

Learning and Skills Council



Local Strategic Plan 2002-05

Greater Manchester



Learning+Skills Council
Greater Manchester

> Contents

Chairman's Message	2
Impact Statement	3
Introduction	4
Mission & Vision	7
Targets and Objectives	8
Approach to Evaluation	9
The Greater Manchester Area	10
Cross Cutting Themes	33
The Participation Strategy	41
Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures (Young People)	47
Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures (Adults)	60
The Skills Strategy	65
Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures	70
The Learning Strategy	74
Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures	78
Annexe 1 - National and Local Targets	82
Annexe 2 - The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester	84
Annexe 3 - Building the Capacity of the LSC GM	85
Annexe 4 - Key Sectors	87
Annexe 5 - Further Planned Research	93
Annexe 6 - Equal Opportunities Policy Statement	95
Annexe 7 - Health and Safety Policy Statement	98
Annexe 8 - Glossary of Terms	100
Annexe 9 - Partner Consultation	101

> Chairman's Message

The Learning and Skills Council has been given the task of championing the power of learning through our role as the strategic planner and purchaser of post-16 learning. We want to encourage more people to take the opportunity to transform their lives through education and training and give businesses a say in getting the skilled people they need.

We are committed to raising the level of skills, knowledge and understanding of young people and adults in our area and will do this by increasing opportunities for all to participate in learning. In doing this we must ensure that the training and education we fund meets the needs of learners and employers and that quality standards are raised.

For the first time, a single organisation has been given responsibility for the strategic development, planning, funding, management and quality assurance of all post-16 education and training (excluding higher education). This includes a budgetary responsibility for colleges of further education, school sixth forms, adult and community learning and work based learning providers. You will appreciate that this is an enormous task that we cannot successfully undertake alone. To achieve a radical change in post-16 education and training will require the support and commitment of a wide range of organisations and individuals working in partnership to instil a love of learning across Greater Manchester. We will need to set ourselves challenging but achievable targets.

We face great challenges in Greater Manchester. There are 420,000 people with basic skills difficulties across the area and this is a major barrier to learning. Many people, especially lone parents, are prevented from learning by a lack of childcare. The Learning and Skills Council has far-reaching responsibilities for equality of opportunity both with duties set out in statute and within the remit provided by the Secretary of State. The remit states that the Council will build equality of opportunity into all its policies, programmes and actions, in accordance with its statutory duties. This is the first time the leading organisation in post-16 education and training has been given this responsibility as part of its statutory remit.

The country as a whole is facing the possibility of a recession, which could lead to a rise in unemployment. In the past, recessions have often resulted in a reduction in training and this has created skills problems when employers start recruiting again. It is our view that learning and skills are key to economic success and we will ensure that access to high quality learning opportunities continues, no matter what the circumstances.

Our Strategic Plan sets out our vision, mission and the key tasks that need to be addressed. It also describes the key learning and skills issues in the Greater Manchester area. We have consulted widely on this Strategic Plan and value your input to this process. Together, we can make Greater Manchester a place where everyone can realise his or her full potential.



Anthony Goldstone

> Impact Statement

In this plan are set out a very wide range of issues and our response to them. We recognise that it would be helpful for all stakeholders to have a simple statement that communicates where we will focus our efforts on making a real impact over the life of the plan.

We aim to prioritise:

- > Widening participation in learning by people resident in regeneration areas and other areas of deprivation
- > Raising levels of basic skills, especially in the regeneration areas referred to above
- > Raising the attainment level of young people with a particular focus on the lowest achievers
- > Improving quality by targeting learning providers where we have serious concerns
- > Support for sectors identified as priorities for the development of Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs)

In developing our delivery plans we will give precedence to these issues.

Introduction

The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for strategic development, planning, funding, management and quality assurance of all post-16 education and training (excluding higher education) across the ten local authority districts of Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Our functions include:

- > Ensuring that high quality post-16 provision is available to meet the needs of employers, individuals and communities;
- > Planning the coherent provision and funding of institutions, private and voluntary sector providers, and planning for mergers where appropriate;
- > Development of national funding tariffs and systems, for the great majority of our expenditure;
- > Direct responsibility for the achievement of targets for young people; for adults (excluding level 4 for which prime responsibility will continue to rest with the Higher Education sector); and for Investors in People;
- > Promoting and supporting social partnership strategies, working with others to raise the aspirations and achievements of young people and adults for learning;
- > Promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that the needs of the most disadvantaged in the labour market are best met;
- > Promoting programmes and policies such as Modern Apprenticeships, and Investors in People;
- > Ensuring an effective Education Business Partnership network exists to support the delivery of work-related learning for those aged under 16, and so complement post-16 provision;
- > Funding information, advice and guidance for adults;
- > Establishing systems for the collection and dissemination of information on labour market and skill trends; and
- > Ensuring value for money and financial propriety, regularity and control, intervening early and effectively where necessary and ensuring that there are sound arrangements for governance, financial management and audit throughout the post-16 sector.

