

successforall

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Success for All has four key themes:

- Theme 1** Meeting needs and improving choice
- Theme 2** Putting teaching, training and learning at the heart of what we do
- Theme 3** Developing the leaders, teachers, lecturers, trainers and support staff of the future
- Theme 4** Developing a framework for quality and success

The *Success for All* newsletter is produced by the Department for Education and Skills and the Learning and Skills Council to keep you up to date with the change programme designed to transform the quality and responsiveness of the learning and skills sector. [Send us your feedback on the newsletter or views on *Success for All* to \[successforall@lsc.gov.uk\]\(mailto:successforall@lsc.gov.uk\)](#)

Partnerships work

Collaboration and partnerships between institutions and services can benefit learners, employers and communities and reposition education and training in a local area.

This is a key finding of a joint research project commissioned by the DfES and LSC, which is designed to stimulate thinking about possible collaborative structures that could develop as a result of Strategic Area Reviews.

The research gathered evidence on existing partnerships across the post-16 sector in cities and rural and coastal areas. It looked at collaborations across specialist and generalist provision and promoting achievement of learners at risk.

General conclusions were that partnerships work and that effective collaboration in the sector mainly results from the development of existing

relationships. The type and formality of collaboration does not appear to be a significant factor in whether or not they are successful.

National policy initiatives were found to have a positive impact in promoting new thinking among providers and their partners while employer-led collaborations benefited from a clear sense of purpose and were often driven by business or regulatory factors rather than training requirements in themselves.

Details of the research can be found at www.successforall.gov.uk under Theme One/StARs Supporting Materials/Related Research.

Focus on...

A monthly feature on *Success for All's* key players and good practice. This month: **Alan Johnson on 16-19 organisation principles**

Focus on...

Alan Johnson on 16-19 organisation principles

Alan Johnson, the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, gave his first speech to the learning and skills sector at a conference on mission review on 24 September. He spoke about the government's expectations for the organisation of 16-19 provision and a key theme was the importance of the sector in providing choice and excellence for young people. He is clear on what needs to be done to achieve this.

'There is very clear evidence that not all young people are able to access the opportunities they need and there is significant variation in the quality of provision, particularly for those who are less academic.'

'The learning and skills sector is at the heart of our policies. However, 16-19 provision needs to be organised to ensure that all young people have access to a broad range of high quality learning programmes that meet their interests, aptitudes and aspirations. I firmly believe that this is integral to raising participation and attainment in learning. It is fundamental to making a reality of the 16-19 entitlement enshrined in the Learning and Skills Act'.

Mr Johnson knows that organisational change is a key issue for the sector as StARs continue to develop. He is also aware that there has been some debate in the sector about what the Government expects of 16-19 provision, and what this means for the shape of provision in the future.

'We published a leaflet* on 22 September setting out the principles we expect to see underpinning the organisation of 16-19 provision:

- All provision for young people should be high quality, whatever pathway they have chosen
- We want to see more distinct 16-19 provision. This should have clear management arrangements that ensure young people have an appropriate and coherent learning experience with tutorial and pastoral care
- Providers need to support a wide curriculum offer for all 16-19 learners in an area. By collaborating, popular and successful small providers including school sixth forms, can remain viable and can share and build on their particular strengths
- We want young people to have a choice of provider within reasonable travelling distance where possible, including school sixth forms, sixth form colleges, sixth form centres in general FE colleges, private and voluntary sector providers and work based training providers.'

'And finally, it goes without saying that any changes to provision should represent an improvement.'

Ministers have thought very hard about the principles, and Alan Johnson wants to be absolutely clear how providers should take account of them.

'These principles are the expression of an entitlement that should be made available to all young people in their local areas. They're not a checklist. The important thing is that 16-19 provision is organised to ensure that young people have access to a broad range of high quality academic and vocational learning programmes that will promote participation and attainment in learning.'

