

Learning and Skills Council

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Local Strategic Plan 2002-05

Devon and Cornwall



Mission and vision

“Our mission is to raise participation and attainment through high-quality education and training which puts learners first.”

“Our vision is that, by 2010, young people and adults in Devon and Cornwall will have knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world.”

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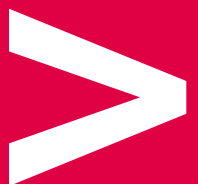
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Learning+Skills Council

Devon and Cornwall

>Contents

1. Chairman's foreword	4
2. Executive Director's introduction	6
Objectives, targets and local priorities for action for 2004	
3. Learning and skills strategy for Devon and Cornwall	11
a) Increasing participation	11
Setting baselines and targets	11
Delivering the strategy	14
A summary	19
b) Improving skills	20
Skills levels	20
Skills availability	22
Specific skills needs in Devon and Cornwall	23
Involving employers in workforce development	25
A summary	27
c) Improving learning	28
Collecting data	28
Developing Local Learning Plans	29
Improving quality	30
A summary	33
4. Success through partnerships	34
5. Monitoring, review and evaluation	37
6. List of council members	38

> 1. Chairman's foreword

Employment and economic success in a competitive market are linked to the level of knowledge and skills in the workforce and local population. Knowledge and skills depend on:

- the quality and availability of appropriate education and training; and
- a commitment to equal opportunities for everyone which encourages young people and adults from all backgrounds to take part in initial, progressive and lifelong learning.

That is the agenda of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The organisation is now a year old and has an annual budget of around £7,000 million which is used to combine the best practices of the previous Training and Enterprise Councils and the Further Education Funding Council. We want to involve employers, training and education providers, other partners and individual learners in a complete education and training process – a unique opportunity to change the culture of post-16 learning in this country.

While the Learning and Skills Council is a national organisation, it is a national organisation that has a very real and responsive local presence, evident here in the Learning and Skills Council Devon and Cornwall. I am delighted to have been appointed Chairman of this local council, to promote an agenda to which I am personally strongly committed. Our 16 local council members, drawn from employers and the wider community, give their time and considerable expertise freely, working with and through the LSC staff to set priorities, translate them into business plans and make sure that the targets are achieved.

So what are the major learning and skills needs of Devon and Cornwall? In terms of the number of young people getting involved in structured learning and training, the current 82% participation of 16- to 19-year-olds is already better than the national average of 75%, but this is still not as good as many other advanced economies. And those who do not take part are either socially disadvantaged or have chosen not to because they cannot see any benefit, think it is too expensive or think that other activities are more important.

Even though we have fairly high participation rates, many of these young people are not actually achieving. By the age of 19, only 72% (75% nationally) have achieved a level 2 qualification (5 or more GCSEs at grades A to C, NVQ 2 or equivalent) and 43% (51% nationally) a level 3 (2 or more A levels, NVQ 3 or equivalent). Around 25% of people in Devon and Cornwall aged between 16 and 60 are estimated to have poor numeracy or literacy skills (or both), affecting their employment opportunities. We clearly have a long way to go!

So what are we going to do? We have set ourselves some ambitious targets. By 2004, we want to increase the number of young people who are taking part in structured learning and training to 87%, an increase of 5% and above the national target of 80%. We also want to raise achievements, working to make sure that by the age of 19, some 85% of young people achieve a level 2 qualification and 50% achieve a level 3 qualification. We also want to help another 23,000 adults to achieve qualifications in

basic literacy and numeracy skills.

We have given ourselves a major but much-needed challenge, but it is a challenge which we cannot achieve unless we work with:

- the three local learning partnerships (Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Plymouth, and Devon and Torbay);
- the public and private providers of post-16 education and training; and
- a range of other key partners such as the Connexions Service, the South West of England Regional Development Agency, local authorities, Business Link, the Jobcentre Plus, and the voluntary and community sectors.

Our Strategic Plan 2002/2005 is the result of thorough consultation with businesses, education providers and other key organisations. It sets out in detail the evidence of the training and skills needs of 16- to 19-year-olds and the adult community, and the targets for improvements over the next three years. It is not a fixed plan, but a plan which will develop as needs are more clearly identified and new opportunities arise. Please help us to deliver an agenda which is truly of vital importance to our region and nation.



John Bull CBE
Chairman
April 2002

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> 2. Executive Director's introduction

Learning and Skills Council mission and vision

While local economic success and individual success in the workplace is linked to the skills and knowledge achieved through learning, we must not restrict our thinking along these lines only. The value of learning to all individuals has immeasurable benefits as it:

- improves the quality of life;
- maintains and develops individual qualities; and
- supports and increases mental and physical wellbeing.

Learning is essential to living and must be lifelong. Nationally and locally, the Learning and Skills Council has a demanding mission. We cannot change the culture of learning in this country overnight, but with a 10-year vision we will try to achieve the most important changes to our post-16 learning system that will be needed for us to match the best in the world by 2010.

Following national and local consultation, we have agreed the aims and targets on the following page for 2004. These will help us to progress against our main tasks.

We have made the decision to work towards the national targets, with the exception of the target for the number of 16- to 18-year-olds participating in learning, where we already do better than the national target. It is clear, however, that in terms of achievement we still have more to do than some other areas so we hope that this will be reflected in the national resources that are provided for this area.

We recognise that the only way we can deliver results against these local priorities is by working with partner organisations operating in the two counties. These are explained in section 4. In particular, we believe that Local Learning Partnerships are vital to successfully developing and delivering Local Learning Plans that will begin to have a positive effect on the whole culture of post-16 learning and skills development in our two counties. Since taking over responsibility for funding school sixth-forms in April 2002, we will work more closely with local education authorities and schools.

High-quality, effective post-16 education is vital to the continued growth and development of the economy, the communities and the individual people of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This strategic plan is just the first step on this road and outlines our proposals for working on these tasks over the 2002-2005 period, set in the context of current performance levels in Devon and Cornwall, together with the particular opportunities and challenges that we face.



Paul Lucken
Executive Director

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Local targets (linked to the national objectives and targets for 2004)

Key objective	Measure	National		Devon & Cornwall	
		2000 position	2004 target	2000 position	2004 target
1. Extend participation in education, learning and training	% of 16-to 18-year-olds in structured learning	75%	80%	82%	87% (5,463)
	% of adults in structured learning		Set baseline and target in next year's plan		Target to be set next year
2. Increase engagement of employers in workforce development	To be developed				Target to be set next year
	% at level 2 by age 19	75%	85%	72%	85% (2,925)
3. Raise achievement of young people	% at level 3 by age 19	51%	55%	43%	55% (2,632)
	Literacy and numeracy skills of adults	Up to 7 million adults with difficulties	Raise skills of 750,000 adults		Raise skills of 23,000 adults
4. Raise quality of education and training and user satisfaction	% of adults at level 2		Target to be set next year		Target to be set next year
	% of adults at level 3	47%	52%	44%	52% (61,252)
5. Raise quality of education and training and user satisfaction	To be developed	No evaluative data yet available	Set baseline and target in next year's plan	No baseline data	Target to be set next year

Local priorities for action

By analysing our local market and through local consultation, we have developed local priorities for action that reflect the particular challenges and opportunities that Devon and Cornwall face. These local priorities for action will help us to deliver our part of the national targets by focusing on those areas that need attention in Devon and Cornwall. Our local priorities relate to the following.

Participation

While we perform well compared with the national average in terms of the number of young people involved in structured learning, we do not have enough data to truly understand how we perform in terms of:

- adults;
- people from ethnic minorities;
- people with disabilities; and
- the balance between men and women.

We do know, however, that there are major differences between participation in the most disadvantaged parts of Devon and Cornwall and the rest of the area. We also know that these differences are mainly caused by demand issues (a lack of motivation to learn, including cost of transport, being a significant factor), rather than barriers on the supply side (lack of provision). We have set the following three local priorities that are related to participation.

- Put in place the research needed to allow us to identify and deal with issues related to the participation of minority groups.
- Develop a strategy to increase demand for learning in the most disadvantaged areas of Devon and Cornwall, and measure its success through an increase in the participation rates in disadvantaged areas (35%) compared to the rest of the two counties (53%).
- Deal with the needs of learners who are at a disadvantage through rural isolation by developing new ways of taking learning to learners.

Skills

If employers are to become more involved in workforce development, they need to be part of a strategy that clearly deals with the changing needs of the local economy. We have set the following local priorities:

- involve the employers of Devon and Cornwall in the post-16 agenda and increase the number of employers investing in the continuous development of their employees;
- develop a strategy for improving the skills of the workforce in Devon and Cornwall in line with predicted future skills needs; and
- develop and deliver a strategy for retraining the workforce who were affected by the foot and mouth crisis in line with restructuring the rural economy.

Learning

The size of our area and its differences in terms of geography, wealth and poverty, rural isolation, urban deprivation, unemployment blackspots and so on, makes it difficult to generalise on achievement levels. It is important that we understand where we have pockets of excellence and areas for improvement. We also need to spread good practice throughout the area. We have set a local priority to agree a post-16 learning plan for each Local Learning Partnership, including targets for achievement and consistent information to measure progress.

The table on the next page shows how our local targets are drawn together to contribute to delivering the national objectives.

Relating the national aims to our local priorities for action

National objective	Local target for 2004	Local priorities for action
Extend participation in education, learning and training	87% of 16- to 18-year-olds in structured learning Percentage of adults participating in structured learning (target to be set)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place the research needed to allow us to identify and deal with issues related to the participation of minority groups • Develop a strategy to increase demand for learning in the most disadvantaged areas of Devon and Cornwall, and measure its success through an increase in the participation rates in disadvantaged areas (35%) compared to the rest of the two counties (53%) • Deal with the needs of learners who are at a disadvantage through rural isolation by developing new ways of taking learning to learners
Increase involvement of employers in workforce development	Target to be set	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve the employers of Devon and Cornwall in the post-16 agenda and increase the number of employers investing in the continuous development of their employees • Develop and deliver a strategy for improving the skills of the workforce in line with future skills needs • Develop and deliver a strategy for retraining the workforce who were affected by the foot and mouth crisis in line with restructuring the rural economy
Raise achievement of young people	85% at level 2 by age 19 55% at level 3 by age 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a post-16 learning plan for each Local Learning Partnership travel to work area, including targets for achievement and consistent baseline information to measure progress
Raise achievement of adults	Raise literacy and numeracy skills of 23,000 adults Percentage of adults at level 2 (target to be set) 52% of adults at level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a post-16 learning plan for each Local Learning Partnership travel to work area, including targets for achievement and consistent baseline information to measure progress
Raise quality of education, training and user satisfaction	Target to be set	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a post-16 learning plan for each Local Learning Partnership travel to work area, including targets for achievement and consistent baseline information to measure progress

> 3. A learning and skills strategy for Devon and Cornwall

Our learning and skills strategy is made up of three parts - participation, skills and learning. This section describes how we will establish baselines, set targets and deliver improvements that will increase participation, improve skills and improve learning.

a) Increasing participation

Setting baselines and targets

Young people

Young people in Devon and Cornwall have shown good continued involvement in structured learning and training after leaving full-time education at 16. Currently, we estimate that the participation rate in structured learning for 16-to 18-year-olds is 82% (75% nationally). However, there are still a lot of people who enter employment without training, remain unemployed or simply 'disappear' from normal records. Even though our participation rate is 7% above the national average, we still want to improve the participation of young people by another 5% in line with the national objective. Removing barriers to training and education among this group will help to increase participation.

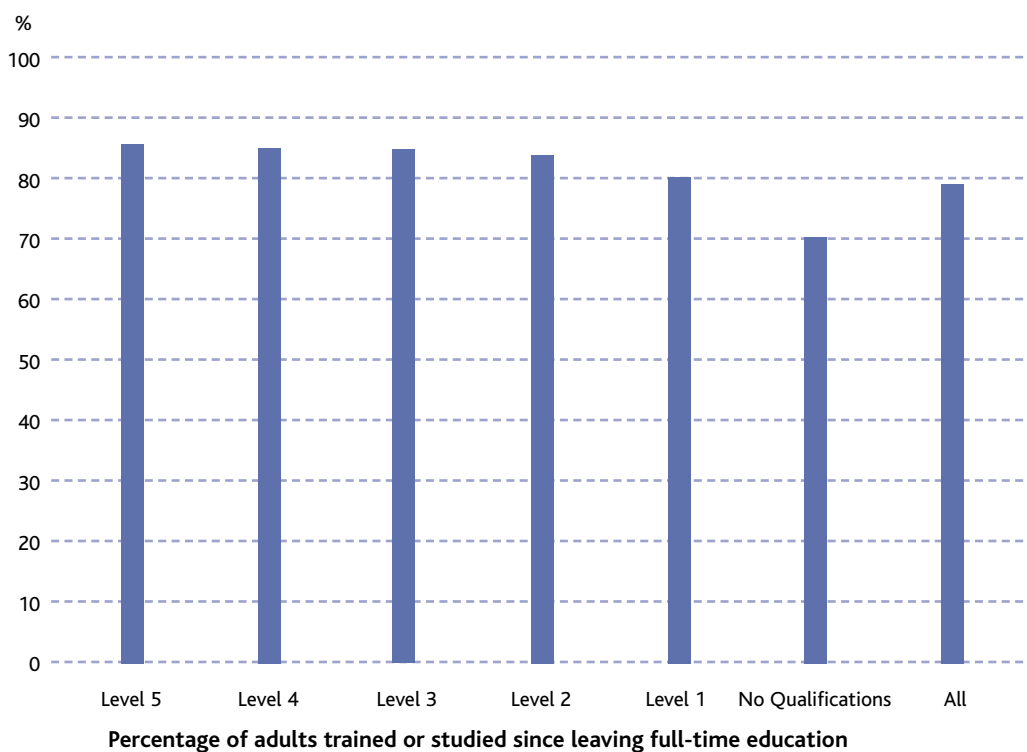
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Adults

Our recent survey of individuals' skills needs showed that 79% of adults in the two counties have taken part in education and training since leaving continuous full-time education, and over half (55%) of these have done so within the last year.

There is a clear pattern of uptake of training after leaving full-time education. One of the indicators was the level of qualification that was achieved during full-time education.



When these figures are combined with the likelihood of each group being involved in study that leads to qualifications, it is apparent that 45% of the people who responded who left continuous full-time education without qualifications are still not qualified today.

Our research shows that the main characteristics of adults who do not take part in education or training are as follows:

- in lower-level jobs;
- unemployed;
- in part-time employment; and
- self-employed.

Although we will not set our targets until national measurement and targets have been agreed, we will set targets for the overall participation by adults and for each of the groups identified above to make sure that we are dealing with the main problem areas.