In this plan, we set out our analysis of the key issues and priorities, together with our proposals for action and suggested performance indicators. This has been supplemented by the results of the two surveys which have been undertaken with learners and employers. Some of the results are already incorporated in this plan; others will be included as the plan is updated. The plan covers the period April 2002 to March 2005. It will drive our local actions over the coming years, in partnership with the stakeholders in our community, within the context of national policy and adhering to the corporate requirements of the Learning and Skills Council. It is a working document which will be updated as required throughout the period covered.

The plan describes the community in which we all live and work and sets out, from a post-16 training and education perspective, where some of the key improvements must be made if we are to ensure a step change in the pursuit of lifelong learning goals.

Certain key issues cut across everything we do and we have tried to address these in the plan without marginalising their importance. The plan outlines the three major strategies where we want to work in partnership to ensure that the Learning and Skills Council's key objectives are achieved.

In these sections, the plan examines the issues associated with participation and achievement, gaining or improving skills and improving quality and sets out the actions we will take to drive our agenda forward.

We also recognise that we need to focus on the core business highlighted previously. An in-depth analysis will be carried out to ensure that the core programmes are focused on the priority areas identified within the plan. This may result in changes to provider contracts relative to the occupational and geographical areas covered as we more closely match the local learner needs to the provision.

The Approach to using Discretionary Funding Sources

These funding sources comprise:

- > Local Initiative Fund
- > European Social Fund (the LSC will become a co-financing organisation in 2002)
- > Standards Fund

Our approach to each of these differs slightly as each is targeted on different aims and has differing regulatory arrangements. There are inevitably, some overlaps and we will seek to establish some principles and operating procedures which prevent duplication. In general, though, we wish to deploy them all in support of the aims set out in this plan. Separate guidance on their use and purpose will be published for each fund and this guidance will be made widely available to stakeholders.

The Approach to Area Planning and Delivery

This plan deals with Greater Manchester as a whole but we recognise the need to address more local issues and to take account of the diversity of the area. It is therefore our intention to focus more closely on the individual local authority districts, and neighbourhoods within these where necessary. The plan will be in place by April 2002 and it is imperative that we have an effective structure to ensure the achievement of objectives and targets contained within it and to address what is an extremely wide range of issues. Focusing in isolation on specific programmes and initiatives when addressing the needs of an area will not produce the long-term results. It will be important for partners to work together across the whole education and training supply chain to maximise participation and achievement levels and raise standards of achievement

Having analysed the key factors involved we have decided upon an approach, which recognises and builds upon local authority geography and identifiable local authority groupings. Using the principle of "Local Authority Districts" as a start point, the model assumes five identifiable local area groupings headed by Area Managers.

Each Area Manager will have responsibility for an Area Team incorporating Account/Contract Management, Contract Co-ordination and Administration. The Area Teams would have responsibility for all operational delivery within their geographical area. The geographical areas have been identified as follows:

- > Manchester
- > Salford and Trafford
- > Tameside and Stockport
- > Bolton, Bury and Wigan
- > Oldham and Rochdale

The Area Manager will be responsible for the production of an Area Delivery Plan to ensure strategic priorities and targets detailed in our Strategic Plan are translated into action and delivered and will take the strategic lead in dealing with key partners in their area.

This approach will also support service and product development and non-area specific activity in order to drive the development agenda including the implementation of new services/products.

Mission & Vision

The Learning and Skills Council is a national organisation with 47 local arms. We have a set of national aims to which we are all working, although each local LSC will also have its own priorities. The national strategic framework includes a Vision, a Mission and five Key Tasks. These will guide our work, along with the locally focused objectives we have developed through our consultation process.

The National Mission & Vision

Our **mission** is to raise participation & attainment through high-quality education & training which puts learners first.

Our **vision** is that, by 2010, young people & adults in England will have knowledge & productive skills matching the best in the world.

The Purpose of the Learning & Skills Council Greater Manchester (LSC GM)

We endorse the national vision and mission, and have added a purpose, which expresses the nature of the local challenge:

To create a culture of learning in Greater Manchester by:

- > widening participation
- > raising attainment &
- > improving quality

to meet the needs of the economy & all our people

Our Key Tasks

These have been set by the Secretary of State for Employment and Skills.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > To raise participation and achievement by young people > To increase demand for learning by adults and equalise opportunities through better access to learning | } | <p>The Participation Strategy</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > To raise skill levels for national competitiveness | } | <p>The Skills Strategy</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > To improve the quality of education & training delivery > To improve effectiveness and efficiency | } | <p>The Learning Strategy</p> |

Together, these three interlocking strategies form the core of our local plan.

Targets and Objectives

The Learning and Skills Council has been charged with delivering the National Learning Targets, shown in the table below. The LSC GM has been set local targets which will contribute towards achievement of the national targets and these are shown in the column headed "2004 Local Target".

National Objectives	2004 National Targets	2000 National Position	2000 Local Position	2004 Local Target i.e. additional to 2000 local position
1. Extend participation in education, learning & training	80% of 16 –18 year olds in structured learning Set baseline & target for adults in next year's Plan	75%	70% (estimated by LSC national office) 73,347	10,213 Target not set in this year's plan
2. Increase engagement of employers in workforce development		Develop measure of employer engagement in next year's plan		Target not set in this year's plan
3. Raise achievement of young people	85% at level 2 by age 19 55% at level 3 by age 19	75% 51%	68.7% (estimated by LSC national office) 24,150 37.7% 13,251	2,492 2,029
4. Raise achievement of adults	Raise literacy & numeracy skills of 750,000 adults % of adults at Level 2: target to be set in next year's plan 52% of adults at level 3	Up to 7 million adults with literacy or numeracy difficulties 47% Not available	420,000 adults with poor literacy and/or numeracy (approx. 27% of Greater Manchester population) Not available 43% 530,000	41,622 Target not set in this year's plan 98,686
5. Raise quality of education & training & user satisfaction	Set baselines & targets in next year's plan			Target not set in this year's plan

Please see Annexe 1 for explanatory notes relating to this table.

Approach to Evaluation

We are committed in Greater Manchester to evaluating the effectiveness of our operations locally. In developing our evaluation strategy we will develop and utilise measures at three levels:

- > Our **ultimate** national objectives and targets; set out in the previous table;
- > Our **intermediate** strategic objectives developed locally with partners to achieve our targets;
- > Our **immediate** operational objectives and actions; these will be developed in our local business plan and area delivery plans;

Impact assessment will need to be encompassed within the evaluation strategy in order to establish the outcomes of our activities. In undertaking this impact assessment we would need to answer the following questions over the course of the plan - building upon each one to establish the impact of our activities:

- > What programmes and services did the Learning and Skills Council provide in Greater Manchester and to whom? – these are the inputs, activities and outputs from our business plan
- > Are learners and employers satisfied with the products/services? – this could be measured through learner/employer feedback mechanisms
- > Are learners and employers better off? – gross outcomes e.g improved skills/qualifications
- > Are learners and employers better off as a direct result of the programme? – gross additional outcomes
- > How has the local economy benefited from the programmes and services? – net outcomes or the economic impact e.g. skill levels, increased participation/engagement in learning
- > Is the Learning and Skills Council in Greater Manchester meeting its strategic objectives?
- > What contribution have these objectives made to the National Targets

The aims of the evaluation strategy are:

- > to provide a framework for strategic evaluation across the Learning and Skills Council in Greater Manchester
- > to support improvement in our programmes, services and business processes
- > to demonstrate accountable use of resources to partners, stakeholders and the people, employers and communities of Greater Manchester

We will be developing and implementing our evaluation strategy over the coming year to support and in tandem with the local planning process.

The Greater Manchester Area

The Greater Manchester area comprises the cities of Manchester and Salford, and the Metropolitan Boroughs of Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. It covers an area of 1,286 sq. km with 2,004 persons per sq. km. Two thirds of Britain's population live within a two-hour drive of Greater Manchester.

The conurbation has a population of 2.6 million; representing almost two-fifths of the North West's total population and is the second largest conurbation in the UK. 1.6 million people are of working age and approximately two thirds of residents are economically active.

The Economic Context

The following economic indicators provide some useful background to the plan.

1. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Source: Office for National Statistics)

- > Total GDP in Greater Manchester in 1998 was £28,629 million representing 3.9% of the UK.
- > GDP per head was lower than the UK at £11,099 compared to £12,548, but higher than the North West at £10,909.

2. Gross Value Added (GVA) in Manufacturing (Source: DTI, Office for National Statistics)

- > Total GVA in manufacturing in Greater Manchester in 1997 stood at £7,295 million representing 5.1% of the UK.
- > GVA per head in manufacturing was lower than the regional and national averages at £31,175.

3. Stock of VAT registrations (Source: DTI, Office for National Statistics)

- > At the start of 2000, 57,630 Greater Manchester businesses were registered for VAT representing 3.5% of the UK stock.

4. Unemployment (Source: Office for National Statistics)

- > In January 2002, unemployment in Greater Manchester stood at 3.7% (47,644 claimants), slightly higher than the national average rate of 3.4%, but lower than the regional average of 3.9%. Since January 2000, unemployment in Greater Manchester has fallen by 7,825 claimants (-14% on the 2000 baseline). This compares to a fall in unemployment of 17% nationally and -16% in the North West, over the same period.
- > The share of long term unemployed (claimants for over 12 months) currently stands at 7,378 (15.6% of all claimants) in January 2002.

5. Earnings (Source: New Earnings Survey, 2001)

- > Average weekly pay for employees in Greater Manchester is £347 per week. This is comparable with the rate for the North West, however it falls behind the average level for United Kingdom of £369 per week.

6. House prices (Source: Land Registry Office, 2001)

- > The average house price was £69,873 in June 2001 compared to £118,766 in England and Wales.

7. Crime (Source: Police Authority performance indicators 99/00)

- > Greater Manchester has over 50% more crimes per '000 population than the national average, 146.3 compared with 90.1.

8. Health (Source: Local Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics)

- > Of those residents in Greater Manchester aged over 16 years old in 2000, an estimated 21 per cent had a current disability or work-limiting disability/illness compared to 19 per cent in Great Britain.

9. Lone Parents (Source: Greater Manchester Handover Report)

- > Lone parents account for 7.6% of all householders in Greater Manchester compared to 5.8% in England

Population

Current Mid-Year Estimates of Population show the resident population of Greater Manchester to be 2,586,000; of which an estimated 2,039,000 were aged over 16; 1,219,000 were economically active (aged over 16 in employment or unemployed and actively seeking work); 1,153,000 were in employment (aged over 16 employed or self-employed); and 782,000 were economically inactive (aged over 16 but not actively contributing to the local economy). (Source: Mid-Year Estimates of Population 2000; Local Labour Force Survey 2000; ONS.)

Greater Manchester has a marginally higher proportion of residents from an ethnic minority background; 6% compared with the UK average of 5%. However, this headline figure conceals the true diversity of the area, as the proportion of ethnic minorities varies widely between the 10 local authority districts. Overall, ethnic minorities are accounting for an increasing proportion of Greater Manchester's youth population.

Population projections predict:

- A fall in the size of the overall population by around 1% up to the year 2010.
- A higher proportion of older people in Greater Manchester. Over the last ten years there has been a fall in the number of 15-29 year olds. Population projections show there will be significant growth in 40+ year old age groups between 2000 and 2010, (driven partially by the current large 30 to 34 year old cohort – 1999).
- Significant falls in the proportion of people in the 0-14 and 30-39 age groups, substantially changing the shape of the local workforce. Growth will be needed in other age groups as well as in participation levels to sustain predicted employment growth in the area, (provided the economy remains robust as it has been throughout the late 1990's).
- A higher than average proportion of 50+ year olds which will contribute to an increase in the proportion of 'third' age residents over the next decade, and as such will impact upon public services etc.

Greater Manchester Business Profile

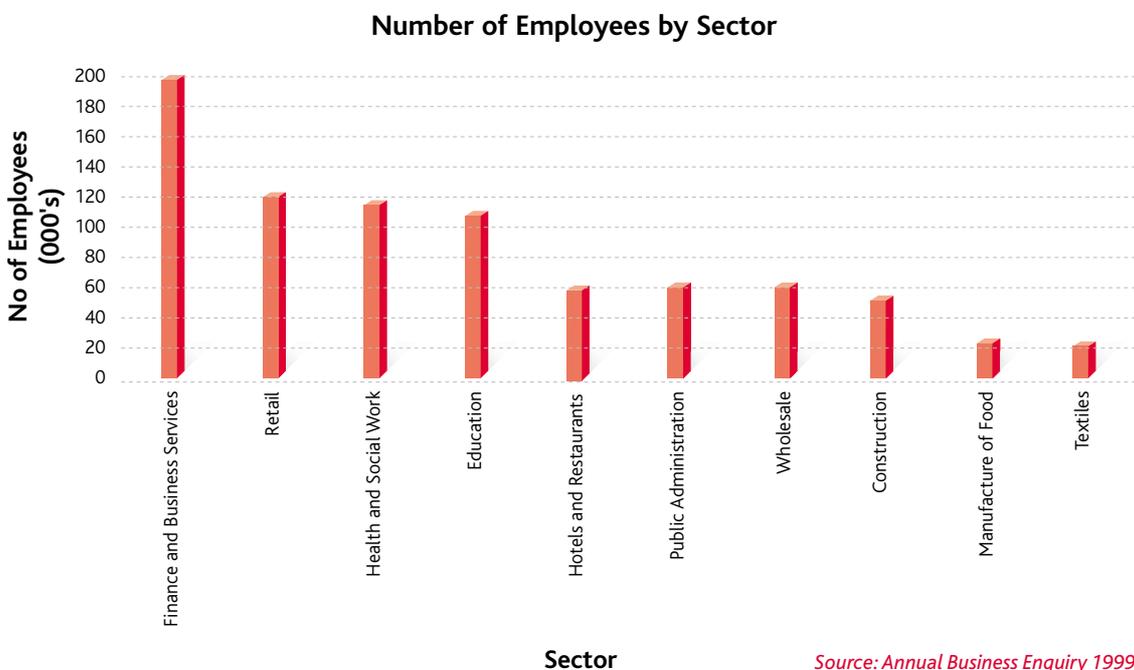
- > There were an estimated 86,000 businesses in Greater Manchester, employing around 1,122,000 employees (Annual Business Inquiry, ONS 1999).
- > The clear majority of employment within Greater Manchester is in the Services sector (including both public and private service sectors), accounting for over three in four – 876,000 (78 %) of jobs.
- > Almost 200,000 people are employed in Finance and Business services and the combined Public Administration, Health and Education sectors account for a further 286,000 employees.
- > The Wholesale and Retail sector employs 207,000 employees and the Hotel and Restaurant industry employs almost 63,000 employees. By comparison, the Manufacturing sector accounts for just over 191,000 employees – 17% of total employment in Greater Manchester.

The share of Manufacturing, Construction and Services jobs varies considerably across Greater Manchester. Results by local authority area show a higher share of Manufacturing jobs within Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Tameside and Wigan. Service sector organisations/businesses make up more of the business base within Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Trafford.

