

 For information



Leading learning and skills

Learning and
Skills Council
Yorkshire
and the Humber
Commissioning
Statement
2009/10

December 2008

Of interest to Local Authorities, providers
and partner/stakeholders

Foreword

The future prosperity of the region depends on the skills and aspirations of its people. A vibrant, inclusive economy can only be achieved if the learning and skills needs and demands of both individuals and employers are met by a responsive, high quality learning infrastructure. Learning is more than an end in itself. It impacts on productivity, employability and social cohesion. Education is the great equaliser, the cornerstone of employability, social justice and sustainable communities.

The LSC in Yorkshire and Humber prides itself on the contribution it has made to driving forward continued improvements in the number of people in the region who are participating in learning new skills and in the proportion of them who are achieving success.

From September 2010 new arrangements are scheduled to be in place for commissioning and planning for learning and skills needs in the region. Local authorities working in sub regional clusters together with the Regional Planning Group and the Young People's Learning Agency will carry responsibility for commissioning 16-19 education after the change. Adult skills and apprenticeships will become the responsibility of the Skills Funding Agency and the National Apprenticeship Service.

In preparation for these changes the LSC is determined that the improvements to the service which have been so hard won are carried forward, sustained and built upon. The Regional Commissioning Statement therefore focuses both on ensuring that the best possible service is in place from the LSC in the run up to September 2010 and that the transition to the new service is prepared in close collaboration with the key partners.

For young people, the Statement sets out how we will work in close collaboration with local authorities and the rich network of regional providers, to ensure that young people choose to participate in learning post 16, are able to take advantage of an increasingly flexible curriculum, and continue to achieve ever higher levels of relevant qualifications.

For adults, the Statement focuses on ensuring there is an appropriate range of informal learning on offer, providing an integrated employment and skills service to support those returning to the labour market, and on upskilling people already in the work. We are committed to achieving this in close collaboration with key partners such as Yorkshire Forward, Job Centre Plus, the Sector Skills Councils, local authorities, the third sector, providers and, of course, employers.

For employers the Train to Gain service in the region has been responsible for a step change in the opportunities to train their workforce. The Statement sets out how the LSC will continue to champion the provision of an increasingly flexible and responsive training service for employers via services such as Train to Gain. The LSC sees a continued expansion in the opportunities for apprenticeships both in the private and the public sector as central to this drive to improve the opportunities for employers to train their workforce.

In setting priorities for the use of the resources available to the region the LSC is clear that it must continue to ensure that our diverse community can take full advantage of the dynamic employment opportunities that exist in the region.

The LSC Regional Commissioning Statement clearly articulates what we must do to achieve this vision. This is a huge agenda and one we cannot hope to achieve on our own. Our relationships with our partners have to be based on trust and shared goals. We aim to exercise that trust with responsibility, with commitment and with energy and to work in close collaboration with our partners to continue the upward trajectory in performance.



Margaret Coleman
Regional Director
LSC Yorkshire and the Humber



Rachel Mann
Chair of the Regional Council
LSC Yorkshire and the Humber

Introduction

This Statement is the key regional output from our annual planning cycle. It provides the direction of travel for learning and skills across the region and sets out the context within which we will plan our provision for 2009/10. Consequently, it will be of interest to a range of organisations including Government Office, Yorkshire Forward, local authorities, employers, FE colleges, specialist colleges, schools with sixth forms, apprenticeship providers, personal development and community learning providers and the voluntary and community sectors.

The Statement includes our areas of focus for the next 12 months and provides an indication of our commissioning intentions for 2009/10. The areas of focus section comprises of a summary of key achievements within the last 12 months, the challenges we face and the key actions that we plan to take to respond to them. Our commissioning intentions section includes details of what has previously been purchased and whether it needs to be maintained, expanded or contracted.

Key Areas of Focus

These are the areas that we will target in 2009/10. They have been identified within the context of the LSC's priorities, outlined in the national Statement of Priorities, and informed by our ongoing dialogue with partner organisations and our Regional Strategic Analysis for 2008.

