

 For information

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Leading learning and skills

Learning and
Skills Council
North West
Regional
Commissioning
Plan
2008-09

December 2007

Of interest to National, Regional and
Local Learning and Skills Colleagues

National Targets

Our Statement of Priorities, Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives (November 2007) sets out government's key strategic priorities and the contribution the LSC will make towards achieving them. The section below summarises the key points set out in the Statement of Priorities.

As part of the Comprehensive Spending Review, the government has set out four new strategic priorities for the period 2008/09 – 2010/11.

- Sustainable growth and prosperity
- Fairness and opportunity for all
- Stronger communities and a better quality of life
- A more secure, fair and environmentally sustainable world

Under each of the priorities is a set of cross government delivery agreements, each containing a number of Public Service Agreement targets (PSA), which together play a vital role in improving the delivery of services. The LSC will indirectly support a number of these delivery agreements and targets. We will also directly contribute to and lead on the following targets:

Young People

- **Raise the educational achievement of all children and young people**
- **Narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.**

While our focus must be on all young people, our delivery targets will be measured specifically by the proportion of young people achieving Level 2 and Level 3 by the age of 19. By raising overall achievement, we will also increase the achievement levels of the most disadvantaged. The target levels are:

- to increase the proportion of young people achieving Level 2 at age 19 from 71.4 per cent in 2006 to 82 per cent by 2011, and
- to increase the proportion of young people achieving Level 3 at age 19 from 46.8 per cent (in 2006) to 54 per cent by 2011.

In the North West:

- the proportion of young people achieving Level 2 at age 19 was 70.2 per cent in 2006
- the proportion of young people achieving Level 3 at age 19 was 43.1 per cent in 2006

Through increasing the number of young people participating in learning, we will support the delivery agreement to increase the number of children and young people on the path to success. The specific delivery target:

- to reduce the percentage of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET), by 2 percentage points by 2010, from a current level of 10%.

Adult Skills

- **Improve the skills of the population, on the way to ensuring a world-class skills base by 2020.**

The delivery targets for 2020 are:

- 95 per cent of adults achieving the basic skills of functional literacy and numeracy
- More than 90 per cent of adults being qualified to at least Level 2, with a commitment to achieve 95 per cent as soon as possible
- 68 per cent of the adult population being qualified to Level 3
- Over 40 per cent of the adult population qualified to Level 4 and above.

We will also work to deliver England's share of the UK ambition for 500,000 Apprentices and improve the quality and success rates of their learning in order to increase further the supply of economically valuable skills. Working towards these targets, Government has set interim targets for **2011** as follows:

- **Increase the proportion of people of working age achieving functional literacy and numeracy skills**

The target is 597,000 people of working age to achieve a first Level 1 or above literacy qualification, and 390,000 to achieve a first Entry Level 3 or above numeracy qualification. These basic skills targets ensure we will continue to meet the target to improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010.

- **Proportion of working age adults qualified to at least a full Level 2 and 3**

By 2011, 79 per cent of working age adults should be qualified to Level 2 and 56 per cent qualified to Level 3. These targets ensure we also remain on track to reduce by 40 per cent the number of adults in the workforce who lack an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualifications by 2010.

- Current national performance in 2006 is 69.7 per cent of adults have achieved a Level 2 and 49.2 per cent have a Level 3.
- In the North West, 69 per cent of adults have achieved a Level 2 and 47.3 per cent have a Level 3.¹

- **Proportion of Apprentices who complete the full Apprenticeship framework**

The target is to have 130,000 learners completing the full Apprenticeship framework in 2010/11.

- In 2005/06, 98,000 learners completed an Apprenticeship; in 2006/07, we expect this to exceed 100,000.
- In 2005/06 almost 14,800 learners completed an Apprenticeship in the North West region, in 2006/07 we expect this to exceed 17,300.

- **A new joint target with DWP/ JCP to move more people into sustainable employment and progression**

Work will begin this year to clarify and set in train the new joint target with DWP/ JCP to move more people into sustainable employment and progression and will underpin the integration of employment and skills services.

¹ Latest baseline position, LFS Q4 2006.

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Foreword

This is the second regional commissioning plan for the North West. Since the publication of the first, significant change has taken place so that today the work of the Learning and Skills Council is more important than ever to the region's economic and skills development.

The strategic and policy landscape has evolved with the creation of two new departments - the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) – that now oversee the education and skills agenda. The Leitch report has led to new targets and priorities for the LSC and the establishment of Employment and Skills Boards in Greater Manchester and Cheshire & Warrington and others developing across the region.

There is ever closer partnership working on the ground between the LSC, local authorities and other partners on meeting the learning needs of young people. We also work with Jobcentre Plus to create routes into work for people living on benefits. Increasingly, the LSC is an active member of local partnerships concerned with economic development and regeneration and here we are accountable for critical targets through local area agreements. With the North West Development Agency, we agree skills priorities that help to shape the delivery of employer responsive services, including Train to Gain.

In developing this plan we have worked with our Regional Development Agency to ensure that our commissioning ambitions are set in the context of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and that the plans for the policy areas on which we lead are fundamentally aligned and based on a shared understanding of issues. This will maximise the opportunities to target public investment where it can really make a difference.

Whilst the LSC does not have a separate 14-19 plan, this plan has been shaped by the general focus and emphasis of 14-19 Partnership Plans, and aligns with Children and Young People's Plans at a local level. In Greater Manchester the LSC has worked with several local authorities to develop an integrated, several boroughs wide participation strategy. In Macclesfield LSC capital investment and joint planning has been pivotal in constructing a radical Learning Zone covering secondary and post 16 learning.

In this commissioning plan we set out what we want to achieve in the region through the transforming power of learning and skills. Through a mix of negotiation and competitive tendering we will aim to:

- Increase demand for learning from young people, adults and employers, because they are clear about the social and economic benefits that it brings
- Transform the education and training system so that it both stimulates demand and meets it with excellent provision
- Deliver better skills, better jobs and better lives

We invite you to read and respond to this plan; if you are from a college or a provider from the independent and third sectors, work with us to address the challenges

within. If you are from a local authority or one of our skills partners, consider how you can get involved in this endeavour. If you are an employee, or currently outside the labour market, take up the challenge of improving your skills.

The continued success of our region requires a steady focus on the twin goals of social inclusion and economic competitiveness – with your support, we can make a major contribution to both.

John Korzeniewski
Regional Director

Roger Hoyle
Regional Chair

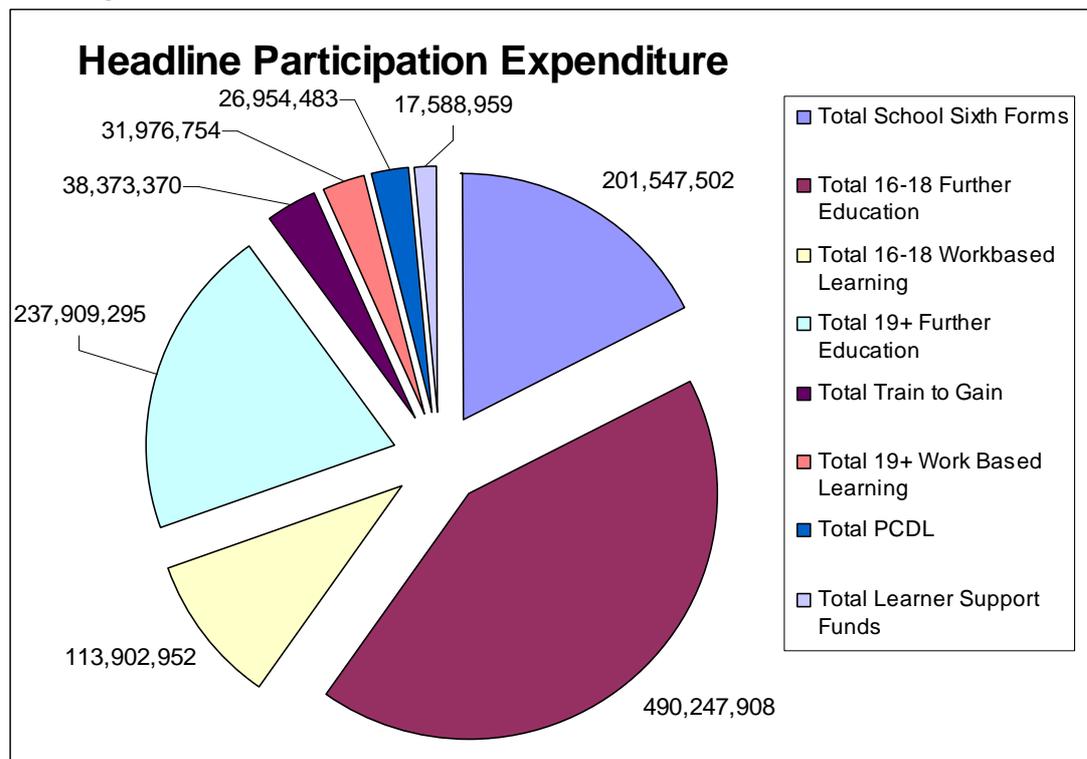
Learning and Skills Council North West Region

12 December 2007

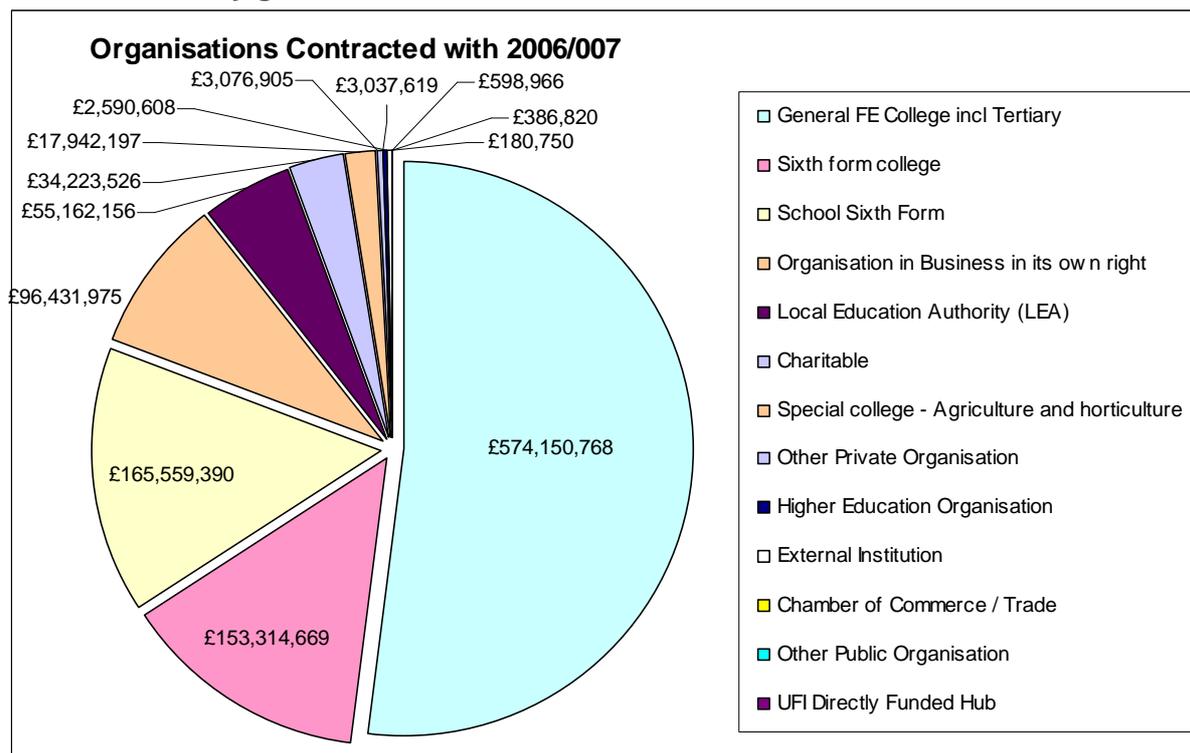
Investing in the North West

- 1 In 2007/08 we are investing more than ever before in learning and skills in the North West. We aim to buy the best quality provision to meet the North West's needs, and will employ robust and urgent measures to withdraw poor-quality provision and invest in providers that can deliver. This all means that we can now pay for the following:
- 122,135 planned places in Further Education (FE) for 16–18-year-olds.
 - 36,649 planned places in School Sixth Forms for 16-18 year olds
 - 23,171 planned apprenticeship places (average numbers in learning) for young people;
 - 10,194 starts in Entry to Employment (E2E)
 - Over 69,000 young people receiving the Education Maintenance Allowance, enabling them to stay in learning.
 - £3 million investment in NEET Hotspots (where large numbers of 16-18 year olds are **not** in **education, employment or training**);
 - an extra 7,882 full Level 2 places for adults in FE.
 - an extra 2,969 full Level 3 places for adults in FE.
 - 7,505 additional places for offender learners in custodial and community-based settings across the region (This does not include mainstream FE for offenders in the community).
 - £500 million in capital projects to provide world-class buildings for the North West's learners.
 - 39,914 employees starting a first Level 2 or Skills for Life qualification and a further 2,122 starting a Level 3 (via Train to Gain).

Funding breakdown for 2007/08



Where the money goes



Investing in our Priorities

- 2 We will work with Children's Trusts in each area through the local **Children and Young People's Plan** to ensure there is a clear plan for 14-19 learners that provides access to integrated and personalised support for each young person in the region.
- 3 We will agree a **single skills strategy for the North West**, working with the North West Development Agency, that underpins the regional economic strategy.
- 4 As more learners take Skills for Life, Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications, we expect that more young people and adults on these courses will come from priority groups, including:
 - young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or who enter jobs without training;
 - care leavers and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities;
 - some black and minority ethnic (BME) groups¹;
 - those with low or no skills;
 - lone parents;
 - those who are on benefits;
 - offenders and ex-offenders;

¹ For example, African Caribbean boys have lower achievements at 16, African Caribbeans have the lowest success rates in FE & Bangladeshi & Pakistani adults have higher proportions with no formal qualifications. Young people of Mixed Race - in particular White & Black Caribbean & White & Black African - form the largest NEET groups. See the North West Strategic Analysis for more details. <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/NorthWest/NWRRegionalStrategicAnalysis2007UpdateV1.pdf>

- those who live in deprived neighbourhoods; and
 - those who face issues of social exclusion.
- 5 We realise that these groups are likely to need the most support and encouragement both to engage with, and remain in, learning. We expect colleges and providers will use the opportunities created by the Foundation Learning Tier¹ (FLT) and Adult and Community Learning to engage wider sections of the community and to support their progression into further learning and employment.
 - 6 The region needs more people to progress to higher levels of learning and to higher education. 14–19 partnerships will be critical to making this happen for young people.
 - 7 At the same time, government strategy is to protect provision for those groups of learners that are most vulnerable – for example, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. We will work with colleges and providers to honour our commitment to continued investment in this provision.
 - 8 As investment is increasingly prioritised towards full Level 2 and 3 and Skills for Life for adults, the sectoral dimension has to be considered. There is continuing replacement demand for Level 2 skills in sectors such as retail, health, education, financial services and logistics. These sectors will provide the large volumes of job opportunities required to attract workless individuals back into work.
 - 9 At Level 3 – which fuels economic development and growth - the key sectors are identified in the RES as:
 - advanced engineering & materials (specifically aerospace & engineering, automotive, chemicals),
 - biomedical,
 - care/ healthcare,
 - construction,
 - digital & creative industries,
 - education and training,
 - energy and environmental technologies including nuclear decommissioning (here, the planned Nuclear Academy will set the standard for the industry),
 - food & drink,
 - retail and tourism.
 - 10 We also need to meet the needs of the land based sector². Despite high quality provision and identified need in Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire, there are

¹ In 2008/09, the LSC will begin to implement a refocused strategy for the FLT to increase engagement of young people & adults, raise learner achievement & improve progression to Level 2. The learning & skills offer below Level 2 will be reviewed for its ability to enhance individuals' employability – with provision focused on helping people to get a job. This will include the assimilation of existing programmes such as Entry to Employment (E2E), Foundation Learning in FE & First Steps into the FLT by 2010/11. Local LSC partnership teams will ensure that each area has sufficient FLT, within the budgets available, to engage more people in learning that supports progression into further learning &/or employment.

