

Successful Participation for All: Widening Adult Participation Strategy For Consultation



Executive Summary

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Responses are requested by 9 May 2003



Subject

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has prepared and issued the consultation document, Successful Participation for All: Widening Adult Participation Strategy. It wishes to consult as wide a community of stakeholders as possible on the proposed Strategy.

Successful Participation for All is a working document which suggests a new, planned approach to widening adult participation. It not only identifies ways in which more adults may be attracted into learning, but also how they may positively be engaged and retained in the learning process. It applies to all LSC-funded providers engaged in the education and training of adults.

This Executive Summary explains what is contained in the full Strategy document. It lists the intended recipients and presents the eight key consultation issues which it is hoped will stimulate and inform debate on the Strategy. This is followed by a summary of the Strategy, with reference to material that is available or cited in the full document.

Intended Recipients

The Consultation Exercise welcomes responses from:

- a individual learners and potential learners;
- b employers, both directly and through employer support agencies;
- c community groups, including representatives from the voluntary sector;
- d providers, including:
 - general FE colleges;
 - sixth form colleges;
 - HE institutions;
 - specialist colleges;
 - local authority adult education institutions;
 - voluntary sector and community-based providers;
 - private sector providers and employers;
- e regional development agencies (RDAs);
- f Ufi/learnirect;
- g local authorities and local education authorities (LEAs);
- h Job Centre Plus;
- i Connexions;
- j local strategic partnerships and subregional strategic partnerships;
- k learning partnerships;
- l information, advice and guidance (IAG) partnerships;
- m student/learner representative groups;
- n trade unions and employee associations; and
- o local LSCs.

Consultation Questions

The eight questions posed for consultation are:

- 1 Please comment on the extent to which the Strategy identifies the key motivating factors for widening adult participation. Do you regard any of these factors as being more significant than others?
- 2 Please comment on the extent to which the Strategy identifies the key barriers to widening adult participation. Do you regard any of these barriers as being more significant than others?
- 3 Do you consider that the actions proposed for a Partnership Approach are appropriate and adequate for the issues identified? Please suggest any further areas for action.
- 4 Do you consider that the actions proposed for Appropriate Provision are appropriate and adequate? Please suggest any further areas for action.
- 5 Do you consider that the actions proposed for Targets and Research are appropriate and adequate? Please suggest any further areas for action.
- 6 Do you consider that the actions proposed for Equality and Access are appropriate and adequate? Please suggest any further areas for action.
- 7 Do you consider that the actions proposed for Funding are appropriate and adequate? Please suggest any further areas for action.
- 8 Do you consider any of the proposed actions (or sets of actions) listed under the five main headings to be a higher priority than the others?

Background Materials

The document examines the following key factors behind the Widening Adult Participation Strategy (paragraph references are to the main document):

- rationale (paragraphs 12–26);
- background (paragraphs 27–43);
- motivating learners (paragraphs 44–58); and
- barriers to learning (paragraphs 59–72).

Rationale

This gives details of the LSC's mission and vision and considers its role nationally in widening participation in order to raise attainment and increase skills. It stresses the fast-moving policy context in which the Strategy is being launched. Strategy developments need to be clearly linked to Success for All and the forthcoming publication of the Government's Skills Strategy that will be informed by a review of the funding of adult learning.

Background

This describes the LSC's work, through its committees and steering groups, with various partners including the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA). The work includes identifying and sharing good practice and examining the prospects of future growth in participation by adults.

This section goes on to give details of the current picture of adult participation, drawing on the English Local Labour Force Survey (ELLFS) and surveys conducted by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE).

Motivating learners

This section looks in more detail at what may motivate adults to participate in learning, again drawing on survey material, and linking motivational factors to the Strategy. This leads to the first consultation question on motivating learners.

Barriers to learning

This section examines more closely the barriers that may discourage or inhibit adult participation and proposes a hierarchy of barriers. The second consultation question asks to what extent the Strategy has identified barriers to participation.

Elements of the Strategy

Key issues and proposed actions designed to motivate adults to participate in learning, to overcome barriers to learning, and to help providers raise participation and achievement are suggested. These are set out under five headings embracing many national and local LSC policy developments to encourage widening participation. They are:

- **partnership approach**, covering local authority, voluntary and community, higher education, and employer engagement and workforce development issues (74 - 89; consultation issue 3);
- **appropriate provision**, covering qualifications and curriculum, and marketing and communications issues (90 - 104; consultation issue 4);
- **targets and research**, covering LSC planning, and current and future research issues (105 - 120; consultation issue 5);

- **equality and access**, covering equality and diversity, quality improvement, provider staff development, and Information and Guidance (IAG) issues (paragraphs 121–136; consultation issue 6); and

- **funding**, covering provider and learner support funding issues (paragraphs 137–150; consultation issues 7-8).

Strategy Implementation and Annexes

The document ends with an explanation of the implementation of the Strategy and a summary of the consultation issues.

More information relating to various sections of the document is supplied in 10 annexes. One annex contains the form on which responses to the consultation questions may be returned. Early responses in advance of the final response date of 9 May 2003 would be appreciated.

Notes:

