

Key Points for the Regional Commissioning Plan 2008/09

The Regional Commissioning Plan will determine the learning and skills investment to be made in the region in 2008/09. This section summarises the key points from the Regional Skills Action Plan which will inform Commissioning and how Providers use LSC funds. We expect these key points to be embedded in discussions with Providers when planning for 2008/09.

1. Creating demand for skills

1.1 For individuals we need to:

- Ensure that Providers have plans to reach new low skilled and disadvantaged learners whose existing attainment level is below level 2. The priority group will include individuals on benefits, those living in deprived communities, those facing issues of social exclusion and lone parents
- Ensure older learners have access to provision
- Deliver Functional Skills to individuals below level 1 literacy and Entry level 3 numeracy and in particular focus on addressing the numeracy shortfalls across the region

1.2 For employers we need to:

- Secure the agreement of key employers in each local area to the Skills Pledge and deliver free level 2 training to appropriate employees
- Ensure that staff within Train to Gain provider organisations who engage with employers achieve accreditation against the appropriate standard so that they deliver a professional service to employers
- Work with the public sector, such as the National Health Service (non clinical staff) and Local Authorities to engage low skilled employees in learning towards level 2 and progression onto levels 3 and 4
- Deliver Leadership and Management training to 2,194 companies to improve their productivity
- Deliver level 3 qualifications to employers within Train to Gain and secure a 37.5% fee contribution from the employer
- Introduce Train to Gain entry flexibilities so that volunteers, the self employed and offenders are included
- Improve participation rates in Apprenticeships to achieve overall growth across 16-18, 19+ and Adult Apprenticeships

- Promote the benefits of a diverse workforce

1.3 For young people (14-19)

- Respond to the need for practical learning provision, outside Diploma delivery, to cater for the individual learning needs of young people “Not engaged in Education, Employment and Training”. Such provision must fit with the Foundation Learning Tier as it develops
- Continue to offer flexible start dates to non-engaged young people
- Ensure that Providers notify Connexions of all early leavers aged 14-19
- Support young people to start atypical careers in Apprenticeship e.g. females into construction and males into early years education

2. Transforming the FE system to meet demand

- Target LSC funds to deliver priority learning and economically valuable qualifications identified by Sector Skills Councils and remove redundant qualifications from their LSC funded provision
- Increase the focus on first, full level 2 and 3 starts in adult responsive Further Education provision
- Provide flexible skills provision that can be tailored to workless individuals to achieve a single customer journey
- Ensure that suitable in-work training is available to Local Employment Partnership clients through Train to Gain, including second level 2 qualifications where appropriate
- Respond to gaps in provision in the local market
- Increase Train to Gain success rates from 76% to 85%
- Increase overall Further Education success rates to 78%
- Increase Apprenticeship completion rates from 59% to 64%
- Increase the participation and success of underrepresented groups
- Secure provider commitment to work towards and achieve the “new standard”
- Invite Providers who have achieved the “new standard” Part B in vocational excellence to join the emerging National Skills Academy Specialist Networks
- Ensure there is sufficient Provider capacity to deliver the significantly increased volumes of learners in Train to Gain
- Encourage progression for learners who have achieved a National Vocational Qualification through Train to Gain into an Apprenticeship to complete an Apprenticeship Framework

- Embed Skills for Life/Functional Skills delivery across all provision and increase the percentage of target qualifications to 80%
- Embed Information, Advice and Guidance services within all LSC provision to support learner decision making and progression
- Focus education and training for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on learning that will lead to sustainable employment and/or qualifications leading to a level 2 as appropriate
- Seek assurance that all providers we work with comply with equality legislation

3. Better skills, better jobs, better lives

- Align Skills for Jobs and Train to Gain to respond to the training and support needs identified through Local Employment Partnerships
- Engage 1,300 workless participants in projects under Skills for Jobs and of these, ensure that 434 secure sustainable employment of at least 13 weeks
- Use European Social Fund projects to provide the pre-employment training that workless individuals need to secure jobs; and provide in-work training through Train to Gain to support retention and the development of higher level skills
- Align planned learning to the priorities in Local Area Agreements and the emerging priorities of Local Employment and Skills Boards
- Ensure that Personal, Community and Development Learning focuses on those individuals who need the most help to progress, either into accredited learning or work
- Ensure that funds for Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities support Skills for Jobs activity in the most deprived wards
- Develop the learning offer to offenders to include Skills for Life, and a wide mix and balance of employment focused provision
- Ensure that offenders can access effective information, advice and guidance services to tailor their learning so that it leads to employability
- Enable Providers to support clear progression arrangements from worklessness to higher level skills