² A diverse sector that includes environmental industries, animal care, agriculture & horticulture. An as yet unpublished review of land based learning was carried out in early 2007 which identified these issues.

low numbers of land based apprenticeships in the North West in comparison to other regions. The sector's ageing workforce is creating increasing replacement demand, and land based provision delivered in an urban setting is potentially a valuable tool for engaging young people who might otherwise become NEET. Regeneration activity in cities and towns across the region is also adding to the demand.

Increasing the offer from the sector

- 11 Increasingly, public investment is prioritised on areas of market failure such as Skills for Life and full Level 2 provision. Outside these priority areas, learners and employers are expected to contribute towards the cost of their learning. In 2008/09, we expect FE providers to increase their levels of fee income and full-cost provision by:
 - widening their offer to adults,
 - encouraging more employers to see FE as the solution to their skills needs, and
 - delivering more professional qualifications and Level 4 and 5 provision.
- 12 We expect to see colleges and providers broadening their income base, becoming more autonomous and less reliant on public funding. However we recognise that providers who increase their engagement with workless adults as part of Skills for Jobs are less likely to be in a position to raise fee income, as these individuals are exempt from paying fees.
- 13 In 2008/09, **commercial activity should increase**, boosting fee income for institutions working with employers. This will help to offset reductions in fee income as a result of targeting workless adults who are eligible for fee remission.
- 14 We estimate that fee income in the North West is currently 60 per cent of planned levels - higher than the national average. As a result of these changes, we expect that colleges will collect a higher proportion of their fees - at least £26.4m in 2008/09. As a result, overall fees income should increase by a minimum of 5%.

Capital

- 15 Our investment in capital in the region underpins the wider development of the FE infrastructure bringing benefits to learners, employers and the wider community. We increasingly focus capital investment on both meeting the needs of an area and the renewal of the college estate. Our investment in world class buildings contributes to the regeneration of local neighbourhoods.
- 16 LSC Capital investment in the North West is at record levels. The investment is being used increasingly as a catalyst for change: whether to act as a spur for reorganising and improving young people's learning, or to form a key part of a holistic regeneration scheme that transforms people's life chances in disadvantaged areas.
- 17 As investment in the region's learning infrastructure continues in 2008/07, there will be new challenges posed by the move to demand led funding:

- How to ensure that investment in vocational facilities is safeguarded when open and competitive tendering can result in providers losing contracts
 - Managing the risks to colleges' financial stability in a period when cohorts of 16-18 learners are reducing, by supporting them to attract learners who might otherwise become NEET
 - How to align LSC investment ever more effectively with the investments made by the North West development agency to ensure strategic gains for the region's skills and productivity.
- 18 In the North West, individual schemes to the value of around £400 million have been approved since the creation of the LSC in 2001:
- 11 major projects have been approved in principle since March 2006– value £338.1 million
 - 12 FE projects approved in detail – value £81 million
 - 144,000 m² unsuitable accommodation removed, being replaced with 149,000 m² new accommodation and 47,100 m² refurbished
 - 25 priority spend projects pending approval over next 12-18 months - estimated value £855 million.

Examples include:

- 19 In **Manchester**, Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT) has established new sixth form provision in Harpurhey, a very deprived ward that is undergoing significant economic and social regeneration. The modern, eco-friendly building won the RIBA 2006 award design excellence and has had a major impact on post-16 participation rates in the North of the city.
- 20 In **Salford**, an infrastructure review by partners including the Local Authority, LSC and local colleges and providers has been used as a catalyst for reform of the local post 16 delivery system through a merger of three local colleges.
- 21 In **Cheshire and Warrington**, recently completed new developments include a £27 million new campus development for Warrington Collegiate and a £22 million new campus development for Macclesfield College.
- Mid Cheshire College have submitted a detailed application for the development of the Winsford Learning Zone in partnership with Vale Royal Borough Council and also part funded by the North West Development Agency. The college have also submitted an application in principle to redevelop their Hartford Campus over 4 phases at an estimated cost of £44 million.
 - South Cheshire College are proposing to commence the development of their £70 million new campus building next year subject to detailed LSC approval
- 22 In **Greater Merseyside**, St Helens College are proposing to start a £60 million redevelopment of their town centre campus subject to detailed LSC approval being obtained in January. They are also developing a new £3.8 million vocational skills centre at Technology Campus that is 50 per cent funded by the North West Development Agency.
- 23 In **Lancashire**, Burnley College are now on site with their £83 million scheme to replace their main campus, also to include a new £10 million Higher Education

centre funded by UCLAN, with a £10 million contribution from the North West Development Agency.

24 In **Cumbria**, Carlisle College have completed their first phase new development comprising 5,000 sq.m. and are currently working on a £35 million strategy to complete the renewal of their estate.

- Kendal College are also undertaking a £13 million refurbishment and renewal of their main campus building.

Challenges, key actions and measures of success for the North West

- 25 The LSC has three national priorities, which we deliver at both a regional and local level. The key challenges for the North West in delivering these priorities are set out below. Many of these are drawn from our analysis of learning and skills in the North West, which can be found at: <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/NorthWest/NWRegionalStrategicAnalysis2007UpdateV1.pdf> .

Priority 1: Creating demand for learning and skills

From the National Statement of Priorities: *Our aim is simple: we want more people to demand more learning, because they are clear about the social and economic benefits that it brings.*

Key challenges for the North West: Young people

- 26 While participation growth has been faster than cohort growth, and performance across Further Education, Apprenticeships and Entry to Employment (E2E) is strong, serious challenges remain:

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
<p>NEET</p> <p>Over 100,000 young people not in education or training - 20,000 who are NEET and 86,000⁵ in jobs without training.</p> <p>Young people more likely to become NEET include white males, BME groups, and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities</p>	<p>LSC Partnership Teams will support 14-19 transition planning through local partnership work and extension of the 14-19 offer to include diplomas, International Baccalaureate, Key Stage 4 engagement programme and Young Apprenticeships.</p> <p>Utilising ESF for NEET Hotspots, work will continue with local partners to develop effective, differentiated strategies to reduce the incidence of NEET and the numbers of young people entering jobs without training.</p> <p>Take a multi-faceted approach to reducing NEET. This will have to include raising aspirations, reducing family breakdown, offering alternative learning routes and challenging parental attitudes.</p>	<p>Both the numbers and the percentage NEET reduce.</p> <p>16-18 participation increases despite reductions in cohort size, especially in Apprenticeships.</p> <p>Year on year increase in the percentage of young people who achieve English and Maths GCSE grades A*-C.</p>
<p>Level 2 @ 19</p> <p>While 80 per cent of young people achieve Level 2 by age 19 in Cheshire and Warrington, only 67 per cent do in Greater Merseyside. The</p>	<p>Partnership teams will work with 14-19 Partnerships to develop a range of provision at level 2 including appropriate curriculum extension</p>	<p>Areas with lowest achievement make progress in closing the gap with the</p>

⁵ Number to be confirmed.

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
<p>same divide exists for Level 3 - 50 per cent and 39 percent.</p> <p>Level 3 @ 19</p> <p>Young people need to do better at Level 3. The region is three points below the national average and improving at a slower rate – the gap is widening.</p> <p>Lower English and Maths attainment at 16 is a barrier to taking Level 3.</p>	<p>programmes which support schools in creating key stage 4 personalised learning packages with progression to level 3, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASDAN CoPE, - Life Skills, - Arts, - Outdoor Education, - Music and Sport. <p>Working with education partners to maximise the impact of the Greater Manchester Challenge</p>	<p>highest achieving areas.</p> <p>Increased levels of attainment and improved progression of young people</p>
<p>BME attainment</p> <p>African Caribbean young people, especially boys, have not shared equally in the increasing rates of GCSE/GNVQ achievement for school leavers.</p> <p>The gap is growing between the highest and lowest achieving ethnic groups in many LEAs.</p>	<p>Work with schools, colleges and providers to monitor and review progress against key equality and diversity indicators (EDIMs) that ensure no-one is prevented from accessing learning and achieving their potential, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or disability.</p> <p>Target black and minority ethnic groups and women in invitations to tender for WBL to ensure participation increases.</p>	<p>Evidence of increasing participation and achievement by groups currently under-represented and/or lower achieving.</p>
<p>Cohort Size Reduction</p> <p>The region's 16-18 cohort reduces by 22,000 by 2011⁶. The impact will be felt most acutely in Greater Merseyside, where there will be a 10.2 per cent reduction by 2011.</p>	<p>Schools, colleges and providers to focus increasingly on attracting and retaining in learning those young people at greatest risk of becoming NEET.</p>	<p>16-18 participation increases despite reductions in cohort size, especially in Apprenticeships.</p> <p>A two percentage point reduction in NEET.</p>
<p>Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities</p> <p>At the same time as the cohort reduces, the numbers of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) are increasing;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing numbers of young people are identified as having special educational needs in school – especially behavioural disorders and autistic spectrum disorders. - Currently 1 in 4 of NEET have 	<p>Implement the key actions set out in the North West Action Plan for Provision for Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.</p> <p>We will promote collaborative working between providers to ensure that increased specialist support is available through local provision to enable more learners to access provision within their own communities.</p> <p>We will use investment to change</p>	<p>The needs of this group are reflected in Children's and Young People's Plans.</p> <p>By 2010 there will be a qualified workforce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and trainers will be qualified to teach and train. • Specialist Learner

⁶ Based on cohort projections derived from the 2001 Census. This is a 6.5 per cent decrease between 2006 and 2011. The decrease is 12.5 per cent by 2015.

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
<p>LDD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number and proportion of young people with LDD in FE has risen year on year. <p>The expectation is that the proportion of young people with LDD in post-16 education and training will grow, with implications for budgets, provider capacity and capability.</p>	<p>funding in the region to instigate transformation of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.</p>	<p>support workers will be appropriately qualified.</p>
<p>Apprenticeships</p> <p>In 2006/07 the average in learning number was 13 per cent less than in 2003/04, compared to a national reduction of 11 per cent.</p>	<p>Roll out the national vacancy matching system.</p> <p>Expand the range of pre-apprenticeships⁷ while also building employer engagement so that trainees can progress into full employed status apprenticeships</p>	<p>Increased numbers in Apprenticeships.</p> <p>500 additional employers involved (targeting those who employ young people but do not currently offer accredited training).</p>
<p>Regional Partnership Activity</p>	<p>Work with local and regional partners to support the development of media:city (including the relocation of the BBC) in Salford;</p>	<p>to maximise the take up of associated employment opportunities by local people</p>

Key challenges for the North West: Adults

27 The region has a strong record on delivering basic skills and we have seen increasing numbers of adults taking full Level 2 and Level 3 in FE. However:

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
<p>People without Level 2</p> <p>There are one million adults in work in the North West without a Level 2 and another 500,000 workless adults without a Level 2.</p> <p>Some ethnic groups are relatively poorly qualified, especially Bangladeshi and Pakistani adults, who have relatively high proportions with no formal qualifications.</p>	<p>Implement the Skills for Jobs Implementation Plan and the Train to Gain Plan for Growth.</p> <p>Conduct a Level 2 focused dialogue with colleges across all funding streams for employer responsive and adult learner responsive provision. Aim is to increase overall numbers and focus on increasing representation of black and minority ethnic</p>	<p>Increased the number of FE firstness Level 2 by 25 per cent.</p> <p>In T2G keep the momentum by optimising those that have a Full Level 2.</p> <p>Increase the representation of BME groups, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities those with prior qualifications, those learners living on</p>

⁷ Previously known as “programme-led apprenticeships”.

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
	<p>groups, learners without qualification, people who are on benefits and/or seeking work and offenders.</p> <p>Dialogue with colleges to ensure all non-full Level 2 programmes capable of becoming so if a different qualification is used, are transferred to a full qualification.</p>	<p>benefits and offenders in Level 2 provision (both adult learner responsive and employer responsive).</p> <p>Increase the proportion of full Level 2 delivery within FE.</p> <p>In the balance and mix of provision – a 50 percent reduction in provision that ‘Does not Directly contribute to full level 2 threshold’.</p>
<p>Literacy and Numeracy</p> <p>General levels of literacy and numeracy are well below national standards, with numeracy need outstripping literacy.</p> <p>Around a third of lone parents with children aged between 6 and 15 have poor literacy skills and almost 40 per cent have poor numeracy skills.</p>	<p>Discussion regarding balance and mix of programmes should be agreed between provider and partnership team dependent on local need.</p> <p>Although Leitch ambitions concentrate on entry 3 for numeracy and level 1 literacy, the LSC would expect providers to offer the whole Skills for Life framework from entry level 1 and 2 provision, this will be supported by the development of the Foundation Learning Tier.</p> <p>From 2008-9 providers should increase their delivery of numeracy provision in order to achieve Leitch ambitions. There will be an expectation that all literacy/ ESOL learners should be assessed for numeracy and offered appropriate support.</p> <p>Providers should not only deliver effective numeracy programmes but also stimulate demand through employer engagement (Train to Gain) and community activity (Skills for Jobs, Family numeracy etc).</p>	<p>Mix and balance of Skills for Life provision to reflect the Leitch priorities and targets.</p> <p>Numeracy provision to increase by 10 per cent points above the Leitch target.</p>
<p>Offender Skills</p> <p>Over 50 per cent of offenders have no qualifications.</p> <p>42 per cent of male offenders are skilled or qualified below Level 1, rising to 72 per cent for female offenders.</p>	<p>Develop a regional employer engagement strategy that delivers on the Regional Economic Strategy.</p> <p>Strengthen employment advice and information for offenders.</p> <p>Ensure service provider links to</p>	<p>Increased volumes of offenders and ex-offenders participating in learning, especially that which provides a pathway to employment.</p> <p>Evidence that the learning and skills</p>

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
	<p>employers support offenders 'through the gate' and that all providers collaborate on this across the region.</p> <p>Develop the curriculum offer so that it provides skills for the workplace.</p> <p>Integrate skills for life and other skills accreditation and opportunities for progression to further learning from 'offending behaviour programmes' and 'unpaid work' including links to Train to Gain.</p>	<p>system in the North West enables offenders to continue and complete the training they started in custody or the community once in employment.</p>
<p>People with Disabilities</p> <p>1 in 2 people with a disability have no qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9.9 per cent of the working age population claim Incapacity Benefit, compared with a national figure of 8.7 per cent. Greater Merseyside has 12.2 per cent. The region cannot address worklessness effectively without having a strategy in place to engage IB claimants and support them into employment via learning. - People with disabilities are under-represented in Level 2 and 3 learning at about 8 per cent compared with their 20 per cent share of the adult population. 	<p>People with disabilities and IB claimants are priority groups for Skills for Jobs⁸.</p>	<p>Increased numbers of people with disabilities taking up Skills for Life, full Level 2 and 3 provision, including through Train to Gain.</p> <p>People with disabilities moving into sustainable employment.</p>
<p>Adult Level 2 Participation</p> <p>Growth in adult Level 2 participation has been slower than expected and Apprenticeship numbers have declined by 800 in 2006/07</p>	<p>Conduct a Level 2 focused dialogue with colleges across all funding streams for employer responsive and adult learner responsive provision. Aim is to increase overall numbers through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conversion of existing Level 2 provision into full Level 2 - increasing the number of programme lead apprenticeships in FE <p>Use programme led apprenticeships to increase access to apprenticeships.</p> <p>Colleges and providers to</p>	<p>Growth of Level 2 provision in line with national trajectories and targets.</p>

⁸ The aim of **Skills for Jobs** is to reduce the number of individuals not in employment through more effective engagement in learning & by moving them into sustainable jobs through skills brokerage, transitional support, skills development, learning progression, & the achievement of qualifications.

