



>lsc

Leading learning and skills

# the magazine

June 2008

the magazine from the Learning and Skills Council  
for partners and people interested in  
learning and skills issues in the South West

The LSC South  
West celebrates  
its skills stars

# Contents

## June 2008

### Regional News

Leadership and Management	03
South West Skills Awards	04
Apprenticeships	06
Train to Gain	07
DIUS Numeracy Strategy	08
National Learner Panel	09
September Guarantee	09

### Local News

West at Work	10
Apprenticeship Week	10
Skills Pledge	11
North Devon College	11

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Malcolm Gillespie  
Regional Director- South West

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

This edition showcases the second South West Skills Awards, held in Exeter in April. The awards celebrate the achievements of individuals and organisations throughout the region.

We also have news on the rise of Apprenticeships, Train to Gain and the launch of the Numeracy Strategy.

As I am sure you are aware, the LSC will be undergoing some major changes over the coming months. Clarity on how this will be put into operation has yet to be achieved, however one of the key messages is to continue to deliver to our customers, learners and employers, and build on the successes of the LSC to date.

We hope that you enjoy this issue of the magazine and look forward to hearing your ideas for future issues.

**Malcolm Gillespie**  
Regional Director  
South West

## Leadership and Management Development funds for South West businesses



Martin Andrews from Cattle Country Adventure Park accepts the 'Success in Leadership and Management' award at the South West Skills Awards. The popular tourist destination introduced an integrated programme to develop the skills of their managers through the Train to Gain service.

A lack of leadership skills costs UK businesses billions of pounds each year causing major issues for businesses of every size from small companies to large PLCs. On top of this, the UK is trailing behind its European counterparts when it comes to investing in managers – it currently spends £1,255 per person on management training, considerably less than any other country in Europe.

The LSC is able to provide significant support to businesses for Leadership and Management Development (LMD) activities through its Train to Gain service. The service offers businesses impartial advice on training and up to £1,000 in match funding to assist with addressing key issues.

Since the launch of the scheme Train to Gain has received applications from over 700 businesses across the South West.

For the companies who have taken up the offer of the grant funding, Train to Gain Skills Brokers have advised on LMD programmes to support everyone from managing directors to supervisors.

Berkeley based Cattle Country Adventure Park fully supports the advantages of taking up the funding for LMD activity. The popular tourist destination won the 'Success in Leadership and Management' award at the LSC South West Skills Awards after introducing an integrated programme

to develop the skills of their managers through the Train to Gain service.

Marion Sweet, Skills Development Manager, LSC South West said: "Leadership and Management Development can be overlooked as businesses tend to focus on generating revenue, particularly if they are on a path to fast track growth. However, productivity, efficiency, staff retention, motivation, competitiveness and sustainable financial growth are all highly dependent on effective management teams.

"We have had applications for the grant from businesses spanning almost every sector in the region. The response to the match funding has been excellent and we are already seeing the impact the training is having on these companies."

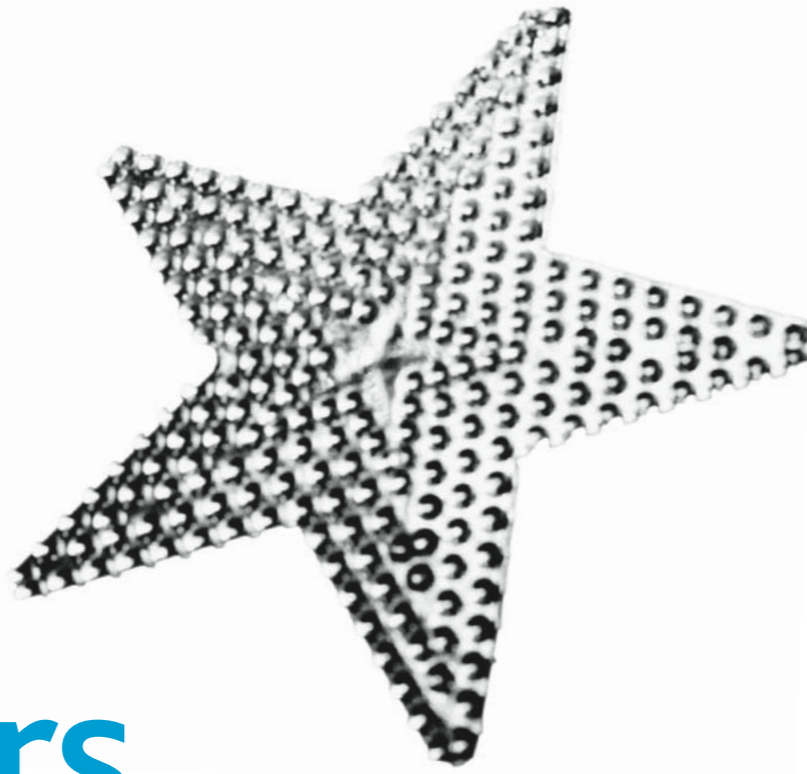
The LSC is currently undertaking an Open Competitive Tendering process to contract for an Advice Service for SME owner/managers. Whilst individual employers

