

Learning and Skills Council Local Area Statement of Need

Herefordshire and Worcestershire

2008/09

December 2007

Of interest to everyone involved in improving skills and learning opportunities
across the West Midlands

Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with the West Midlands Regional Commissioning plan 2008-09.

<https://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/WestMidlands/Aboutus/Annualplans/>

Herefordshire and Worcestershire includes two county council areas: Herefordshire, which is a unitary authority and Worcestershire, which comprises of six District Council areas – Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Worcester City, Wychavon and Wyre Forest.

The two counties have a mixture of rural and urban areas.

The county of Worcestershire has a population of 542,000. By 2011 it is expected that the population of Worcestershire will have grown by over 8%, with the highest rate of growth expected to be in the 65+ age group. Redditch has the highest proportion of residents aged 0-17 (24%) with Malvern Hills having the highest proportion of residents aged 65+ (15%).

Herefordshire is a predominantly rural county and is the most sparsely populated unitary authority in England. It has a population of 179,000 and this is expected to grow to 182,475 by 2011. Only 14.5% of Herefordshire population fall into the 15-29 age bracket and Herefordshire traditionally 'loses' young people to areas of greater opportunity and higher education.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire has a very high proportion of SMEs (81% of business compared to 74% regionally). In Worcestershire there is a higher than average level of self-employment.

The proportion of staff training across Herefordshire and Worcestershire is low compared to other sub-regions across the West Midlands with less than one third of businesses in Worcestershire investing in training linked to their business plans.

Despite a reduction in skills gaps across the region, reported skills gaps across Herefordshire and Worcestershire are the highest in the West Midlands (6% compared to 5% for the whole of the West Midlands).

Forecast growth in employment across Herefordshire and Worcestershire will be led by retail (expected to grow by 2,000 over the next 10 years with a replacement demand of 8,000), business and professional services (expected to grow by 8,000 new jobs over the next 10 years) and health and social care occupations. Overall employment in Manufacturing across Herefordshire and Worcestershire is expected to fall by 7,000 to 50,000 by 2014. However, replacement demand is forecast to create 19,400 job opportunities. The Agriculture sector will also see an increase in replacement demand over the next 10 years

We recognise that the most effective and efficient way to tackle the key challenges across Herefordshire and Worcestershire is through partnership working. Further details on work with our partners can be found in section 3 of this document.

Challenges, key actions and measures of success for Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Our challenges and actions are based on our regional *Strategic Analysis*; a robust strategic analysis of supply, demand and need; as well as ongoing dialogue with key partner organisations. The analysis can be accessed at <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/WestMidlands/wmr-regionalstrategicanalysis-dec07.pdf>

NATIONAL PRIORITY 1: CREATING DEMAND FOR SKILLS	
Challenge – There are falling 16-19 numbers on the Apprenticeship programme	
<p>Action:</p> <p>Development of the Young Apprenticeship programmes across Herefordshire and Worcestershire with a clear target for progression onto the Apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>Investigate further the role of Entry to Employment (E2E) in progressing learners onto the Apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>Investigate the role of programme-led Apprenticeships within colleges and providers</p> <p>Ensure that the 14-19 plan includes a responsibility for employer engagement</p> <p>Work with the Connexions service across Herefordshire and Worcestershire to identify those learners in jobs without training and follow-up.</p>	<p>Measure of Success:</p> <p>Participation on the Apprenticeship programme increased in line with national planning expectations.</p> <p>Year on year reductions on the proportion of young people in jobs without training.</p> <p>To see an improvement in the progression rate from E2E onto Apprenticeship programmes from 8% in 2006/07 to 20% in 2007/08.</p>
Challenge – The proportion of young people not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET) remains significantly higher than the local average of 6.5% in Redditch; Wyre Forest; Pickersleigh, Malvern; Worcester City (specific Wards); Hereford and South Wye.	
<p>Action:</p> <p>Ensure that targets to assist in the reduction of NEET are included in individual consortium development plans for 2008/09</p> <p>Continue regular partnership meetings with Connexions to ensure a clear understanding of the nature of the NEET group and through the local NEET commissioning board ensure that the appropriate provision is secured to meet the needs of learners in particular hotspot areas</p>	<p>Measure of Success:</p> <p>Reduction in NEET in Redditch, Wyre Forest, Pickersleigh, Worcester City (Warndon and Gorse Hill), Hereford and South Wye</p> <p>Contracts procured to provide additional first rung opportunities pre and post 16 to directly reduce NEET figures.</p>