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
	increase their employer engagement to identify more apprenticeship opportunities.	
<p>Gender</p> <p>Females outnumber males by almost two to one on FE Level 2/3 courses, although there is no significant gender difference in the population without a Level 2.</p> <p>Females also have higher success rates than males.</p>	<p>Colleges to review their current marketing practices to identify strategies that will encourage greater take-up by men.</p> <p>Colleges to review their curriculum and the learner support available to identify the factors preventing male take-up and achievement.</p>	<p>Increased proportion of males participating in Level 2 and 3 FE courses.</p> <p>Male success rates improve so as to close the gap with females.</p>
<p>FE Responsiveness: Year-round Enrolment</p> <p>Monthly college returns show only a slight increase in year round enrolment⁹; the majority of enrolments continue to occur in the autumn term.</p>	<p>Encourage more providers to offer all year round enrolment: share regional performance with AoC, Principals & Governors & emphasise the need to raise our game</p> <p>Review qualifications to consider whether moving to unitised quals would enable more flexible, year round enrolment.</p>	<p>All colleges with significant adult provision to demonstrate year round enrolment.</p>

Key challenges for the North West: Employers

28 We have the most successful Train to Gain service in the country. We delivered 29,000 L2/3 starts in Train to Gain (T2G) last year and plan to support 40,000 in the current year (38 per cent increase). But there is more to do:

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
<p>Declining Apprenticeship Numbers</p> <p>The declining numbers of Apprenticeship opportunities both for young people and adults are evidence of a market failure to convert need into demand from employers.</p>	<p>Expand the range of pre-apprenticeships¹⁰ while also building employer engagement so that learners can progress into full employed status apprenticeships.</p> <p>Target sectors with high volumes of Level 2 jobs (especially employers in Local Employment Partnerships¹¹ and those who have signed the Jobs and Skills Pledges), to grow apprenticeship</p>	<p>Learners who have been successful at Level 2 and Level 3 moving into full apprenticeship.</p> <p>Increased numbers in Apprenticeships and more employers involved.</p>

⁹ 3% was added to Level 2 volumes after FO1 in 2005/06, which was the lowest in the country. For employer facing provision, colleges added 66% after FO1 – again the **lowest** proportion nationally.

¹⁰ Previously known as “programme-led apprenticeships”.

¹¹ Employers that have committed to Local Employment Partnerships include ASDA, B&Q, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury, Tesco, Debenhams, DSGI, Birds Eye, Greggs, John Lewis and Primark.

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
	opportunities.	
Apprenticeships In 2006/07 the average in learning number was 15 per cent less than in 2003/04.	Colleges and providers to make use of programme-led apprenticeships and the new flexibilities in the Train to gain plan for growth to increase numbers.	Increased numbers in Apprenticeships in line with national trajectories and more employers involved.
Employer Engagement (TtG) With the latest data showing there are over 232,000 companies in the region, the number of employers accessing TtG funded provision (7,500 to date) needs to grow substantially.	Implement the Train to gain Plan for Growth. Build on the early success of Train to Gain by engaging more employers through effective brokerage and responsive providers.	A 25 per cent increase in employers accessing Train to Gain.
High Growth Sectors The RES identifies a number of knowledge based sectors that have international growth potential and contribute significantly to the North West's GVA. For these sectors, the RSP has identified skill priorities for the North West at levels 3 and 4.	Ensure colleges and providers target RES priority sector employers for take-up of Apprenticeships and Train to Gain, and also recruit more adults to Level 2 and 3 courses in these sectors. Ensure active engagement of the public sector to support the Leitch ambition through Apprenticeship and Train to Gain activity.	Increased numbers in Apprenticeships and more employers involved. RES priority sectors form an increased volume of LSC funded Level 3 and 4 provision for adults.

North West Region Sector Skills Priorities

Level 3	Level 4
Advanced engineering & materials (aerospace & engineering, automotive, chemicals)	
Biomedical	
Care/ Healthcare	
Construction	
Digital & creative industries	
Energy & Environmental technologies including nuclear decommissioning	
Food & Drink	
Education & Training	Financial services
Retail	
Visitor economy (tourism)	

Priority 2: Transforming the FE system to meet demand

29 We want to ensure that the system reflects the needs and goals of more young people, more adults and more employers.

Key challenges for the North West

30 FE colleges in the North West are among the best in the country. We have 19 Learning and Skills Beacon¹² colleges in the region and success rates are frequently higher than the national average. The FE sector has already demonstrated an ability to identify and respond to the needs of young people in the region, with the result that FE participation outstrips participation in Apprenticeships and School Sixth Forms by 1.7:1.

31 Colleges are also increasingly responsive to the needs of employers and adults, having reshaped their provision towards full Level 2 and 3 and Skills for Life in line with the skills agenda. But some challenges remain:

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
<p>Improving the FE Environment</p> <p>64 per cent of FE estate was constructed before 1979¹³. Only 25 per cent is considered excellent and 11 per cent of the estate is considered inoperable.</p> <p>The region needs an FE offer that is state-of-art to boost participation by young people and attract greater investment by employers.</p>	<p>We will support planned capital projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Warrington, we will conduct a review of secondary provision - In Cumbria, we will support local capital projects at Furness College, Barrow Sixth Form College, Kendal and Carlisle College 	<p>A reduction in the percentage of FE floorspace regarded as inoperable.</p>
<p>Review the work based learning (WBL) in Greater Manchester</p>	<p>To continue to develop the provider base to provide the high quality learning infrastructure to support vocational pathways</p>	<p>A step change in the volumes of apprenticeships and continued improvement of attainment in WBL.</p>
<p>Skills for Life Balance and Mix</p> <p>Despite the progress made on Skills for Life qualifications, we need to see more target facing provision taken up and achieved by adults aged 19+.</p> <p>We also need to maintain the literacy offer and grow the numeracy where the need is greater, based on the Leitch targets.</p>	<p>Issues to be highlighted in college and provider dialogue.</p> <p>Focus the funding on target bearing provision.</p>	<p>Balance and mix changes to include a greater share of target facing provision delivered to adults, with more than double in numeracy qualifications (minimum of 500 in 07/08, increase of 500 for 08/09).</p>

¹² Colleges & other LSC funded providers & subject to formal inspections are invited to apply for Beacon status by the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA). QIA identifies the outstanding candidates from inspection information and seeks an assessment of their performance from the LSC. Inspection requirements - a minimum of Grade 1 for Leadership and Management; Grades 1 or 2 for other areas inspected or at least two thirds of learners in curriculum areas graded 1 or 2 (under previous inspection arrangements), & no grades 4 or 5.

¹³ Source: eMandate cost benchmarking initiative return in which a third of NW colleges participated.

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
To ensure Train to Gain providers are utilising the Skills for Life budget within their Train to Gain contracts and not use their mainstream allocation, purely based on cost at the expense of wider community needs	Partnership teams to monitor Skills for Life activity through Train to Gain contracts	Funding is available to support community based Skills for Life activity, which is more costly and time consuming. May also support progression into the labour market.
Success Rates and Gender Success rates for males aged 16-18 are five percentage points lower than females.	Issues to be highlighted in college and provider dialogue.	Progress to be made in closing the gap between male and female success rates.
Fee Income Colleges only collected an estimated 60 per cent of their expected fees income in 2005/06; if they are to become more autonomous and self-reliant, this needs to increase.	We will agree fee income targets with each college.	Colleges collect a minimum of 65 per cent of fee income in 2008/09 and overall sum collected increases by at least 5 per cent.
FE Employer Engagement There has been increasing participation by young people in FE, which is a positive development, but we also need to see colleges increasing their engagement with employers to provide apprenticeships for young people who want to work while learning. Colleges also need better relationships with employers to enable them to provide pathways to employment for workless adults.	We will continue to develop specialist vocational provision to respond to the skills needs of employers – for example, we will increase the number of national skills academies to 12 in 2008/09, moving towards one for each industry sector. Land based and National Skills Academies	More FE colleges delivering a significant employer responsive service. Increasing T2G activity and growing fee income. Nuclear Academy operating in 2008/09 and delivering the volumes as per their business plan.
FE and Train to Gain Employers should increasingly see colleges as the first port of call for addressing their workforce development and recruitment requirements. As a first step on this path, we expect more FE colleges to become Train to Gain providers in the next round of tendering.	We will support colleges to reach the new standard ¹⁴ for employer engagement. We will work with colleges to introduce the new QCF unitised qualifications	At least 25 per cent of the region's colleges & WBL providers to achieve the new standard in 2008/09
Excellence and Self-regulation Providers should continue to focus on excellence and quality improvement and	Support the development and implementation of Framework for Excellence	Continue to increase success rates at Full Level 2, 3 and Skills for

¹⁴ The New Standard is a framework and an assessment & accreditation process which recognises & celebrates the best organisations delivering training & development solutions to employers. It incorporates & replaces business standards such as *Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)*, & *Action for Business Colleges*. For further information see: <http://www.newstandard.co.uk/>

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
prepare for the move towards self-regulation.	Support access to QIA (Quality Improvement Service) Support peer referring across the region.	Life. Improvements in access, success and progression for disadvantaged groups. Improve the scale and quality of employer responsive provision.

Priority 3: Delivering better skills, better jobs and better lives.

Key challenges for the North West

32 The North West has seen an improvement across the board on qualifications, employment and economic activity statistics. However, as the region started from a lower base than England, serious challenges remain. Some of these are region-wide, but many are concentrated within sub-regions, even down to ward level in some instances:

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
<p>Worklessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Almost a million are workless in the region: areas with the greatest numbers of workless adults are Greater Manchester and Greater Merseyside. - 500,000 workless adults without a Level 2 in the region and 650,000 adults with no qualifications at all. - A lower employment rate – almost 74 per cent compared with 76.2 per cent nationally. - For those with no qualifications, the employment rate drops to 44.3 per cent – more than 4 percentage points below England. - Economic inactivity is linked to travel to work patterns – e.g. the Manchester workforce is highly skilled and well paid, the Manchester working age population is not. - Many workless individuals are from vulnerable groups, including people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (225,000 on Incapacity Benefit), lone parents/couple families, people aged 50+, people without a current Level 2 qualification, offenders 	<p>Providers must be ready to deliver to employers who sign up to Local Employment Partnerships and to prepare individuals for the employment opportunities these provide – then continue to support once in work or refer/handover to a Train to Gain provider.</p> <p>A step change is required in the aspirations of colleges and providers regarding workless people's engagement and achievements in learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We expect that providers and partners will work together on the ground to deliver an adult offer that is innovative, flexible and able to respond to the needs of individuals providing progression routes (including sectoral routeways). - Voluntary and community organisations must be involved to gain access to the harder to reach. 	<p>Priority participants move out of economic inactivity into sustainable employment through the development of skills.</p> <p>33 per cent of Skills for Jobs participants should move into sustainable employment.</p> <p>The behaviour and culture of partner organisations in Skills for Jobs consortia change so that we see integrated models of skills and employment support proliferating across the region.</p> <p>Ever closer working partnership with JobcentrePlus leads to step change in the numbers of workless individuals who obtain sustainable employment following skills training.</p>

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
<p>and ex-offenders, some BME groups (some of whom are well qualified¹⁵), and residents of deprived areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is high participation in FE by BME groups but very low employment compared to the white population (58 per cent on average, but as low as 44.5 per cent for people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage). - The issues faced by these groups are complex and a high degree of differentiation will be necessary to address the range of barriers they face to give them the skills needed to improve their life chances and contribute to their communities. - Both within the UK and in a wider international context, there is an increasing concern with young people who are NEET that a 'culture of worklessness' has developed within the poorest areas. - By 2020 the number of jobs requiring no skills at all will fall from 4 million to 500,000. 95 per cent of jobs will require a Level 2 as a minimum and 65 per cent of jobs will require a Level 3. Raising the skills of these vulnerable and often disadvantaged groups is vital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broader consortia of providers are required to put in place routeways for people that take them right the way through from pre-employment to Train to Gain. Crucial to move individuals through the routeways is effective IAG and systems of referral/handover from one provider to another along the way. <p>Encourage more providers to offer all year round enrolment for economically inactive people including offenders in the community. Also encourage use of outreach centres as these are likely to be more effective for increasing participation in learning.</p> <p>Providers and partners working together should align their provision to support local partnership aims and targets e.g. Contributing to LAAs, MAAs and City strategy plans through the effective procurement and programme management to ensure the integration of employment and skills.</p> <p>With JCP, develop an integrated approach to the Skills Pledge and Local Employment Partnerships and ensure that Train to Gain supports the further development and retention of individuals once in work.</p>	
<p>Offenders in Custody and the Community</p> <p>Two new prisons in Maghull, Merseyside; HMP Kennet (opened June 2007) and HMP Maghull (opening 2010), as well as expansions in several North West prisons,</p>	<p>Ensure offenders can make applications to colleges and providers while in custody so that there is no gap between their release and starting training.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of offenders who access "through the gate" training.</p>

¹⁵ See Equal Opportunities Commission publication "Moving on Up", on ethnic minority women & employment, with examples i.e. the failure of women with Islamic names to get called for interview, even when they have good qualifications and experience. Report found at <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/Documents/Gender/Formal%20investigations/EOC%20Moving%20on%20up%20Formal%20investigation.pdf>

Challenge	Action	Measure of Success
will require additional provision both in custody and through the prison gates into the community.		
<p>Skills for Life – Numeracy</p> <p>Currently the majority of Skills for Life achievements are in literacy, despite the region's higher numeracy deficit (83 per cent are below Level 2 compared with 75 per cent in England)</p>	<p>Utilise the new flexibilities in Train to Gain to deliver more Skills for Life provision to employees, especially in numeracy.</p> <p>Work with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics/Tribal to influence the development of the Numeracy for Employability Strategy.</p>	<p>Freestanding Skills for Life delivery commences in Train to Gain.</p> <p>An increase in Skills for Life qualifications delivered through Train to Gain and other emerging vehicles such as Skills for Jobs and OLASS.</p>
<p>Apprenticeships</p> <p>In recent years we have seen participation declining in apprenticeships, especially by young people aged 16-18, yet we now have a very high target for apprenticeships set by Leitch</p>	<p>Building on Skills for Jobs activity to establish a series of sector led route ways for adults.</p>	<p>Increase in Apprenticeship volumes.</p>
<p>Moving Learners into Work</p> <p>The LSC is increasing focus on skills development through training as a route to employment, but colleges and providers do not yet see assisting learners to find and keep a job as their responsibility.</p>	<p>Increase the volume of Adult Apprenticeships by opening up provision to all employment sectors (where an apprenticeship framework exists) and across all of the North West.</p>	<p>Increase in Apprenticeship volumes. (reference the Leitch targets and measures for success).</p>

Priority 4 (specific to the North West region): Improving leadership and management.

- 33 This **regional priority** has been developed and agreed with the North West Development Agency on behalf of the Regional Skills Partnership (RSP).
- 34 Partners in the North West wish to emphasise the importance of leadership and management skills through an additional priority:
- Tackling cross-sectoral leadership and management skills gaps*
- 35 The priority takes forward the work of the Regional Skills Partnership, established by the North West Development Agency (NWDA) and involving the LSC, Jobcentre Plus, Government Office for the North West, Skills for Business and the North West Universities Association.
- 36 The RSP ensures there is a strong connection between the skills needed to raise productivity and the allocation of funds to education and training providers. The aim is to deliver a better skilled workforce to support the achievement of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES).

- 37 The RSP's statement of skills priorities, underpinned by the LSC's strategic analysis of skills demand and supply, supports delivery of the RES. This regional priority is essential to achieving the vision for the RES. Evidence suggests that good leaders and managers drive up the productivity of their businesses and in turn, value their own workforce and recognise their need for upskilling.

Key challenges for the North West

- 38 In the North West, compared to the national average, there are fewer managers, greater shortages of management occupations and surveys have identified significant skills gaps for managers.
- 39 The leadership and management development needs of businesses are not being met by current provision and the supply infrastructure. There is evidence of significant market failure around:
- Information – lack of awareness regarding business benefits of leadership and management development
 - Responsiveness – provision is not always appropriate to business/employers needs
 - Cost/value – business unwilling or unable to pay

Actions

- Raise awareness of the business benefits leadership and management development
- Use the new flexibilities in Train to Gain to support SME owner managers
- Increase the take up of Management and Leadership provision and support.

Measuring Success

- Impact measures are currently being developed but overarching outcome is that of increased productivity of business and improved business performance, measured through increased sales, increased turnover, and increased employment
- 40 Our challenges and actions are based on our regional strategic analysis of supply, demand and need; as well as ongoing dialogue with key partner organisations. The analysis can be accessed at:
<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/NorthWest/NorthWestStrategicAnalysis.htm>.

Commissioning Profile

41 We will continue to measure our success – either directly or by working with regional and local partners – as outlined below.

