



**Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to  
Deliver  
Summary of the Events and Written  
Responses**

## **A Introduction**

- I The consultation process
- II Summary of responses
- III Structure of this report

## **B Raising Expectations Consultation Events**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Event summary
- 1.3 The opportunities and challenges of the pre-19 reforms
- 1.4 The opportunities and challenges of the post-19 model
- 1.5 The demand-led system
- 1.6 Interface issues
- 1.7 Transition
- 1.8 Impact of events

## **C Raising Expectations Written Responses**

### 2.1 Introduction

#### Part 1: Supporting Participation and Achievement for Young People

- 3.1 Summary
- 3.2 Central proposal
- 3.3 Challenges to implementation
- 3.4 Transfer of funding to local authorities
- 3.5 Funding
- 3.6 Sub-regional groupings
- 3.7 Regional groups
- 3.8 The Young People's Learning Agency
- 3.9 Interfaces between agencies
- 3.10 Commissioning
- 3.11 Performance management
- 3.12 Timescale
- 3.13 Apprenticeships
- 3.14 Sixth form colleges
- 3.15 Presumptions and competitions
- 3.16 Capital
- 3.17 Learners with Learning Difficulties/Disabilities
- 3.18 Young offenders
- 3.19 Information, advice and guidance
- 3.20 Capacity and capability
- 3.21 Bureaucracy

#### Part 2: Reforming the Post-19 Skills System to Secure Better Outcomes for Adults

- 4.1 Summary
- 4.2 The Skills Funding Agency (SFA)
- 4.3 Funding and commissioning
- 4.4 Performance management and intervention
- 4.5 Sponsorship of the FE sector
- 4.6 Other functions of the SFA and the wider skills landscape

## **D Annexes**

## A Introduction

1. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) published the White Paper *Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver* on March 17 2008 to consult on how to implement proposed reforms to education and training for pre-19 and post-19 learners.

### 1.1 The consultation process

2. Following publication of the White Paper, the Government carried out a twelve week formal consultation, which concluded on 9 June 2008.
3. We received 443 written responses, from a wide range of groups and individuals. These responses were analysed carefully and are being taken into account during the development of our plans to implement these proposals.
4. In addition to the written consultation, we also sought the views of individuals and organisations at nine regional events<sup>1</sup> held in May 2008. These events, which were attended by Ministers and/or senior officials, captured views of attendees on the proposals, including the challenges and opportunities of both implementation and the transition process. The feedback from these regional events was collected and considered alongside the written responses.

## II Summary of responses

5. There was wide approval of the principle and commitment to increase participation, to give education and skills a greater priority at the local level, and the focus on performance and quality. Many respondents welcomed the creation of a single framework for integrated commissioning of education and training to age 19, which fits well with the principles of Every Child Matters.
6. The White Paper underlined the need to reform the funding system to support other educational reforms including Raising the Participation Age (RPA) and the new Diploma, to allow local authorities to take a joined up approach to 0-19 planning and commissioning, and to reflect the principle of local decision making at the right level. In the context of adult skills, the White Paper emphasised the need to reform the post-19 landscape in order to move toward a demand-led system of funding, increase opportunities for adult skills expansion, and better integrate employment and skills.
7. At the launch of the White Paper Ed Balls and John Denham spoke of the necessity of the changes:

*“Local authorities are in the best place to respond to the needs of young people locally. So by giving them responsibility for the funding we are putting the final pieces in place to ensure they can offer this choice. They are already responsible for schools, are taking responsibility for advising young people and are being*

---

<sup>1</sup> London, Birmingham, Newcastle, Manchester, Leeds, Leicester, Bristol, Peterborough and Reading

*given new duties to ensure that the right range of provision is in place for young people to continue in education and training until 19.”*

*“We [also] want every adult to have the opportunity to improve their skills to get a job or progress in work and to help them realise their own aspirations and talents. The proposals in today’s consultation paper will help us to build on the great success of the LSC who are currently taking forward the skills agenda.”*

8. The general support for the reforms was accompanied by the request for further information on the implementation and transition stages, including how the new agencies will work together and the plans for planning and commissioning under the new system. Stakeholders were also looking for assurance that the needs of young people, adults and employers will be best supported by the arrangements and that the new reforms will reduce bureaucracy.

### **III Structure of this report**

9. This report is one of a pair of documents published in tandem to provide an update on the reforms. The other document “Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver: Update and next steps” provides further information on some of the areas of the reforms. We intend to publish further detail on next steps on a regular basis as we finalise our plans.
10. Although the consultation has now closed, both DIUS and DCSF remain committed to ensuring that stakeholders are kept involved with, and informed about the progress of, these reforms and we would welcome feedback as the proposals continue to develop.

## **B Raising Expectations Consultation Events**

### **1.1 Introduction**

11. DCSF and DIUS launched the White Paper *Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver*, on 17 March 2008 to consult on how to implement the proposed reforms. As part of this consultation, nine regional events were held during May 2008. This section covers a summary of the output from those events.

### **1.2 Event summary**

12. Nine regional events were attended by stakeholders from organisations including: local authorities including Directors of Children's Services (DCS), colleges, independent providers, schools, employer representative bodies, Regional Development Agencies (RDA), and Learning and Skills Council (LSC) staff.
13. The agenda for the events covered:
  - Policy presentations;
  - Question and answer sessions about the high-level principles of the changes (involving Ministers and/or senior policy officials);
  - Round table discussions on opportunities and challenges for the pre-19 and post-19 reforms;
  - Round table discussions of transition activities; and
  - Plenary sessions supported by technology for immediate feedback/opinion gathering.
14. This summary of the events is based on the output from these sessions and is therefore qualitative in nature. The outcome of polling questions and feedback from delegate evaluation forms is included where appropriate.

### **1.3 The opportunities and challenges of the pre-19 reforms**

#### **Opportunities**

15. Delegates took part in discussions to identify the opportunities potentially offered by the new reforms. There were significant parallels between the opportunities and challenges, highlighting that successful resolution of the challenges could form the basis of the opportunities of the new reforms.
16. One of the strong themes running through the discussions was the opportunity to provide a more integrated approach to 0-19 education and to Children's Services in general. It was perceived this could potentially help to engage young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and support the Raising the Participation Age (RPA) legislation that will come into effect in 2013.

17. Further opportunities included:

- A more collaborative, coherent approach to bringing local authorities, schools, sixth form colleges, FE colleges and Work Based Learning (WBL) providers together in delivery;
- Fulfilling the goal of greater devolution of power to local authorities;
- A chance to improve strategic planning of provision and to raise standards through effective commissioning and decommissioning;
- Raising the profile of Apprenticeships;
- Potential to reduce bureaucracy and improve data management; and
- Better Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) which is more closely aligned to local strategic needs.

## Challenges

18. Delegates identified potential challenges within the new reforms that must be successfully addressed. Two of the main challenges were: developing the sub-regional groupings and collaborative working patterns; and ensuring that local authorities have the capacity and capability to deliver. It was thought that the transition process would be challenging, as capacity, capability and collaboration networks would need to be built to make the new reforms a success. An important element of ensuring the appropriate skills were available within local authorities was to coordinate the transition of staff with the LSC.