are the main beneficiaries, developments are also addressing specific LMD needs in particular sectors. Leadership South West has been commissioned to work directly with groups of employers from a range of sectors to identify challenges and issues in LMD through 'action learning' seminars, which allow employers to discuss and action issues.

Nationally, a total of £30 million will be allocated annually for the next three years for leadership and management development opportunities. The service will offer employers the opportunity of preparing a personal development plan and seeking support to fulfil the Leadership and Management needs identified within the plan.

For further information contact the Train to Gain service on 08456 047 047.

# South West skills stars announced



## On 24 April skills stars from across the region set the evening alight as the winners of the South West Skills Awards were announced!

Described as the 'Learning Oscars', the prestigious ceremony was organised and funded by the LSC South West to celebrate the exceptional achievements of individuals and organisations throughout the region.

Now in their second year, the Awards celebrate those who have embraced training and development and have gone the extra mile to achieve great things.

Over one hundred and seventy South West apprentices, learners and employers attended the event, which took place at Sandy Park Stadium, Exeter.

Speaking on the night was intrepid adventurer Ben Fogle who took time out from crossing the Arctic Circle, scaling

active volcanoes and running across deserts to deliver a motivational speech and present awards to the region's skills stars.

Malcolm Gillespie, Regional Director, LSC South West said: "This year's ceremony was a fantastic celebration of learning and development across the South West. We received a record number of entries so our winners and finalists can be very proud of their achievements.

*"The awards showcase the outstanding contribution that individuals and businesses are making to raise skills levels in the region."*