> Manufacturing still accounts for a larger share of employment across Greater Manchester in comparison to the share across Great Britain. Other significant differences in the share of employment by industry sector are seen within:

- Finance and Business Services Sector – where the share of employment across Great Britain (19 %) is larger than the share across all Greater Manchester (18 %);
- Public Services, Administration, Health and Social Work, accounting for 26 % of employment across Greater Manchester compared with 24 % of employment across Great Britain.

The 10 highest employment sectors are set out in the table below:



*Source: Annual Business Enquiry 1999,
Office for National Statistics*

However, segmenting by employment alone does not identify sectors which make the most impact in economic terms. We also recognise the importance of other sector breakdowns, such as those identified in the North West Development Agency Learning and Skills Strategy (set out in alphabetical order):

- > Computer hardware and services
- > Environmental technology
- > Financial services
- > Life-science industries
- > Medical equipment and technology
- > Creative industries and multi-media, film and TV
- > Fine and speciality chemicals
- > Internet-based services
- > Media/advertising/public relations
- > Tourism

Please note that the chart uses the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) to analyse the sectors, whereas the NWDA list is broader. For example, "Tourism" will include hotels, restaurants, bars, museums, self-catering accommodation, conference facilities, leisure, sports where the main users are from outside the area and other tourist attractions.

Within the City Pride¹ area research has been carried out which analyses value added compared with numbers employed. Employment forecasts for the next 10 years show impressive growth in several key sectors:

- > Professional services
- > Manufactured Fuels
- > Instruments
- > Pharmaceuticals
- > Other Business Services

The Manufacturing sector, although small in overall employment terms within Greater Manchester, nevertheless remains important in our area, and we will identify how best to provide support.

The Demand for Skills

It is apparent that skills issues are becoming even more important in the workplace. Employers are increasingly demanding higher level vocational skills – at level 3 and above. The occupations where there are skills shortages, especially at Level 3, are as follows:

Business Administration, Management and Professional

Accounts, Advertising, Financial Managers, Legal Secretaries, Marketing and Sales, Medical Secretaries, Personnel, HR, Training and Development staff, Supervisory Management.

Information and Communications Technology

Computer Engineers, Technical network support, Programmers and Systems Engineers, Website design and delivery, CAD.

Retailing, Customer Service and Transportation

Call Centre Supervisory Management, Importing and Exporting, Other specialist transportation occupations.

Hospitality, Sports, Leisure and Travel

Chefs, Supervisors/Managers, Exercise and Fitness Coaching, Recreation Management

¹ City Pride is a sub area of Greater Manchester comprising the local authority districts of Manchester, Salford, Tameside and Trafford.
Some references to City Pride may include Stockport for specific initiatives

Engineering, Technology and Manufacturing

All craft and technician occupations (Level 3 plus).

Construction/Related Occupations

All Level 3 plus occupations.

Land Based

Animal Care (Level 3), Veterinary Occupations.

Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy

Hairdressers (Level 3).

Health, Social Care and Public Services

Care Workers (Level 3), Childcare and Early Years (Level 3), Dental Nurses, Laboratory Technicians, Medical and Dental Technicians, Nursing/Nursing Assistants, Medical Technicians and Paramedics.

Visual, Performing Arts and Media

A wide range of occupations in Multimedia, Publishing, Broadcast, Film/Video/Music, Design, Performing Arts.

In addition to the specific vocational skills shortages, there are also increasing demands for employees to possess a wide range of generic skills, such as communications, management, team-working and flexibility.

Manchester Enterprises Ltd "Skills 2001" survey shows the following:

- > In the future, skills such as communication skills, showing initiative and ability to learn will be much more important for plant and machine operatives. This suggests significant up skilling will occur in this occupation.
- > Professional occupations (particularly teaching) and, to a lesser extent, managers, are generally the highest skilled occupations. In the future, they will be expected to develop their skills even more.
- > Some skills such as management, leadership and formal qualifications will become more important across a range of occupations. Currently they are seen as important for managers and professionals only.
- > The emphasis on increased skills for craft, plant and machine, and protective and personal is reflected in a greater emphasis on skills amongst companies in manufacturing and transport & communications.

Further Research into Skills Issues

The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester has recently completed an Employer Skills Survey of its area. The survey comprised 2,516 telephone interviews.

Project Aim And Objectives

The aim of the survey was to gain a detailed, up to date and consistent understanding of the skills issues faced by employers across the area in order that the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester can develop an informed, market driven strategy to make local industry and its workforce more competitive. The project's objectives were to determine the following skills/learning issues at a detailed level:

- > Background establishment information (product, size, ownership, performance)
- > Recruitment issues, both historical and future
- > Recruitment difficulties/hard to fill vacancies
- > Identify the extent of skill-gaps and skill-shortages and to quantify and qualify what these are and determine their impact
- > Identify training: activity, barriers to learning/training and market failure
- > Gain employer feedback on quality and effectiveness of education and training undertaken
- > Understand existing and future workforce training and development needs
- > Quantify future skills demand
- > Understand the levels of expectation that employers have from their staff
- > Understand employers' perceptions and expectations on employing young people and other specific labour market groups.

'Headline' analyses of the results of the survey indicate that findings are broadly in line with previous research conducted throughout the area.