Other challenges that were raised included:

- Understanding the role that DCSF and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) would play, particularly in relation to direction and guidance;
- How the FE sector would develop stronger relationships with schools and local authorities;
- Aligning learner demand and employer demand in the commissioning and planning process;
- The commissioning of specialist provision including Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD), Special Educational Needs (SEN) and provision for young offenders in custody;
- Raising participation and engagement for young people who are NEET;
- Engaging with employers, WBL providers, and delivering Apprenticeships;
- Managing bureaucracy;
- Ensuring local authorities have access to learner data;
- Understanding how performance management would be delivered under the new model; and
- Providing impartial IAG to learners, facilitating a demand-led system.

## 1.4 The opportunities and challenges of the post-19 reforms

### Opportunities

19. Delegates were clear that as stakeholders they would need to work together to make the new system a success and were able to frame many of the challenges as potential opportunities. These included:
- Greater collaboration within the system between all types of providers;
  - Greater collaboration between Government Departments;
  - A chance to further engage employers with the education and skills system and to embed a greater understanding of their needs into the system;
  - The creation of a more dynamic economy through the up-skilling of the workforce;
  - A raised profile and renewed focus for post-19 provision;
  - Improved provision and greater choice for learners;
  - An overhaul of the Apprenticeship system and a chance to fully market this to learners;
  - Improved adult IAG;
  - The regeneration of local areas bringing positive social and economic change; and
  - Greater synergy between local authority economic development activity and the provision of skills.

### Challenges

20. Delegates also highlighted challenges for the new post-19 system. In general they felt less familiar with the post-19 reforms than those for pre-19 and asked for more details as soon as possible on how the proposed system would operate. Particular issues and challenges included:
- Engaging employers with the changes and with the education and skills system more generally;
  - Improving existing programmes such as Skills Accounts and Train to Gain to become solid foundations on which to build the new system;
  - Greater clarity around the roles and responsibilities of both new and existing organisations at all levels of operation;
  - Clarity on ownership of performance management and quality assurance targets and interventions;
  - Limiting the amount of bureaucracy for providers in administering the new system;
  - Integrating specialist learners, such as LLDD, young offenders and the unemployed into the proposed system; and
  - Encouraging existing talent to stay within the system and attracting new skills and talents at both an agency and provider level.

## **1.5 The demand-led system**

21. There were also comments made by some delegates regarding the need for greater clarification about how the demand-led system will operate. This included:

- Where data on the demand will come from to inform the demand-led system;
- Generating and capturing demand from both employers and learners; and
- The impact funding changes may have on providers' ability to plan due to the uncertainties of volume of demand.

## **1.6 Interface issues**

22. Issues that cut across both the pre and post-19 reforms were discussed. Delegates made suggestions for ways to ensure a smooth transition. They focused on how learners and providers will manage the shift to a demand-led system, and recommendations were made regarding mechanisms for easing the transition. Opportunities and challenges were discussed and are set out below.

### **Interface Opportunities**

23. Opportunities identified included:

- The chance to define the commonalities between the pre-19 and post-19 systems and to clearly map the dependencies and touch-points between the YPLA and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA);
- Widening knowledge of the skills agenda by sharing information about skills and employer needs across the pre-19 and post-19 systems;
- Encouraging closer integration of impartial IAG services to minimise disruption to learners; and
- Using Apprenticeships and in particular the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to help learners transition between the pre and post-19 systems.

### **Interface Challenges**

24. Challenges identified included:

- The successful integration of the planned pre-19 system and the demand-led post-19 system;
- Creating accountability for interface issues at national, regional and local levels;
- Ensuring the transition between the pre and post-19 systems will be seamless for learners;
- Supporting learners who may not follow a standard path between the systems, such as those who will not have an aged-based progression, LLDD, those with SEN and young offenders who spend time in custody;

- Alignment of performance management systems, data gathering and reporting mechanisms across the pre and post-19 systems;
- The effect that two systems will have on providers that offer both pre and post-19 provision, particularly regarding funding; and
- Managing down bureaucracy for providers who offer both pre and post-19 provision.

## 1.7 Transition

### Transition in the pre-19 system

25. Delegates discussed how the challenges could be met. They recognised that one of the most fundamental aspects of the transition would be to ensure that the LSC and local authorities work together on transition arrangements and that routes exist for the transition of LSC staff to local authorities where desirable. Delegates believed it to be crucial to maintain the valuable skills residing with current LSC staff.
26. Local authorities will also need to form effective sub-regional groupings and drive greater collaboration with providers, employers and other stakeholders. Providers will have the challenge of raising their understanding and awareness of the reforms, and adapting to a more collaborative way of working across the sector.
27. One overarching issue for the transition was the need for consistent and simple communication about the changes to stakeholders. This is important at the local and sub-regional level, and there was also an appetite for more information and guidance from DCSF.

### Transition in the post-19 system

28. The role of key stakeholders who need to be successfully engaged and communicated with during the transition period was discussed in detail:

**Local authorities** were recognised as having a pivotal role in the transition, but may require support to develop their resources to completely fulfil their responsibilities;

**Employers** need to be engaged as early as possible in the transition process through existing national and local organisations. This will enable an understanding of employer concerns and allow employers to share information and learning about the changes;

**Providers** should be involved in the development process and be kept fully informed of progress, with different types of providers requiring tailored information and reassurance. They also need to be clear about what support will be available to help them to continue to offer a high quality of provision to the existing cohort of learners during the transition period and about the form this support will take;

**LSC** must retain the skills and knowledge of their staff while reassuring them about their future;

**Learners** and their needs should also be considered including the requirements of more vulnerable groups of learners; and

**RDAs** were acknowledged and in particular the need to build upon their knowledge of regional economic and business performance while ensuring there is no duplication of mechanisms which the education and skills system may put in place for capturing regional employer needs.

29. The practicalities of transition were also debated, with calls again for greater detail about:

- The strategic planning arrangements, particularly timescales and programme management;
- The funding system and how it will work;
- The transition arrangements for the SFA;
- How the system will be implemented and function, particularly regarding timelines, planning and funding; and
- Collection of and access to data.

30. Key recommendations for the transition period included:

- Clear and frequent communication to be maintained with and between stakeholders; and
- Communication that wins the hearts and minds of stakeholders.

### 1.8 Impact of events

31. During the events, delegates were polled on their understanding of the pre-19 and post-19 reforms. A summary of the results from those who voted are set out below.

32. Delegates were asked about the extent to which they understood the reforms at both the beginning and end of each event. Understanding of both the pre-19 and post-19 reforms improved over the course of each event.

33. At the end of the events 23% of delegates felt they knew only a little about the pre-19 proposals and 48% knew only a little about the post-19 proposals. This indicates there is still a communication effort needed to follow these events; this was echoed by delegate feedback.

	Know nothing at all	Know a little	Know more than a little	Know a lot
Pre-19 reforms, pre-event	2%	44%	42%	12%
Pre-19 reforms, post-event	1%	23%	59%	18%
Post-19 reforms, pre-event	8%	56%	29%	7%
Post-19 reforms, post-event	1%	48%	43%	8%

## **C Raising Expectations Written responses**

34. This report has been based on 443 responses to the consultation document. As some respondents may have offered a number of options for questions, total percentages listed under any one question may exceed 100%. Throughout, percentages are expressed as a measure of those answering each question, not as a measure of all respondents. Annex B breaks down the respondents by responder type.

### **Part 1: Supporting Participation and Achievement for Young People**

#### **3.1 Summary**

35. Part one of the White Paper set out the proposed reforms to the pre-19 system, and the benefits to moving funding for pre-19 education and training from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to local authority control. From 2013 all young people will be obliged to stay in education or training past the age of 16. This, along with the other reforms to pre-19 education and skills, means that the funding system needs to be reformed to support the educational aims of the future. The LSC has done an excellent job over the last 8 years but the landscape of education and training is changing so a new system is needed.