### The winners on the night were:

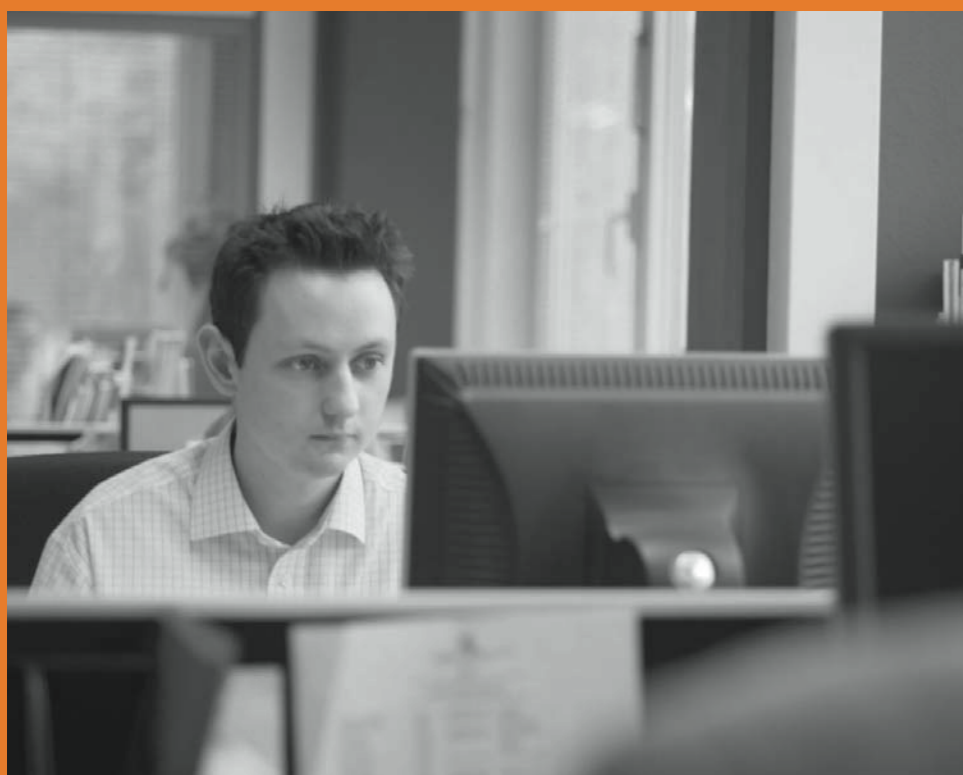
- **South West Young Apprentice of the Year:**  
Winner – Josh Pickering (Poole)  
Highly Commended – Benjamin Brown (Truro)
- **South West Apprentice of the Year:**  
Winner – Kirsten Moran (Newton Abbot)  
Highly Commended – Curtis Frewin (Kelly Bray) and Julia Dixon (Wadebridge)
- **South Advanced Apprentice of the Year:**  
Winner – Jacob Stimpson (Plymouth)  
Highly Commended – Sarah Knight (Yeovil) and Kirsty Macdonald (Plymouth)
- **South West Personal Achiever of the Year:**  
Winner – Mathilde Heather (Bath)  
Highly Commended – Ben Butler (Newquay) and Sarah Knight (Yeovil)
- **Employer of the Year (Micro):**  
Winner – N.E Vehicle Repairs (Plymouth)  
Highly Commended – Flamerite (Penzance) and I.R.T Construction Ltd (Kingsteignton)

- **Employer of the Year (Small):**  
Winner – Sherwoods (Torquay)  
Highly Commended – Bonnet Electrical (Ivybridge) and L & J Electrical (Plymouth)
- **Employer of the Year (Medium):**  
Joint winners – Mark Wilkinson Furniture Ltd (Chippenham) and The Duke of Cornwall Hotel (Plymouth)  
Highly Commended – Defence Support Group (Warminster)
- **Employer of the Year (Large):**  
Winner – Pendennis Shipyard (Falmouth)  
Highly Commended – Clarkson Evans Ltd (Gloucester) and Kawasaki Precision Machinery UK (Plymouth)
- **Achieving Skills for Life:**  
Winner – Ceila Smart (Gloucester)  
Highly Commended – Charlotte Barber (Barnstaple) and Simon Sibley (Weymouth)
- **Inspiring Others to Learn:**  
Winner – Steve Murphy (Plymouth)  
Highly Commended – Sean Duff (Plymouth) and Lee Millard (Taunton)

- **Learning Against the Odds:**  
Winner – Crosby Casey (Glastonbury)  
Highly Commended – Sarah Knight (Yeovil) and Natalie Catherine Lochrie (Taunton)
- **Learner of the Year:**  
Winner – Denise Going (Chippenham)  
Highly Commended – Kyle Critchely (Plymouth) and Kim Slade (Corsham)
- **Train to Gain Small Employer of the Year:**  
Winner – Mid Devon Community Recycling (Exeter)
- **Train to Gain Medium Employer of the Year:**  
Winner – Beard (Swindon)
- **Train to Gain Large Employer of the Year:**  
Winner – Tulip Foods Ltd (St Austell)
- **Success in Leadership and Management:**  
Winner – Cattle Country Adventure Park (Berkeley, Gloucestershire)

*"Over one hundred and seventy South West apprentices, learners and employers attended the event."*

# The South West set to see a rise in Apprenticeships



*"In the last ten years the number of Apprenticeships in the UK has risen from 75,000 to nearly 240,000."*

Gordon Brown is asking employers to offer training courses so that even more apprentices can benefit from development. The plans will be delivered through a new National Apprenticeship Service, which will be launched by the LSC in April 2009.