Recruitment difficulties and skill shortages

There were approximately 25,000 job vacancies in Greater Manchester over the survey period. This is equivalent to around 2 per cent of all current employment in Greater Manchester. Around 11,400 (approximately 44 per cent) of vacancies were described as hard-to-fill by respondents. Of these, 4,900 (18 per cent) were due to skill shortages in that they were explicitly attributed to a lack of job applicants with the required skills, qualifications or work experience.

Share of establishments with vacancies and overall number of vacancies

	percent	all establishments vacancies '000 (a)	percent	vacancies '000(a)
All vacancies	12%	25.4	14%	766
Hard-to-fill vacancies	6%	11.4	8%	358
Skill-shortage vacancies (b)	2%	4.9	4%	159

Base: All establishments. Source: Greater Manchester Employer Skills Survey 2001 (LSC/IFF)

(a) Grossed up survey-based estimates.

(b) Skill-related vacancies are defined as those for which at least one of the following causes of hard-to-fill vacancies was cited: 'Low number of applicants with the required skills'; 'Lack of work experience the company demands'; 'Lack of qualifications the company demands'.

Analysis of vacancies by industry sector reveals that the wholesale, retail and hospitality sector accounts for the greatest share of vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies, and skill-shortage vacancies (38 per cent, 40 per cent, and 26 per cent respectively).

When vacancies are expressed as a percentage share of employees within the sector (i.e. the 'density' of skill shortages), the construction sector which shows a particularly high proportion of hard-to-fill and skills-shortage vacancies as an equivalent share of the total workforce in the sector.

Analysis of vacancies by broad occupation group reveals that sales/customer service (22 per cent) and elementary occupations (17 per cent) accounted for the highest proportions of vacancies; Sales/customer services also accounted for a high share hard-to-fill vacancies (18 per cent) and skills-shortage vacancies (16 per cent).

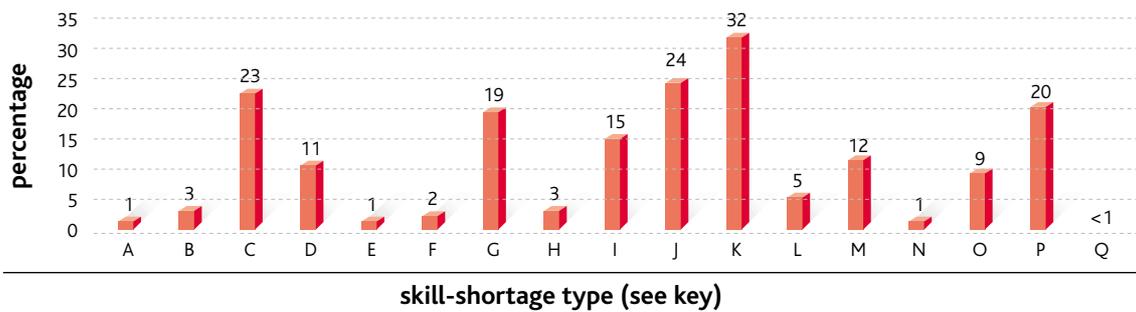
There are, however, some notable differences between the distribution of vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies, and skill-shortage vacancies. For example, whilst skilled trades occupations accounted for a relatively modest one in ten of all vacancies (11 per cent) they accounted for one in five (20 per cent) of all hard-to-fill vacancies and one in three (36 per cent) of skill-shortage vacancies.

The most frequently listed jobs relating to hard-to-fill/skill-shortage vacancies were:

- > **Managers:** General managers, project managers, contract managers
- > **Professional/Associate Professional:** teachers & assistants, nurses & assistants, care assistants
- > **Clerical and Secretarial:** general clerical/administration, accounts clerks, receptionists
- > **Sales/Customer services/Personal services:** general sales assistants, bar/restaurant staff
- > **Skilled Craft and Machine Operatives:** construction - joiners, skilled engineers (mechanical, electrical and metals), machine plant operatives, drivers

Employers provided information about the characteristics which were persistently hard to recruit into their business/organisation, shown below:

Skill characteristics associated with skill shortage vacancies



Key: (skill characteristics)

A. Advanced IT	G. Literacy	M. Problem Solving
B. Basic Computing	H. Management	N. Sales/Marketing
C. Customer Handling	I. Numeracy	O. Team Working
D. Experience	J. Oral and Verbal Communication	P. Written Communication
E. Foreign Language	K. Other Technical / Practical	Q. Other/not elsewhere classified
F. Leadership	L. Personal attributes	

*Base: All skill-shortage vacancies Source: Greater Manchester Employer Skills Survey 2001 (LSC/IFF)
Percentage figures total more than 100% due to multiple response*

The largest share of skills-shortages experienced were in 'specific technical and practical skill' areas covering just under one in three (32 per cent) of all skills shortage vacancies, this was closely followed by a shortage of 'oral verbal communication', and 'customer handling skills' covering around one in four (24 per cent, 23 per cent respectively) of skills shortage vacancies. One in five (20 per cent) of skills shortage vacancies were due to 'written communication' skills.