#### **3.3 Challenges to implementation**

36. Many respondents were of the opinion that local authorities will need to build their expertise in order to deal with the complex pre-19 issues. The transfer of staff, skills and knowledge will need to be managed carefully to ensure that local authorities have all the knowledge and awareness they need to fulfil their responsibilities in the new system.
37. The forming of sub-regional groupings was seen as necessary in order to balance learner demand and cost effective provision. However the majority of respondents asked for more guidance to make sure that sub-regional groupings are as effective as possible, and to reduce bureaucracy.
38. Commissioning was a key concern for most respondents. There was a request for further clarity on who will commission different types of provider and the funding. Along with this there was a need for clarity around the new sixth form designation and what this will mean in practice.
39. Most respondents were of the opinion that local authorities must come together regionally to agree plans and to ensure cross-regional consistency, and agreed that a regional forum was an appropriate mechanism. Respondents asked for clarity over the membership, governance and powers of regional groups.
40. The majority of respondents believed that comprehensive and impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) will be critical for both young people and adults who undertake any form of structured learning. IAG will also be

needed for employers who currently work with the LSC so they understand what the reforms mean for them.

### **3.4 The transfer of funding from the Learning and Skills Council to local authorities**

41. The majority of respondents welcomed the commitment to increase participation, give education, skills and training a greater priority at local level, and the focus on performance and quality. They believed that local authorities have a significant role to play in providing the strategic planning for pre-19 education and training. The broad response to the consultation was cautiously positive. Most respondents flagged some concerns for the implementation of the reforms and asked for greater clarity and reassurance around building capacity and capability in local authorities, commissioning and the interaction between the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA), local authorities and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). Respondents also asked for clarity over the planning and management of provision, performance and quality.
42. Some respondents stressed that the pre-19 system must have at its centre a focus on the complete needs of the individual young person so that local authorities along with all of their partners can support them fully. Many respondents, particularly local authorities, saw the new reforms as a step closer to full integration of services for young people with wider planning and commissioning. They agreed that this focuses the system around the needs of the young person supporting the aims of Every Child Matters. They saw a particular opportunity to further support vulnerable young people including those who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and those who are in danger of becoming NEET.
43. The first question in the White Paper asked respondents "Do you agree that transferring funding from the LSC to local authorities to create a single local strategic leader for 14-19 education and training is the right approach?" There were 401 responses to this question: 47% agreed, 20% disagreed and 32% were not sure.
44. Many respondents thought that giving the local authorities the clear strategic lead for 14-19 education and training offered a real opportunity to integrate provision between schools, colleges and employers. Many agreed that this move will improve coherence of the planning of 14-19 provision, and customise provision to the local labour market requirements. With the focus on the Diploma, the development of the 14-19 curriculum and the increase in the age of participation, local authorities are best placed to take on this role.
45. Those who disagreed or were unsure asked for an extended rationale for the changes to convince them of the case for change. Some of those who disagreed were unconvinced of the need for two agencies to replace the LSC.

### **3.5 Funding**

46. In the White Paper there were several questions around funding. Respondents were first asked: "Do you agree that the model we have proposed for transferring funding to the local authority is the best way to give

local authorities effective powers to commission, to balance the budget, create coherence for providers and retain the national funding formula?" There were 374 responses to this question: 34% of respondents agreed, 35% disagreed and 32% were not sure.

47. For the new funding system to work some respondents were of the opinion that the new arrangements must ensure that funding follows the learner, and is the same regardless of the young person's institution. Some respondents thought that if learners decided on certain providers then these providers should not be "capped" for growth but funded for growth. Respondents reiterated that some providers take students from many surrounding areas, and the new arrangements must ensure that these students can continue to move in this way. This new system must be coherent for learners; they should not notice the change.
48. Respondents were also asked "Are you content with the proposals to retain a National Funding Formula (NFF) based closely on the existing one?" There were 345 responses to this question: 79% agreed, 8% disagreed and 14% were not sure.
49. Many respondents agreed with the basis for funding flow to institutions as described in the White Paper and believed this achieved a fair balance between the need for a degree of stability in funding allocations to institutions, and the need to adjust funding in response to learner decisions.
50. Some of those who disagreed felt that maintaining the NFF method would reduce the ability of local authorities and local providers to determine collectively where resource is most appropriately focused.
51. Some were unclear whether, in directing funding to local authorities as a single grant, it would be ring-fenced to local authority pre-19 provision. Respondents said it was essential that college funding was ring-fenced within local authorities to ensure transparency and integrity and to sustain the strength and coherence of the college sector.
52. Respondents were also asked "Are you content with the proposals for funding to flow to institutions on the basis described [in the White Paper]?" There were 325 responses to this question: 65% of respondents agreed, 7% disagreed and 28% were not sure.
53. The respondents who agreed with the basis for funding flow to institutions as described in the White Paper believed this will achieve a fair balance between the need for a degree of stability in funding allocations to institutions, and the need to adjust funding in response to learner decisions. Those who disagreed or were unsure were concerned about annual assessment, and believed three year funding would give greater confidence.
54. Respondents also responded to the question "Would you support a move to a single national 14-19 funding system?" There were 326 responses to this question: 70% agreed, 9% disagreed and 21% were not sure.

55. Over two thirds of the respondents (70%) agreed with the move to a single national funding system, and believed this would be a significant step towards providing the right type of education and training for all 14-19 year olds, and would place all providers on the same footing. Those who were unsure or disagreed thought a single 14-19 funding system represented a major change in the funding arrangements for the secondary phase only a year after the new commissioning arrangements were launched. Some respondents also disagreed with the removal of local authorities' ability to set local funding formulae for 14-16 year olds in consultation with Schools Forums.
56. Respondents raised the following areas as areas for further clarification: Apprenticeship funding; the flexibility of funding to move between education streams; and whether DCSF could provide further information about the proposed move to a 14-19 funding system particularly the fit with the NFF.

### **3.6 Sub-regional grouping**

57. Respondents were asked "Do you agree that there is a need for sub-regional groupings of local authorities for commissioning?" There were 355 responses to this question: 65% of respondents agreed, 14% disagreed and 21% were not sure.
58. Some respondents stated that it will be helpful to establish sub-regional groupings as travel to learn and travel to work patterns will be important in provision planning. This is because many learners cross boundaries to study, and many unitary authorities are too small for effective decision making on provision given this free movement of learners across boundaries. However, respondents were concerned sub-regional groupings may lead to bureaucratic forums which could delay decision making.
59. Some respondents supported sub-regional groupings but only where they are appropriate. They suggested that some local authorities might be large enough to be a single "sub-region" themselves. They stressed that however the groups are arranged they must be kept as simple as possible.
60. Some respondents highlighted the following areas where further clarity or guidance would be useful: criteria for forming sub-regional groupings; recommendations for the membership of the groupings, and when the groupings will need to be formed by.

### **3.7 Regional groupings**

61. Respondents were also asked "Do you agree that there is a need for local authorities to come together regionally to consider plans collectively?" There were 344 responses to this question: 75% of respondents agreed, 8% disagreed and 17% were not sure.
62. Some respondents considered it important to involve key stakeholders in planning, and vital that local authorities should work collaboratively to ensure there are consistent commissioning decisions. Respondents also

mentioned the need for experienced educationalists, as well as Sector Skills Councils and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to be involved in considering the aggregation of plans but were unsure as to whether the RDA should be the co-chair of the regional groupings as the statutory responsibility will lie with local authorities. Some respondents believed that regional groupings would serve to make a fairer and more strategic planning system and noted that the level of regional activity would be helpful in terms of specialist provision, and provision for those with learning difficulties.