Measure	2006/07	2007/08 estimated	2008/09 projected
14–16-year-olds			
Total number of learners aged 14–16	3,237	4,408	4,810
16–18-year-olds			
Number of young people participating in learning	198,726	202,175	204,375
Percentage of young people reaching Level 2 at age 19	74.3%	76.4%	77.6%
Percentage of young people reaching Level 3 at age 19	44.6 %	46.3%	49.3%
Number of young people completing Apprenticeships or Advanced Apprenticeships	10,175	10,684	11,218
Adults			
Total number of adults participating in learning	309,588	270,000	235,000
Number of Skills for Life achievements overall for adults (Leitch Target SFL Provision)	9,581	10,199	19,028
Literacy (inc. ESOL) Level 1	7,378	7,438	6,546
Numeracy Entry Level 3			12,482
Number of First Full Level 2 achievements overall for adults	1,517	2,000	3,000
Number of First Full Level 3 achievements overall for adults	3,440	3,700	4,000
Number of adults accessing adult safeguarded learning	99,300	100,000	100,000
Employer responsive			
Total number of learners	90,930	109,000	130,000
Train to Gain	35,530	48,000	66,500
Number of First Full level 2 achievements	14,272	22,940	29,030
via Train to Gain	9,775 ¹⁶	17,440	22,530
Number of adults completing an Apprenticeship or Advanced Apprenticeship	7,128	7,484	7,858
Number of employers engaged through Train to Gain ¹⁷ Skills Brokerage ¹⁸	2,680	6,945	6,945
Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)			
Total number of LLDD learners supported	69,005	72,041	72,077
Total number of learners in specialist residential colleges	470	470	470
European Social Funding (ESF)			
Recorded number of interventions supported by ESF	53,844	31,345	46,860
Young people NEET/at risk of becoming NEET	17,687	17,500	5,456
Workless adults supported to secure employment	28,276	26,500	9,720
Employed adults whose skills have been raised	37,894	36,250	31,684

¹⁶ Includes 7,526 Level 2 qualifications achieved via the Employer Training Pilot.

¹⁷ Measured by financial, not academic, year.

¹⁸ Note that these figures relate purely to those employers who have engaged via brokerage. It does not include those that have engaged via a provider.

Commissioning

- 42 The Leitch Review of Skills, *Prosperity for all in the global economy: World-class skills*, published in December 2006, set out new ambitions for developing world-class skills. To achieve the report's vision, we have implemented a demand-led approach to commissioning, coupled with a strong emphasis on quality.
- 43 Commissioning is the term we use for all of our planning and purchasing activity across the learning and skills sector, including purchases that are negotiated or competitively tendered for. All of our commissioning decisions are rooted in a firm commitment to allocating our budget wisely, targeting provision of the highest quality, contributing to government targets and priorities, and giving value for money.

Negotiated commissioning

- 44 Negotiated commissioning involves us agreeing plans with colleges and providers that currently deliver LSC-funded provision. Our negotiated commissioning plans for 2008/09 include the following.

Negotiated provision for 16–18-year-olds

- 45 Most provision for young people will be secured through planning dialogues with colleges, providers and schools (via local authorities). These discussions will result in agreed plans to deliver the following.
- 204,375 places for 16–18-year-olds, of which:
 - 34,000 places are for Apprenticeships (includes an additional 1,000 places – an increase on last year of 2.85 per cent); and also 6,067 places in programme-led apprenticeship in FE and WBL
 - 47,500 places for Foundation Learning Tier
 - Monitoring volumes in schools and colleges
 - We expect that a minimum of 5,000 places for 16-18 year olds will be taken by young offenders in the community.
 - Of those a minimum of 1,000 places are for apprenticeships,
 - 1,500 places for Foundation Learning Tier and
 - 2,500 places for Entry to Employment
- 46 Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD):
- We will increase learning and skills opportunities for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities by expanding provision to meet the needs of the cohort and we expect participation and achievement to increase for learners with LDD.
 - 1-in-4 young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) have LDD. We expect providers to develop provision to meet their needs.
- 47 Our regional LDD strategy focuses on:

- Investing in provision: understanding demand and building capacity
 - Raising the quality of provision
 - Increasing participation in the economy and our communities through sustainable employment
- 48 Learning provision for people with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities, an analysis of supply and demand in the North West, identifies that participation rates by young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 16-18 are 52.2%, compared to 74.5 per cent for young people age 16-18 without LDD. The participation rate for learners with LDD aged 19-25 is 8%, compared to 18 per cent participation by people aged 19-25 without LDD. We aim to close this gap and increase participation by learners with learning difficulties aged 19-25.
- 49 We must achieve this within existing resources by changing the balance of provision and ensuring that local provision is responsive to learners' requirements.
- 50 We will also work with other planning and commissioning agencies to align programmes and funding for learning and skills and for health and social care.

Negotiated adult learner responsive provision

- 51 As agreed with our partners, we need to deliver the following in 2008/09.
- Full Level 2: 14,431 places in total.
 - Full Level 3: 16,647 places in total.
 - Skills for Life: 26,430 places in total (this includes Skills for Life provision that counts towards Leitch target – Literacy (inc. ESOL at level 1, Numeracy at entry level 3). Providers can continue to deliver non-target provision as long as it is agreed with the LSC for engagement/progression purposes (predominantly at entry level).
 - Given the low number of approved numeracy qualifications delivered to date (c. 5,000 in 2005/06), we reserve the right to conduct an open and competitive tendering round later in the year to secure the required number of qualifications, subject to review of performance.
 - We expect that a minimum of 5,000 places will be taken by offenders in the community who should be referred by the OLASS lead provider and /or probation area
 - Foundation learning tier: 50,401 places in total. We expect that a minimum of 2,000 places will be taken by offenders in the community.
 - Qualifications and Credit Framework: we aim to pilot the delivery of second Level 2 and 3 provision through a credit based approach using ESF in 2008/09. This will be in specific sectors where the sector skills council (SSC) has agreed its sector qualification strategy.

Negotiated employer responsive provision

- 52 As agreed with our partners, we need to deliver the following in 2008/09. Those colleges that currently deliver employer facing Level 2 and 3 provision through FE funding will have the opportunity to negotiate growth on 2006/07 delivery

volumes. The volume of TtG places available for negotiated growth will depend on the performance of the existing provider base in 2007/08.

- Level 2: 65,077 places in total, of which Train to Gain places number 44,880¹⁹.
- Level 3: 14,065 places in total, of which Train to Gain places number 2,250
- Skills for Life: 26,000 places in total. Train to Gain contribution 5,400
- Apprenticeships: 29,100 places in total.
- Pre-apprenticeships²⁰: 3,000²¹ places in total, of which 100 places will be Adult Apprenticeships. These places will form part of our welfare to workforce development offer for adults and will be negotiated with current Train to Gain providers.

Negotiated Adult Safeguarded Learning, including Personal and Community Development Learning

- 53 We will secure this provision locally and ensure it is aligned to Local Area Agreements and Multi-Area Agreements.
- 54 We wish to see increasing alignment of Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) provision to meet the needs of workless people, including more emphasis on encouraging and supporting progression into further learning that enhances employability; and to see a steadily increasing number of individuals supported through NLDC.
- 55 We wish to see an increasing concentration of this budget on those who need help most, lost out at school or could not otherwise afford to pay for the cost of a course.
- 56 We wish to see volumes maintained across Adult Safeguarded Learning.
- 57 We also want to see an increasing proportion of fees collected from those who can afford to pay.
- Personal and community development learning (PCDL): 77,000 places in total.
 - Family Language, Literacy and Numeracy (FLLN): 8,800 places in total.
 - Wider Family Learning (WFL): 6,700 places in total.
 - Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC): 7,500 places in total.

Tendered commissioning

- 58 Tendered commissioning is a competitive process that is open to any new providers wanting to enter the market. It is also open to existing colleges or providers wanting to extend their provision or enter new markets or geographical areas.

¹⁹ Includes L2 and L3 jumpers (jumpers- first qualification a L3)

²⁰ Previously known as “programme-led apprenticeships”.

²¹ Figure to be confirmed; includes PLA within WBL.

- 59 In order to drive up the quality and responsiveness of the provision that we fund, we will be introducing more competition within our commissioning activity. Key triggers for competition include new investment, restructuring of provision or a new delivery model, significant gaps in provision, and failure to meet minimum levels of performance. In 2008/09, we plan to tender for the following:

Tendered provision for 16–18-year-olds

60 European Social Fund:

- In 2007/8 we will procure provision (ESF) with a value of £24.75M which will provide funding up to 2010. Our aim is to reduce overall NEET volumes by working with young people in key Stage 4, those who are in post 16 learning who are vulnerable and those at risk. In total we intend to work with over 5,500 young people each year.

61 Entry to Employment:

- the whole programme may be tendered for a period of three years.
- 4,023²² Average in Learning in 2008/09, utilising a budget of £37M.

62 NEET:

- Subject to availability of further funds we will tender the 14-19 Fighting Fund
- Key Stage 4 Engagement: 3,775 places in 2008/09, utilising a budget of £3.4m from the 14-19 Reform Budget
- Young Apprenticeship: an additional 1,000+ cohort 5 places in 2008/09, utilising a budget of £3.7m (includes cohort 4 costs)

63 Apprenticeships:

- New, additional programme–led-pathways in FE targeted at specific sectors: 1,000²³ places in 2008/09, utilising a budget of £2m;
- Places released due to withdrawal of provision following failure to meet minimum levels of performance; up to 3,000 places in 2008/09, utilising a budget of up to £4m.
- Tendering to achieve growth. If we can't negotiate enough growth, we will go out to tender.

Tendered adult learner responsive provision

- 64 In 2007/8 we will commission activity funded under the new 2007-13 ESF programme. Under the new programme we envisage fewer more substantive interventions for both young people and adults than is the case under the current programme. By adopting this approach we aim to improve the number of people who secure and sustain employment.
- 65 By aligning our investment alongside those of Jobcentre Plus and other partners in City Employment Strategies we will procure £30m of ESF activity which will deliver provision under the banner of Skills for Jobs in the North

²² E2E – average in learning.

West. In 2008/9 we plan to work with almost 10,000 adults providing them with the skills they need to secure sustainable employment.

66 Apprenticeships for Adults: 100 programme-led apprenticeships in 2008/09, in RES priority sectors, utilising a budget of £350,000.

67 Information, Advice and Guidance:

- to deliver the Integrated Employment and Skills Service, we will put out to tender the Nextstep Information, Advice and Guidance for 08/09 to 09/10. This will help us to deliver a fully aligned adult guidance service as part of the lead up to the implementation of the new Adult Advancement and Careers Service from 2010/11.
- Core requirements will remain largely unchanged relating to the delivery of Advice sessions to pre-level 2 and pre-level 3 customers (up to 10%) with a particular focus on priority target groups and disadvantaged areas.
- In addition, contract requirements will reflect the direction of travel for the new Adult Advancement and Careers Service including arrangements in preparation for:
 - The bringing together of Ufi Learndirect Advice and Nextstep services
 - The delivery of Skills Health Checks
 - The implementation of Skills Accounts
 - The broadening of the support offer to take into account personal issues faced by clients including finance, housing, childcare etc
 - The role of IAG in Skills for Jobs
 - Apprenticeships for Adults

68 The Employability Skills Programme²⁴:

- The Employability Skills Programme aims to help JobCentre Plus customers secure and sustain employment. It will help people improve their employability skills and gain sustainable employment. We may wish to procure more of the Employability Skills Programme in the North West region up to a value of approximately £3.75M (equating to approximately 2,000 places).

69 Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS)

- The overriding aim is for learning and skills for offenders to be an integral part of the interventions available for people who are economically inactive. However there is evidence to show that offenders need some form of dedicated 'bridging provision' to support them in their integration into communities and on to progression routeways leading to development of employability skills, job readiness and, for those who are suitable, into work. This support could take the form of motivational programmes, mentoring, work taster sessions etc, which needs to be underpinned by consistent IAG and the services of a link worker between the offender manager and the provider. A maximum of £2M ESF will be required for this provision.
- Data from NW Probation shows that they supervise 30,000 offenders each year. There are also 11,000 offenders in NW prisons.

²⁴ Formerly known as Basic skills for Jobcentre Plus.

- Probation refer over 10,000 offenders, (against a target of 7,500), who have skills for life needs.
- The number of offenders in the NW who are below level 2 is not known but national data shows that 50 per cent of offenders are level 1 and below and 50 per cent do not have any qualifications.

Tendered employer responsive provision

70 Train to Gain is a service that seeks to meet the employer demand for skills. In the North West it is delivered by 108²⁵ providers. It will continue to be our flagship programme during 2008/09 and we will tender for the following additional provision.

- 6,945 employers will be engaged in Train to Gain during Financial year 2007/08
- 10,000 employees will start their first Level 3 qualification
- 21,500 employees will start their first Level 2 or Skills for Life qualifications during 2008/09.
- Leadership and Management support for approximately 3,000 managers
- Train to Gain funding will focus on the North West's priority sectors, which are those that have the potential for either GVA or employment growth (including replacement employment demand).
- In the North West, a proportion of the Train to Gain budget will be available as a response fund, which will be commissioned throughout the year in response to employers' needs.

71 European Social Fund:

Workforce Development:

- Our approach to ESF Priority 2 - workforce development - is to integrate this with our overall procurement of Train to Gain by securing an additional £30m of employer facing activity which will enhance the core Train to Gain offer. The funding will support over 30,000 individuals each year.
- ESF will be used to ensure Train to Gain meets the needs of all Skills for Life learners, including those at entry level, those who already have a level 2 and those who may wish to achieve more than one level in literacy/ESOL or numeracy. This activity will feed into the national LSC to inform future planning.

72 Qualifications and Credit Framework provision

- We aim to pilot the delivery of second Level 2 and 3 provision through a credit based approach using ESF in 2008/09. This will be in specific sectors where the sector skills council (SSC) has agreed its sector qualification strategy, as per the addendum to the Statement of Priorities²⁶.

National Skills Academies (NSA)

73 The National Skills Academy network is a unique structure of employer-led excellence for skills training. The NSAs provide a means for direct involvement

²⁵ This is the current number of providers with TtG contracts, but will change in-year as the region makes use of the regional response fund.

²⁶ Found here: [http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/Aligning_Public_Funding_with_Priority_VQs_\(11Dec2007\).pdf](http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/Aligning_Public_Funding_with_Priority_VQs_(11Dec2007).pdf)

by employers in the design and delivery of learning. The NSA network will be a key component of the supply infrastructure in addressing skills shortages in specific sectors and industries.

74 In the North West, the current NSA network comprises:

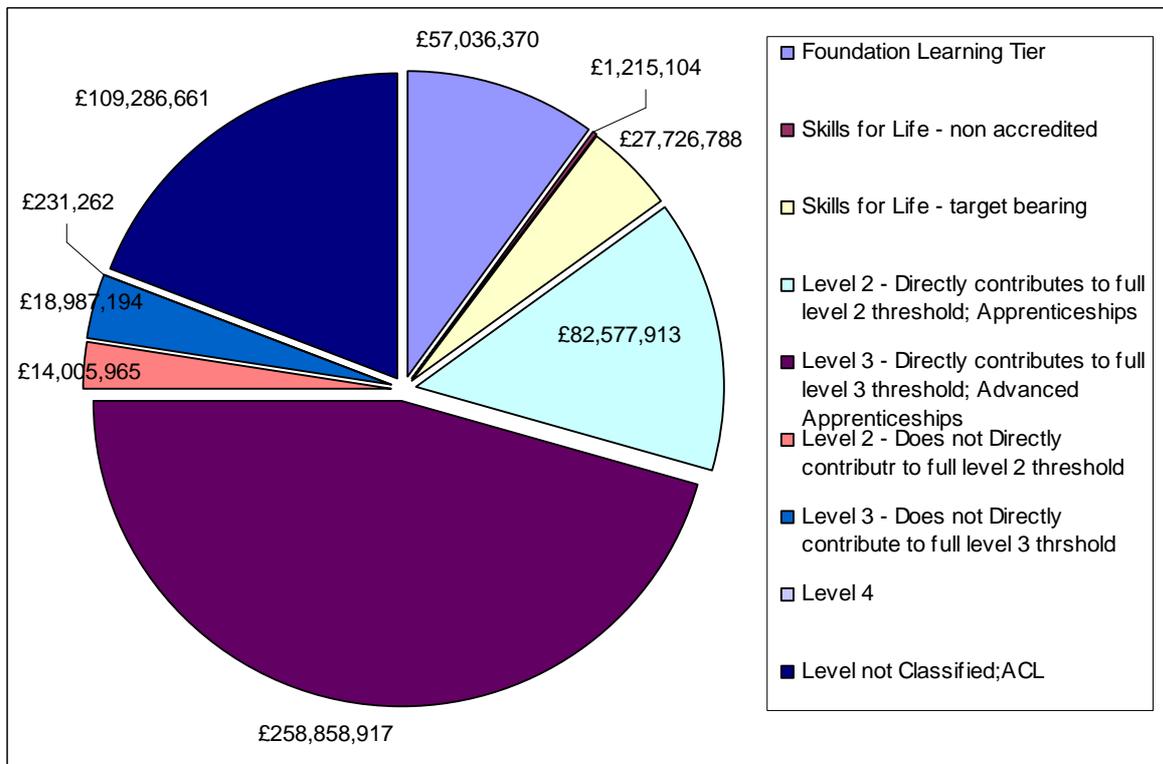
- Construction
- Financial Services
- Food and Drink Manufacturing
- Manufacturing
- Nuclear

75 NSAs will be a key part of our overall strategy to commission high-quality, employer responsive provision in a demand-led system.