In terms of basic skills, during 2000/2001, 10,949 people took part in relevant training programmes in the two counties. This represents less than 1.5% of the population. In Devon and Cornwall, it is estimated that 21% to 29% of the adult population currently have poor basic skills. It is clear that we need to attract more learners to these

programmes to make sure that we achieve the targets set out in the Learning and Skills Council Corporate Plan. It is our aim to have 62,000 basic skills enrolments by December 2004.

Minority groups

Ethnic minorities

We have a very small percentage of people from ethnic minorities in Devon and Cornwall (less than 1%). One of our targets for our first year will be to work out the exact percentage of people from ethnic minorities from the 2001 census data. Again, without knowing the exact figures, we know that fewer people from ethnic minorities take part in education and training – a main target for 2002 will be to work out by how much. We do know that there are specific problems for ethnic minority communities, particularly in relation to completing and staying on. For example, only 0.3% of the people who take part in work-based learning are from ethnic minorities, but they represent 0.6% of those who start work-based learning (showing a 50% drop-out rate). A main target over the next three years will be to reduce this drop-out rate and bring it in line with the overall population in work-based learning. Only 28.7% of people from ethnic minorities stayed with their employer when they completed work-based learning (as opposed to 43% for all men and 44% for all women).

People with disabilities

According to data from the last census in 1991, we know that we have a higher than average proportion of the population who have disabilities, but that they have a lower than average participation rate in education and training. For example, we know that only 1.4% of the people taking part in work-based learning have disabilities. We also know that only 26.7% of people with disabilities stay with their employer when they have completed work-based learning (as opposed to 43% of all men and 44% of all women). Our priority in our first year is to establish firm baselines and set targets for participation in all forms of education, training and learning, and for completion and staying-on rates. The principle behind these targets will be to bring people with disabilities in line with the population as a whole.

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The difference between men and women

More women than men get involved in education and training in England, and in Devon and Cornwall an even higher percentage of women take part (57% as opposed to 50% of men). Given the growth in the service sector and decline in the manufacturing sector, it will become more important for men to participate in training and learning since the traditional male employment opportunities will be declining. Our target will be to map the participation by men and women in learning and training against future employment opportunities to make sure that the difference between men and women will not lead to a skills mismatch.

Delivering the strategy

Setting baselines and targets

While we have a fairly clear understanding of overall participation rates (young people and adults), the assessment above has identified that we need to be able to set baselines and targets for specific groups (for example, people with disabilities and people from ethnic minorities). Only then can we truly understand the size of each problem and measure our progress towards overcoming it. In order to achieve this, we will:

- use the national council's management information and business systems to gather data about learners; and
- use surveys and the 2001 census to collect accurate baseline information about the local population.

We will combine the information from these two sources to:

- understand how the different groups of the population who are over 16 are represented across all forms of education, training and learning;
- set baselines and identify the gaps in access, participation, retention and achievement;
- develop performance standards, set targets and measure performance; and
- analyse and use the data to direct planning and close equality gaps by targeting under-represented groups.

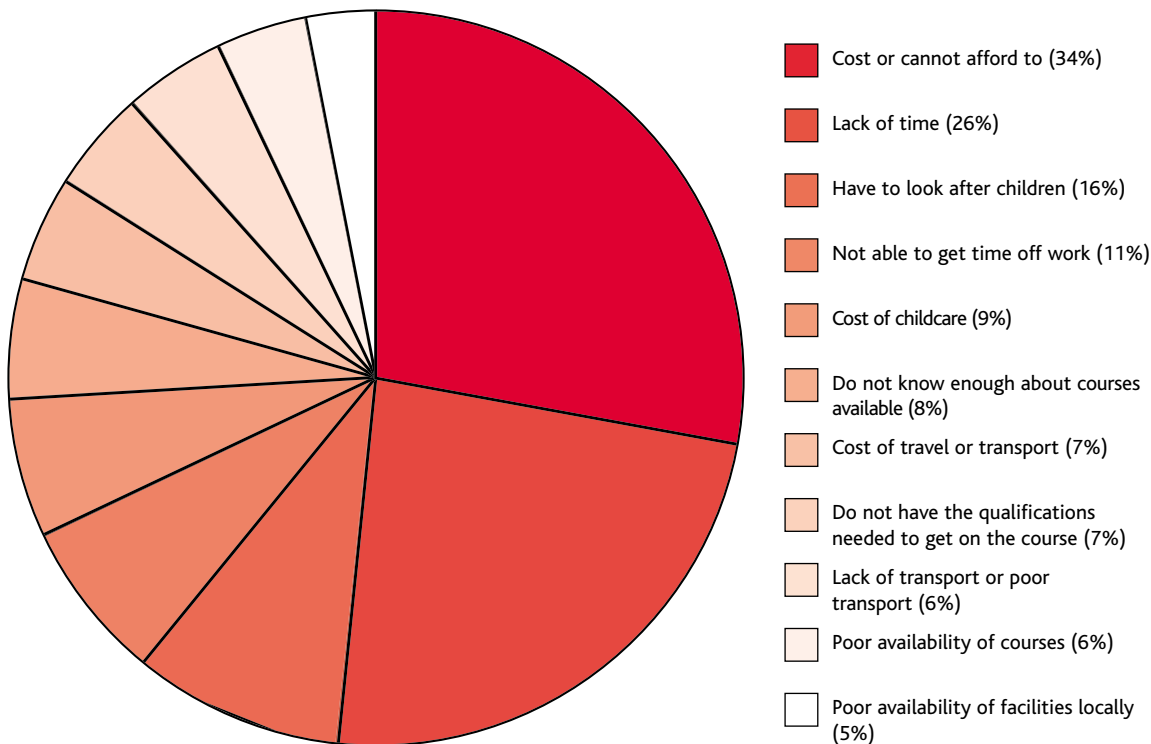
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Overcoming the main barriers to participation

If we are to achieve our targets for participation (both the overall targets already set and those for specific groups which we will set as above), we need to take action to overcome the barriers.

Barriers to learning



Source: Individuals' Skills Needs in Devon and Cornwall 2001

The main barriers are clearly time and cost, while the supply-side factors such as 'lack of relevant courses locally' only affect a small number of people. People have a number of activities competing for their time and money, and the likelihood of learning depends on how important people consider it to be compared to other commitments.

More consistent and better-quality post-16 provision will help to encourage people who are currently unaware that they have the potential to benefit from learning, as may better 'information flows' between employers, providers and individuals. However, few individuals (or, indeed, employers) report failure in provision of education and training as a main barrier. Rather, they report that they do not have the time or the money to support learning.

This shows that, while our major budget elements are directed to supporting and improving provision, we also need to develop effective ways of influencing learner behaviour, particularly by using the funds allocated to us for spending on suitable local projects. This behaviour can be influenced through employers and directly with individuals.

Our research shows that employers encourage work-related training and education, funding three quarters of it. It could be argued that changing the behaviour of employers (encouraging them to take more responsibility for workforce training and education than they currently do) has the greatest potential for significantly changing participation in learning. Our strategies for employer participation are outlined in the next section – Improving skills.

However, this will not deal with the issue of people who are unemployed and is less likely to deal with people who are at the lower levels of employment. Our research shows that there are clear differences in the opportunities available to and attitudes of people in disadvantaged areas and Devon and Cornwall in general.

Learning record	Disadvantaged areas	Average
Learned since education	66%	80%
Gained qualification	55%	64%
Learning in last 12 months	35%	53%

Source: Individuals' Skills Needs in Devon and Cornwall 2001

It also shows the different views people have about learning.