In the South West the number of Apprentices has risen from around 3,500 to almost 4,000 in the last five years and the planned initiative will mean that hundreds more Apprenticeships will be available throughout the region.

Malcolm Gillespie, Regional Director, LSC South West, said: "We welcome this announcement as it is great news for

In February this year the Prime Minister announced that the number of Apprenticeships available in the UK is set to increase.

learning and development in the region. By 2010 fewer jobs will be open to people without at least five good GCSEs or equivalent, therefore gaining skills has never been more important. Programmes like Apprenticeships offer young people the opportunity to gain a qualification that will open up work opportunities."

In the last ten years the number of Apprenticeships in the UK has risen from 75,000 to nearly 240,000. Currently one in fifteen 16-18 year olds is on an Apprenticeship programme. Gordon Brown has said he wants to see this figure increase to one in five within the next ten years.

*"Approximately half of all businesses have no training plans in place, and this sends out the wrong message to existing and prospective employees."*



## 2008 - the year for Skills Training

According to research by recruitment service JobSite, over 40 per cent of UK workers intend to look for a new job in the first few months of a new year and over 50 per cent are seeking greater career satisfaction.

LSC research shows that 45 per cent of businesses have no dedicated staff training programme, despite the fact that it costs an average of £7,000 to recruit and induct a new employee.

In response to this, the LSC started the year by urging companies across the South West to make 2008 the year for skills training and to take immediate action to minimise staff turnover by investing in a structured training plan.

Latest figures from the LSC's Train to Gain Brokerage Service for employers show that the region's businesses are taking note. The Train to Gain Service has helped almost 14,000 businesses in the South West improve productivity and competitiveness by identifying employees' skills and training needs.

Chris Minett, Skills Development Director, Train to Gain, said: "Training is an investment, but it is also an integral part of the employment

environment. Many employers express concern about investing in training because they fear employees will leave their organisation shortly afterwards. In today's competitive climate, however, businesses need to acknowledge that staff development and training is instrumental in maintaining staff morale and improving retention.

"Approximately half of all businesses have no training plans in place and this sends out the wrong message to existing and prospective employees. Staff want to know that their careers are being managed and developed in the right way.

"Thousands of the businesses in the region have already signed up for the Train to Gain service, many of which are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that do not have the luxury of an HR or training resource. They have benefited by working with our team of Skills Brokers who offer free consultation and advice. Diagnosing

a company's skills needs and providing expert advice on appropriate staff training programmes can really put a business on the path to greater commercial success."

The Train to Gain service offers benefits for both employers and employees. Train to Gain makes it simple for employers to find the best training to match the needs of the business and identify potential financial support. For employees, it is an opportunity to build their skill base, whether through improving literacy or numeracy, or by taking a qualification appropriate to their experience and knowledge.

For further information contact the Train to Gain service on 08456 047 047.





## South West student chosen for National Learner Panel

Georgie Erangey, a seventeen-year-old from Chudleigh in Devon, has been chosen by the Government to join the National Learner Panel. Georgie, an A Level student at Richard Huish College in Somerset, is the panel's sole representative from the South West.

The National Learner Panel, set up in 2006, asks learners from across England for their views on further education policies, initiatives and proposals. The Panel consists of 18 members aged 17 to 67 and meets four times a year at different locations across the country.

Malcolm Gillespie, Regional Director, LSC South West said: "We are very proud that Georgie has been chosen to represent

the South West and have her say on the future of education and skills. It's so important that people are engaged in education and training so that we can plug the skills gap we have in England and there is no better way to develop policies and ideas but with input from learners."

Georgie said: "Being selected to represent learners in further education is a real honour. Having been an active member of school councils for as long as I can remember, working on a national scale and being able to be so influential in the policy making process is really refreshing and exciting! I look forward to seeing the positive impact on learners across the country."