Infrastructure

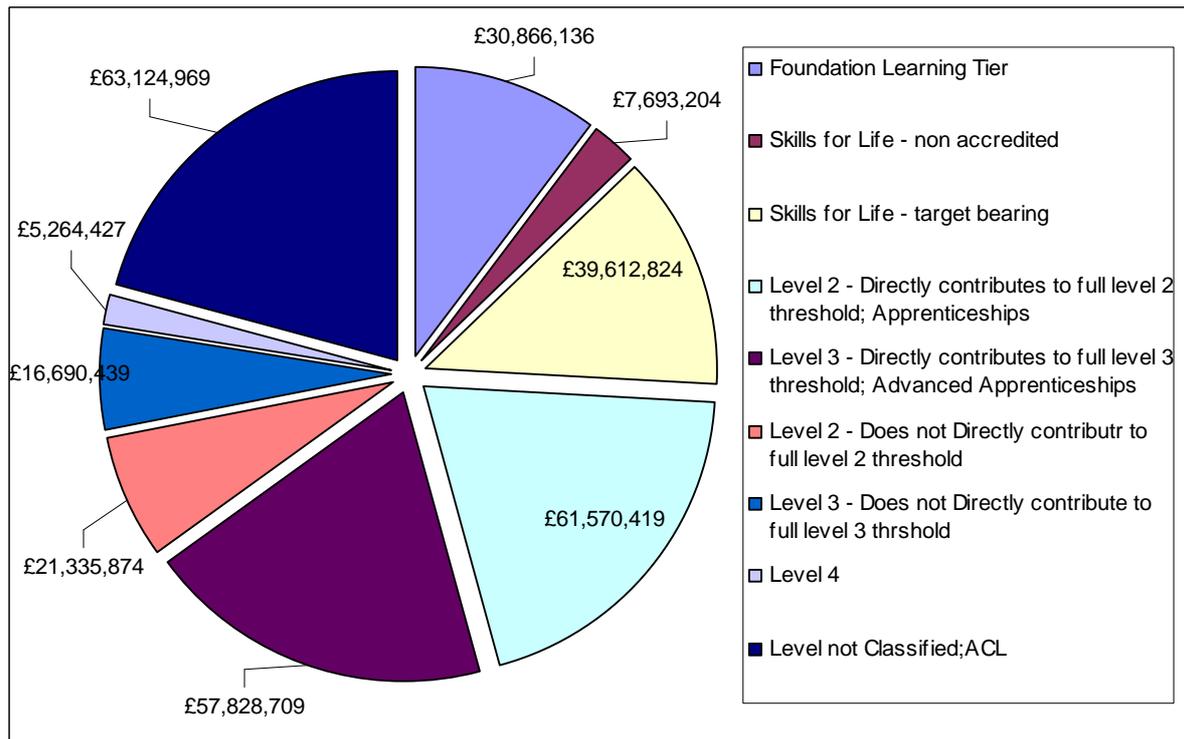
- 76 We are a responsible government-funded organisation: rather than funding the same providers year after year, we take great care to test the market. This ensures that our learning and skills provision continues to meet the changing needs of learners and employers.
- 77 We take an active interest in the overall volume, pattern and range of learning and skills activity that individual learners and employers can choose from in each area. We also analyse delivery to ensure that no group is disadvantaged and that equality of opportunity exists throughout our learning and skills provision in the North West. The charts for young people and adults illustrate the balance and mix of provision in 2006/07.

Young People: Mix of Provision Funding 2006/07



Source: LSC Corporate reports 06/07.

Adults : Mix of Provision Funding 2006/07



Source: LSC Corporate reports 06/07.

- 78 We want to invest in the capacity of the FE system so that it is continually able to respond to future challenges and where necessary, we want to encourage a diverse provider base to increase choice, quality and stimulate the delivery of innovative provision.
- 79 One way we will achieve this is through the use of open and competitive tendering processes where this will result in improved quality or choice for learners and employers.
- 80 Where we have good and excellent providers, we will help them to grow so that they can continue to offer the breadth and depth of provision we need in the region.

Quality

- 81 Quality improvement will be a key driver of our commissioning decisions to ensure that we secure good quality provision for learners and employers and continue to eradicate poor provision from the market.
- 82 We will support colleges and providers that are performing well to perform even better, and we will challenge colleges and providers that are satisfactory but not improving. As part of this more rigorous approach to securing the best provision, we will assess performance against minimum levels of performance from the 2006/07 academic year, based on the new measures for calculating success rates
- 83 These minimum levels will be used by Ofsted as part of the college and provider performance report. Where a substantial proportion of provision is identified as inadequate or underperforming, a 'Notice to Improve' will be issued. We will address mediocre provision through a regional approach to improvement indicators that will focus on areas that are in danger of slipping below minimum performance levels if the bar is raised.
- 84 The National Improvement Strategy sets out how the Quality Improvement Agency and partners such as the LSC will provide support to colleges and providers. The Strategy includes the expectation that the contracts and funding agreements we hold with providers ensure that they have appropriately qualified and trained staff in accordance with new requirements.

Related strategies

- 85 Local Area Statements of Need (including links to Children and Young People Plans): appended to this plan.
- 86 Equality and diversity:
- 87 Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:
http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/NorthWest/NW_Action_Plan_for_LLDD_Provision.pdf
- 88 Capital:
<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/NorthWest/North+West+Capital+Plan.htm>
- 89 Regional Economic Strategy: <http://www.nwda.co.uk/PDF/RES06v2.pdf>
- 90 Train to Gain Growth Plan:
http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-ttg-plan_for_growth.pdf?WT.mc_id=ttgho760&WT.mc_ev=click

Glossary

CoVE: Centre of Vocational Excellence

E2E: Entry to Employment

EMA: Education Maintenance Allowance

ESF: European Social Fund

ESOL: English for speakers of other languages

FE: Further Education

Full Level 2: equates to five GCSEs at grades A* to C

Full Level 3: equates to two GCE A-level passes or equivalent

HE: higher education

LA: Local Authority

LAA: local area agreement

LLDD: learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

NEET: not in education, employment or training

NSA: National Skills Academy

NVQ: National Vocational Qualification

NWDA: North West Development Agency

OLASS: Offender Learning and Skills Service

OSAT: On-Site Assess and Train

Partnership teams: local LSC teams, usually covering one or more local authority districts, who work with providers and partners to ensure a coherent, high quality learning offer is available across the patch

PCDL: personal and community development learning

Progression pathways: a high-quality, coherent curriculum offer for entry and Level 1

QCF: Qualifications and Credit Framework

RES: Regional Economic Strategy

RSP: Regional Skills Partnership

WBL: Work based learning

Annex: Local Area Statements of Need

91 This annex contains the Local Area Statements of Need for the five local LSC offices in the North West; Cheshire and Warrington, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Greater Merseyside and Lancashire.

92 Districts covered by each local office:

- Cheshire and Warrington
 - Chester
 - Congleton
 - Crewe and Nantwich
 - Ellesmere Port & Neston
 - Macclesfield
 - Vale Royal
 - Warrington

- Cumbria
 - Allerdale
 - Barrow-in-Furness
 - Carlisle
 - Copeland
 - Eden
 - South Lakeland

- Greater Manchester
 - Bolton
 - Bury
 - Manchester
 - Oldham
 - Rochdale
 - Salford
 - Stockport
 - Tameside
 - Trafford
 - Wigan

- Greater Merseyside
 - Halton
 - Knowsley
 - Liverpool
 - Sefton
 - St. Helens
 - Wirral

- Lancashire
 - Blackburn with Darwen
 - Blackpool
 - Burnley
 - Chorley
 - Fylde

- Hyndburn
- Lancaster
- Pendle
- Preston
- Ribble Valley
- Rossendale
- South Ribble
- West Lancashire
- Wyre

Learning and Skills Council Local Area Statement of Need

Cheshire and Warrington

2008/09

December 2007

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

Introduction

Cheshire and Warrington Learning and Skills Council (LSC) presents its 2008/09 Local Statement of Need. Based on an analysis of the sector and through work with local partners, this statement identifies what the local LSC will commission to meet LSC priorities and targets focusing on local skill needs. This is the first Local Statement of Need replacing the Local Annual Plan produced previously.

Any commissioning needs identified here will feed into the North West Regional Commissioning Plan. We are working with partners to align priorities and to enable limited resources to be targeted in the best interests of learners.

Our capital investment is helping to transform FE learning facilities and local providers are setting the highest standards with the majority of College Ofsted inspections recognising the 'outstanding capacity to make further improvements'.

Over the last five years we have continued to see success in learning and skills provision across Cheshire & Warrington. Participation and success rates amongst 16-18 year olds have continued to rise. The proportion of young people "not in education, employment or training" (NEET) remains significantly lower than the regional and national averages.

The LSC and ADCS (Association of Directors of Children's Services) have reached a protocol on the development of local 14-19 education plans as part of the local Children and Young People's Plan. Our growing joint responsibility for the 14-19 agenda through 14-19 partnerships and the Local Authorities, make it all the more important to ensure that our analysis and priorities are fully aligned and sharing our commitment to them.

Productivity in the North West is lower than the England average; however, in Cheshire and Warrington it is actually 4% higher. Its continued success is therefore critical to the economic prosperity of the region as a whole.

While much of the area benefits from a prosperous local economy, significant numbers do not share this prosperity. Strong employment growth is forecast for the area with major developments planned. We want to ensure that local people have every opportunity to benefit from these opportunities by removing skills barriers, ensuring the appropriate mix of provision and engaging with employers.

The LSC will continue to strengthen its partnership with the Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance (CWEA), Local Authorities, Job Centre Plus and the Employment and Skills Board (ESB) to plan and fund joint action plans for learning communities

Liz Davis
Area Director
Cheshire & Warrington Learning & Skills Council

Challenges, key actions and measures of success

The LSC has three national priorities which we deliver at both a regional and local level. This section takes account of the region's Strategic Analysis, reflects on performance and takes account of new areas or changes in policy direction and sets out the key challenges for us in delivering the national priorities.

National Priority 1: Creating Demand for Learning and Skills		
Key Local Challenges	Key actions	Measures of Success
<p>Post 16 Participation Participation post 16 is high in Cheshire and Warrington at 80% and 74% respectively and the levels of NEET are low in comparison to the NW.</p> <p>Reducing NEET further presents a challenge, however there is a national target of 90% participation by 2013. Need to continue to raise the numbers of young people taking up learning and prepare platform for 100% participation</p>	<p>Work with local WBL networks to deliver an enhanced Apprenticeship offer and increase places.</p> <p>Work with Connexions to target those in employment without training.</p> <p>Work with Connexions to increase access to IAG through the Area Wide Prospectus and exploring the feasibility of an online application process.</p> <p>Increase % of 16 year olds who receive a learning offer (September Guarantee) and pilot the guarantee for 17 year olds</p> <p>Support greater progression pathways into FE/HE.</p> <p>Set up a local LLDD group to review mix of provision</p> <p>Work with LA to ensure each local area has a clear level one and pre-vocational offer.</p> <p>Work with Children's Services partners to remove the barriers to participation and utilise additional funding to develop and procure additional, innovative learning activities</p>	<p>Both the numbers and the percentage NEET reduce</p> <p>16-18 participation increases despite reductions in cohort size, especially in Apprenticeships</p>
<p>Diplomas Successfully secured delivery of 5 diploma lines from 2008. Challenge to offer all 17 lines by 2013 in a rural area.</p>	<p>Work with local 14-19 partnerships to develop and implement a timeline for diploma delivery</p> <p>Work with LA and delivery partners to secure a common timetable</p> <p>Work with LA to develop transport infrastructure</p>	<p>More diploma lines secured to begin delivery in 2009</p>
<p>Level 2 @ 19 Achievement of L2 at 16 is high in the area however 85% of 19 years old are to achieve at least L2 by 2013</p> <p>Level 3 @ 19 L3 attainment at 19 is high, need to continue to raise this achievement and lower English and Maths attainment at 16 can be a barrier to taking L3.</p>	<p>Increase the proportion and success rates of full level 2 provision</p> <p>Increase participation in L2 Apprenticeships</p> <p>Work with LA to increase GCSE attainment with English and Maths</p> <p>Work with Sixth Form Group to improve L3 achievements</p> <p>Work with LA to improve value added scores of schools</p> <p>Increase the success rates of full L3 provision</p>	<p>Year on year increase in the % of 19 year olds who achieve a L2 and L3</p> <p>Increased % of 16yo achieve English and Maths GCSE grades A*-C.</p>

National Priority 1: Creating Demand for Learning and Skills		
Key Local Challenges	Key actions	Measures of Success
<p>Adult Participation Need to ensure that the local provision matches the skills needs of adults wishing to gain basic qualification levels and progress through to employment</p>	<p>Discuss the balance and mix of programmes also ensuring a FLT offer during provider dialogue</p> <p>Develop local groups to plan and implement the adult skills and entitlement, building on any existing arrangements to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate PCDL offer • Define adult journey offer and role of advice and guidance 	<p>Increased mix and balance of provision to reflect the Leitch priorities.</p>
<p>Train to Gain Delivered 2,489 L2/3 and skills for life starts in Train to Gain, however there is still scope to expand this provision</p>	<p>Target sectors which employ large numbers of employees with sub-level qualifications</p> <p>Promote the Skills Pledge to maximise Train to Gain offer</p> <p>Utilise the Train to Gain Regional Response Fund to deliver flexible high quality provision</p>	<p>Increased numbers take up first Level 2, Level 2 and Level 3 in Train to Gain</p>
<p>Employer Engagement Need to engage with employers to drive up the demand for Train to Gain and Apprenticeships</p>	<p>Engage with employers through local employment groups, SSCs, diploma forums, Connexions, the CWEA, Local Employment Partnerships and the ESB to define the employment offer and raise awareness of their role in learning and skills.</p>	<p>Increased numbers in Apprenticeships and more employers involved.</p>

National Priority 2: Transforming the FE system to meet demand		
Key Local Challenges	Key actions	Measure of success
<p>Quality FE Colleges in the area perform well with 5 out of 8 colleges with beacon status, high Ofsted inspection grades and success rates higher than the NW. Need to continue this high standard.</p>	<p>Improve awareness of the Framework for Excellence and share good practice through local provider consortia to support providers in a successful application.</p>	<p>Providers achieve Framework for Excellence</p>
<p>FE Responsiveness Providers are increasingly responsive to employers and adults needs having reshaped provision, however some challenges remain in engaging with employers and meeting their demands</p>	<p>Need to further increase the proportion of full L2 & L3 provision and first L2 provision through dialogue with providers.</p> <p>Reduce the gap in achievement between males and females through the Equality and Diversity Group</p> <p>Build capacity of colleges to engage with employers and become their first choice</p> <p>Support providers to attain the New Standard Map specialist provision in the area</p> <p>Continue to build the capacity of colleges to respond to economic developments</p> <p>Promote collaboration between providers and identify or develop networks to build capacity and a coherent employer offer in key sectors.</p>	<p>Colleges increase fee income</p> <p>At least 25% of colleges to achieve the new standard in 2008/09</p> <p>FE colleges delivering to more employers via Train to Gain, Apprenticeships in 2008/09.</p>

National Priority 2: Transforming the FE system to meet demand		
Key Local Challenges	Key actions	Measure of success
<p>Apprenticeships</p> <p>The declining numbers of Apprenticeship opportunities (particularly evident in Warrington and Macclesfield) both for young people and adults are evidence of the further need and step change in converting local market need into demand from employers.</p>	<p>Need to continue to commission high quality provision and remove contracts with provision where quality is below MLPs.</p> <p>Prioritise the commissioning of apprenticeships based on geographical need</p> <p>Agree 19+ Level 3 success rates performance indicators with providers</p> <p>Review E2E provision and develop E2E progression pathways</p> <p>PLP activity to be accelerated in the area</p>	<p>Increased numbers in Apprenticeships and more employers involved.</p>
<p>The FE Environment</p> <p>There has been good progress in renewing the FE infrastructure, need to continue to progress this across the whole area, with a focus on diploma development and ensuring accessibility for LLDD</p>	<p>Work with partners to support TLC reviews in Cheshire and Secondary review in Warrington</p> <p>Work with the LA to take a joint view on the future infrastructure</p> <p>Ensure local capital developments align with local needs and encourage providers to work with local employers</p>	<p>A reduction in the percentage of FE floor space regarded as inoperable.</p>

National Priority 3: Delivering Better Skills, Better Jobs and Better Lives		
Key Local Challenges	Key actions	Measure of success
<p>Worklessness</p> <p>Unemployment is low in the area, however there remain a number of challenges: 44.6% of inactive do not have a L2 In Crewe & Nantwich 31% want a job. In Warrington 68.8% of black/black British working age people are economically inactive In C&W, only those aged 50-retirement have a lower economic activity rate than nationally</p>	<p>Ensure FE colleges have an FLT offer to prepare people for further learning and sustainable employment.</p> <p>Work with CWEA and JCP to action priorities identified in the Worklessness study.</p> <p>Work with JCP and other partners to develop a coherent redundancy package to get people back into employment as soon as possible</p> <p>Target priority groups and areas through Local Area Agreements and LLNs.</p> <p>Coordinate activity under Skills for Jobs to ensure a comprehensive local offer by engaging local providers, LLNs, LEPs and Next Steps to ensure a collaborative and approach to all local pre employment activities funded through LSC, LA, JCP, RDA, ESF and ERDF support.</p>	<p>Priority participants move out of economic inactivity into sustainable employment through the development of skills.</p> <p>We see integrated models of skills and employment support across the area.</p>
<p>Moving People into Work</p> <p>Lots of developments in the area and job growth expected: need to ensure the local population has the skills needed to enable access to local jobs.</p> <p>High volume of growth in managers and senior officials,</p>	<p>Work with JobCentre Plus to engage workless people in sustainable employment through Skills for Jobs and Train to Gain</p> <p>Ensure that the qualifications we fund are those identified by sector skills councils</p> <p>Increase proportion of full level 3 provision and extend the level 3 pilots through Train to Gain</p>	<p>33% of Skills for Jobs participants should move into sustainable employment</p> <p>Priority participants move out of economic</p>

National Priority 3: Delivering Better Skills, Better Jobs and Better Lives		
Key Local Challenges	Key actions	Measure of success
personal services and sales, and customer services occupations, High volume of employment growth expected in Business and other Services. Key high value sectors for the CWEA are Food and drink, Digital media, Energy, Retail	Expand the number of employers offering high-quality apprenticeships in these sectors Develop a coordinated response with partners to these sectors and key employment sites Develop or link to sector provider networks to build their capacity to deliver Diplomas, NVQs and frameworks to meet the needs of those sectors.	inactivity into sustainable employment through the development of skills

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://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/NorthWest/NorthWestStrategicAnalysis.htm>.

Partnership Working

Partnership is fundamental to the delivery of LSC objectives. The partnership teams are leading the development of high quality learning provision in each area and increasingly, the LSC is an active member of local partnerships concerned with economic development and regeneration and here we are accountable for critical targets through Local Area Agreements. Some of the partners and groups we will work closely with over the next year include:

14-19 Partnerships

Recent announcements signalled a significant change in the way that the 16-19 system will operate the future with the transfer of funding for 16-19 year olds from the LSC to Local Authorities. We will work with Children’s Trusts in each area through the local Children and Young People’s Plan²⁷ and our growing joint responsibility with Local Authorities for the 14-19 agenda make it all the more important to ensure that our analysis and priorities are fully aligned through 14-19 partnerships and work with Connexions and the Local Authorities, to maintain the focus and momentum on continuous improvement in the implementation of 14-19 reforms.

Cheshire and Warrington Economic Strategy

Employment opportunities are expected to grow with a number of large developments expected in the area. We will work with the CWEA and the NWDA to lead the delivery of the skills elements of the Regional Economic Strategy and the “Invest in Success” Strategy and support improvements in workforce skills and productivity.

Employment and Skills Board

²⁷ <http://www.cheshireschildren.co.uk/plan.pdf>
http://www.warrington.gov.uk/Images/Children%20and%20young%20peoples%20plan%200609_tcm31-14176.pdf

Employer engagement and their demand for skills is a growing priority for the LSC. The local LSC will lead and support partners in the further development of the ESB for Cheshire and Warrington to engage more employers in developing workplace skills.

Local Strategic Partnerships

We will work with local authorities to ensure achievement of the learning and skills elements of Local Area Agreements and target priority groups.

Welfare to Workforce Development

We will continue to work with Jobcentre Plus, local Learning Partnerships, the voluntary sector and Local Employment Partnerships to tackle worklessness amongst disadvantaged groups and in deprived areas and integrate route ways into employment with training under skills for jobs.

The Third Sector

We will work with the voluntary and community sector through the Learning Together partnership to ensure we maximise the third sectors contribution to our priorities.

Cheshire and Warrington Employment and Learning and Skills Pathway Group

This group meets quarterly to implement the NW Reducing Re-offending Delivery plan which has now been published by the Regional Offender Manager's Office (ROMs). It is an important local group to support partners and key stakeholders in focusing on how the Employment, Learning and Skills Pathway Plan, and the actions agreed, will be implemented and delivered in Cheshire and Warrington criminal justice area which includes community provision and learning activity within the prisons.

Learning and Skills Council Local Area Statement of Need

Cumbria

2008/09

December 2007

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

Introduction

The Cumbria Statement of Need is derived from a variety of sources relating to the economic needs of the county and each of its distinctly different districts, the current level of skills across the population of Cumbria and current levels of provision. The Regional Commissioning Plan ([hyperlink](#)) links procurement plans with the Regional Economic Strategy and local Children and Young People's plans. The LSC NW Strategic Analysis ([hyperlink](#)), local economic assessments and surveys, Cumbria Vision's Cumbria Economic Plan and the 14-19 partnership plans have all contributed to the identification of Cumbria specific needs. West Cumbria's Energy Coast plan, the Barrow Masterplan and Waterfront projects, Carlisle Renaissance, and Kendal Regeneration are all key drivers for the local economy and will affect future procurement decisions.

Cumbria has approximately half of the land-mass of the North West, but only 7% of the resident population of the region. West Cumbria and the Barrow peninsula particularly suffer from geographical isolation and these areas have suffered economic decline for many decades due to shifts in the industrial base. The geography, topography and rural nature of Cumbria provide real challenges to access and choice of services. In addition, the relatively low population density makes viability of learning provision hard and requires innovative methods of delivery.

The current Cumbrian population of 496,200* is forecast to grow, although this demographic will be mostly older people not of working age. Migrant populations, mainly from Eastern Europe, are also forecast to grow and many of these will be of working age. There is a declining population of 0-24yrs in all areas except Eden and the proportion of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is expected to increase over the next few years. Cumbria has a higher employment rate than the regional and national averages. However, this masks areas of significant unemployment, particularly in Barrow, West Cumbria and Carlisle. There is also an issue of rural underemployment, with people holding down multiple part-time, low paid jobs to make ends meet.

Economic performance has been weak in recent years, with GVA increasing at lower than national rates. Due to growth in the north and east of Cumbria, there are indications that GVA growth is starting to narrow the gap with the national average. Barrow and the West Cumbria remain in relative decline. Despite this, unemployment claimants have fallen since 2006 across all districts of the county, suggesting that the job market is improving. Barrow (13.2%) and Copeland (10%) have the highest rates of working age people claiming Incapacity Benefit.

The trend-based 2006 Working Futures report predicted a low employment growth in the county to 2014. However, perhaps due to particular regeneration and public spending decisions, there has been a significant net gain in jobs across the county over the last year and continued employment growth is forecast. The manufacturing sector has gained the most jobs, the majority associated with the Barrow shipyards, maintaining the importance of manufacturing to the local economy. Retail and construction are the next highest in terms of jobs gain. Barrow and Carlisle are likely

to be most affected by this, although Whitehaven will also benefit. A high proportion of people are employed in hotels and restaurants, signifying the need for good hospitality, catering and service sector skills. The Nuclear sector is a key contributor and determinant of economic prosperity in West Cumbria. Nuclear decommissioning opportunities, alongside the presence of the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency with its national and international influence, present particular opportunities for the development and provision of relevant learning programmes from the age of 14.

Most skills gaps are at an intermediate level (Barrow and South Lakeland), followed by higher level skills (Copeland and Carlisle). Technical and practical skills feature highly in the gaps reported, particularly in manufacturing and finance/professional services, and there is an overall problem with a lack of basic employability skills amongst job applicants.

Cumbria has a higher rate of WBL participation than elsewhere in the region and it is expected that this will grow. Whilst the numbers of young people not in employment, education and training compares favourably with the rest of the region, we have significant issues with young people in jobs without training. There are differing levels of educational achievement across Cumbria, with attainment in Carlisle of particular concern. .

The skills profiles of the Cumbrian working age population appear to compare well against regional and national averages, but this varies significantly at district level. Allerdale, Copeland and Eden all have lower than regional and national rates of people qualified to at least Level 2. Cumbria as a whole has a lower proportion than the regional average of people qualified to at least Level 4. This is particularly marked in the resident population of Copeland. Copeland and Barrow have the highest levels of entry level literacy needs and the most number of people in need of improving numeracy

The continuing challenges for Cumbria, in order to ensure economic inclusion and growth, are increasing the demand for learning amongst key groups and providing the appropriate qualifications and skills to meet the needs of individuals and employers.

Emer Clarke
Director of Area - Cumbria

Challenges, key actions and measures of success

For the period 2008/09 there are a number of challenges and key actions that will be our focus, many of which are linked to targets in our Local Area Agreement.

Local actions listed below for young people are linked to the Cumbria's Children and Young Peoples' Plan which can be found at:

<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/14-19/> . In 2007 we worked in partnership with Cumbria Children's Services and Connexions Cumbria to complete the Progress Check against which Cumbria assessed themselves as green / amber for the majority of the criteria.

National Priority 1: Creating demand for skills	
Local Challenges	Local Actions
<p>Jobs without training Reduce the number of young people in jobs without training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set differentiated targets for providers with regards to positive progressions from e2e; • Ensure closer partnership working via the 14-19 NEET Group with e2e and other providers; • Influence the Regional TUC contract to specifically target young people in jobs without training; • Challenge providers at dialogue meetings to target a wider net of employers with regards training of their workforce; and • Conduct a pilot exercise in West Cumbria to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with one e2e provider with large numbers of progression into jobs without training to improve the processes for referral to Apprenticeship and FE providers ○ Work with FE provider to determine how many early leavers go into employment without training and develop strategies for re-engaging these young people ○ Work with Connexions to identify those young people who go into employment from Year 11 and develop strategies to re-engage these young people.
<p>Level 2 at 16 and Level 2/3 at 19 Raise the attainment of Level 2 at 16, including English and Maths and raise the attainment of Level 2 and 3 at 19.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work with the Cumbria 14-19 Strategic Partnership and the five 14-19 Area Partnerships to ensure achievement at Level 2/3 is seen as high priority, especially in those districts that are below the national average; • In particular, we are ensuring that the Level 2/3 targets are key elements of the Area 14-19 Development Plans; and • Continue working with the 14-19 Partnerships to improve English and Maths achievements and the development of a range of provision at Level 2, including appropriate curriculum extension programmes.
<p>16-18 Participation Increase dramatically the take up of Apprenticeships and ensuring a dramatic increase in the completion of the full Apprenticeship framework for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work with the WBL Provider Forum to ensure improved IAG about Apprenticeships and to ensure that they are working with the key sectors in Cumbria; • Ensure that good practice is shared across the county such as the Apprenticeship Working Group in South Lakes; • Work with the Nuclear and other key Sectors to identify the

National Priority 1: Creating demand for skills	
Local Challenges	Local Actions
<p>16-18 year olds. Work with Connexions to continue to reduce the proportion of young people in the NEET group.</p>	<p>range and scope of the needs of the sectors;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a PLA strategy with the FE providers; • Improve the progression from Young Apprenticeships to Apprenticeships and monitor the targets via the 14-19 groups; • Ensure that the IAG to young people is improved to ensure the integration of the offer between the schools and the WBL providers is in place; • We will work with providers to increase e2e progressions into learning and build on the good practice with regards to the September Guarantee; • We will work with successful organisation(s) in the delivery of NEET projects in the county; and • We will work to develop Apprenticeship strategies to facilitate growth in Apprenticeship numbers in the county.
<p>Adult Level 2 Increase Full Level 2 participation and achievement for adults</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will request and monitor Full Level 2 action plans from FE providers; • Work with providers to ensure that Level 2 programmes are converted into Full Level 2 where appropriate; • Encourage providers to assist workless individuals in accessing employment opportunities and to work with the employers to ensure that individuals who gain employment are able to complete their qualification via Train to Gain; • Stimulate the demand for learning ensuring that providers promote adults learning grants; and • Initiate linkages to other employer led bodies such as CBI and IoD.
<p>Employer Demand Increase the demand for skills from employers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure the Skills Pledge is expanded and linked into Local Employer Partnerships; • Work in partnership with employers and providers to create the Retail Academy in Carlisle, the Nuclear Academy in West Cumbria and the Outdoor NSA in Penrith; • Influence with Regional TUC contract to specifically target Full level 2 with employers; • Stimulate local employer demand through strategic partnerships and employer groups, including the Chamber of Commerce; and • Work with Cumbria Higher Learning to ensure that FE providers deliver higher level skills including Foundation Degrees and Diplomas.

National Priority 2: Transforming FE	
Challenges	Actions
<p>Financial self-reliance Increase the fee income generated by fees and full cost provision by providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will challenge the FE Colleges and ACL providers to increase adults engaged in learning to meet/exceed their fee income targets; and • Encourage our providers to investigate and implement good practice.
<p>Infrastructure Develop the accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will support the Capital Projects at our FE and Sixth Form Colleges, especially with the new challenges posed by

National Priority 2: Transforming FE	
Challenges	Actions
across the FE Colleges	demand-led funding.
<p>Quality of Provision Eliminate poor quality provision by removing provision that does not meet MLP (Minimum Levels of Performance) and build a strong provider base, including developing new provision for the learners of Cumbria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will identify poor performance and remove provision via MLP; • Identify demand and negotiate provision where able; • Identify and expand current excellent provision and commission new provision; • Work with Colleges and providers to implement the Framework for Excellence to raise the quality and standards of provision, and ensure that they are responsive to the needs of customers; and • Encourage providers to apply for the New Standard so that they aspire to greater flexibility and relevance of delivery of provision and commitment to continuous improvement.