	Disadvantaged areas	Average
Advantages of learning		
Improve chances of getting a job	49%	26%
Get promotion	27%	16%
Earn more money	29%	17%
Reasons for being negative about learning		
Not very good at learning new things	14%	2%
Do not see any benefit	20%	19%
Found it to be a waste of time in the past	18%	3%
Attitude to future learning		
Positive	50%	67%

Source: Individuals' Skills Needs in Devon and Cornwall 2001

To increase the number of adults participating in learning, we:

- must focus on stimulating demand as well as improving provision;
- need to emphasise the benefits of learning to overcome the downsides (mainly cost and time);
- need to target specific sectors, for example, areas of disadvantage and those who are unemployed or in low-level employment; and
- need to show clearly the direct connection between achieving qualifications and improving the chances of getting a job (or promotion).

We will develop a strategy that will focus on these areas. It is unlikely that simple advice or the general marketing of learning opportunities will have much effect in these areas – the messages would not get through or would be ignored. We will develop a strategy that does the following:

- works through participation in community regeneration partnership;

- makes sure all marketing of post-16 learning actively promotes equal opportunities, challenges stereotyping and targets under-represented groups;
- works with the networks and agencies that are familiar to 'hard-to-reach' groups such as the Councils for Voluntary Services, ethnic minority networks (for example, the local Chinese Advocacy Scheme) and The Olive Tree Project that provides ESOL (English as a second or other language) tuition to women. This will help us to reach people who may not receive normal marketing messages or may not see the relevance of them; and
- works with providers to target employers and employed young people who fail to get involved in training.

Developing new provision

Although we have identified that the supply side does not present barriers to participation, there are ways in which we can improve provision to overcome the barriers of 'time' and 'cost'. We will work to develop learning that is suited to the needs and circumstances of those who currently cannot participate. This will include the following:

- exploring new methods of delivering learning and using information and communication technology that will increase participation, particularly for those who are disadvantaged by rural deprivation;
- working with schools and colleges to create flexible learning that is attractive to young people, including the new 'Increasing flexibility' schemes for 14-to 16-year-olds;
- simplifying the qualifications system and recognising achievement at all levels to increase motivation;
- increasing the flexibility of learning, for example an extended day, or using local community venues such as a community room in every primary school;
- giving people choice in how to learn by taking account of learning styles; and
- encouraging the development of learning facilities in places which are used by the public, such as supermarkets and village halls.

We will also develop a system for providers by setting targets and sharing good practice in order to remove barriers, increase participation and prevent discrimination. We will do this by setting up specialist provider groups, through the advice and support of our specialist equal opportunities team, using our website and analysing Adult Learning Inspectorate and Ofsted reports.

Developing new funding arrangements

Where funding is a barrier to learning, we will develop flexible funding arrangements to overcome the barrier. We aim to:

- make it affordable for young people to learn and employers to give time off;
- simplify funding arrangements to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of providers, and make sure that more funding reaches the learner; and
- provide incentives for employers to support learning in the workplace.

Improving advice and guidance

Where the advice and guidance (or lack of it) received by potential learners is the barrier to their future learning, we will:

- work with the Connexions and adult guidance services to make sure that independent, appropriate advice and guidance is provided to encourage people to participate; and
- build on and improve our information about what jobs or continued education people move on to after completing stages of education or training, to show learners the links between learning and outcomes.

The following is a specific example of the current actions to improve participation.

- The Plymouth Learning Partnership appointing a Basic Skills Co-ordinator, to deal with the significant level of basic skills needed in the city. This need has been mapped on a ward level and targets for participation have been set.

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Increasing participation – A summary

	Where are we now?	What are we aiming for?	How will we get there?
Young people	82% participation	87% participation	Set baselines and targets using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • census data • national LSC data • data from local providers
Adults	55% participated in last year 79% participated since leaving full-time education	Set a baseline and target for overall participation, once national targets have been agreed Set specific local targets to involve people who live in disadvantaged areas, are unemployed, are in lower-level jobs and so on	Remove the main barriers to participation through a strategy which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses on stimulating demand; • targets specific sectors (areas of disadvantage); and • shows the links between learning and success.
Ethnic minorities	10,000 adults took part in basic skills training (less than 1.5%) Participation rates based on 1991 census data	62,000 adults take part in basic skills training Set a baseline for overall participation based on 2001 census data The participation target for young people from ethnic minorities is 87% We will set a participation target for the adults from ethnic minorities in line with the overall adult target	
	50% drop-out rate from work-based learning	Reduce the drop-out rate to be in line with the overall population	
	0.3% participation in work-based learning	Increase participation to be in line with the overall population	
	28.7% stay with their employer after completing work-based learning	Improve the staying-on rate to be in line with the overall population (43% to 44%)	Develop new methods of learning, particularly with information communications technology
Disabilities	Participation rates based on 1991 census data	Set a baseline for overall participation based on 2001 census data The participation target for young people with disabilities is 87% We will set a participation target for the adults from with disabilities in line with the overall adult target	Develop new funding arrangements
	26.7% of people with disabilities stay with their employer after completing work-based learning	Improve staying-on rate to be in line with the overall population (43% to 44%)	Improve advice and guidance
Gender imbalance	More women than men take part in education and training	Set a baseline and target (mapped against future employment needs)	

b) Improving skills

Skills levels

Setting baselines and targets

The figures for achievement in the two counties are not as good as the national averages. The most up-to-date information suggests that in Devon and Cornwall:

- 72% of 19-year-olds are qualified to level 2 (75% nationally); and
- 43% of 19-year-olds are qualified to level 3 (51% nationally).

Our targets for skills levels are extremely ambitious as we want to match the national targets by 2004. In the case of level 3 qualifications, this represents an increase of three times the national figures (a 12% increase to 55%, as against the national 4% increase to 55%). In the case of level 2 qualifications, this represents a 13% increase to 85% (as against a national 10% increase to 85%). We will need to make a great effort to achieve these challenging targets.

We estimate that about 44% of working adults are qualified to level 3 and above, and we will be setting a baseline in our first year. If the baseline is correct, our target will be an 8% increase to 52% by 2004 (this is another ambitious target against the national increase of 5% to 52%).

Using statistics and definitions provided by the Basic Skills Agency, we have estimated that in Devon and Cornwall 157,100 people have low literacy skills (category A), 30,400 have lower literacy skills (category B) and 35,800 have very low literacy skills (category C). Also, we estimate that 92,550 have low numeracy skills, 65,400 lower numeracy skills and 52,700 very low numeracy skills. Our target is for 23,000 adults to achieve qualifications in basic skills by 2004.

During 2000/2001, providers funded by the LSC delivered basic-skills support to an estimated 10,949 adults. During 2001/2002, the LSC has provided more funding of £1.29 million to increase this to 16,397 adults. Retention and success rates are currently very high and improved steadily to a level of 74% in 1999/2000. However, these success rates have not necessarily been linked to a qualification. We have set a target of 62,397 basic-skills enrolments by December 2004 and 36.9% must achieve a recognised basic skills qualification if we are to meet our overall target. This will be a difficult target to meet, mainly because of the difficulty in encouraging this client group to work towards a qualification.