63. Some respondents felt that while guidance on the minimum membership of a regional grouping would be helpful, the arrangements for governance and leadership could be determined in each region.
64. Some respondents were concerned that local authorities coming together regionally would not be an effective way of resolving problems associated with the colleges that recruited nationally and across regions. They also reiterated that rural factors need to be given equal weighting in regional planning.
65. Further clarification was also requested about the powers of the regional groupings and who will be on the membership of these groups.

### **3.8 The Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)**

66. Respondents were asked "Do you agree that there is a need for a slim national 14-19 agency with reserve powers to balance the budget and step in if needed?" There were 345 responses to this question: 66% of respondents agreed, 9% disagreed and 26% were not sure.
67. Those who disagreed or were unsure feared the YPLA would increase bureaucracy, and would be costly and overly complicated.
68. Some respondents thought a slim national body was essential in order to ensure equity of approach and coherent planning and funding and that it was sensible for Central Government to maintain reserve powers so as to provide local authorities with real incentive to secure the capacity and capability to take on the new responsibilities. Many respondents stressed that this body must be kept as slim as possible to ensure that decision making is not slowed or affected by many layers of agencies.
69. It was seen to be important that the YPLA should be seen as a strong body with the power and speed to respond to and resolve issues effectively, and ensure equity of provision between local authority areas. Respondents suggested that the YPLA should have additional responsibilities for students with learning difficulties under 25, and young people in juvenile custody during the initial years of the reforms.
70. Other respondents felt that all commissioning capacity should be transferred to local authorities and that this should take place by 2010. They also felt that local authorities should have a strong voice within the YPLA.

71. Clarity was requested on: what the roles and responsibilities of the YPLA will be; how the YPLA will interface with local authorities and the SFA; and what commissioning powers it will hold.

### **3.9 Interface between agencies**

72. Respondents were asked “Do you agree that we have described the way that these bodies would function in broadly the right way? Is the balance of responsibilities between them right?” There were 330 responses to this question: 22% of respondents agreed, 33% disagreed and 45% were not sure.
73. In the new system there will need to be interactions between the local authorities, YPLA and the SFA inside which the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will be housed. Many of the respondents said the White Paper did not provide enough information about how these bodies would function, and how the balance of responsibilities would be delegated for them to be able to offer an opinion at this stage.
74. Some respondents felt that the new system would create a new divide at 19 and that it may have been more helpful for the proposals to allow local authorities and other strategic partners to have a single point of contact for all post-16 learners.
75. Further information about the roles and responsibilities, and the points at which these organisations interact is needed. Specific information on the division of responsibilities between the performance management of school sixth forms, sixth form colleges and FE colleges is also needed.
76. Respondents called for clarity on the relationship between the YPLA, the SFA, the NAS, and local authorities.

### **3.10 Commissioning**

77. Respondents were asked “Do you agree that there is a need for a single local authority to lead the conversation with each provider?” There were 339 responses to this question: 65% of respondents agreed, 13% disagreed and 22% were not sure.
78. Almost two thirds of the respondents (65%) agreed that there was a need for a single local authority to lead the conversation with each provider to prevent the duplication of work and excessive bureaucracy, and to be able to understand the local context in which the provider was operating. Some respondents supported this proposal as it requires a high level of collaboration between neighbouring authorities, stakeholders and agencies. Some respondents mentioned that a more collaborative approach with a clear focus on jointly meeting the needs of all young people was a sound approach, but would be achieved more easily in some areas of the country than others. They thought that this model would work as long as the sub-regional partnerships were collaborating and functioning fully and effectively. Respondents thought that a single local authority leading the conversation with each provider would stop the duplication of work and excessive bureaucracy.

79. Many respondents were clear that the commissioning process should be designed to give final budgets as quickly as possible.
80. Clarity was requested on how all types of provider will be commissioned in the new system, how all providers will be considered equally during commissioning, how the proposed single conversation will work in practice and how it will be ensured that splitting commissioning between the local authority, the sub-regional groupings and the YPLA will not increase bureaucracy, and cause political tension.

### **3.11 Performance management**

81. Respondents were asked “Do you agree with the proposed approach to a common performance management framework based on the Framework for Excellence?” There were 316 responses to this question: 73% agreed, 9% disagreed and 18% were not sure.
82. The new reforms proposed that schools, school sixth forms and sixth form colleges will be performance managed by the local authorities in the new system; FE colleges will be performance managed by the SFA. Many respondents said in order to ensure commissioning decisions were based on rational criteria, it was important there was a level playing field, with a consistent model for schools, school sixth forms and FE colleges being judged on the same performance measures.
83. Almost three quarters (73%) of the respondents agreed that performance management should be based on the Framework for Excellence (FfE) to ensure consistent evaluation of the different provision across providers. It is important that the FfE is put into place and applied to schools and colleges in a similar way, and these arrangements should not be influenced by political pressure. To compare provision effectively would require a clear and measurable set of targets implemented across all providers to ensure that young people are able to make choices from information that is based on the same criteria across providers. There was also the suggestion to link the performance management criteria to those of Ofsted.
84. Overall the proposals for a common performance management framework were positively received as a move towards a more level playing field for all providers, and a more comparable way for learners and their parents/guardians to make decisions about the best provision.
85. Respondents were also asked “Do you agree with: the local authority role in commissioning to improve quality?” There were 262 responses to this question: 64% agreed, 13% disagreed and 23% were not sure.
86. Several respondents mentioned that local authorities already had a strategic commissioning function and were committed to driving up standards and quality. Those who disagreed or were not sure said working with so many different groups could mean the level of quality of provision could be judged differently in each local authority area, which may lead to potential

inconsistencies.

87. Some respondents felt that the new system should allow local authorities flexibility in their commissioning but make sure that they are held to account for the outcomes they deliver.
88. Some respondents asked for a more detailed account of how this would work in practice before they could agree to this local authority responsibility.
89. Further clarity was asked for around: what changes will be made to the FfE to make it applicable to the new system so that there is a level playing field, and to whom local authorities and providers will be accountable for delivering their roles and responsibilities.

### **3.12 Timescale and staff transition**

90. Respondents were asked “Do these proposals about timescale and transition appear reasonable?” There were 336 responses to this question: 42% agreed, 24% disagreed and 35% were not sure.
91. Many respondents said if the LSC transition was handled well, the timescale and transition would be very demanding, but manageable, and agreed that there would be a need for transition arrangements in 2009. There were concerns over whether the timescales allow local authorities time to build their capacity and capability sufficiently.
92. A few respondents noted that care must be taken not to destabilise the sector and recognised that the retention of LSC expertise plays a key role in this. Respondents called for more detailed timescales outlining how the reforms will be implemented and supported during the transition period.

### **3.13 Apprenticeships**

93. As set out in the White Paper in the new system Apprenticeships will be managed by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) which will be housed in the SFA. Some respondents were concerned that this would mean that the Apprenticeship would be less flexible. Concerns were also raised over whether the NAS was best placed to increase the number of pre-19 year olds taking Apprenticeships.
94. Respondents asked for clarity on how the plans for Apprenticeships will be implemented and how funding for Apprenticeships will flow in the new system.