National Priority 3: Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives	
Challenges	Actions
<p>Foundation Learning Tier (FLT) and Qualification Reform Develop the FLT to ensure a more inclusive curriculum which will assist learners progressing to further training or sustainable employment. Ensure awareness of the QCF.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with the 14-19 Area Partnerships to identify Progression Pathways; • Target learners in wards that are characterised by worklessness; and • Encourage providers to begin to shift provision from the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), in particular with regards to progression Pathways, LSC priority qualifications and the Level 2 Framework.
<p>Vulnerable Groups Increase the number of young people with LLDD that can live and learn in Cumbria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop with providers more effective methods of self-declaration; • Maximise support mechanisms for the most vulnerable young people in conjunction with Connexions via 'Vulnerable Group' partnerships; • Ensure effective transition arrangements are in place when transferring from pre 16 to post 16; • Ensure providers make full use of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), Adult Learning Grant (ALG) and Care to Learn (CtL) for learners; and • Work to maximise the availability of mainstream provision for offenders in the community.
<p>Numeracy Increase the take up of numeracy courses that count towards LSC targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with providers to ensure that they have the capacity and capability to deliver and are aware of the new LLUK qualifications; • Ensure that a minimum of 80% of all Skills for Life enrolments are on to approved qualifications; and • Influence the Regional TUC contract to ensure Skills for Life is promoted to employers and employees.
NLDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work in partnership with the Voluntary

National Priority 3: Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives	
Challenges	Actions
Ensure that the NLDC fund is used to best effect to engage learners	<p>Sector to ensure that we can contribute strongly to the NLDC panels; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure integration with Skills for Jobs.
Employment and Skills Board Integrate skills provision with local job opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will establish the Employment and Skills Board in Cumbria; and • Align activities with the Local Area Agreement.

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://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/NorthWest/NorthWestStrategicAnalysis.htm>.

Partnership Working

The wide ranging needs identified for Cumbria require us to achieve our aims by working with strong partnerships of key stakeholders and provider networks. A single Cumbria wide local area agreement has been in place since April 2007 and is devolved through district authority led local strategic partnerships, due to Cumbria's two tier local government structure. This creates a complex set of arrangements and partnerships.

The establishment of an Employment and Skills Board for Cumbria during 2008 aims to create better coherence and integration of activities across these two agendas. In addition, it will be important that the new Board links effectively to other key partnerships such as the Adult Provider Forum, IAG Board for the new Adult Advancement and Careers Service and the local Skills Partnership (provider partnership). Joint working arrangements are in place with Jobcentre Plus and these will be further developed. Employer engagement, linking the Skills Pledge and Local Employer Partnerships, will be advanced through a joint delivery plan and through the local area agreement and Employment and Skills Board.

LSC Cumbria work in partnership with Cumbria Children's Services to drive forward 14-19 reforms in the County and is a key player in the 14-19 Strategic and five Area Partnerships. We will continue to work closely with Connexions and with the Children's Services 14-19 team to exert influence on schools, providers, and employers to deliver the entitlement to all our learners and a range of diplomas from September 2008. We are also a member of the Cumbria Children's Trust Board and have been involved in the development of the Children and Young Peoples' Plan. We will support the Cumbria 14-19 Strategic Partnership Board in drawing up and implementing the 14-19 Educational Plan for Cumbria.

The local partnership team has effective relationships with providers, partners and stakeholders and will continue to develop and strengthen these during the coming year. We will continue to be active in the following:

- The county-wide 14-19 Strategic Partnership and the 14-19 Partnerships in Barrow-in-Furness, Carlisle, Eden, South Lakeland and West Cumbria;

- The School Organisation Project Steering Group;
- Provider networks, such as FE Principals group, Cumbria Colleges Ltd and Cumbria WBL Provider Forum, to maximise the use of funds towards priorities and skills needs;
- Cumbria Criminal Justice Area partnership, to ensure integration of services for the offender learning and skills service;
- Cumbria Higher Learning Stakeholders Consultative Forum to ensure the provision of progression opportunities into Higher Education; and
- Cumbria Strategic Adult Provider Forum and PCDL Partnership.

Cumbria County Council has a Compact agreement with the Third Sector in Cumbria and through the Local Strategic Partnership, Cumbria LSC is involved in developing a Third Sector Strategy. We are supporting the Third Sector to develop capacity to compete for LSC funding.

Funding processes, low learner densities and the need to provide a comprehensive offer requires providers in Cumbria to work together to access LSC funding and to respond consistently to employers and individuals. Collaborative working is a key component to the planning and delivery of learning in Cumbria.

Cumbria LSC has worked closely with key partners in the development of the new University for Cumbria and will continue to assist in the development of needed learning opportunities across the county, including access to provision with projects such as the Eden Skills Centre.

Learning and Skills Council Local Area Statement of Need

Greater Manchester

2008/09

December 2007

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

Introduction

I am delighted on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Greater Manchester to present our Annual Statement of Need for 2008/09. This plan outlines the key priorities and challenges for Greater Manchester within the context of the North West Regional Commissioning plan and sets out how we intent to focus our efforts and resources over the forthcoming year.

The transformation of the learning and skills sector in Greater Manchester has accelerated over the last 12 months and we are very proud of the effective partnership work which has been taking place. Together we have worked to tackle the issues we face that impact on sub-regional economic growth and the results are clear.

More young people are now participating in learning and we have invested an additional £x across our NEET hotspot areas to target the high volumes of 16-18 year olds who remain disengaged. Our Entry to Employment programme is performing well and we have achieved the highest positive progression rates in the country. Success rates are continuing to rise and the post-16 sector is adding high levels of value at Level 2 for young people.

We are improving the responsiveness of the sector to learners and employers and have increased the proportion of our adult provision which is focused on the delivery of priority provision at Level 2, Level 3 and Skills for Life. Train to Gain volumes are increasing and we have achieved greater alignment with sector skills needs through effective commissioning processes.

However we still need to increase the participation and achievement of young people and to develop appropriate progression routes to enable them to achieve their full potential and secure sustainable employment. We need more adults to be undertaking learning at Level 2 and, increasingly important to the economy, at Level 3 and we will work hard to stimulate demand for skills both from individuals and employers

Partnership working has featured strongly in our approach to driving forward transformation and collaboration will continue to be fundamental to addressing the key issues we face as a sub-region. We will strengthen our relationships locally to ensure that learning and skills are positioned at the heart of local economic development and community regeneration through effective neighbourhood targeting.

We will also strive to ensure that Greater Manchester LSC continues to play a key role in the city regional agenda and supports improved regional productivity and sustainable employment.

Elaine Bowker
Area Director
Greater Manchester
Learning & Skills Council

Challenges, key actions and measures of success for Greater Manchester

As we move forward through 2008/09 we will need to ensure that we have an infrastructure of learning provision that reflects the changing policy landscape. The challenges and actions for Greater Manchester are based on our regional and sub-regional Strategic Analysis, a robust review of supply, demand and need; as well as ongoing dialogue with key partner organisations. The analysis can be accessed at <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/NorthWest/NorthWestStrategicAnalysis.htm>

Priority 1: Creating Demand for Skills

Key Challenges:

- Addressing high levels of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Too many young people are in employment without any formalised learning
- There are low levels of progression to Level 3 learning and beyond

To increase the demand for learning we need to drive forward a cultural shift in the perception of learning and ensure the benefits of skills acquisition are clear. In addition for 2008/09 we aim to:

- Plan, through local 14-19 Partnerships, a **comprehensive 14-19 offer**, maximising the utilisation and impact of ESF to provide pathways for young people to progress into mainstream learning within each borough
- Work with education partners to **maximise the impact of the Greater Manchester Challenge**, to increase levels of attainment and improve the progression of young people
- Increase the participation of young people through effective **NEET reduction strategies** with a clear focus on vulnerable learners including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Continue to raise the profile of learning and celebrate success by holding the **Greater Manchester Learner Awards in 2008** and promoting the benefits of learning through enhanced local skills campaigns
- Work with partners, including Greater Manchester Chamber, the Greater Manchester Employer Coalition, the Greater Manchester Universities and the brokerage service, to **promote the Skills Pledge** and increase the take up of Train to Gain

Priority 2: Transforming FE

Key Challenges:

- The need to increase capacity for level 2 and 3 learning through flexible learning opportunities

- Aligning the renewal of the FE capital infrastructure and facilities with the BSF programme for schools

Whilst the journey to self regulation has begun, we will support the continued transformation of the FE system as a whole with a clear focus on the areas where we believe we can add the greatest value. These include:

- **Understanding the needs and demands of learners and employers** through 'The Learner Voice', a comprehensive review of apprenticeships and a local assessment of employer responsiveness
- Working with colleges to **increase income generation** through effective fee policies and the agreement of individual income targets that reflect the local area and employer base
- Undertake a **structural review of the work based learning provider base** to provide high quality learning infrastructure to support the development of vocational pathways
- Through strategic investment, **expand the apprenticeship programme**, including increased volumes of Young Apprenticeships, the expansion of Programme Led Apprenticeships and additional volumes of adult apprenticeships
- **Continue to drive up quality** and in particular success rates at Level 3; only purchasing learning opportunities which exceed Minimum Levels of Performance and give value for money

Priority 3: Better Skills, Better jobs, Better Lives

Key Challenges:

- High need for Skills for Life learning with a focus on numeracy provision
- Low levels of attainment and skills within the working age population

We will focus our efforts and resources to engage more people from disadvantage groups to increase overall participation and achievement levels. We will drive forward the integration of skills and employment and focus training on addressing skills shortages in local labour markets. In addition we will:

- Contribute to borough level LAA targets and the **Greater Manchester Multi Area Agreement (MAA)** through effective procurement and programme management to ensure the integration of employment and skills
- Provide an increased focus on **engaging employers in learning**, with a focus on increasing apprenticeship places and reducing the high numbers of young people who are in employment without any formalised learning
- Ensure equality of opportunity, **targeting areas of disadvantage**, which result in improved success rates for minority groups, increased participation of under-represented groups and reduced imbalances in learning and skills acquisition
- Work with those local providers who are trialling the **Foundation Learning Tier** and disseminate the outcomes in order that Greater Manchester providers can respond to the national roll out of the FLT for learning below Level 2

- Work with further education providers to target the learning offer to **adults without a Level 2 qualification**, focusing on those who are disengaged from learning and furthest away from the labour market

Partnership Working

Over the last twelve months the Greater Manchester Area Team has developed new and effective relationships with providers, partners and stakeholders and we will continue to embed these throughout our work in 2008/09. The impact of the Economic Development Team and ten local Partnership Teams has been positive and resulted in a clearer understanding of the key issues within each of our localities and supported our ability to align funding and resources to address borough needs.

If we are to maximise the contribution of the learning and skills sector locally then we need to continue to drive forward partnership working. We will do this through the development of a shared understanding with partners of our joint agendas and targets; and in particular we will:

- Strengthen the relationship between our Economic Development Team and Manchester Enterprises to develop a clear understanding of skills needs and to stimulate demand for learning by employers
- Work with each Local Strategic Partnership to agree a consistent set of meaningful targets relating to skills, 16-19 performance and post-19 achievement in the new LAA process
- Work with our local Connexions partners to raise participation levels of young people and reduce the number of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training.
- Work closely with Local Authorities and 14-19 Partnerships to enhance and extend the development of 14-19 opportunities including embedding the new Diplomas in the curriculum offer from September 2008.
- Continue to develop our relationship with Voluntary and Community Sector networks in each borough to help capacity build the sector as part of our commitment to widening learner choice.
- Develop closer working with Jobcentre Plus to integrate skills and employment agendas, promote Local Employment Partnerships and increase take up of the Skills Pledge
- Work closely with our providers, schools and colleges to provide high quality choice for all learners and encourage cross-sector collaboration
- Strengthen our work with employers and Sector Skills Councils to better understand the local demand for skills and qualifications, working in partnership to take forward skills development in key sectors for Greater Manchester
- Strengthen our work regionally relating to skills and economic development through work with the North West Development Agency and the Regional Skills Partnership.

Learning and Skills Council Local Area Statement of Need

Greater Merseyside

2008/09

December 2007

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

Introduction

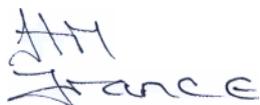
On behalf of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Greater Merseyside, I am pleased to present our Annual Statement Need for 2008/09. This plan, which is set within the context of the North West Commissioning Plan, outlines the key priorities and challenges for Greater Merseyside and identifies our local commissioning responses to specific learning and skills needs.

We continue to be proud of the progress being made locally by the LSC in transforming learning and skills in Greater Merseyside. More young people are participating in learning and achieving success at all levels. We have also improved the responsiveness of the sector to learners and employers, ensuring that the mix and balance of provision is aligned to our skills priorities in order that we make the best use of our available resources.

However, although NEET levels are falling, large numbers of young people remain disengaged and attainment levels at aged 19 are not closing the gap on regional averages. Also, many adults lack the qualifications at level 2 or level 3 necessary to prosper from and contribute to the resurgent local economy. We will therefore continue to work to ensure that local people are provided with the opportunity to gain the skills and qualifications that they need in order to progress into further learning and employment, by developing appropriate progression routes and driving up quality through our commissioning process. We will also work with employers to engage them in support of the introduction of the diplomas, to encourage them to provide further apprenticeship opportunities within key sectors, and to take the 'Skills Pledge' as a sign of their commitment to investing in skills development.

A continuing challenge for Greater Merseyside is the high incidence of worklessness within all of our local authority areas. To address this we will work to create skilled and working communities through the provision of integrated employment and skills interventions that offer individuals clear and supportive pathways into sustainable employment, and further skills development within the workplace.

Our success is underpinned by strong partnership working and only through our continued collective efforts can we improve the life chances of individuals and their children, enhance the competitiveness of the local economy and businesses within it, and ensure the sustainable regeneration of our local communities.



Helen France
Area Director
Learning & Skills Council
Greater Merseyside

December 2007

Challenges, key actions and measures of success for Greater Merseyside

The following challenges and actions are based upon a number of sources of information including our regional *Progress Report*, a robust strategic analysis of supply, demand and need; as well as ongoing dialogue with key partners and other stakeholders.

Across all of our priorities we will maximise the utilisation and impact of our ESF monies towards helping to address our key challenges and adding value to our mainstream activity. Further information on outputs and success measures for activities that relate to our ESF provision can be found within the NW ESF Co-financing plan and recently issued tender specifications.

National Priority 1: Creating Demand for Skills

Key Challenges:

- *High proportion (and absolute number) of young people in the NEET, particularly as a result of dropping out of learning/training at aged 17 and 18.*
- *Demand for learning is expected to increase: there are almost 300 young unaccompanied asylum seekers in Liverpool and the Home Office is expecting to locate a further 150 within the City in 2008/09.*
- *High levels of young people in jobs without training*
- *Attainment levels at Level 2 and especially Level 3.*
- *More employers are needed to balance the demand for Apprenticeships from our young people.*

To address the above challenges we aim to:

- Work through 14 -19 Partnerships to plan and commission a creative and comprehensive range of pathways and alternative activities to effectively re-engage NEET groups in learning and to provide additional support for young people (particularly vulnerable learners and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities) with the transition from school to post-16 learning and employment.
- Transform and improve our Pre-Apprenticeship and Entry to Employment offer to improve the numbers of young people progressing to apprenticeships/further learning.
- Increase participation at Level 2 and Level 3 by supporting the implementation of Diplomas to widen choice for young people, accelerating sector specific Programme-Led Apprenticeship activity, and increasing our investment in Apprenticeships and Train to Gain provision.
- Deliver clear and accessible progression route ways for young people and adults matched to the demand for higher level skills from employers /sectors.
- Make specific proposals to secure new and replacement Apprenticeship provision in support of the key strategic developments, for example Liverpool One (retail, leisure and tourism) and Wirral Waterfront/Football Stadium Proposals (construction).
- Engage employers and learners through promotion of the Skills Pledge and the implementation of a high profile Apprenticeship campaign.
- Work with partners e.g. Job Centre Plus, Connexions, Train to Gain Brokerage Service, Chambers of Commerce and Local Authorities to develop and implement an integrated employer engagement strategy thus maximising employer engagement through emerging Local Employment Partnerships, existing employer/ business forums and the

opportunities afforded by the Capital of Culture 2008 legacy proposals.

Evidence of Success:

- Reduction in the numbers of young people who are NEET across all our districts but particularly within the NEET hotspot areas of Liverpool, Knowsley, Wirral and Halton.
- Reduction in the numbers of young people in jobs without training.
- Increase in available apprenticeship places and apprenticeship participation rates.
- Increased participation and achievement across the 14 -19 cohort as a whole to include attainment at Level 2 and Level 3 and apprenticeship framework completion.
- Increased participation in Train to Gain
- September Guarantee met across all districts.