Delivering the strategy

We have a lot to do if we are to increase the achievements of 19-year-olds at level 2 from 72% to 85%, and at level 3 from 43% to 55%. We will take the action outlined below:

- recognise and value a level 1 qualification as a significant statement of achievement for some young people and a way to progress even more;
- work with employers, providers and Connexions to improve the quality, effectiveness, user friendliness and relevance of initial and continuing assessment;
- match funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) to improve the curriculum, for example, by using motivational activities such as IMPACT workshops, Outward Bound activities and mentoring;

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- encourage each work-based learning provider and their employer network to use best practice to meet all apprenticeship framework needs, including key skills and technical certificates;
- work with schools and colleges to fund and support the new vocational pilot schemes for 14- to 16-year-olds, leading to vocational NVQs;
- support locally the national marketing campaign to encourage people to accept modern apprenticeship places;
- put into practice the main improvements to the modern apprenticeship programme that were identified in the Cassels report to improve achievement;
- make sure Education Business Links activities contribute to local and national learning targets; and
- encourage all young people completing their post-16 education and training programmes to continue in learning and aim for higher qualifications.

To specifically deal with people with special needs, we will:

- work with private training providers to make sure that most offer Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Additional Social Needs (ASN) support;
- make sure that all learners with learning difficulties or a disability (or both) have the opportunity to access learning support through the Learning Support Budget;
- provide extra support through the Local Initiatives Fund for those learners with learning difficulties or disabilities (or both), with the clear aim of mainstreaming this activity; and
- work with the LEA, Connexions, the health authority and social services to allow learners with severe learning difficulties to have their learning needs met by specialist residential colleges.

We also have a lot to do to increase adult achievement at level 3 from 44% to 52%, and to improve basic skills among adults. To achieve this we will:

- use the Adult and Community Learning Plans to make sure that education meets national and local priorities;
- monitor the delivery of Adult and Community Learning Plans against national performance standards and try to agree local performance standards;
- identify and deal with any gaps in provision, monitoring progression routes and developing strategies to increase basic skills provision;
- increase the number of accredited courses on offer;
- investigate ways of partnership working that could reduce the administrative burden on projects and encourage as many funding opportunities as possible;
- develop links between the voluntary-sector and community-sector providers, and mainstream provision to allow and encourage people to progress; and
- investigate co-financing opportunities to extend the provision of modern apprenticeships for adults, currently being piloted in Cornwall.

To support the planned increase in achievement of basic skills, we will do the following:

- we will continue to use Local Initiatives Funding (LIF) to build on the eight basic skills projects that were funded during 2001/2002, such as the Exeter City Library Basic Skills Project;
- use the £2.4 million ESF funding available through co-financing from June 2002 to December 2004 to support the target of 6000 adults. We will use this funding to encourage participation through family learning, parent education and employees in the workplace;
- work with employers and trade unions to deal with basic skills needs in the workplace. Our contract with Union Learning Services includes a target for employees taking up new learning in basic skills; and
- work with the Jobcentre Plus to make sure there is a common approach to dealing with people with basic skills needs. We will help with the professional development of Jobcentre Plus staff by identifying and supporting those with basic skills needs.

Skills availability

Setting baselines and targets

According to our Devon and Cornwall Employers' Survey, during 2001, 29% of employers who wanted to recruit staff said that they had difficulty. The most common reason given for this difficulty was a lack of people with the necessary qualifications and skills. Eighty-five percent of employers with recruitment difficulties for skilled trades in the manufacturing and construction sectors gave this reason. Work by the Institute of Employment Studies shows that this problem will be made worse in the next few years with a decrease in the number of people in the 16 to 24 age group and an ageing population in the two counties. It is our target that, by 2004, no more than 20% of employers wanting to recruit staff should have difficulty.

Delivering the strategy

We can get more females involved in the job market which will deal with some of the skills shortages. This is particularly true given the observations in the previous section (Increasing participation) that more women than men participate in education and training in Devon and Cornwall, and in light of the current level of qualifications held by

females. Women are less economically active and are more likely to work part time. Fewer females are currently working in higher level occupations (professional and managerial) while more are in clerical, personal, protective and sales occupations. To achieve this, we will take action to:

- help employers to put into practice policies and practices to balance their employees' work life and home life; and
- be careful how jobs are promoted to young people to prevent stereotyping.

Also, we will make sure that our local learning plans are designed to:

- deliver the basic employment skills that employers need;
- deliver the general skills that employers find lacking in new recruits; and
- encourage people to receive employability skills training.

Specific skills needs in Devon and Cornwall

Setting baselines and targets

The economic development strategy of the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) lists skills and learning as the third of the 'drivers' which will help the South West region make choices and work out priorities. SWRDA proposes to 'equip people with the skills and adaptability needed to underpin a modern, developing and inclusive economy'. The organisation sees this as essential for the region's future economic success.

SWRDA favours an approach linked to defined industry sectors in its economic development strategy and it has identified two groups of sectors that need support.

- Established regional sectors - sectors that are important to the region for either employment or their contribution to the Gross Domestic Product or because they are a specialised sector for the region. These are aerospace, information communications technology (ICT), food and drink, marine, and tourism.
- Emerging sectors - sectors that have the potential to be important to the economy of region in the future. These are creative industries, biotechnology and environmental technologies.

It is essential that skills development in Devon and Cornwall is in line with the needs of the selected sectors, all of which are important in Devon and Cornwall. The development of centres of excellence, and of vocational, further-education and higher-education provision, needs to be co-ordinated to support these sectors. An example of this is the work being done before the Meteorological Office moves to Exeter. The city council, the University of Exeter and Exeter College, are already working together to make sure the city's workforce will be suitably skilled in ICT.

It is accepted that general skills are more likely to be in demand in the future across many of the target sectors, in response to structural changes in occupations and sector profiles, especially among higher-level occupations. The following skills are needed:

- computing skills for other professional and other associate professional occupations, clerical occupations, and buyers, brokers and sales representatives;
- problem-solving skills for science and engineering professionals, science and engineering associate professionals, and skilled engineering trades;

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- communication skills for science and engineering professionals and associate professionals, skilled engineering trades, other skilled trades, protective service occupations, and industrial plant and machine operatives; and
- team working skills for managers and proprietors in agriculture and service sectors, and skilled engineering trades.

It is our target that by the end of 2002/2003 we will have developed a strategy with our partner organisations that will identify and put in place systems to deliver these future skills needs for the benefit of the economy of Devon and Cornwall.

The foot and mouth epidemic has undoubtedly had a major effect on local businesses – both those involved directly in agriculture and those indirectly affected, such as tourism and distribution. A lot of media coverage has been given to the possible restructuring of the agriculture sector following this latest blow. Farmers will need a lot of help to learn new skills. Our aim during 2003 is to understand the effect and develop a strategy for retraining those working in industries affected by the foot and mouth disease and the restructuring of agriculture.

The local area (especially Cornwall) has a high rate of self-employment, making up approximately 15% of all employment. While self-employment has been falling in line with the decrease in unemployment, it still continues to be a significant contributor to job opportunities. Likewise, our employers' survey shows that more jobs are likely to be created in micro-businesses (more than 27%) whereas a fall of 6% is expected in major employers (those with more than 200 staff). Self-employment and the management of very small businesses need particular business and management skills to increase business survival rates. We do not yet fully understand the extent to which the needs of these individuals are being met and it is our aim to work with partners such as Business Link to develop baselines and targets for skills in the self-employed and micro-business sector.

Delivering the strategy

In 2002/2003, we will focus on developing strategies to deliver the skills needed in Devon and Cornwall in the future. These will focus on:

- the future skills needs of established regional sectors and emerging sectors, as identified by SWRDA;
- skills development within the agricultural sector and others affected by the restructuring of the agricultural sector; and
- working with Business Link and other partners to develop baseline and target measures for the skills needed for success in self-employment.