Alan Johnson emphasised that there is no blueprint for the pattern of learning for 16-19 year olds since the focus is the learner, not the institution, and local circumstances vary. However, popular and successful sixth form provision – whether in schools, sixth form colleges or new distinct sixth form centres in FE colleges – will be encouraged, particularly where there is little or no such provision.

The Minister also clarified the position on mixed age learning groups in colleges.

'Young people will still be able to learn in the same classes as adults where this is appropriate. To be distinct, 16-19 provision should have clear management arrangements that ensure young people have an appropriate and coherent learning experience with tutorial and pastoral care. It is particularly important for this age group that they are attached to a 16-19 base and distinct sixth form centres will be encouraged, especially in areas where sixth form provision is lacking.'

Mr Johnson is aware that in the past there has been a lack of collaboration among schools and colleges in some areas, but he says this must change.

'We expect all providers to put the needs of learners first. To deliver on these principles, schools, colleges and work based learning providers will need to work together to offer high quality provision that meets the needs of all young people.'

'The Government has set the sector a challenging agenda. But I think everyone will agree that this is a very exciting time to be a learning and skills provider, and I look to everyone involved to make a reality of these principles. We owe it to our young people to give them the highest quality and real choice in our public services, and I expect the learning and skills sector to lead the way.'

* A copy of the leaflet can be found at www.successforall.gov.uk in the What's New, News Archive section

Success rates on the rise

Overall success rates for learners leaving training on completing their MA framework, achieving a required NVQ or NVQ training, rose by 3% in the first six months of 2002/03 from 36% to 39%.

Early indications from data covering the following three months indicate that the trend of improvements across work based learning has continued. Figures for FE, covering 2001/02, show a 6% rise in learner success rates from 59% the previous year to 65%.

Avril Willis, Director of Quality and Standards, said: 'These aren't just dry statistics; the upward trend is really good news because it means that people's lives have been changed for the better, which doesn't just benefit them, but their communities and the economy. I'd like to congratulate all those learners – and their teachers, tutors and trainers – for the excellent job they have done. We're here for the long haul, and that means continual improvement, this year, next year and every year after that until we've reached our goals.'

Details of the Statistical First Release can be found on the LSC's website www.lsc.gov.uk

Centre for Excellence in Leadership – your views welcomed

On 14 July 2003 the contract for the leadership college for the learning and skills sector was signed. The new college, known as the Centre for Excellence in Leadership, is a key element of the *Success for All* reforms. The principal aim of the college is to create opportunities for the professional development of both current and future leaders in the learning and skills sector.

The college was formally launched on 8 October and the DfES Standards Unit is consulting on the programmes to be offered by the Centre and other aspects of the leadership strategy. You can view the consultation document on the DfES website at www.dfes.gov.uk/consultation2/27/

In addition to publishing a consultation document and inviting written comment, the Standards Unit have been running a series of half-day conferences and workshops. These have provided representatives from across the sector an opportunity to meet and take part in face-to-face discussions with both the Unit and with key representatives from within the Centre. These were half day events with a morning session running from 9.30am to 12.30pm which were also repeated in the afternoon from 1.30 to 4.30pm.

The Centre draws together unrivalled expertise from four leading institutions; Lancaster University Management School, the Learning and Skills Development Agency, Open University and Ashridge Management School. In drawing together such expertise, the Centre will contribute to greater collaboration and successful development across the sector. It will be available to all providers within the learning and skills sector, whilst also recognising and responding to the unique needs that exist.

It is also offering pilot versions on a number of programmes from November onwards, with further programmes to be launched during 2004.

Teaching and Learning Frameworks

There has been rapid progress in the development and trial of new teaching and learning materials in business studies. A common weakness in inspection reports on business studies, in colleges and work based learning provision, has been the lack of sufficient differentiation in teaching and training.