Certain skills were particularly difficult to find when recruiting for specific occupations, these were:

Occupation	Main skills sought (percentage of skill-related hard to fill vacancies in each occupational area)
Managers/ Senior administrative	Sales/marketing (23%)
	Technical/practical (21%)
	Management (20%)
	Experience (14%)

Occupation	Main skills sought (percentage of skill-related hard to fill vacancies in each occupational area)
Craft/skilled trades	Technical/practical (40%)
	Customer handling (24%)
	Verbal communication;
	Literacy & Numeracy;
	Written communication
	Problem solving (19%)

Occupation	Main skills sought (percentage of skill-related hard to fill vacancies in each occupational area)	
Professional	Technical/practical	(25%)
	Management	(21%)
	Customer handling	(15%)
	Personal attributes	(15%)
Associate professional/ Technical	Written communication	(14%)
	Experience	(12%)
	Technical/practical	(11%)
Clerical/ Admin. Secretarial	Verbal communication	(49%)
	Literacy	(44%)
	Customer handling	(43%)
	Written communication	(41%)

Occupation	Main skills sought (percentage of skill-related hard to fill vacancies in each occupational area)	
Personal service	Technical/practical	(65%)
	Experience	(59%)
	Team working	(21%)
	Problem solving	(20%)
Sales	Verbal communication	(53%)
	Numeracy	(39%)
	Written communication	(37%)
	Literacy	(37%)
	Customer handling	(33%)
Operative and assembly	Personal attributes	(36%)
	Technical/practical	(32%)
	Experience	(15%)
	Verbal communication	(12%)

Base: All skill shortage vacancies. Source: Greater Manchester Employer Skills Survey 2001.

Local employers were asked to think about the future of their business in terms of skill needs and identify which will become more important in future, these were:

Occupation	Increased skill demands (percentage of respondents anticipating/stating future skill needs)	
Managers, professionals, associate professional occupations	Customer handling	(11%)
	Management	(11%)
	Advanced IT	(10%)
	Communication	(8%)
	Basic computer literacy	(6%)
	Technical/practical	(6%)
	Team working	(6%)
Administrative, personal service, sales	Customer handling	(22%)
	Advanced IT	(12%)
	Basic computer literacy	(9%)
	Communication	(8%)
	Team working	(6%)

Occupation	Increased skill demands (percentage of respondents anticipating/stating future skill needs)	
Skilled trade, operatives, elementary	Customer handling	(13%)
	Technical/practical	(11%)
	Team working	(9%)
	Communication	(5%)
	Basic computer literacy	(5%)

Customer handling skills, team working, basic and advanced IT skills and communication are the generic skills which the largest share of employers see as becoming increasingly important to their business in future years.

Employers' skills gaps

The Employer Skills Survey 2001 investigated the levels of skill needs **within** local businesses/organisations, using two common definitions (Employer Skills Survey for England, IFF/DfES 2001) of **skills gaps**, these are:

- > **Broad definition:** includes all establishments that reported that at least some of their staff lacked full proficiency.
- > **Narrow measure:** includes only those establishments where a significant proportion of the workforce was reported as lacking proficiency, typically involving a third or more staff in at least one specific occupational area. This 'narrow' measure is used to derive the more detailed information below, unless otherwise stated.

Share of establishments with skills gaps (broad and narrow)

National ESS 2001	Skills gap measure	
	Establishments '000s	Percentage share of all establishments
- narrow measure	142	7%
- broad measure	470	23%
Greater Manchester 2001		
- narrow measure	12	14%
- broad measure	20	23%

Base: All establishments. Source: Greater Manchester Employer Skills Survey 2001 (LSC/IFF)

In Greater Manchester around 14 per cent of establishments said they had experienced skills-gaps within their workforce (narrow measure), the position against the national figure (7 per cent) suggests skill-gaps are more 'acute' locally than the comparative national average for 2001.

'Small' organisations (1 to 10 employees) reported most skill problems amongst sales/customer service (25%) and managerial occupations (22%).

'Medium-sized' establishments employing 50 to 99 employees were most likely to report internal skill deficiencies among plant/machine operative employees who account for just over a fifth (22%) of their skills gaps.

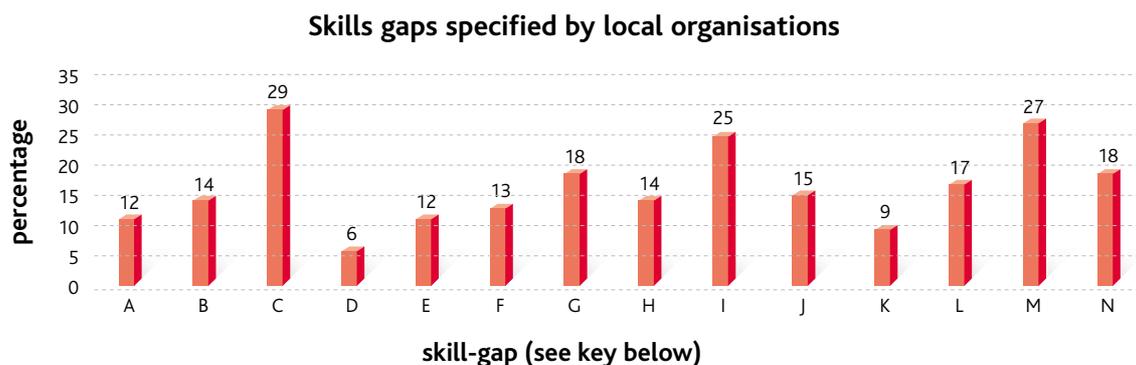
Sales/customer service and elementary occupations are the most common internal skill problems for organisations with over 200 employees.