The national Statement of Priorities can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/aboutus/lscstrategy/statementofpriorities/>

The full Regional Strategic Analysis can be accessed via the following link:

http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/YorkshireandtheHumber/Y_HRegionalStrategicAnalysisDEC2008.pdf

1. Meeting the Needs of Young People

Achievements

- Overall participation by young people increased by 2.5% to 143,000 learners in 2007/08.
- Participation in Further Education colleges increased by 3.5% to 77,200.
- School sixth form student numbers increased by 0.6% to almost 35,800.
- 22,400 young people participated on an Apprenticeship, of which 11,000 were new starts. New starts increased by 5% compared to the previous year.
- NEET has reduced by 0.9 percentage points and 'Not Knowns' has fallen by 2.3 percentage points.
- Further Education success rates increased by 1.8% to 75.4% in 2006/07.
- Apprenticeship success rates have increased by 18 percentage points in the last two years to 63%.

The key challenges in Yorkshire and the Humber for young people are:

- **16 - 17 participation rates remain 3 percentage points below the national average.**
- **Apprenticeship participation fell by 1%** in 2007/08 and this needs to be reversed to respond to demand and achieve our targets.
- The region continues to have **high levels of NEET** overall (7.7% or 13,000 young people), with wide variations between areas and within areas.

- Level 2 and Level 3 attainment at 19 are both improving, but **the gap between regional and national performance has widened to 4 percentage points for Level 2 and 5 percentage points for Level 3**. This is despite stronger than average performance for Level 2 between the ages of 16 and 19.
- **Level 2 attainment including English and mathematics is poor** with only two in every five young people reaching this standard at age 19.
- **Success rates for young people in the region remain below national averages** in School sixth forms and Further Education colleges, and there are wide variations in performance between providers.
- **The full range of provision is not always available to young people** in small schools, particularly those in rural areas, and the new curriculum opportunities that are opening up require strong collaborative networks.

The actions we intend to take to respond to these challenges include:

- To direct mainstream 16-18 funding to those organisations which have successfully attracted increased numbers of learners in priority areas in 2007/8 and 2008/9, and have supported them to achieve success.
- To commission an expansion in apprenticeship provision and to strengthen the links between employer need and young people's demand via developing the Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service as part of the National Apprenticeship Service.
- To direct funding to activities which support the delivery of an increasingly flexible curriculum, making full use of the opportunities provided by the Foundation Learning Tier and Diplomas.
- To prioritise flexible Further Education programmes to facilitate reductions in NEET.
- To support the evolution of the Entry to Employment programme into the Foundation Learning Tier by competitively tendering for an appropriate range of provision.
- To co-ordinate the delivery of an £34m ESF programme of activity designed to provide an enhanced and more coherent programme of support for those at risk of becoming or already not engaged in education, employment or training.
- To continue to support a co-ordinated multi agency approach to the core 14-19 issues via the Yorkshire and the Humber 14-19 challenge.
- To facilitate the development and implementation of local authority 14-19 plans and 16-19 commissioning plans and the work of the Regional Planning Group.

- To implement the Single Equality Scheme, with particular emphasis on the differential participation and attainment of ethnic minority groups.
- To work with local authorities and providers to continue to enhance the availability of high quality LLDD provision for those aged 16-25, both in the local community and in specialist regional centres, and to strengthen the link between the provision of learning services and the provision of care.
- To collaborate with local authorities and their sub regional clusters in challenging and supporting providers to improve their performance.

2. Improving Adult Skills

Achievements

- Integrated employment and skills activity attracted:
1,100 skills for jobs participants
1,500 Employability Skills Programme learners
- 265,600 adults participated on LSC funded programmes in 2007/08, of which 168,300 were in FE colleges.
- The number of adults participating in Train to Gain increased to 31,500, a year on year increase of 249%.
- Adult apprenticeship starts increased by 55%, with particularly strong growth at Level 3.
- Adult learners studying to a full Level 2 aim in FE increased by 5% to 25,900, whilst there was a 10% increase in adults studying for a full Level 3 qualification.
- Over 67,000 adults improved their literacy and numeracy skills.
- 55,000 learners accessed adult safeguarded learning in 2006/07.
- FE success rates have improved by 3 percentage points for both full level 2 and full level 3.