We will make sure that our Local Learning Plans reflect these strategies and contain actions to:

- identify and deliver the more specialist skills needed by particular employment sectors;
- adopt a sector approach to identifying and meeting skills needs in particular sectors of the economy; and
- involve employers in identifying real skills needs.

Involving employers in workforce development

Setting baselines and targets

We will be setting a baseline and target for employers' participation in workforce development in the coming year, in line with the national target. However, we do already have some indications of employer participation.

Workforce receiving training

During 1999/2000, it has been estimated that 49% of the workforce in the two counties received some training. However, only a small percentage of this training led to formal qualifications (22%). This training tends to be directed towards regulatory needs (for example, health and safety). It is our target that by 2004, 60% of the workforce should be receiving some training, with 30% of this training leading to formal qualifications.

Employers recognised as Investors in People

Although the number of organisations that are 'Investors in People' has been continuously growing, more employers will need to train employees towards qualifications to achieve the national learning targets. At the moment, there are approximately 600 employers in Devon and Cornwall that are recognised as Investors in People. Only 4% to 5% of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are recognised as Investors in People. It is our target that over 1000 employers should be recognised as Investors in People by 2004 and that the SME sector should have increased to between 8% and 10%.

Delivering the strategy

We will build long-term relationships with local employers, working with them to identify current and future skills needs and to develop the existing workforce. We will work directly with large employers and Sector Skills Councils, and work closely with key partners such as Business Link, the Employment Service, the Federation of Small Businesses and trade groups.

We use the Investors in People programme to work directly with employers to increase the delivery of improved management skills and improve the skills of the workforce. We will aim to make the best use of the resources provided to support employers in dealing with their skills needs. We will provide incentives to encourage employers to invest in their workforce, where appropriate co-ordinating funding from the various funding organisations (LSC, SWRDA, Objectives 1, 2 and 3 and so on) to achieve effective results.

We will produce a workforce development strategy building on the national report published by the Cabinet Office Performance and Innovation Unit in November 2001. This will be done in line with the SWRDA-led Regional Framework for Employment and Skills Action which will be in place by October 2002. Through this Workforce Development Strategy, we will secure local employer commitment both to the plan and to targeted actions in key priority areas.

We will recognise the specific needs of SMEs and make sure that training is both flexible and accessible to them. In particular, we will develop our current range of 'Success Through People' workshops aimed at SMEs – showing how performance improvements directly result from improved leadership, communication and performance management.

Improving skills - A summary

	Where are we now?	What are we aiming for?	How will we get there?
Skills levels	72% of 19-year-olds at level 2 43% of 19-year-olds at level 3	85% of 19-year-olds at level 2 55% of 19-year-olds at level 3	Encourage individuals to aim for higher qualifications Improve training Get as much funding as possible to add value to the training
	44% of adults at level 3 (estimate)	Establish baseline for adult achievement Target = 52% of adults at level 3	
Skills availability	223,300 adults with poor literacy skills 210,650 adults with poor numeracy skills	62,397 basic-skills enrolments by December 2004 23,000 achieving a recognised basic-skills qualification	Use Local Initiative and ESF funding to support new arrangements with voluntary-sector organisations, trade unions, Jobcentre Plus and so on
	29% of employers have difficulty recruiting staff	20% of employers have difficulty recruiting staff	Involve females in the job market Develop plans to improve provision and take-up of general and employability skills training
Specific skills needs in Devon and Cornwall	SWRDA identified established regional sectors and emerging sectors	Strategy for delivering future skills needs to SWRDA identified sectors	Work with partner organisations to identify needs and develop a strategy
	Restructuring of agricultural industry and the effect of foot and mouth disease	Strategy for retraining those affected by restructuring agriculture and foot and mouth disease	Industry research to work out people's needs
	15% of working population self-employed Forecast 27% growth in employment in micro-businesses	Establish baseline and targets for skills needed for self-employment and micro-businesses	Work with Business Link and other partner organisations to develop measures
Involving employers in workforce development	49% of workforce receive training 22% of this training leads to formal qualifications	60% of the workforce receive training 30% of this training leads to qualifications	Tailor training to SME requirements Provide incentives to employers, particularly through Objective funding
	600 employers recognised as Investors in People 4-5% participation by small or medium-sized businesses	1000 employers recognised as Investors in People 8-10% participation by small or medium-sized businesses	Increase promotion of 'Investors in People' Develop Investors in People workshops for SMEs
	No overall measure for employer participation	New measure agreed, baseline and targets set for employer participation	Work with SWRDA and Business Link to work out appropriate measures

c) Improving learning

The current provider network for post-16 learning in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is shown below.

Sixth forms	56
Further education (FE) colleges	10
Private providers	44
Employer providers	16
Higher education	5
LEAs (providing through FE, community colleges, and voluntary-sector providers and Learndirect - about 20)	5

With such a range of providers across the area, one of the main success factors for our learning strategy will focus on improving joint working between partners. This is why we are working closely with the three local learning partnerships that include representation from the full range of private-and public-sector providers of post-16 learning, including school sixth forms, specialist provision, the adult guidance service and the Connexions Service. The ability of the Partnerships to act as broker between previously competing providers will be critical, as new approaches to co-operation are truly tested.

Collecting data

Setting baselines and targets

As we have shown throughout the sections on participation and skills, it is currently difficult to set baselines and targets around many of the issues due to a lack of useful data. Providers are sharing data within the partnerships, but we still need to agree a common set of definitions that can be applied to FE, school sixth forms and training providers.

More problems arise with data collection because of 'cross boundary' issues. For example, the Plymouth Partnership is facing difficulties in establishing local (Partnership area) baseline positions regarding local targets for participation and achievement (especially in percentage terms) due to the cross-boundary movement of significant numbers of post-16 learners into the Plymouth unitary authority area from the surrounding 'travel-to-learn' area. It is our target that by 2003 we will have reached agreement on all issues surrounding 'cross-boundary' learning.

Delivering the strategy

In the coming year, we will develop a common approach to setting baselines for all providers. We will start by analysing all the data needs that have arisen from this strategic plan to set baselines and targets. We will also agree a method for handling 'cross-boundary' activity. We will then consult LEAs, Connexions and any other group that regularly collects data from the learning network to summarise their needs for data.

We will also take account of the outcomes of the national exercise that is currently being carried out to reduce the paperwork of official procedures for providers.

Developing Local Learning Plans

Setting baselines and targets

The three Local Learning Partnerships are currently involved in extensive consultation on their draft Local Learning plans, and the final versions should be available by March 2002.

These Local Learning Plans will clearly:

- map need against current provision;
- identify gaps and duplication; and
- set targets for improvement.

Once these plans have been agreed, we will have a role in building the skills and capabilities among providers, where this is a critical issue for delivery.

Some issues of capacity among the provider network are already clear from problems highlighted earlier in the plan. For example, to achieve the targets set for improving basic skills, provider capacity will have to be considerably improved. Our target is that by March 2003, we will have mapped the extent of current provision against our future need and have a clear funded plan for building capacity.

We will need to deal with capital infrastructure (buildings and facilities) and it is our target to have a capital plan completed by 2003. We will also work with our providers to improve the quality and effectiveness of provision to increase learner participation, satisfaction and achievement.

Delivering the strategy

The first step is to map the needs of learners against current provision through the local learning partnerships. The plans will make sure that providers understand how they can better meet the needs of learners by working in a planned learning environment, and how their achievements contribute to local and national targets.

