

CAREERS SOUTH WEST TAKES NEXTSTEP FORWARD

£4 MILLION PROGRAMME TO UPSKILL FOR THE UPTURN

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Jobseekers and people who are especially vulnerable to the effects of the recession in the South West are being offered extra help to find work or training.

Careers South West Ltd has been asked by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to expand its nextstep career advice service across the whole of the region through a host of activities.

The expansion, which includes providing advice sessions in more Jobcentre Plus offices, is being funded by over £4 million of LSC funding.

Careers South West is also rolling out more focused guidance to young people through its delivery of the Connexions Service in Cornwall, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. A wider network of personal advisers are working with key target groups such as school and college leavers, teenage parents, young offenders, care leavers and people with learning difficulties and disabilities. One strand of activity is to give young people the confidence to approach employers directly through speculative letters rather than waiting for vacancies.

The moves are part of the specialist support that Careers South West delivers through a number of separate career advice and training contracts from the Isles of Scilly to Wiltshire.

Jenny Rudge OBE, chief executive of Careers South West, said: "We are focusing on upskilling for the upturn and ensuring that adults and young people have the support they need to raise their employability and go forward on their various career pathways. We are especially seeking to engage people with low or out-of-date qualifications or who are out of work or at risk of redundancy."

The LSC funds the nextstep programme through Careers South West to provide adults with free face to face help and support for training, learning and the world of work.

Since April, more than 21,000 people in the South West have received advice sessions with 47 per cent so far moving into learning or work.

To support its work, Careers South West has developed an innovative database that records every individual contact session and enables advisers to stay in contact and continue to help young people as they progress their careers.

John Tempest, Skills for Life Director for the LSC, said: "It is vital that the LSC, Careers South West and our other partner organisations continually strengthen careers advice and guidance services. We need to help everyone who wants to improve their career prospects through education and training. Raising the skills of our workforce gives individuals their best chance and in turn gives us the best chance of delivering the region's economic recovery."

Ends

Note to Editors:

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers. For more information visit: www.lsc.gov.uk/southwest

Careers South West Ltd (formerly Connexions Cornwall and Devon Ltd) is a wholly owned and controlled company of the local authorities of Cornwall, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay and delivers contracts to provide information, advice and guidance (IAG) to young people and persons of all ages. The company is committed to the provision of independent information, advice and guidance to help individuals engage in learning and work. For more information visit: www.careerssw.org.

Public Document

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