The key challenges in Yorkshire and the Humber for adults are:

- Recently the **claimant count has risen sharply** to 3.0% of the working age population. By October the claimant count had experienced a 0.4 percentage point increase over a 4 month period (11,000 extra claimants), double the national increase.
- Currently **the proportion of workless people** in the region stands at 9.5%, 304,500 of the working age population.

- The pattern of employment is changing rapidly in the region with **reduced job opportunities** expected to be available in areas such as financial services and house building.
- There are relatively **few opportunities in the labour market that match the skill levels and aspirations of the workless**. This requires excellent inter-agency partnership working to maximise available opportunities, and flexible responses from providers to move people from unemployment into sustainable jobs.
- The mix and balance of provision has changed to respond to the needs of the region. Significantly **higher levels of target bearing provision** are now being delivered, but this change will need to accelerate further if we are to achieve the skills levels needed to compete internationally as outlined in the Leitch report. In the region we need to have an additional:
 - 265,000 adults with functional literacy
 - 460,000 adults with functional numeracy
 - 150,000 adults qualified to Level 2
 - 177,000 adults qualified to Level 3 and
 - 442,000 adults qualified to Level 4 and above
- **Attainment of adults at Level 3 is the lowest in the country** and the gap between the region and the national position widened to 4 percentage points in 2007.
- **Demand for apprenticeship places for adults is increasing** and there is a need to continue to increase the supply of adult apprenticeship places.
- Whilst nearly 25,000 adult learners achieved a Skills for Life target bearing qualification in 2006/07, the proportion of working age adults with **low attainment levels in literacy and numeracy** remains significantly higher than the national averages. We need to significantly expand our efforts to strengthen, in particular, numeracy achievements in the region.
- The region contains **significant numbers of adults for whom English is a second or third language**. This includes 80,000 overseas nationals arriving in Yorkshire and the Humber in the last two years, many of whom are economic migrants from the A8 countries.

The actions we intend to take to respond to these challenges include:

- To work with Jobcentre Plus, Local Authorities, Work and Skills Boards and city regions to align skills for jobs activity for priority workless groups, provide pre-employment training for Local Employment Partnerships (LEPS), respond to the national Integrated Employment and Skills trials and incorporate skills development with sustained employment.

- To encourage providers to offer more flexible programmes that respond to the pre and post employment needs of workless people, including offenders in the community.
- To work towards the new Adult Careers and Advisory Service by extending the information, advice and guidance offer to include housing and benefits advice.
- To roll out the delivery of Skills Accounts following trials in other regions.
- To work with Yorkshire Forward, Jobcentre Plus and other relevant regional partners on a joint plan that sets out how providers and local services will join up to offer a rapid response service to help workers affected by redundancy. These plans will be available from January 2009 and will set out the offer (including pre-employment provision) that will need to be secured in each region. The LSC is likely to secure its elements of this offer through an invitation to tender process, beginning in January 2009.
- To develop and monitor a £33m ESF programme of activity to address worklessness and ensure funding is maximised.
- Via local area agreements, contribute to the development of multi-agency co-ordinated programmes in each local authority area designed to support those without work to re-enter the employment market and to sustain that employment.
- To work with the voluntary and community sectors to engage more workless individuals in learning to improve their skill levels and support them into sustained employment.
- To prioritise participation in programmes which lead to the achievement of qualifications which are recognised and valued in the job market, by agreeing individual targets for an increase in full level 2 and full level 3 participation by each FE provider
- To safeguard the existing level of funding for

Personal and community development learning
 Family learning, literacy and numeracy
 Wider family learning
 Neighbourhood learning in deprived communities

and to focus provision on deprived areas and disadvantaged groups, strengthening progression and routes into employment where appropriate.

- To increase participation by adults in Apprenticeships through a combination of tendering for additional provision and negotiation to augment existing contracts.
- To continue to prioritise provision that addresses literacy and numeracy needs.
- To protect the existing level of funding for ESOL programmes and maximise the available resource towards meeting the needs of priority groups.

3. Employer Focus

Achievements

- Nearly 10,000 employers have benefited from Train to Gain.
- 25,000 employees started and 12,500 employees gained a first Level 2 qualification in 2007/08.
- 1,650 employees gained a Skills for Life qualification.
- Over 300 employers, responsible for 43,000 employees, have signed the Skills Pledge.
- Six National Skills Academies are operational and a further three are in development in the region.
- The NHS Joint Investment Framework has over 4,800 employees participating on full Level 2 programmes.