### **3.14 Sixth form colleges**

95. The White Paper proposed that for the first time colleges will be legally designated as sixth form colleges or FE colleges. Some respondents felt that they lacked clarity over the need for this designation and over whether there are any benefits in being designated as a sixth form college rather than an FE college or vice-versa.

96. Colleges will remain autonomous bodies. In the new system the difference between sixth form colleges and FE colleges will be who acts as their performance manager. Sixth form colleges will be performance managed by their home local authority, where as FE colleges will be managed by the SFA. Respondents felt that the different performance management systems could potentially lead to local authorities having a more distant relationship with FE colleges.
97. Concerns were also raised about payment of value added tax in sixth form colleges, different financial and funding years, and the differences in staff costs in FE compared with sixth form colleges.
98. Respondents asked for further clarity about how the designation process will work and details about the new performance management arrangements.

### **3.15 Presumptions and competitions**

99. Respondents were asked “Do you agree with the proposals for managing changes to 16-19 organisation and adjusting the arrangements for 16-19 competitions and presumptions?” There were 288 responses to this question: 61% agreed, 10% disagreed and 29% were not sure.
100. Many of the respondents were fully supportive of the proposals for managing changes and adjusting arrangements for competitions, and agreed that any developments must fit in with local needs. They believed these changes would contribute to the achievement of a more coherent range of provision. It was mentioned that these changes should be implemented now, and should not wait for the planned legislation in 2010. Respondents said implementation could happen by changing the regulations made under the 2006 Education and Inspections Act and changing the instructions given to the LSC about the use of its capital fund.
101. Respondents wanted further clarification over how will it be ensured that any developments will fit in with local needs and commissioning plans.

### **3.16 Capital**

102. Respondents were asked “Do you agree with the proposals for capital funding?” There were 311 responses to this question: 32% agreed, 27% disagreed and 42% were not sure.
103. Those who agreed said it made sense for the YPLA to hold the capital fund. Those who disagreed were against the splitting of capital funding and said local authorities should hold the capital pot to ensure a clear link with their commissioning plans.
104. Those who disagreed or were not sure felt that it did not make sense for post-16 capital funding to remain with the YPLA. They felt that for planning of expansion, contraction and reorganisation capital should be joined-up with the devolved Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

105. Most respondents called for the capital proposals to be linked more closely to BSF and required further clarification on: how will it be ensured that there is a common system for capital funding for FE colleges across both their pre and post-19 learners; how capital funding will be applied to special schools and specialist colleges; and how the plans will fit in with BSF.

### **3.17 Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities**

106. Respondents were asked “Do you agree with the proposed approach for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD)?” There were 298 responses to this question: 57% agreed, 15% disagreed and 27% were not sure.
107. Over half (57%) of the respondents agreed that local authorities are the correct leads for LLDD and fully supported local authorities having responsibility for LLDD learners up to the age of 25. Those who disagreed or were not sure believed that this vulnerable group would not be best served by a local approach, or that it was more sensible for the YPLA to take responsibility. Because of these reservations some respondents suggested in the first year it should be the YPLA who take responsibility for the planning and funding of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This role could then be devolved to local authorities in subsequent years. They believed this would ensure there was a smooth transition from the current LSC arrangements and would minimise the disruption for this vulnerable group.
108. Those who agreed felt that integrating 0-19 commissioning for young people with special educational needs and learning difficulties or disabilities would enable more joined up delivery.
109. Many respondents stated that funding arrangements for LLDD learners should be the same as for other provision and local commissioning decisions should be based on the budget for all learners. They believed if the funding was separated, then there was a risk that provision would not reflect the balance of local needs.
110. Respondents believed the funding and eligibility criteria for LLDD are more rigid for FE colleges than for schools, and the new arrangements must ensure there was comparability between institutions. Most respondents were clear that funding needs to be sufficient to enable young people’s needs to be met effectively.
111. Further clarity was requested on how LLDD providers will be commissioned and how LLDD funding will flow.

### **3.18 Young Offenders**

112. Respondents were asked several questions around the education and training of young offenders. The first question asked “Do you agree that local authorities should be responsible for commissioning provision for young offenders in custodial institutions?” There were 273 responses to this question: 55% agreed, 21% disagreed and 25% were not sure.

113. Just over half of the respondents (55%) agreed that local authorities should be responsible for commissioning provision for juvenile young offenders in custodial institutions and said the commissioning for young people in custodial institutions was currently weak and should be a much higher priority. Some said it was important that when young offenders returned to their locality there was a seamless, one stop support service. They believed a consistency of education and skills provision was important as it could facilitate transition out of custody and into the community.
114. Those who did not agree or were unsure, thought this would be difficult to administer for organisations working across different regions, and it could lead to unfair provision as different local authorities had different working practices.
115. Respondents were then asked “Do you favour the ‘host’ funding model, or the model where ‘home’ authorities are charged?” There were 272 responses to this question: 30% favoured the host model, 32% favoured the home model and 38% were not sure.
116. Some respondents felt that both home and host local authorities should be involved in the education and training of young offenders but that this approach would need careful handling of bureaucracy.
117. Some respondents thought that the lead responsibility should initially be with the YPLA, whilst the ‘host’ and ‘home’ models were piloted. Some respondents believed that the expertise and experience in dealing with this vulnerable group lay with the LSC, and the YPLA would retain the experience for commissioning provision for young offenders from the LSC. They believed the responsibility could be devolved to the local authorities at a later date.
118. Some respondents thought that local authorities should be responsible for commissioning provision for young offenders in custodial institutions only if they worked in partnership with other sector agencies. Respondents mentioned groups such as the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) should liaise with local authorities to manage this group.
119. Other respondents expressed concern that local authorities would deal with local and not wider issues, and therefore believed that young offenders in custodial institutions must come under a national funding structure.
120. There were mixed views over whether a host or home model of juvenile young offender funding should be used, with most respondents being undecided on which model would be the most effective. Many respondents said that if this was delegated to local authorities then it was essential that the home authority should retain responsibility. However, others supported the principle of the home local authority retaining responsibility but felt that this would be too complex to implement and would result in significant administrative burdens. These respondents therefore favoured the host authority taking responsibility because it would be simpler for the funding to be directed to host authorities, rather than implementing complex arrangements to recoup from home authorities. Many respondents said that there are other

levers and incentives beyond funding routes, which could be used to ensure that home local authorities maintain an interest in the young person's education whilst they are in custody, and to ensure a smooth transition for young offenders on their return to the community.

121. Respondents were also asked "Are there planning or legislative levers other than funding systems which would create the right responsibilities and incentives to promote the best outcomes for this group of young people?" There were 241 responses to this question: 58% thought there were, 3% thought that there were not, and 39% were not sure.
122. 11% said that the standards set out in the common inspection framework could be an important lever in raising quality. Respondents believed its systems for measuring and publishing success, and its systems for managing performance would encourage better outcomes for young people in juvenile custody.
123. 7% were of the opinion that the home authority must monitor the quality of provision, and that this could be tested through Annual Performance Assessment (APA) or Joint Area Review (JAR) activity.
124. 5% said there must be a strong lever to ensure that local authorities must take account of providers beyond their service boundaries. Examples put forward by respondents were, non-maintained independent (NMI) special schools, specialist colleges, and voluntary and private providers.
125. Further clarity was required over: how it will be ensured that when young offenders returned to their locality there will be a seamless, one stop support service; how local authorities work with other sector agencies (e.g. the National Offender Management Service (NOMS)); and which model is now the preferred model.

