given an overview of the programme and shared details of their own involvement. It was announced that the money would be invested in a number of stages: £32 million has been allocated in Phase One with a further £10.6 million currently being put in place for Phase Two.

The organisations who have been awarded the ESF funding to deliver the Phase 1 projects are: Cornwall County Council (Youth Service), the Learning Partnership for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change, Council of the Isles of Scilly and Cornwall College.

Mark Williams, LSC Skills Development Director – ESF for the South West, said: "Cornwall has been allocated substantial funding and we all need to invest it wisely. The projects we have agreed will encourage adults and teenagers through continued learning, enhancing their lives and improving Cornwall's potential by creating a world class workforce. To achieve this we must make huge investments in tackling barriers to employment such as personal barriers, business barriers, community barriers and physical barriers."

For further information about projects currently being funded by the ESF, visit www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/SouthWest/esf/



Mark Williams, LSC Skills Development Director – ESF for the South West, says the investment will be used to support three groups: people out of work; those in work but not realising their potential and those at risk of redundancy; and disadvantaged communities.



Jamie Christon, Managing Director of Exeter International Airport, makes the Skills Pledge

Flying the flag for the Skills Pledge

A public commitment to staff training and development as Exeter International Airport makes the Skills Pledge.

Exeter International Airport has become the latest business to make the Skills Pledge in the South West.

The Skills Pledge, led by the LSC, is a voluntary commitment by organisations to support all employees to develop their skill levels to at least Level 2 (equivalent to 5 GCSEs grade A-C).

Staff at Exeter Airport have been promised that the company will actively encourage them to gain the skills and qualifications to support them and meet the needs of the business. It will also help employees to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills. The airport has also pledged to raise employees' skills to improve organisation's performance.

Jamie Christon, Managing Director of Exeter International Airport, acknowledged his commitment to training and development for all staff.

He said: "Over 260 people are employed by the airport company and they will each be surveyed so that we can gain a better understanding of their training needs. I'm sure the scheme will prove extremely beneficial not only to the company, but to each individual too."

A Skills Broker will support the Airport's Skills Pledge by helping to create a training plan for staff through the Train to Gain service. The tailored plan will look at all business processes and suggest ways in which these can be made more efficient and effective by providing the right skills to meet the needs of each employee.

Exeter College, one of the learning providers for the Airport, will be offering NVQ courses in areas such as Aviation Operations on the Ground, Customer Service and Health and Safety. The Exeter Skills Shop, funded by the LSC and hosted by Flybe, offers advice and information to airport employees and will provide a range of suitable training courses.

For more information on the Skills Pledge, please visit www.traintogain.gov.uk/skillspledge

By February 2009 a total of 770 employers in the South West have made the Skills Pledge, covering 232,000 employees in the region.

Education Oscar for City of Bristol College

The success of a pioneering alliance between City of Bristol College and the Kingswood Partnership has been recognised with an Association of Colleges (AoC) Beacon Award for School Collaboration.

Established for 15 years, the Kingswood Partnership covers six schools in the Kingswood area of Bristol, all of which have linked up with City of Bristol College. Through the Partnership, students from the schools can access a wide range of vocational programmes, many using specialist facilities at the College's Vocational Centre.

Judy Stradling, Deputy Principal at City of Bristol College, said: "Our collaborative work has focused on providing vocational study routes for young people. It has significantly improved achievement and progression rates in the Bristol area, and we're delighted that this work has been formally recognised."

The nationwide Beacon Awards are designed to recognise and reward best practice and improve standards in the further education college sector by encouraging sharing of award winning ideas.

To find out more please visit www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/SouthWest

Keith Elliot, City of Bristol College Principal, is handed the AoC Beacon Award by Clare Wilson



The magazine is produced quarterly and aims to celebrate the achievements of young people, adults, employers and training providers across the South West.

We hope that you have enjoyed this edition of the magazine and we look forward to continually developing it to ensure that each issue represents the hard work and success stories that are happening across the region and providing a useful insight into the LSC and our plans and activities.

You can also find this document on our website:
www.lsc.gov.uk/southwest

If you would like to be included in the mailing list for future editions of the magazine please email your contact details to catherine.fischer@lsc.gov.uk

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