Also, we will encourage the Local Learning Partnerships to develop links with the higher education institutions and pre-16 schools to improve progression routes for learners.

Local Learning Plans will show how providers will:

- work together in the interests of economy and efficiency in delivering learning that meets learner and employer needs;
- explore ways of piloting and sharing best practice, particularly in relation to involving new, returning and non-traditional learners;
- work flexibly to meet the needs of learners in employment and their employers;
- work with the most excluded groups and colleagues in the voluntary sector who can provide the first step to formal learning;
- support the development of centres of excellence to develop quality and joint working among providers;
- develop strategies in line with our strategy for equal opportunities;
- work together to co-ordinate provision with that of higher-education institutions; and
- work together to deliver the new Increasing Flexibility pilots for young people aged between 14 and 16.

We will work with further education colleges to develop a capital projects strategy to make sure that funding is appropriately targeted to improve provision and choice available to learners. During 2002/2003, we will carry out a thorough review of all post-16 learning facilities as part of a major capital assessment. We are also working with our FE colleges to develop a local plan to make sure that we develop a network of CoVEs (Centres of Vocational Excellence) that tie in with SWRDA Sector Skills priorities, and locally identified skills needs.

Improving quality

Setting baselines and targets

During 2001/2002, we have put into practice the provider review process. All the learning providers we work with (55 work-based learning contractors, 10 FE colleges and 1 Ufi Hub) have been reviewed twice during 2001/2002 in line with our Quality and Standards manual. As a result of this process, baseline information has been established that will allow us to identify targets for improvement.

The provider review process held in October 2001 produced the following baseline information which we are using to identify those providers that need particular support and to develop targets for improvement.

Category	All providers
Excellent	3% (2)
Good	18% (11)
Satisfactory	64% (39)
Some concerns	10% (6)
Serious concerns	5% (3)

Existing data about Ofsted and ALI inspections is not particularly up to date in all cases. However, we are working closely with those providers that have been identified as having weaknesses or development needs or placed in the emergency category as a

result of a further inspection, using the Standards Fund and individual consultancy support.

During 2002/2003, we will establish baseline data at a national level for inspection grades, performance review assessments and learner satisfaction.

Measure	Deadline
Retention and achievement rates	June 2002
Inspection grades	September 2002
Performance review assessments	June and December 2002
Learner satisfaction	September 2002

In line with the national key quality measures, we will:

- establish baseline data for retention and achievement rates across Devon and Cornwall by June 2002;
- agree local targets for improvements on retention and achievement rates falling into two categories (targets for learners aged between 16 and 18 and targets for learners aged 19 and over); and
- set and agree these targets with providers as part of the development planning and target setting annual cycle.

Health and safety

Our health and safety advisor has developed a monitoring plan that will make sure that every provider will be visited within three years. During 2002, we will set baselines for provider performance in relation to health and safety and targets for improvement.

Delivering the strategy

Improving the quality of provision in Devon and Cornwall is essential if we are to achieve the challenging targets for achievement at levels 2 and 3 for young people and adults. We need to:

- establish a clear idea of our current baseline in terms of quality and user satisfaction;
- develop accurate measures of progress;
- set targets for improvement; and
- work with providers to deliver progress against targets.

We will use standards funding to help colleges and other providers in particular to improve poor provision where this has been identified as part of the inspection process. Specifically, we will target those providers where inspection reports have identified unsatisfactory provision (grade 4 or 5), low rates of learner retention and achievement, and a categorisation of some or serious concerns through performance review. We will also use standards funding to help providers improve quality to support their annual development plans. We will make sure that our providers show:

- commitment to raising standards, continuous improvement and the highest standards of professionalism;

- effective use of management information to plan and improve the quality of provision;
- development plans to improve the professional skills of all staff (including seasonal and part-time workers);
- development plans for all providers so that they can successfully get involved in self-assessment, inspection (including area inspections) and planned formal reviews;
- how local employers' understanding of their role in workplace learning will be developed to make sure that they are equipped to identify skills needs among their workforce and commit to meeting those needs through training and development; and
- that, with us, they will carry out area assessments against the Common Inspection Framework to prepare for the national adoption of area inspections.

Health and safety

While the main duty of care for learner health and safety rests with providers, we have a responsibility to make sure that providers set standards and maintain quality health and safety management systems that will provide a safe working environment. We are committed to health and safety being an important part of our processes from initial assessment, contracting, self assessment and development planning to performance review.

Our aim is to achieve continuous improvements in standards of health and safety, raising the quality of education, training and user satisfaction, by making sure that learning takes place in a safe and supportive environment.

We will achieve this by putting providers into risk bands, monitoring performance and holding regular reviews as part of the provider review process. Specifically, our process will:

- test the effectiveness of providers' internal and subcontractor management procedures by examining the providers' systems and inspecting the training place together with a percentage of subcontractors to check how effective the systems are;
- examine providers' response to the recommendations made as a result of previous health and safety reports, four monthly assessments and accident records; and
- provide reports on how effective providers' systems are and whether they follow the recommendations of the local Learning and Skills Council's audit committee.

While there will be a three-year cycle for assessment, the providers we assess as being in the higher-risk categories will be visited more often and we will make recommendations for improvement. Where appropriate, we will use the Local Initiatives Fund or Standards Fund to improve the capability of providers.

We are equally committed to the health and safety of our own employees and will use HS(G)65 'Successful Health and Safety Management' as the basis of our approach.

Improving learning - A summary

	Where are we now?	What are we aiming for?	How will we get there?
Collecting data	Unable to combine data or break it down into segments due to a lack of common methods for collecting data	Data to be collected from FE, school sixth forms and training providers in a common format to meet set timescales	Data collection project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop framework Improve it for partner needs Improve it for provider needs Sort out treatment of 'cross-boundary' data Agree with partners and providers Put framework into practice
	Unable to collect valid local data due to difficulties agreeing treatment of 'cross-boundary' issues	Agreement of treatment of 'cross-boundary' data by learning partnerships and individual providers	
	Providers producing broadly similar data for many organisations leading to inefficiency	An agreed system for collecting data which each partner can use	
Developing Local Learning Plans	No current mapping of learning needs against learning provision for each learning partnership area	Local learning plans finalised and agreed by 2002/2003 academic year	Develop local learning plans with local Learning Partnerships to deal with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> capital planning needs capacity needs joint working flexible working
	No current mapping of capital provision against market need	Capital plan for training provision completed by 2003	
	Centres of Vocational Excellence not yet set up	Five CoVEs set up across Devon and Cornwall	Work with partners to develop and put into practice effective bids
Developing quality of provision	15% of providers assessed as being less than satisfactory National baselines set for key quality measures in 2002	No providers assessed as less than satisfactory by 2005 Local baselines set for learner retention and achievement rates in 2002	Develop Quality Assurance Strategy with Ofsted, ALI and key partners, including a provider review process on which to base comparisons and measure activities
	Mismatch between timescales for provider review, development planning and strategic planning	Revised timetable to make sure there is a consistent planning and review process for all providers	Revised timetable used nationally
	Three-year cycle monitoring plan for health and safety	Set baselines and targets for provider performance in health and safety	Put providers into risk bands, and monitor performance and reviews as part of the provider review

> 4. Success through partnerships

We are committed to working in partnership. At both strategic and operational levels, we will make sure that our activities support those of other agencies. Wherever possible, we will try to get involved in joint long-term planning and joint working with partners. By agreeing and working towards joint targets, we can make the most of our resources. We aim to:

- meet our targets; and
- help to deal with the broader issues of developing the local economy and attracting new highly skilled jobs to the area.