National Priority 2: Transforming the FE System to meet Demand

Key Challenges:

- *Improving the quality of the learning infrastructure across the sub-region*
- *Improving the quality, flexibility and responsiveness of our provision to meet the needs of learners and employers.*
- *Increasing the proportion of adult provision that contributes to skills targets.*
- *Improving the financial self-reliance of our providers.*

To address the above challenges we aim to:

- Work with LA partners, Colleges and providers in order to align the renewal of FE capital infrastructure and facilities with BSF programmed and developing 14-19 Plans, and in support of the implementation of the NW Regional Capital Strategy and Plan.
- Work with local providers to trial and implement the Foundation Learning Tier.
- Work with providers to eliminate poor quality or unresponsive provision through implementation of Minimum Levels of Performance (MLP) and Notices to Improve.
- Embed the Framework for Excellence to raise the quality and standards of provision and encourage providers to apply for the New Standard accreditation as a measure of employer responsiveness.
- Work with providers to ensure the mix and balance of provision meets the demands of the local areas with a particular focus on ensuring that stretching targets for Skills for Life and Level 2/3 provision are set and achieved.
- Encourage colleges and providers to become more self-reliant by increasing the level of income generated by fees and full-cost work, agreeing individual income generation targets that reflect the characteristics of the local area and employer base.

Evidence of Success:

- Renewed and improved learning infrastructure.
- Progression pathways in place across Entry Level and Level 1.
- Increased numbers of year-round enrolments, demonstrating the flexibility and responsiveness of our provision.
- Increased participation levels and success rates.
- Increased levels of fee income in line with Employer Standard expectations and those set out within our Statement of Priorities.

National Priority 3: Delivering better skills, better jobs and better lives

Key Challenges:

- *Greater Merseyside has the lowest numbers of people qualified to Level 2 across the NW and the highest number of people with low or no skills. The employment rate in the sub-region is significantly behind the NW average at 68% (NW- 72.6%); alongside this there are also considerable spatial disparities with some wards in North Liverpool experiencing employment rates as low as 25% - 30%.*
- *Low levels of literacy skills and especially numeracy skills.*
- *Ensuring equality of opportunity and improved success rates for minority groups.*
- *ESOL needs of the migrant workforce.*
- *Maximising the opportunities provided by the major economic regeneration and inward investment initiatives in the Liverpool City Region, and the legacy of Capital of Culture.*
- *Providing appropriate progression routes into employment and further learning for those individuals with particular barriers e.g. Offenders, Learners with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities.*
- *Increasing the number of people qualified to L4 across the sub-region (currently 22%, compared to 29% nationally).*

To address the above challenges we aim to:

- Deliver the new suite of ESOL international qualifications- ESOL for work.
- Increase the focus on training as a route to employment through the creation targeted planned pathways with clear progression routes to meet employer demands for labour.
- Work with local and regional colleagues to secure additional OLASS Provision to meet the demands of the two new prisons opening at the Ashworth and Kennet sites and develop and implement a process to enable offenders in custody to make applications to colleges and other providers ensuing that no gap exists between their release and commencement of training.
- Work in partnership with HEIs, Lifelong Learning Network, Aim Higher, Connexions and Local Authorities, to develop and implement a Higher Education Strategy and Action Plan for the City Region, to strengthen progression opportunities to Level 4 and the Level 4 Train to Gain Pathfinder.
- Work in partnership with City Employment Strategy partners to support the establishment of an employment and skills continuum and to collectively develop effective integrated strategies for employer engagement and sector development.
- Ensure the integration of employment and skills interventions across the partners to maximise participation in Train to Gain and effectively align mainstream and discretionary funds.
- Contribute to borough level LAA frameworks and targets, commissioning provision to meet locally identified labour market needs. Support the development and implementation of the Greater Merseyside Multi Area Agreement and the establishment of an Employment and Skills Board for the Liverpool City Region.
- Commission Supported Employment provision to the value of £4.2 million (across 3 years) to enhance the lives of LLDD young people and adults by enabling them to gain sustainable employment.

Evidence of Success:

- Reductions in the levels of worklessness across Merseyside and especially within disadvantage groups and wards.
- Delivery of sectorally relevant provision to meet the demands of employers.
- Closing of the gap on Merseyside between NW and England average in relation to Level 4 achievement and improved GVA.
- Increase in the numbers of adults with Level 2/3 skills and increase the numbers achieving literacy and numeracy qualifications.

Partnership Working

Partnership working is the key to achieving lasting and sustainable impact and over the last year we have strengthened our working relationships with providers, partners and stakeholders through the work of our six local Partnership Teams and Economic Development Team.

We are committed to working with our partners to further develop our shared understanding of joint agendas and targets in order to maximise the contribution and impact of local learning and skills provision. In particular we will:

- Work closely with Local Authorities through 14-19 Partnerships to develop coherent 14-19 Education and Training Plans that clearly identify the needs of each local area, support commissioning decisions, and are firmly embedded within the refreshed Children and Young People's Plans and Local Area Agreements.
- Through our leading role within the City Employment Strategy and subsequent alignment of our ESF co-financing provision as part of a Single Investment Framework, ensure the targeting of those individuals and communities most in need.
- Continue to work closely with Local Strategic Partnerships on the development of a set of consistent and meaningful skills targets within the Local Area Agreements and also on the alignment of the Working Neighbourhood Funds.
- Work with Local Authorities and political leaders towards their aspiration for the establishment of a Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Board and the development of a Multi Area Agreement for the sub-region.
- Further develop our relationship with JobCentre Plus and other City Employment Strategy Partners to ensure the effective integration of employment and skills and especially to integrate the roll out of the Skills Pledge with the opportunities provided by the development of Local Employment Partnerships.
- Strengthen our role with the Sub-Regional Partnership (SRP) and The Mersey Partnership to support and align the local skills offer with the adoption of the new inward investment strategy for Greater Merseyside. Alongside this we will strengthen our relationship with HE Institutions to further develop progression pathways to HE to fit alongside the SRP's aspiration to attract and grow more higher value added businesses.
- Continue to work with the Community and Voluntary Sector to ensure that the sector is better positioned to engage with the Learning and Skills Agenda.
- Strengthen our relationships with the Merseyside Employer Coalition and our work with employers and Sector Skills Councils to better understand the needs of employers and the key sub-regional employment and growth sectors.

Learning and Skills Council Local Area Statement of Need

Lancashire

2008/09

December 2007

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

Introduction

Lancashire is a sub-region of diverse geography and an interlinked network of cities, towns and settlements within an extensively rural context. It makes a substantial contribution to the economy of the North, employing some 670,000 people.

Lancashire hosts a unique concentration of higher value added manufacturing activity in aerospace, electronics, the automotive industry, nuclear sector, textiles, chemicals, rubber and plastics and food and drink. It also has a significant service sector which is of low economic value.

It covers the areas of Lancashire County Council, the unitary authorities of Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen and incorporates the Cities of Lancaster and Preston and the principal towns of Blackpool, Blackburn and Burnley. Lancashire has a good provider base with 14 FE Colleges, 24 WBL Providers and 18 Schools with 6th Forms. In terms of education and skills Lancashire is a well performing area; however this performance masks a number of pockets of under performance usually linked to areas of deprivation.

We will seek to address these areas of weakness through improving the levels of participation and achievement of young people in specific districts of Lancashire. Linked to this objective we will continue to reduce the numbers of 'NEET' young people.

The key economic priorities for the sub-region remain and they are:

- Blackpool World Class Resort Destination
- Preston City Vision
- Pennine Lancashire Transformation Agenda
- Aerospace and Other Advanced Manufacturing
- Tourism and Rural Development

In support of these priorities we will work with partners to improve the levels of employer engagement with the learning sector. We will continue to grow the Train to Gain Programme and provide adults with the qualifications they need to be effective in the workplace.

We appreciate that these objectives can not be achieved in isolation and therefore we will continue to develop strong, effective partnerships with: JobcentrePlus in addressing the Worklessness Agenda; the three Lancashire Local Authorities on the Every Child Matters and 14-19 Agenda; and The Lancashire Economic Partnership in driving forward the Lancashire Skills Strategy.

[Insert Signature]

Ian Haworth
Area Director
Lancashire Learning & Skills Council

Challenges, key actions and measures of success

Our challenges and actions are based on our regional Strategic analysis and the Sub regional analysis for Lancashire as well as ongoing dialogue with key partner organisations. The analysis can be accessed at:

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/NorthWest/NorthWestStrategicAnalysis.htm>.

Priority 1: Creating Demand for Skills

Key Challenges:

- The 16-18 cohort will reach a peak of 59381 in 2008 and afterwards begin to fall, in 2009 by some 0.9%.
- It is a priority to continue to increase the numbers of Young People Participating in Learning with a priority of 17 year olds participation across the county but in particular in the areas of Blackburn with Darwen, Preston and Blackpool
- Reducing the numbers of young people in the NEET category remains a high priority. In addition to the “hotspot” areas of Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool, we are concerned about the high volumes of NEET in Preston, Chorley, South Ribble, Accrington, Burnley, Lancaster and Morecambe.
- Implementing the vocational Diplomas so that all 13 are available across Lancashire by 2013
- Train to Gain and its growth will continue to be a key priority and we will plan for provision in support of the key sectors in the Lancashire economy, Construction, Manufacturing, Engineering, Retail, Tourism, Care, Rural and the Public Sector.
- Lancashire has the second lowest rate in the North West of attainment of Level 4 amongst its working age population and volumes of HE in FE provision have not changed significantly; and the two local universities import large numbers of students from outside the area

In addressing these challenges, in our key local actions for 2008/09 we aim to:

- Continue to monitor the **September Guarantee** with Connexions and colleges / providers paying particular attention to identifying young people in jobs without training and converting them to apprentices, and onto other forms of learning through the Learner Agreement Pilot.
- **Develop and procure progression routes** for young people who leave shorter duration courses for example E2E leavers into the LAP or apprenticeship.

- We will continue to maintain and improve the current levels of targeted participation in FE, WBL and School 6th Forms. However in preparation for the future year's growth in apprenticeship provision we will:
 - Review the current vocational offer and look for opportunities to convert learning to all forms of apprenticeships, including **programme led**.
 - Identify opportunities for the development of apprenticeships in key sectors, where the programme is under represented, for example the **public sector**
 - **Develop apprenticeships in support of key strategic developments** such as Pennine Lancashire (construction), Preston City(Retail), Fylde Coast(Tourism)and in geographical areas such as Preston, Chorley, South Ribble and Skelmersdale.
 - We will make specific proposals to **secure new and replacement apprenticeship provision in the Preston area** through open and competitive tendering. We anticipate that this provision will be of a value of up to £1m (16-18 AIL 250 and 19+ AIL 100). We will also commission through OCT new and replacement provision in construction to the value of £400k (16-18 AIL 75 and 19+ AL 25) and in retail to the value of £250k (16-18 AIL 60 and 19+ AIL 40).We will also **commission additional E2E provision in the Blackpool and Preston areas** to the value of £500k
- Reducing the numbers of **young people in the NEET category remains a high priority**. Through targeted interventions in the NEET hotspot areas, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen we have seen some reduction in NEET and we anticipate that this work will continue.
- We are concerned about the high **volumes of NEET** in Preston, Chorley, South Ribble, Accrington, Burnley, Lancaster and Morecambe. We will be targeting these areas by the use of discretionary funds such as ESF, KS4 engagement project, LID and also mainstream funding in providing the curriculum and progression needed by this group of young people. We will develop and implement NEET strategies in each travel to learn area in Lancashire linked to local 14-19 partnerships.
- The following **diplomas** will begin in Lancashire in September 2008. Creative and Media (Burnley and Pendle, Hyndburn, Rossendale and Ribble Valley, Lancaster and Morecambe) Engineering (Chorley and South Ribble). We also anticipate a further eight diplomas starting in September 2009 and have also submitted a further 25 proposals in Gateway 2. We will continue to work with the LAs and Local Partners in developing an appropriate curriculum framework
- We will expect providers to work closely with other agencies in supporting the single offer to employers and in developing the necessary partnership working to improve the level of employer engagement needed to hit the Train to Gain targets

- **Level 4 skills** are fundamental in improving competitiveness and in supporting key sectors; therefore we will seek to address this issue in partnership with the two Lancashire Universities and local providers of HE.

Priority 2: Transforming FE

Key Challenges:

- Lancashire performs well in success rates and volumes at Level 2 and 3 for young people. However this does mask some local variations, in particular low levels of young people who achieve at level 2 and 3 by the age of 19 in Hyndburn, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen. Linked to this are the levels of achievements of GCSE's including English and Maths in areas of deprivation.
- Performance at Adult Level 2 is above the national average, however there are some instances of targets not being achieved by some providers.
- Lancashire benefits from some high performing colleges and providers with inspection grade profiles and success rates above the regional average and a high number recognised with Beacon awards. This level of quality needs to be available across the infrastructure.

In addressing these challenges, in our key local actions for 2008/09 we aim to:

- Agree with the LA, plans for the **improvement of GCSE performance**. These issues were also identified in the recent round of GONW progress checks and we will contribute to the achievement of level 2 and 3 targets with an appropriate allocation of resources in FE and WBL and in planning the appropriate balance and mixture of provision in 2008/09.
- Ensure that the **right balance of Level 2/3 and Skills for Life provision** is achieved and that targets are hit. We will continue to reduce Adult non-priority provision with an expectation that fee paying by individuals and employers increases.
- Monitor performance closely in the key economic areas of Blackpool, Blackburn and Preston which are key to the achievement of adult targets.
- Continue to encourage excellence amongst the infrastructure, eradicate poor performance via the **Minimum Levels of Performance** and work collaboratively to implement the **Framework for excellence** in order to continue to raise quality and standard of provision.
- As part of the development of provider plans for employer engagement, expect them to develop their plans to meet the **New Standard**.

Priority 3: Better Skills, Better jobs, Better Lives

Key Challenges:

- A key challenge for Lancashire is the number of economically inactive individuals
- There are a significant number of people with literacy and numeracy needs across the area

In addressing these challenges, in our key local actions for 2008/09 we aim to:

- Work closely with Job Centre Plus in addressing this issue in a number of key areas particularly in targeting learning to **adults without a level 2 qualification and those facing a disadvantage in accessing the workforce**
- Address the large proportion of **Skills for Life provision** which is still non target facing in plans with providers.
- Address the potentially large number of people who require **ESOL training** in Blackburn with Darwen, in partnership with others and with local learning providers.
- Contribute to the 3 Local Area Agreements in the area in ensuring the **integration of employment and skills.**

Partnership Working

We have established strong working relationships with the three Local Authorities of Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen. Priorities have been to establish 14-19 strategies with a supporting local infrastructure. We have developed a range of shared resources i.e. 14-19 advisors, local partnership officers and we expect to continue this work. We will work with the LAs in developing the strength of local 14-19 partnerships to enable them to play a greater role in defining the needs of local areas, agreeing plans and commissioning of local provision. We will continue to work closely with the LAs in aligning the plans, activities and targets within the Children's and Young Peoples Plan and the Local Area Agreements.

Lancashire: http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/every_child_matters/reports/pdf/children_and_young_peoples_plan.pdf

Blackpool: <http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/NR/ronlyres/7E08AA2A-63D1-4561-980D-C621748F8CBA/0/childrenandyoungpeoplesplan.pdf>

Blackburn with Darwen: http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/upload/pdf/Children_and_young_people%27s_plan.pdf

We will work with the LAs in the roll out of the new integrated youth service and ensure its integration into 14-19 plans and local NEET strategies in the Lancashire LA Area. As activity to implement the Machinery of Government changes increases we will keep clear communication channels open with the LAs to ensure a future smooth transition.

We are a member of the Lancashire Economic Partnership Board and are involved in a number of sub-groups overseeing the delivery of the sub-regional action plan. An Employment and Skills Board has been formed under the aegis of the Economic Partnership. We are expecting NWDA funding in support of the delivery of the Lancashire Skills Strategy. We will continue to play a full role in these partnerships and work with them to align LSC provision in support of the shared agenda.

Three local area agreements are in place in the sub-region. Two multi-area agreements are being actively canvassed for 2008, Pennine Lancashire and Fylde Coast.

We work in partnership with Job Centre Plus in the achievement of LAA reward targets and in the agreement and delivery of a joint working plan. We plan to continue these arrangements in advancing Lancashire's worklessness agenda.