The business studies team in the DfES Standards Unit, working with six trial centres drawn from across the sector, have developed and conducted trials of a range of teaching and learning materials on differentiation within the context of teaching marketing and customer service. Work commenced in May 2003 and continued into the summer. Evaluation reports from students and staff at the trial centres show that the materials have been very well received. Students have commented on lively and enjoyable lessons while staff have reported that they now have a real understanding of what differentiation is and how to implement it.

Producing high quality materials and focusing on teacher/ trainer development are the two key elements to the Standards Unit teaching and learning frameworks.

Having identified four priority curriculum areas; science, construction, business studies, and entry to employment (e2e), the Unit has conducted a series of trials to test 'best practice' guidance. These were developed by their team of secondees that consists of experts in their respective fields from the learning and skills sector, working with practitioners from all areas.

The trials were completed in July, and were subsequently reviewed to gain feedback and collect evaluations. Feedback was extremely positive, and materials as a result of the evaluations have been modified.

Pilots for all teaching and learning frameworks started in September and are due to end in summer 2004, when the national rollout of the first materials will take place.

Innovation through Test Beds

What are Test Beds? *Success for All* encompasses a huge programme of change to help learning and skills providers deliver the government's key strategies for skills and post-16 learning. To inform the implementation of the reforms and to ensure all the changes are coherent 3 local LSCs are introducing the changes at a faster pace than nationally. The projects will also pilot approaches to reducing unnecessary bureaucracy. The idea is to learn lessons that can be spread to other parts of the country, and provide evidence of our effectiveness in improving public services.

What will they do? The 3 'Test Bed' areas are Birmingham and Solihull, Greater Merseyside, and Sussex – and they are developing proposals that will:

- join up the four *Success for All* themes – showing how, for example, new curriculum frameworks could improve results, or how 16/19 reform might raise staying-on rates
- speed up change where we can – undertaking a quicker strategic review where there is a local consensus about issues, or fast-tracking equal opportunity initiatives
- provide pilots and test new ideas to see what works to create models of success for providers, the LSC and the DfES and
- show how the learning and skills sector can align with wider public sector reforms – increasing choice and flexibility and cutting bureaucracy

What happens next? The proposals will be finalised and implemented during the autumn, and assessed next year. We will have more news – so watch this space – we promise to keep you in the picture over the coming months.

Developments in Funding and CoVEs

A consultation on radical revision of the funding method for FE colleges has begun: **Plan-led Funding** builds on 'Trust in FE' and three-year development planning and may be viewed on the LSC website. Meanwhile, the arrangements for **Premium Funding** for colleges have also been published. It is anticipated that 10% of colleges will qualify in the first year and that proportion is expected to expand annually.

A significant milestone has also been reached with the number of **Centres of Vocational Excellence** exceeding the 150 target set in 2001; CoVEs now number over 200 with more in development. Sixth form funding guidance was issued in September and a series of consultative seminars are taking place across the country at the moment.

Further details of all these developments will be included in the next issue of the *Success for All* newsletter. In the meantime, information is available at www.successforall.gov.uk.

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www.successforall.gov.uk

Calendar

The *Success for All* calendar is updated in each issue of the newsletter. The calendar as at the beginning of October is:

| 2003 | Developments | Communications/consultation |
|----------------|---|---|
| October | Arrangements for Premium Funding issued Centre for Excellence in Leadership launched | Plan-led Funding Consultation Consultation on proposals for new success measures Consultation on Centre of Excellence in Leadership |
| November | LSC, DfES, Inspectorates publish proposals for measuring success | |
| 4 November | | Standards Unit Teaching and Learning Conference |
| 5 November | | Focus on Policy (FOP) Seminar – Qualifying the Workforce |
| 11 November | | Teacher Training Consultation |
| 11-13 November | <i>Success for All</i> Progress Report | AoC Annual Conference |
| December | | Focus On Policy seminar, Equality & Diversity |
| 8 December | | 'Ask Alan' online discussion with Alan Johnson |