### **3.19 Information, advice and guidance**

126. Respondents were asked "Do you agree with: proposals to ensure that informed learner choices should be a key part of shaping the system?" There were 349 responses to this question: 95% of respondents agreed, 1% disagreed and 3% were not sure.
127. The majority (95%) of respondents agreed with the proposal that informed learner choices should be a key part of shaping the new system. Most respondents thought that the provision of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) represented one of the fundamental policies of a demand-led model because it empowered young people to make informed choices. Respondents said for this to work effectively, IAG services must be well resourced, easily accessible, and backed up by well researched and robust data.
128. 35% of respondents said there must be improvements in IAG to ensure that young people made informed choices based on clear options. Respondents thought the key to this was 'genuinely' informed learner choice,

and impartial guidance from accredited sources. IAG should give young people information about the opportunities they have for increasing the education and skills and also about the national and local labour needs.

129. Some respondents highlighted the potential tension between a learner demand and a fully planned system. They suggested that this could be addressed in part through ensuring that learners are well informed and advised.
130. Clarification was asked for on: what is being done to improve the IAG system, including ensuring that it is well resourced, easily accessible, and backed up by well researched and robust data?

### **3.20 Capacity and capability building**

131. Although the White Paper did not directly ask for respondents views on how capacity and capability in local authorities will be increased to help them deliver the reforms, it was a strong theme in respondent's answers.
132. Most respondents supported the principle of responsibility for funding for pre-19 education and training passing from the LSC to local authorities, many had concerns that these proposals were complex, and questioned the capability of local authorities to undertake this leadership role.
133. The proposal to move the responsibility for funding to local authorities was seen to be based on an assumption that local authorities had the expertise to commission provision for the pre-19 age range, and the willingness to work together collectively and transparently. Many respondents were of the opinion that the local authority did not currently have the capacity to take on this new responsibility and would need support to build the appropriate understanding of key client groups. Some respondents were concerned that planning would not be strategic. Further clarity was requested on: how local authorities will gain the knowledge and skills they need to improve their capability to carry out their new responsibilities; how local authorities will be supported to build the relationships they need with the FE sector to nurture trust and cooperation between them; and how the transition of staff will be managed?

### **3.21 Bureaucracy and complexity**

134. Respondents concerns over the level of complexity and bureaucracy that the reforms might bring to the system was a strong theme in the responses.
135. Those who disagreed with the proposal to move the responsibility for pre-19 funding for education and training from the LSC to local authorities thought the system proposed would increase bureaucracy and delay a demand-led approach. Respondents believed there was a danger, even with the creation of the YPLA, that provision would become fragmented. There is a need for further detail on how bureaucracy will be managed to avoid adding extra administration costs and possibly taking resources away from delivery.

136. Respondents were also concerned that providers might encounter a more bureaucratic process when being commissioned to provide education and training. They thought that providers might have to have many more planning and commissioning conversations than they have now and asked for further reassurance around the single commissioning conversation.
137. They were also concerned that all the levels in the system (local, sub-regional, regional, and national) might lead to delays in the decision making process. They asked whether decisions will be passed between boards before being made and communicated to providers.
138. Further clarification was requested on: how bureaucracy will be avoided in the new system; how it will be ensured that providers will not have a more bureaucratic commissioning process to negotiate; and how decision making will be kept quick and responsive.

## **Part 2 – Reforming the Post-19 Skills System to Secure Better Outcomes for Adults**

139. Part two of the White Paper set out the proposed reforms to the post-19 system, including the establishment of a next steps agency – the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), whose key function will be to support a strong demand-led sector, by deploying funding swiftly and flexibly to FE colleges and providers, in response to the purchasing decisions of adult learners. The SFA will also support a strong and coherent FE service which is crucial to delivering the services learners and employers should expect.

### **4.1 Summary**

140. The majority of respondents supported the creation of a new national body – the SFA, and recognised the importance of these reforms in taking forward the Leitch agenda. The broad response was again cautiously positive. Most respondents requested further detail on the SFA's role and responsibilities, particularly in relation to funding and planning, and stressed the importance of the SFA working closely with local authorities and the YPLA.

### **4.2 The Skills Funding Agency**

141. Respondents were asked “Do you agree with the proposal to create a new Skills Funding Agency to replace the Learning and Skills Council post-19?” There were 327 responses to this question: 62% agreed, 15% disagreed and 22% were unsure.

142. The majority of respondents recognised the need for a national body to oversee post-19 funding and delivery, with a clear focus on demand-led funding and performance management. Some respondents believed that the transition from the LSC to the SFA was a major undertaking, and suggested that the potential risks of this transfer could be minimised by locating the SFA in Coventry and using existing mechanisms as a starting point.

143. Of those who disagreed, 10% were of the opinion that the LSC should be left in place, preferring evolution of existing systems to wholesale changes. This position was based upon concerns over instability and the need for a large change management exercise.

144. Some respondents were concerned that the creation of a largely local led system for pre-19, but a nationally led system for post-19, would result in an inconsistent, more complex approach to funding and fragmented the governance of the system. 7% of respondents preferred that funding for adults be transferred to local authorities, to create a single strategic leader for both 14-19 and adults. Others queried whether the government had considered other models, such as the RDA.

145. Some respondents (5%) noted the need for local contact within the SFA. Others were also concerned that there was a gap in the consideration of

the links between further education and higher education in this proposal, and the impact that this could have on progression between the two sectors

146. Respondents emphasised:

- The importance of the SFA becoming a streamlined body so that it would be effective, focused and less bureaucratic;
- The need for the SFA to be flexible at local level, in order to meet the demands of local employers and the skills needs of sub-regional economies;
- The importance of building on the LSC's work, achievements and knowledge of the adult education and skills sector and retaining the experience and skills of LSC staff;
- The need for local contact within the SFA; and
- That managing the transition into a total demand-led system to include train to gain and skills accounts, would require the new agency to be more pro-active in its links to employers and the new national employer service.

147. Respondents were also asked "Do you agree with the proposed role of the Agency?" There were 311 responses to this question: 46% of respondents agreed, 23% disagreed and 31% were unsure.

148. Some respondents noted that as the SFA had a broad role, it was essential that it worked collaboratively with other agencies and with local authorities, to ensure a seamless delivery of skills from pre to post-19.

149. Of those that disagreed or were unsure about the agency's role, 12% expressed concern that the establishment of the SFA as an executive agency would limit the sources of advice to government, noting that Cabinet Office guidance suggests that an executive agency structure is suitable where expert advice is not needed, and when the emphasis is on implementation of decisions made by Ministers.

150. Some respondents emphasised that micromanagement of providers should be avoided and again noted the importance of the SFA reducing bureaucracy.

151. Some respondents requested further information on where responsibility would lie in respect of planning functions if the SFA did not take on this role.

### **4.3 Funding and Commissioning**

152. Respondents were asked "Do you agree with the funding and commissioning role proposed for the Skills Funding Agency?" There were 306 responses to this question: 53% agreed, 14% disagreed and 32% were unsure.