Richard Huish College, Somerset

## Launch of the Numeracy Strategy

Spring 2008 saw the launch of a Numeracy Strategy, which aims to increase the number of numeracy learners across the South West as well as the rest of the UK.

The Leitch Review of Skills, published in December 2006, highlighted that almost 15 million adults in the UK have numeracy skills at Entry Level 3 or below.

As a result, the Government has set a new Skills for Life target for 95 per cent of adults to have achieved functional skills in both literacy and numeracy by 2020. For numeracy, this requires an increase from a base of 79 per cent, which will need a huge positive cultural change in attitudes towards mathematics.

In response to this challenge the DIUS (Department for Innovation,

Universities & Skills) commissioned the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics to prepare the Numeracy Strategy.

The DIUS is working closely with the LSC and other partners to support the Numeracy Strategy and bring about this change.

In preparation for the launch of the Strategy, a marketing campaign based around the theme of *Get Confident with Maths* was launched in Spring 2008. Other forthcoming skills promotions will extend the signposting and referral of

adults to numeracy courses, requiring a greater emphasis on this provision by all partners. In particular the LSC expects all providers to offer numeracy assessments for their literacy and language learners, and to endeavour to engage them in the most appropriate numeracy provision.

## South West Post School Learning – Guaranteed!

The LSC has extended its commitment to provide every 16-year-old in the South West with learning opportunities after leaving school in 2008.

The September Guarantee is a pledge by the LSC to provide every Year 11 learner with an offer of a learning programme either with a school, college, work-based learning provider or employer by the end of September.

The initiative, which ran for the first time last year, achieved a 91 per cent success

rating in the South West – one of the highest of any region in the UK - with more than 54,000 school leavers provided with further learning opportunities.

The primary goal of the guarantee is to ensure that young people have the motivation, guidance, opportunities and support they need to build better lives through better learning and skills.

Catherine Christie, Regional Director of Learning, Planning and Performance, LSC South West said: "The Guarantee has resulted in more young people than ever before staying in learning. This is a significant effort from the region in the first year of such an initiative, and reflects the joint working of

Local Authorities, Connexions, further education providers and the LSC."



# New funds for skills

Bristol's Cabot Circus development, which will provide the city with over 100 new shops and a 13-screen cinema, has received a recruitment boost thanks to £550,000 worth of Skills for Jobs funding, secured by West at Work.



The funding targets unemployed adults within the West of England area who have low skills, and are without a Level 2 qualification. More than 4,000 jobs need to be filled at the £500 million Cabot Circus retail and leisure development, which is due to open in the autumn.

Working Links, A4E (Action for Employment), Education & Youth Services and the RNID, who support deaf and hard of hearing people, are working in partnership with Jobcentre Plus.

The partnership will deliver pre-employment training and post-employment support with

priority given to Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. The training concentrates on the needs of Cabot Circus and Broadmead employers whilst also focusing on overcoming barriers to employment and developing vocationally relevant skills.

The programme began in February and will run until mid October with a target engagement figure of 517. It is envisaged that, of these, 259 people will enter into employment with training. The aim is to ensure that 172 people will still be in employment with training, after 13 weeks.

The training will be sustained through European Social Fund projects that West at Work has commissioned for recruitment and training in response to Cabot Circus and Broadmead employers in 2008.

Links with Jobcentre Plus will be maintained and developed to identify future participants and make referrals. The funding may also be used to respond to the needs of employers that have signed up to Local Employer Partnerships (LEPs).

# South West businesses sign up to the Skills Pledge

Research shows that every day 1.3 million people go to work without the necessary training and skills to do their job efficiently. The Skills Pledge is a commitment made by an organisation to support all its employees to develop their basic skills and achieve a relevant qualification to at least an NVQ Level 2.

In the South West, five transport companies including two national firms, together with Exeter College have signed the Skills Pledge and made a public commitment to training their staff. The region is also the first in the country to have all its NHS Trusts sign up.

The Pledge is designed to ensure that the skills of all employees meet a benchmark and are enhanced to enable them to progress in their career and effectively contribute to the future success of their organisation.