<p>The local area NEET Management board to oversee planned activity.</p> <p>14-19 consortia plans to identify local actions to target the NEET group</p> <p>14-19 Local Authority Partnership plans include NEET as a priority. Successfully implement a process for meeting the new September Guarantee definition contained in the Grant Letter.</p>	<p>Ensure all Year 11s receive an offer of learning before they sit their GCSEs in 2009, plus year 12s (17 year olds) receive an offer of learning for the end of the 2008/09 academic year.</p>
<p>Challenge – Take up of some sectors on the Train to Gain programme is poor particularly Retail and Commercial Enterprise a key employment demand sector over the next 10 years</p>	
<p>Action: Ensure that new jobs in retail are supported by Train to Gain and Apprenticeships.</p> <p>Ensure that Train to Gain is a key part of the skills offer to retail employers</p>	<p>Measure of Success: Work with providers to ensure delivery of the new retail qualification</p>
<p>Challenge – To increase participation in Train to Gain by the Agriculture and Land-based sectors</p>	
<p>Action: Meeting to be held with the Agriculture sector colleges early in 2008</p> <p>Discussion with individual colleges through dialogue meetings</p>	<p>Measure of Success Increase in the numbers in learning in agriculture and land-based sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in Train to Gain • in Apprenticeships
<p>Challenge – To better equip Adults in the sub-region with the skills they require to meet the demands of the economy</p>	
<p>Action: Skills for Jobs to target workless people in the most deprived areas</p> <p>To increase participation levels on the Level 2 Train to Gain and Skills for Life programmes.</p> <p>Personal and Community Development Learning linked to Local Area Agreement (LAA) priority groups</p> <p>Skills pledge to be signed by all the major public sector bodies.</p>	<p>Measure of Success: 500 – Engaged across Herefordshire and Worcestershire 168 – employed with training 250 – training/further learning</p> <p>150 learners against each LAA target participating.</p> <p>Public health trusts, county authorities and further education colleges sign the pledge</p>

NATIONAL PRIORITY 2: TRANSFORMING FE	
Challenge – The take up of BIT, ITQ and the new retail qualification across Herefordshire and Worcestershire is poor	
<p>Action:</p> <p>Use balance sheets and commissioning plan to inform provider dialogue</p> <p>Improve the local infrastructure to better deliver BIT and ITQ</p> <p>Target providers through negotiated and competitive tendering</p> <p>Improve Train to Gain consortium capability and capacity to deliver the new qualifications.</p>	<p>Measure of Success:</p> <p>Providers to deliver more of the new qualifications in 2008/09</p> <p>Enhanced marketing of the qualifications through providers' staff; more centres accredited for delivery; staff qualified to assess and verify.</p>
Challenge – There is a gap in Retail Apprenticeship provision in Herefordshire	
<p>Action:</p> <p>Ensure that appropriate provision is secured through the next tendering round.</p> <p>Ensure increased delivery of the new Retail Qualification.</p>	<p>Measure of Success</p> <p>Sufficient places for Retail on the Apprenticeship programme contracted for Herefordshire</p>
NATIONAL PRIORITY 3 – BETTER SKILLS, BETTER JOBS, BETTER LIVES	
Challenge – The highest number of claimants of job seekers allowance are in Worcester City, Redditch and Kidderminster	
<p>Action:</p> <p>Delivery of the Employability Skills Programme developed to meet the needs of Jobcentre Plus customers will enable people on Job Seekers allowance to gain an employability award that is based on the skills, behaviours and attitudes that employers require.</p>	<p>Measure of Success:</p> <p>The target of 80 starts on the programme achieved across Worcestershire</p>
Challenge – The need to plan specialist LLDD provision across Herefordshire and Worcestershire	
<p>Action:</p> <p>The LSC is to arrange a meeting with the local authorities to discuss concerns, analyse cohort data and discuss ways of improving provision across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.</p>	<p>Measure of Success:</p> <p>14-19 Partnership plans will address this issue. Look at bringing in new providers into this field if required</p> <p>Future capital investment plans to include specific facilities designed to support this group of learners.</p>
Challenge - Increased commitment from the public sector to improve the skills base	
<p>Action:</p> <p>Skills pledge to be signed by all the major public sector bodies.</p>	<p>Measure of Success:</p> <p>Public health trusts, county authorities and further education colleges sign the pledge and increase training opportunities for their staff.</p>

Major Public Sector bodies to:

- make the Skills Pledge
- introduce/increase Apprenticeship opportunities
- require these actions in their supply chain
 - include and influence particularly in construction
 - public sector bodies to include targets for apprenticeships, work placements, interviews and new jobs in tendered contracts

Partnership Working

We cannot deliver our challenging agenda and create a new learning culture on our own. We have formed strong links with others who share our passion for transforming learning.

We have built strong relationships with Jobcentre Plus and Local Authorities. These are helping to develop high-quality learning which meets the demands of employers and individuals. We also have strong patterns of partnership outside of government, including employers, the voluntary sector, and trade unions.

Our wider partnerships extend well beyond direct campaigns to promote learning. All our partnerships create opportunities to promote a new learning culture.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire LSC is developing clear operating relationships with a number of key groups, namely:

- Government Office West Midlands and Advantage West Midlands
- Jobcentre Plus / New Deal Task Force
- Local Authorities
- National Training Organisations network
- Small Business Service
- Connexions and adult guidance services
- Employment and Skills Boards
- Learndirect
- Adult Learning Inspectorate and OFSTED
- Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and awarding bodies
- Voluntary and community organisations, and those representing equal opportunities issues
- NEET Commissioning Board
- Local Strategic Partnerships
- 14-19 Consortia
- College Consortium
- Training Providers Association.