153. Just over half of the respondents supported the funding and commissioning role of the SFA, again emphasising the importance of building on the knowledge of the adult education and skills sector developed by the LSC. Respondents also noted that employers' needs must be fully reflected in decisions made locally on funding and commissioning.
154. Of those respondents that disagreed with the SFA's proposed funding and commissioning role, some considered that either there was an argument for adult skills being devolved to local authorities or expressed concern about most funding being provided via Train to Gain or Skills Accounts. It was also suggested that improvements need to be made to Train to Gain for it to operate effectively. Those that were unsure requested further detail, especially on the role and responsibilities of the agency, budget allocations and how it would operate at sub-regional and regional level.
155. The White Paper also asked "Do the proposals in this chapter reflect the right balance of strategic commissioning and individual customer choice?" There were 293 responses to this question: 22% agreed, 30% disagreed and 48% were unsure.
156. Almost half of the respondents were unsure and considered that more detail was required. Of those respondents that agreed, some welcomed proposals for the SFA to have a regional as well as a national presence, and plans to work closely with partners.
157. Of the respondents that disagreed, concerns focused upon Train to Gain and Skills Accounts. These included concern that the shift in funding to Train to Gain and Skills Accounts would result in funding being diverted from other valuable provision. Others felt that further piloting of Train to Gain was needed or raised concerns about lack of demand for Train to Gain in particular parts of the country. Some thought that proposals to route funding via 'untested' Skills Accounts in 2010/11 were premature.
158. More clarity was requested on the following areas: demand-led funding (including how demand would be met if demand for training out-weighed supply); the administration of the learning account system; the basis on which the funding level will be made under the national funding system and whether the funding level will allow providers to recover costs or give incentives for providers to grow their businesses; how strategic commissioning and funding that follows the learner fit together; and the roles and responsibilities of the SFA including how it will operate at regional and sub regional level.

#### **4.4 Performance management and intervention**

159. Respondents were asked "Do you agree with the proposals on performance management and the performance intervention role of the Skills Funding Agency?" There were 282 responses to this question: 52% agreed, 18% disagreed and 30% were unsure
160. Respondents that agreed with the performance management and intervention role of the SFA agreed that it was sensible for one agency to have

an overview of the whole FE sector, welcomed the move to a more self-regulated FE system underpinned with the Framework for Excellence, and considered that these proposals seemed close to being a transfer of current practice. Respondents also emphasised the importance of effective liaison between YPLA and the SFA in respect of those organisations whose main relationship was with the YPLA. Some respondents, who were unsure, considered this part of the white paper to be unclear and lacking vision and detail.

161. Some respondents considered that the correct balance between self-regulation and external safeguards had not been struck. Other respondents took the view that local authorities should lead on accountability for their home FE institutions rather than the SFA.
162. Some respondents were unconvinced that a national SFA would be close enough to the providers to take effective action. They raised concerns about locating performance intervention for the 16-19 sector with the SFA, considering that this approach risked destabilising the local authority commissioning and funding activity. In addition there were concerns that as this work was commissioned, funded, and quality assessed by local authorities and YPLA it would prove difficult for DIUS to maintain oversight over the range of institutions for their performance and viability.
163. Further clarification was requested on the role of the SFA in performance management, and the relationship between the SFA and Ofsted

#### **4.5 Sponsorship of the FE sector**

164. Respondents were asked “Have we got the right approach to sponsorship of the FE sector as a whole?” There were 272 responses to this question: 23% agreed, 38% disagreed and 39% were unsure.
165. Some respondents thought that the proposals in the White Paper took the right approach, emphasising the importance of ensuring that the system is flexible, avoiding a narrow approach to the definition of the FE sector and ensuring that uniqueness of the provider breadth is maintained.
166. Of those respondents that disagreed or remained unsure, some highlighted the complexity of the proposals and potential for confusion between the roles of the various organisations. Others were concerned about the loss of a single body championing FE colleges through the planning and commissioning phases and the impact of the proposals on sixth form colleges.
167. Some respondents thought that the proposals didn’t consider the characteristics and student profiles of colleges, whatever their formal designation. Others thought that the post 19 proposals did not place the same degree of emphasis on institutional stability as the pre-19 proposals.
168. Some respondents highlighted a risk that FE colleges could reduce adult/demand-led provision in order to gain greater funding from delivering the 14-19 agenda associated with sixth form college designation. Others

considered that a national system that divided planning, funding and monitoring between different agencies could prevent the full potential of the FE sector's contribution to local education and training priorities being harnessed.

169. The risk of financial vulnerability resulting from the uncertainty of demand-led Train to Gain provision was also raised as was concern that the supply side could become risk averse, reducing choice, flexibility and responsiveness.
170. The following areas were highlighted as requiring further information: how the SFA will work with local authorities and ESBs; management and intervention in relation to independent providers; and more detail about governance and capital investment and a definition of the FE sector.

#### **4.6 Other functions of the SFA and the wider skills landscape**

171. Respondents were asked "Do you agree that each of the functions in [chapter 10] should be performed by the Skills Funding Agency?" There were 273 responses to this question: 57% agreed, 10% disagreed and 34% were not sure.
172. Over half of the respondents (57%) agreed that the SFA should take on the functions outlined in the White Paper, which included: management of the National Employer Service (NES) and Adult Advancement and Careers Service (AACCS); housing the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS); and responsibility for funding adult offender learning. Some respondents considered that this would enhance the integration and employment and skills at a national level.
173. Some respondents again questioned the planning and funding functions of the SFA, and said these needed more clarity. Respondents also requested more detail on how much autonomy NAS would have under the SFA. Some respondents were concerned that the nature of Apprenticeships as an 'employment based' pathway was not yet clearly understood. Others noted that the wide range of functions of the SFA placed delivery of its commitment to being a focussed and streamlined agency at risk.
174. Some respondents stressed the importance of a uniform approach to commissioning provision, whilst 12% emphasised the importance of operational work at local level to ensure that the integration of skills and employment at national level occurred in the services delivered to employers and individuals.
175. Finally, respondents were asked "Do you agree with this description of the wider skills landscape within which the Skills Funding Agency will operate?" There were 263 responses to this question: 49% agreed, 10% disagreed and 41% were unsure.
176. Almost half of the respondents (49%) agreed and considered that the proposed remit for the agency would strengthen coherence to the adult skills system overall. Some respondents welcomed the recognition of autonomy for

providers, the movement towards self-regulation and an environment where colleges could take strategic decisions.

177. Some respondents raised concerns about the complexity of the proposals and stressed that the SFA would need to carefully coordinate and monitor service delivery between the different agencies to identify and manage performance. Some respondents stressed the importance of the SFA working closely with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), others suggested that the proposals would require further testing if they were to be effectively implemented.

178. Further details were requested on the following areas: the relationship between the SFA and Jobcentre plus; the relationship between the SFA and HEFCE; and the level of autonomy NAS will have under the SFA and the nature of apprenticeships as 'employment based' pathways. It was again stressed that more information was required on the planning and funding functions of the SFA.

## Annexes

A	Glossary
B	The categories of stakeholders who responded in writing to the White Paper <i>Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver</i> .

## **Glossary**

### **14-19 Partnership**

14-19 Partnerships are partnerships formed between schools, work-based learning providers, colleges, local authorities, LSC and other stakeholders to collaboratively plan and provide the full 14-19 offer.

### **Adult Advancement and Careers Service**

This will be a new service set to be fully operational in 2010. It will give adults information and advice about skills, jobs and other matters to help them overcome barriers to success in work.

### **ALI Adult Learning Inspectorate**

This was a non-departmental public body responsible for inspecting the quality and education of training for adults and young people in England. In April 2007 it merged with the new OFSTED's (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) Learning & Skills Directorate.

### **Apprenticeship**

The Apprenticeship is a structured programme of training which gives an individual the opportunity to work for an employer, learn on the job and build up transferable knowledge and skills. A successful Apprentice will achieve an occupationally specific qualification alongside qualifications in basic skills and in a broader vocational area.