The participation of the NHS Trusts and companies across the region who have already signed up pushes the number of employees who are covered by the Skills Pledge to over 3.3 million nationwide.

Malcolm Gillespie, South West Regional Director at the LSC, said: "Through the Skills Pledge we are aiming to ensure as many people as possible develop valuable employability skills and have the opportunity to access new training relevant to their jobs. Services such as Train to Gain, which offers impartial advice to identify skills needs and sources appropriate training solutions, will enable South West's employers to achieve this goal and bring a host of business benefits."



# The LSC celebrates Apprenticeships in the South West



February saw the launch of the the first ever Apprenticeship Week, a celebration of the growing success of the programme and an opportunity to encourage more employers to train young people.

Apprenticeships are an important part of businesses across the South West, enabling employers to train staff whilst giving young people the opportunity to develop skills in the work place.

As part of their remit Train to Gain Skills Brokers across the South West have helped companies who want to take on apprentices.

One example of the many Train to Gain success stories is 23-year-old Paul Derrick from Bristol. Paul is undergoing an Advanced Apprenticeship in Electro Technical Services (Level 3) at JF

Electrical Services Ltd. Below is Paul's story: "I didn't know what I wanted to do when I left school. Whilst I had GCSEs and A Levels, I didn't want to waste my time just doing something that I wasn't going to stick with, so I waited a few years before trying for an Apprenticeship.

"It was important for me to get a trade so that I'd always be able to work. Being an electrician seemed ideal. I enjoy manual labour, going out and meeting different people and doing different types of work.

"I found out about Apprenticeships through talking to people – friends mainly – who had done one themselves and said what a good idea they were. It seemed to be the best way of learning a trade 'hands on', whilst also being given an academic qualification and skills training.

"I ended up working for JFES through the relationship that the company has with City of Bristol College. John, my boss, and the work-based learning team at the college have a good working relationship. They understand one another's needs and match people's ambitions with the employers.

"I should complete my Apprenticeship in Electro Technical Services this summer, having finished my portfolio and a year's full time college course.

"I've spoken with John and when I finish I plan to stay on with the company. As well as learning the job, completing my Apprenticeship has made me a better communicator. We have to liaise with customers so that we get a good understanding of what's going on and what they want."

# LSC promises over £75 million for new North Devon College

**The LSC has confirmed it will part-fund a brand new building for North Devon College, as part of its mission to ensure high quality education and training for everyone.**

By 2011 North Devon College will boast a world-class, purpose-built learning centre aimed at inspiring and stimulating learning throughout the whole community. The project will cost over £100 million with the LSC contributing in excess of £75 million.

The college is already acknowledged as an outstanding learning community and it is hoped that the new learning centre will help drive forward the economy of the area through learning and skills.

Dr. John Chudley, LSC Area Director for Devon and Cornwall, said: "This is a fantastic result for the learners of North Devon and Torridge. It will help raise the nation's ambition to

increase participation for post 16 learners and raise attainment for adults. The new estate at Seven Brethren will provide the college with the facilities necessary to support the already excellent provision being delivered at North Devon. It will also provide the infrastructure to increase the number of young people on the path to success whilst engaging with more employers and businesses in a bespoke 21st century environment."

The floor plans for the new building have yet to be finalised, but it is already agreed that the site will host a variety of impressive state of the art facilities including a University Centre providing a good range of recognised degree level programmes.

As part of its work to unlock business potential in North Devon and Torridge, the South West Regional Development Agency (RDA) has also agreed, in principle, to invest in an Innovation Centre which will provide

facilities to help fledgling firms develop as well as encouraging enterprise and innovation within companies in the wider area.

The building will be created using and incorporating many green and sustainable techniques and its dramatic architecture will create an impressive new gateway to the heart of Barnstable.

Principal of North Devon College, David Dodd, said: "This is brilliant news for the people and businesses of North Devon. The building itself will make a world class educational statement that will encourage people and businesses to be aspirational about what is possible and to be entrepreneurial and innovative in their approach."