The key challenges in Yorkshire and the Humber for employers are:

- Awareness and **take-up of opportunities to develop the workforce remains varied** amongst employers in the region.
- Whilst the proportion of businesses experiencing skill gaps in their workforce has declined to 14%, there remains **a significant proportion of employees who need to improve their skill levels**. This position is further threatened by a potential cut back on skills investment by employers in the current economic climate.
- Whilst nearly 10,000 employers have now benefited from the Train to Gain service, there remains **a significant number of businesses, including ethnic minority led and rurally based enterprises, which have yet to recognise the benefits of this flexible approach to upskilling their workforce** and engage in the wide range of support available.
- Changes to the infrastructure have maintained improvements in Train to Gain performance. However, **literacy and numeracy achievement remains poor** at 1,650 employees in 2007/08, reflecting the lack of awareness by employers and employees of the benefits of raising these skills.
- A number of employers have signed the Skills Pledge in Yorkshire and the Humber and we now need to make sure they **maximise the opportunities available to upskill their workforce**.
- More employers in the private and particularly in **the public sector would benefit from taking on apprentices** than currently do so.

- Whilst we have made significant investment in **improving leadership and management skills** we need to engage many more businesses, particularly those employing less than 100, so that they can develop the skills necessary to help their business grow.

The actions we intend to take to respond to these challenges include:

- To strengthen the coherence of the advice service for employers by working with Yorkshire Forward and other strategic partners to integrate the Train to Gain skills brokerage arrangements within the general business brokerage service, including implementation of the Regional Knowledge System.
- To continue to develop the Train to Gain core offer to stimulate demand for learning and help address the full range of needs through subsidised and full cost provision, including the significant flexibilities contained in the Plan for Growth and the measures for SMEs. For those making the Skills Pledge, follow up advice and support will continue to be fully integrated within the Train to Gain service.
- To substantially increase the volume of Train to Gain provision through growing successful providers who can tackle identified skills gaps within the workforce, respond to needs highlighted by Sector Skills Councils, and address replacement demand in key employment sectors. The commissioning process will also focus on improving quality via monitoring minimum performance levels and on improving participation in the service by ethnic minority led businesses and rural based SMEs.
- To deliver a £50m programme of activity designed to enhance the Train to Gain offer for employers in the region, using ESF and Yorkshire Forward funding.
- To support the development of the NHS Joint Investment Framework and National Compacts through co-ordinated approaches aimed at identifying skill needs of the existing workforce and appropriate funding to address these needs.
- To utilise increased flexibilities in Train to Gain and Adult Apprenticeship funding to increase the number of employers taking part in apprenticeship programmes.
- To maintain our specialist leadership and management brokerage with substantially increased funding and a focus on employers with 10 - 250 employees. Also, to explore options to support leadership and management in micro businesses.

4. Reforming the Further Education System

Achievements

- Over £688m of new capital investment in Further Education in Yorkshire and the Humber has received final approval. This represents one of the largest capital investment programmes underway in the region and represents a major reconfiguration of the provision on offer to respond to changing needs.
- The majority of localities in the region have access to a strong network of high quality provision which is well adapted to respond to changing regional needs and is financially sound.
- The delivery of the core elements of Train to Gain has transformed some learning providers approach to working with employers in the region.

The key challenges in Yorkshire and the Humber for the Further Education system are:

- **The facilities available for learning vary in quality and relevance** across the region and there remains a continued need for an active renewal and reconfiguration programme to meet future needs.
- There are localities in the region where **the quality or the configuration of available provision are not appropriate** to meet the needs of the future, or where there are particularly challenging financial pressures on providers.
- Some learning providers still fail to grasp the full implications of Train to Gain on their 'core' funding and aren't delivering **flexible and responsive provision to meet employer needs**.

The actions we intend to take to respond to these challenges include:

- To seek approval for a further £433m of capital investment in Further Education, as part of a £1,833m programme over 10 years in collaboration with Yorkshire Forward and our local authorities. Also, to provide a regional skills capital development fund of £4m per year to foster an increase of supply of priority provision in collaboration with the private and voluntary sector.
- To secure further improvement in quality through the implementation of Framework for Excellence across the sector.
- To issue notices to improve where provision is below acceptable standards and to recommission activity which falls below minimum levels of performance.
- To respond to the needs of rural communities in our planning and commissioning decisions. Also, encourage and support partners and providers to share resources and facilities and engage in development of collaborative programmes.