### **BSF Building Schools for the Future**

BSF is the major capital programme for renewing school buildings in England.

### **CAA Comprehensive Area Assessment**

This will provide the first independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there. It will put the experience of citizens, people who use services and local taxpayers at the centre of a new local assessment framework, with a particular focus on those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. CAA will be managed by the Audit Commission with multi inspectorate involvement.

### **Dedicated Schools Grant**

A ring-fenced specific grant, paid to local authorities for their maintained schools.

### **Employment and Skills Boards**

Led by employers, Employment and Skills Boards are set up in local areas to encourage the involvement of local employers to decide what skills and resources are required to meet the local market needs, including what training support is needed.

### **ESF**

The European Social Fund was set up to improve employment opportunities in the European Union (EU) and so help raise standards of living. It aims to help people fulfil their potential by giving them better skills and better job prospects. As one of the EU's Structural Funds, ESF seeks to reduce differences in prosperity across the EU and enhance economic and social cohesion.

## **FE College Further Education College**

This is an education establishment for post secondary education. They offer anything from basic skills to A Levels, Higher Nationals and Foundation Degrees.

## **Framework for Excellence (FfE)**

The Framework for Excellence is a comprehensive and new approach to managing performance of FE providers.

## **HEFCE**

The Higher Education Funding Council for England is a non-departmental public body of DIUS which is responsible for the distribution of funding to Universities and colleges of higher and further education.

## **IAG Information, Advice and Guidance**

This is the provision of impartial advice and guidance on learning and skills. IAG providers include the Connexions Service for young people and IAG Partnerships and learndirect advice for adults.

## **ILR**

Individualised Learner Record is an aggregation of records about individuals' learning that is collected by UK education bodies in relation to the funding they receive from the LSC.

## **Jobcentre Plus**

Jobcentre Plus provides an integrated service to people of working age. It offers help to people looking to move into work and support for people who cannot. Jobcentre Plus also provides a range of services to help employers fill their vacancies quickly.

## **Juvenile offender/Juvenile custody**

A young person under the supervision of the youth justice system (aged 10-17, and some 18 year olds who are near the end of their sentence). Juvenile Custody refers to custodial places for young people in the youth justice system and includes places funded by the Youth Justice Board in Secure Children's Homes (SCHs), Secure Training Centres (STCs), and Young Offender Institutions (YOIs).

## **Level 2**

Level 2 is an educational attainment level, which is part of the National Qualification Framework. An example of a level 2 qualification would include GCSEs or National Vocational Qualification Level 2. A full level 2 is equivalent to 5 GCSEs at grade A\* to C.

## **Level 3**

Level 3 is an educational attainment level, which is part of the National Qualification Framework. An example of a level 3 qualification would be an A Level at Grade E or above, or National Vocational Qualification Level 3.

## **LLDD**

Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

### **Local Employment Partnerships**

Local Employment Partnerships are a new collaboration between Government and business to tackle the increasing recruitment and skills challenges of the labour market and economy.

### **LRS**

Learner Registration Service is an internet based facility capable of providing a Unique Learner Number. This will allow people to build a lifelong record of their learning participation and achievements (their learner record), which they can access and can choose to share.

### **LSC**

The Learning and Skills Council is a non-departmental public body responsible for planning and funding high quality education and training for post-16 learners in England, other than those in Universities.

### **MAA Multi-Area Agreements**

MAA are cross local authority boundary arrangements to bring together key players in flexible arrangements to tackle issues which are best addressed in partnership at regional or sub-regional level.

### **Machinery of Government**

This is the term used to explain the changes to established systems of public administration.

### **MIAP Managing Information Across Partners**

MIAP is a programme designed to allow for the streamlining of the collection, handling and sharing of information on learning and achievement for education and training organisations.

### **NAS**

National Apprenticeships Service is a customer-facing agency, which was announced in the Apprenticeships review, aimed at putting England's apprenticeship system amongst the world's best. NAS will provide a streamlined customer-facing service designed to meet the needs and expectations of learners, providers and employers and will have end-to-end responsibility for the entire programme.

### **NDPB: Non-Departmental Public Body**

These are public bodies that are not an integral part of a Government department but are ultimately responsible to Parliament.

### **NEET**

Not in Education, Employment or Training.

### **NES**

National Employer Service offers a single interface for employers with over 5,000 employees, designed to meet all their skills needs.

### **OLASS Offenders Learning and Skills Service**

A service which commissions learning and skills provision for offenders on a regional basis

**PAC Public Accounts Committee**

They examine the accounts of the sums of money granted by Parliament for public expenditure to ensure that it is being spent properly.

**Provider**

The provider is an institution or organisation that delivers training and education in return for receiving public and/or private funds.

**PSA Public Service Agreement**

This details a Government department's aims and objectives for the next three years explaining how these targets will be achieved and how performance is measured.

**QIA**

The Quality Improvement Agency commissions quality improvement to improve provider performance within the learning and skills sector.

**RDA Regional Development Agency**

This is a non-departmental regional body that promotes economic development and regeneration. Each of the nine government regions has its own RDA.

**SEN**

Special Educational Needs

**Skills Accounts**

Skills Accounts enable adults to take control of their learning by accessing funds to cover all or part of their course fees. They put purchasing power in the hands of individuals to access learning with an accredited provider of their choice. They will help individuals develop skills for job entry and progression.

**SSC**

Sector Skills Councils are state-sponsored, employer-led organisations that cover specific economic sectors in the UK and have four key goals: to reduce skills gaps and shortages, to improve productivity, to boost the skills of their sector workforces and to improve skills supply.

**Sub-National Review**

*Review of sub-national economic development and regeneration July 2007.*

**Targeted Youth Support**

Coordinated delivery of action to help young people who have additional needs that cannot be met by universal services, and who are at high or growing risk of poor outcomes, such as substance misuse, offending or dropping out of education and training.

**Third Sector**

The third sector operates between the State and the private sector. Companies operating within the third sector generally have specific social goals.

**Train to Gain**

The Government's single service to support employers of all sizes and in all sectors to identify and then meet the skills needs of their employees.

**Travel to Learn**

This is a term used to explain the distance travelled to the learning establishment by each individual learner.

**UK Commission for Employment and Skills**

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills will ensure that employers have a pivotal role in ensuring the UK's employment and skills system responds well to the needs of business. Their aim is to increase employment and skills rates.

**ULN**

Unique Learner Number that will be allocated to every person undertaking education and training. The 10 digit number will remain with them for life and will not be recycled. It is designed to ensure that no meaning can be inferred from its structure.

**WBL Work-Based Learning**

Learning which takes place predominantly in the work place. It includes the following Government Supported Training: Advanced Apprenticeships; Apprenticeships; Entry to Employment (E2E); and NVQ training.

**Annex B:** The categories of stakeholders who responded in writing to the White Paper *Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver*.

Other *	120
Headteacher/college principal/leader of educational institution	84
Local authority	66
General Further Education College	49
Voluntary and community sector organisation	29
Sixth Form College	24
Professional/Representative Body	17
Union	14
Work-based learning provider	14
Partnership	14
Sector Skills Council	12

\*Those which fell into the 'other' category included: Awarding bodies; Chamber of Commerce; Governors; Youth Justice Board; Watchdog; Training Providers; Individuals; School Forums; Inspectorates; Consortiums; Connexions; private sector organisations; large employers; teaching staff; tertiary colleges; schools; parents or carers; small or medium sized employers; professionals working with young people; adult learners; and those who did not specify a type.