During 2001, we used £2.4 million from our Local Initiatives Fund to support a wide range of new projects that are being delivered by many of our partner organisations. In the longer term, this activity will be linked to European Social Fund co-financing to make the most of the effect of this funding in contributing towards progress against our targets. Our priorities for funding so far have centred on our local impact measures detailed in section 2.

For example, we have provided funding for the three learning partnerships to help in their planning process. We are also funding a number of projects linked to the retraining of the rural population in Devon in the aftermath of the foot and mouth crisis and a range of projects working with voluntary and community groups to help them meet the learning needs of potentially disadvantaged groups.

Key partners are described below.

- Post-16 educational and training institutions – further education colleges, private training providers and schools are clearly central to the process of reforming the system of post-16 learning, and we are involving them at every stage in the planning and delivery process.
- We are also developing links with higher education institutions – Plymouth and Exeter Universities, the College of St Mark and St John, Falmouth College of Arts and Dartington College of Arts. We will explore ways of improving progression routes through to higher education to increase the number of people entering higher education.
- The South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) has identified skills and learning as one of the four strategic 'drivers' that are essential to the success of the south west region. This means giving people the skills and adaptability they need to be part of a modern, developing and inclusive economy. SWRDA has a member on the Learning and Skills Council Devon and Cornwall and we will take account of the priorities identified by the SWRDA in all our activities. We hold regular meetings with the SWRDA's Skills and Learning team to make sure that our activities support theirs. We are in the process of agreeing relevant joint targets.
- The Connexions Service is another important partner. Our Executive Director is a member of the Connexions Cornwall and Devon Board, and the Connexions Service Chief Executive is an observer on the Learning and Skills Council Devon and Cornwall. At an operational level, staff from both organisations work closely together to make sure that the learning opportunities we fund provide appropriate and attractive progression routes for young people. We are currently involved in agreeing joint targets locally.

- Business Link is a key partner in involving employers in creating a learning culture in Devon and Cornwall. We need to work with employers to identify and begin to deal with current and future skills needs. This is particularly important in this area where small businesses employing fewer than five people make an important contribution to our economy. The chief executive is an observer on the Learning and Skills Council Devon and Cornwall. As an example of ongoing activity, we are working with Business Link Devon and Cornwall to produce a joint strategy for developing the skills of owner managers in small to medium-sized enterprises.
- Jobcentre Plus is a key partner in providing learning and employment opportunities for adults and young people aged between 18 and 24, and is represented as an observer on the Learning and Skills Council Devon and Cornwall.
- Local authorities are key partners in the planning and delivery process, and we must make sure that our activities relating to learning support theirs. We are involved as a member of the Local Economic Partnerships for Devon, North Devon, Plymouth, Exeter and Cornwall. In view of our new co-financing role, we will work closely with the Objective 1 office for Cornwall and local authorities in Devon for Objective 2 and 3 European funding.
- The voluntary and community sectors and local equalities organisations are vital to our work with socially excluded people and to the equal opportunities agenda. Many of these organisations are becoming directly involved in delivering new projects funded through our Local Initiative Fund.
- Local strategic partnerships are now being set up to bring together representatives of the public and private sectors and voluntary and community groups. We are a member and are fully involved, where appropriate, in the Government's neighbourhood renewal strategy.
- Learning Partnerships currently operating in Cornwall, Plymouth, Devon and Torbay already include representation from key stakeholders. These groups have a crucial role in translating national and area-wide strategies into local actions that will achieve real improvements and create a planning process for post-16 learning that starts at grass-roots level.
- The emerging Sector Skills Councils will have an important role to play in working with us and our partners to help identify employer needs in particular sectors of the economy.

We have identified more than 150 other organisations, agencies or representative groups that we will need to work with, including the following.

- Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI)
- Basic Skills Agency
- Chambers of Commerce
- Devon and Cornwall Business Council
- Education Business Link organisations
- Employers
- Equality organisations – the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC)
- Government offices
- Higher Education Funding Council for England
- Local education authorities
- National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)
- National Training Organisations
- Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)
- Professional groups, such as the Council for Excellence in Management

- South West Tourism
- The Learning and Skills Development Agency
- Trades unions and the Trades Union Congress
- Ufi (University for Industry) Regional Offices

Our thorough consultation exercise has included representatives of all the partners referred to above. We sent out the draft strategic plan to just under 1,000 partner organisations and put it on our website with a request for feedback using a questionnaire. We held six consultation events across the two counties that were attended by 175 people and we also received 48 written responses. A full report on the outcomes of the consultation process is available on our website.

> 5. Monitoring, review and evaluation

We have already started to evaluate our strategic plan using the consultation process. As a result, we have already made major changes.

The monitoring, review and evaluation process will show:

- our progress against our targets;
- the effect of our actions; and
- the extent to which we have effectively and efficiently used our resources.

From March 2002 the evaluation of the strategic plan will be critical to the development of next year's plan. In September 2002, a formal evaluation will take place both internally and externally. To gain the views of our external partners, we will send a questionnaire to a random sample of the original 1,000 people we consulted. The questionnaire will focus on what elements are still relevant and how the plan has contributed to their planning processes. For our providers it is important that the strategic plan is cross-referenced in their plans for this year (September 2002) and the monitoring of their plans will reflect the success of our plan. If the questionnaire identifies any areas of major concern that need to be investigated, we will organise a workshop with those concerned to work out how we can jointly deal with the issues raised.

Our working relationship with our partners, in particular the Local Learning Partnerships, will allow us to continually assess the strategic plan as we work together to meet the targets and review the long-term aims of the plan.

Finally, the evaluation will review our annual progress towards national and local targets, and identify what has worked well and highlight areas for concern where we need to put things right.

> 6. List of council members

Learning and Skills Council Devon and Cornwall

Members (at 29 May 2002)

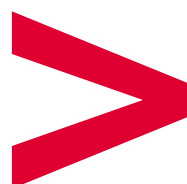
Professor John Bull CBE (Chairman)	Vice-Chancellor, University of Plymouth
Mr Shabir Ahmed	Managing Director, Deltacomm Systems Ltd
Mrs Janet Anderson, MBE	Regional Co-ordinator, DfES, Adult Basic Skills
Mr Nick Buckland	Board Member, SWRDA
Mrs Val Cox	Councillor, Cornwall County Council
Mr Malcolm Florey	Principal, Bicton College of Agriculture
Mrs Debbie Grosvenor	Grosvenor Practice HR
Mr Tony Hodgkiss	Chief Executive, Torbay Council
Mr Ray Jackson	UNISON
Ms Kary Lescure	Organisational Development Director, The Eden Project
Mr Paul Lucken	Executive Director, Learning and Skills Council Devon and Cornwall
Mr Geoff Rees	Principal, Ivybridge Community College
Mrs Penny Robertson	Chief Executive, Pentreath Industries
Dr Graham Stirling, CBE (Deputy Chairman)	Managing Director, The Barden Corporation (UK) Ltd

Observers

Mrs Chris Holland	District Manager, Employment Service
Mr Bob Dow	Chief Executive, Business Link for Devon and Cornwall
Mr Richard Bayly	Director Devon and Cornwall, GOSW
Mrs Jenny Rudge	Chief Executive, Connexions Cornwall and Devon Ltd

Co-opted member

Mr David Jeffries	Director of Finance and Company Secretary, J&S Marine
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Learning+Skills Council
Devon and Cornwall

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