- To continue to support the re-organisation of FE provision in Leeds in order to maximise benefits for learners, employers and communities across the city and wider city region.
- To continue to support the implementation of action plans to address areas of provision which require strengthening and transformation in order to provide via a financially stable provider the quality of service which learners and employers are entitled to expect.
- To increase the quality and the range of employer focused training provided by Further Education providers by setting targets for individual institutions for commercial work and by fostering the expansion of the network of Train to Gain providers.

5. Connecting a Diverse Community with a Changing Job Market

Achievements

- There has been a long term increase in the number of people in employment in the region and a significant transformation of the regional economy.
- Participation rates are high for people from ethnic minorities and success rates for minorities have increased faster than the national average for people from ethnic minority groups.
- There is a strong network of provision for Learners with a Learning Difficulty/Disability.

The key challenges in Yorkshire and the Humber for connecting a diverse community with a changing job market are:

- To meet the **business sector growth priorities identified by Yorkshire Forward:**

Advanced Engineering and Metals
 Digital and New Media Industries
 Food and Drink
 Environmental Technologies
 Healthcare Technologies

- In response to these priorities and the sectors which are generating the most employment opportunities, or where there is a clear need to strengthen their skills base in order to respond to the current economic difficulties, **the LSC has identified the following priorities:**

Construction and the built environment
 Engineering, manufacturing and print
 Financial services
 Health and social care
 Retail, wholesale and logistics
 Public services

- **Attainment levels vary significantly within the region**, with particular concern in areas of high deprivation, which includes both urban and rural areas, and with key groups of learners, including boys (9 percentage points (pps) below girls at Key Stage 4 for GCSE attainment), and learners of Black Caribbean (13 pps. below regional average for GCSE attainment) and Pakistani (6 pps below regional average for GCSE attainment) origin. This is particularly pertinent given the growing 16-18 year old Asian population in West Yorkshire.
- **Provision for Learners with a Learning Difficulty/Disability is not yet sufficiently well matched** across the region to the pattern of need.
- **Offenders face major barriers in entering employment**, often having significant training and education needs. Unfortunately, the proportion of offenders accessing LSC mainstream provision is very low compared to the number of offenders in the community.

The actions we intend to take to respond to these challenges include:

- To respond to regional skills priorities by commissioning proportionately higher volumes of this provision within Train to Gain, Apprenticeships and other relevant programmes.
- To respond to regional skills priorities by continuing to support employer-led skills academies and other specialist college provision and, where appropriate, deploy additional funds to address identified gaps.
- To support the development of higher level skills in Further Education, through increased engagement in Lifelong Learning Networks, and the establishment of clear progression routes from Diplomas to HE. This approach will consider all elements of Higher-level Skills, including the relationship with Train to Gain, Apprenticeships, and Foundation Degrees.
- To instigate actions to enable the region to work towards meeting its equality and diversity impact measures (EDIMs), with a particular focus on challenging providers where they fail to reflect their communities or evidence suggests that the performance of a particular group is falling behind their peers.

- To continue to strengthen the local and regional supply network for Learners with a Learning Difficulty/Disability.
- To implement the integrated Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) Phase Three in 12 prisons in the region.

Commissioning Intentions for 2009/10

Our strategy will be to encourage successful providers to grow, to invest in new providers where necessary, and to free providers to focus on the core business of delivering to learners and employers.

In keeping with LSC policy for 2009/10, our approach will see negotiation as the preferred route for securing provision from colleges and providers. We will however, still tender for ESF and some mainstream provision. Key triggers for competition include new investment, restructuring of provision or a new delivery model, significant gaps in provision, failure to meet the minimum levels of performance and to satisfy our obligations as a co-financing organisation.

Our commissioning decisions will be based on a commitment to allocating our budget wisely, funding provision of the highest quality and providing value for money. It will also be based on the need to ensure that individuals and employers share the responsibility, where appropriate, for funding learning.

