

## LEARNING GUARANTEE EXTENDED FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS

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A successful initiative, which provides every 16-year-old in the South West with guaranteed learning opportunities after leaving school, is to be extended in 2008.

The September Guarantee is a commitment by the LSC (Learning and Skills Council) 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. And this year will see 17-year-olds covered by the Guarantee for the first time.

The initiative, which ran for the first time last year, saw 614,000 16-year-olds across the UK receive an offer of learning three months after leaving school. In the South West, the scheme achieved a 91 per cent success rating – one of the highest of any region in the UK - with more than 54,000 school leavers provided with further learning opportunities.

Catherine Christie, LSC Regional Director of Learning, Planning and Performance in the South West said: “The Guarantee, which is basically an offer of learning to 16 and 17-year-olds, has resulted in more young people than ever before staying in learning.

“This is a significant effort in the first year of such an initiative, and reflects the joint working of Local Authorities, Connexions, further education providers and the LSC.”

Catherine Christie stressed that the Guarantee’s primary goal is to ensure that young people have the motivation, guidance, opportunities and support they need to build better lives through better learning and skills.

“Inevitably, some young people refused an offer or were not in a position where they could accept a place, but this is a very small number compared to those that were enrolled into new learning opportunities,” added Catherine. “There is also more we can do in 2008 to build on our success and ensure the figures in terms of offers, actual enrolment and completion of learning programmes are higher.

“It was also the first year in which an on-line prospectus of learning opportunities was available covering the whole of England, and we are confident that this initiative alongside the Guarantee resulted in a substantial fall in the number of 16-18-year-olds not in education, employment or training.”

## **Ends**

### **Note to Editors:**

#### **LSC**

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational 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 by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country. For more information visit:

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/westofengland>

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