In the following sections we set out our intentions for commissioning of provision in 2009/10. In addition, some detail is provided on 2007/08 performance and planned delivery in 2008/09, to give an indication of the changes being sought for 2009/10.

1. Young People

Total learners

In 2007/08, over 143,000 young people accessed LSC funded learning and this is planned to rise to 145,350 in 2008/09. In 2009/10, we expect to fund a modest increase in overall volumes, which will reflect the growth in Apprenticeships.

No growth is expected in FE or School sixth forms, although with cohort decline this will ensure that overall participation rates increase as we work towards the PSA target of 86% of 17 year olds in learning by 2010/11.

Within this, we expect the following breakdown for our priority areas:

Full Level 2

In 2009/10, we expect to secure a modest increase in full level 2 places, much of which will come from an expansion of Apprenticeships.

Full Level 3

In 2009/10, we expect to secure a modest increase in full level 3 places, primarily from the expansion of Apprenticeships.

Foundation Learning Tier (including Entry to Employment)

We expect to maintain provision below Level 2 in 2009/10, with particular emphasis on ensuring appropriate provision to meet the needs of young people in NEET, or at risk of becoming NEET.

The key development will be the tendering of Entry to Employment, as we work towards a position where all the Foundation Learning Tier has Progression Pathways by 2010/11.

Skills for Life

We will continue to support a similar number of opportunities to previous years for young people who need to improve their literacy and numeracy in order to achieve a full level 2 qualification.

Diplomas

We anticipate an increase in places offered at all levels, as the lines of learning and geographical spread of Diplomas expands.

The impact of these commissioning decisions on our funding streams will be as follows:**School Sixth Forms**

35,750 young people attended School sixth forms in 2007/08 and this is planned to increase to 36,000 in 2008/09. We expect there to be no further growth in 2009/10.

Further Education

In 2007/08, 77,200 young people attended Further Education Colleges in the region and there are plans for a further increase to 78,200 in 2008/09. We expect learner numbers to remain static in 2009/10.

Apprenticeships

There were nearly 22,400 young people on an Apprenticeship in 2007/08 and this is planned to increase to 23,500 learners in 2008/09. A further increase is expected in 2009/10.

The impact of these commissioning decisions on our priority groups of young people will be as follows:**Overall Participation**

The demographic decline in the region in 2009 is 1,900, or -0.9%. It is therefore anticipated that static volumes will fund a 0.9% increase in participation.

NEET

In order to continue the reduction in NEET we expect to see further engagement by young people at the risk of becoming or already not engaged in education, employment or training in all the above programmes. The Foundation Learning Tier will play a pivotal role in this process.

These programmes will be supplemented by an £34m ESF funded programme of activity that covers every local authority district. Provision will be procured through a fund manager approach in order to remain responsive to demand.

Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

We expect to secure increased local opportunities for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, along with a continued strengthening of the network of specialist provision.

2. Adults

Total learners

We will continue to direct adult learner responsive funding towards our long term skills targets i.e. full Level 2, full Level 3 and Skills for Life. Whilst doing this, we recognise that in the current economic climate we need flexibility in the way we allocate resources so that providers can respond quickly and effectively to help businesses and individuals through the downturn. We have already announced flexibilities in adult employer responsive funding which providers will be expected to fully utilise. European social funded programmes are also available to support integrated employment and skills.

It remains important that we focus on the programmes of learning and qualifications that will deliver most benefit to individuals and the economy. In making adult learner responsive allocations we will introduce greater flexibility for provision below level 2. Colleges and providers will still be expected to deliver Skills for Life priorities but will have flexibility across all their pre-level 2 budgets in delivering these priorities and responding to local circumstances.

We anticipate the following for our key areas of activity:

Integrated Employment and Skills

We expect an expansion of the programme in 2009/10, with the roll out of the national Integrated Employment and Skills Service trials.

These trials will be supplemented by a £33m ESF funded programme supporting skills for jobs activities. This is being established during 2008/09.

Full Level 2

In 2008/09, we have planned for 11,000 adults to be studying for a full Level 2 in the region. We expect to secure an increase for 2009/10.

We expect that a greater proportion of these places are taken by adults who are seeking their first, full Level 2 qualification.

Full Level 3

11,500 adults are planned to be participating on full Level 3 programmes in 2008/09. For 2009/10, we expect to secure a slight increase in these places.

We expect that a greater proportion of these places are taken by adults who are undertaking a full Level 3 for the first time.

Skills for Life (of which literacy, numeracy and ESOL)

We expect to maintain current levels of literacy provision, whilst substantially increasing the availability of numeracy places. Literacy and numeracy provision will be at all five levels to facilitate learner progression.

We will continue to focus on the levels defined in our PSA targets, while ensuring there is adequate provision at all levels to ensure progression up to and beyond these thresholds.

We expect to maintain current levels of ESOL provision in 2009/10.

Foundation Learning Tier

We expect to secure a modest increase in these places in 2009/10, with particular emphasis on ensuring appropriate provision to meet the needs of those preparing for life and work and those on pathways leading to apprenticeships.

Developmental Learning

We expect a significant reduction in learner numbers as we continue to focus on priority learning. Within the context of the flexibilities outlined above, Developmental Learning will focus on the following priority groups/provision in 2009/10 (in order of priority):

- Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities with a 16-19 entitlement
- Teacher training
- Level 4 provision
- Trade Union learning
- Regional priorities e.g. sign language
- Qualifications that are not listed on the National Qualification Framework

Adult Safeguarded Learning

In 2009/10, we will continue to maintain the overall budget available to support the following areas of learning:

- Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL)
- Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN)
- Wider Family Learning (WFL)
- Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC)

In addition, there is further funding identified as Family Learning Impact Funding to support family learning for 2009/10.

Funding available for individual providers will vary from 2008/09 levels.

We expect the budget to secure a broad, high quality curriculum that is responsive to the needs of local communities. LSC funding should target the most disadvantaged learners, whilst income collected should be used to widen the offer and ensure we maintain learner numbers. Learners should contribute to some or all of the cost of their learning where they can afford it.

The impact of these commissioning decisions on our priority groups will be:

LLDD

We expect to secure increased local opportunities for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, along with a continued strengthening of the network of specialist provision.

OLASS

Provision for offenders in custody has recently been tendered. This aims to align more closely the needs of offenders and employers from September 2009. In addition, we expect more offenders in the community will access mainstream provision.

LSC provision will be enhanced by ESF funded activity from within the Skills for Jobs theme. This has been allocated to support offenders in the community gain the skills to sustain employment and align these skills with employer demand.

3. Employers

Total learners

In 2007/08, there were over 47,600 starts and this is planned to rise to 82,600 in 2008/09. In 2009/10, we expect to secure a further increase, as we work towards the PSA targets and the Leitch ambition. Within this, we expect the following breakdown:

Train to Gain

There were 31,500 starts in 2007/08 and this is planned to increase to 66,000 in 2008/09. We expect learner numbers to increase again in 2009/10.

A breakdown of these overall volumes by priority is given below.

Skills for Life

In 2007/08, there were 4,650 starts and this is expected to rise to 6,800 in 2008/09. We anticipate securing a further increase in 2009/10.

Full Level 2

There were 25,500 learner starts in 2007/08 and this is set to rise to 48,000 in 2008/09. We expect to secure a modest increase in full level 2 starts in 2009/10.

Full Level 3

1,900 adults started a full Level 3 programme in 2007/08 and an increase to 11,000 is anticipated in 2008/09. A further modest increase is expected in 2009/10.

These programmes will be enhanced by an £50m ESF funded programme of skills development activity across Yorkshire and the Humber.

In addition, we will channel funds to support priority qualifications identified by Sector Skills Councils through Sector Qualification Strategies and sector compacts. Also, we expect this provision to respond to the National Skills Academies and the region's skills priorities.

Apprenticeships

There were 16,100 adults on an Apprenticeship in 2007/08 and this is planned to increase to 16,600 learners in 2008/09. We expect further increase in 2009/10.

4. Tendered Provision

For 2009/10, we anticipate tendering for the following provision:

- All Entry to Employment provision for 16 – 18 year olds.
- Approx £15m of ESF Priority 2 activity for employed adults.
- ESF support for the national redundancy strategy.
- Gaps in Apprenticeship provision as a result of failure to meet minimum levels of performance and in sectors with growth potential.

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