Reasons for skill gaps

Findings from the survey indicate that most respondents attribute skill-gaps to employees being relatively new to their job (40%). Failure to train and develop staff was however the next most common cause (33%).

- > 'employees only in the job for a short while' was particularly mentioned in relation to associate professionals, personal services and sales/customer services
- > 'failure to train and develop staff' was mostly mentioned in relation to administrative/secretarial and skilled trades
- > 'reluctance to accept or make the most of training opportunities' was mostly mentioned in relation to administrative, secretarial and elementary occupations
- > 'inability of the workforce to keep up with change' was the most common reason cited for skill-gaps in operative, professional and associate professional occupations

Employers were asked about the specific characteristics of skill-gaps amongst their staff, these were:



Key: (skill-gaps)

A. Advanced IT	F. Literacy	K. Personal attributes
B. Basic Computing	G. Management	L. Problem Solving
C. Customer Handling	H. Numeracy	M. Team Working
D. Foreign Language	I. Verbal Communication	N. Written Communication
E. Leadership	J. Other Technical / Practical	

Base: All establishments. Source: Greater Manchester Employer Skills Survey 2001 (LSC/IFF)

Customer handling (29 per cent), written communication skills (27 per cent), and verbal communication skills (25 per cent) were the most common skill-gaps identified by all survey respondents.

Analysis of skill-gaps by occupation highlights certain groups are more likely to experience skill gaps in comparison to the employers required performance, these were:

Skill gap characteristics	Occupation
Basic computing and advanced IT skills	Administrative and secretarial occupations
Technical and practical skills (other than IT related)	Professionals and associate professionals
Verbal communication skills	Associate professionals, machine/plant operatives and administrative/secretarial occupations
Written communication skills	Plant and machine operative occupations
Numeracy and literacy skills	Plant and machine operative occupations
Customer handling skills	Sales and customer service occupations
Team working and problem solving skills	Administrative and secretarial staff

The Local Skills Base

Skills issues are explored in greater depth in the Participation and Skills Strategies, and Basic Skills issues are examined in the Basic Skills section.

In general terms the skills base of the Greater Manchester resident population lags behind that of the whole of the country across each of the National Learning Targets. However, as is the case with all other indicators, this masks a very diverse range of levels at local authority level with Trafford and Stockport consistently out performing neighbouring areas and boroughs such as Salford and Rochdale under-performing. These disparities between local areas are a cause for concern and we are committed to improving performance across the area to the level of the best.

National Learning Targets 1998/99

Target	Greater Manchester	England	Differential
19 year olds at Level 2	70.7%	74.9%	-4.2%
21 year olds at Level 3	42.9%	53.2%	-10.3%
Adults at Level 3	45.0%	46.0%	-1.0%
Adults at Level 4	24.0%	26.5%	-2.5%

Source: Labour Force Survey; DfES admin sources

Educational attainment, in terms of NVQ level 2 equivalent achievement in Greater Manchester, lies consistently below the national average, whereas the average A/AS level points score for 17 year olds is above the England average in 2001.

Educational attainment 2001²

	Greater Manchester	North West	England
% school leavers with 5 or more GCSE at A-C	46.9%	46.1%	50.0%
Average A/AS level points score for 17 year olds	17.9%	17.4%	17.8%

Source: DfES

Locally, fewer young people at the age of 16 continue in full time education than nationally whilst a slightly higher proportion, 12.2% compared with 11.1%, go into employment with training in Greater Manchester. The figures in the table below conceal significant variations between the local authority districts.

School Leaver Destinations 2000 (%)

Destination	Greater Manchester	England
Full time education	65.8%	71.3%
Training (non employed)	4.7%	4.4%
Employment	15.6%	12.1%
Not settled	8.3%	7.3%
Moved out of contact	2.4%	2.6%
No response	3.2%	2.3%
TOTAL	100%	100%
	(32,580)	(570,279)

Source: Careers Destinations Survey

Although there is no single reliable source of data, local knowledge suggests that there are also disparities between the 10 local authority districts in the percentages of young people who progress into Higher Education. As we now have a government target that requires 50% of young people to progress into higher education, this is an issue that we need to address.

² England averages in the secondary performance tables include all schools, and England averages in the school and college performance tables

The Post-16 Learning Survey

We have recently completed research into the learning needs, experiences and preferences of residents in Greater Manchester.

Project aim and objectives

The aim of the research was to establish detailed up to date and consistent information on adult learning undertaken by residents in Greater Manchester and to provide a benchmark for the monitoring of adult learning in the future. The survey identifies the extent to which people are engaged in learning, the plans people have for learning, the perceived barriers to learning, peoples attitudes and motivations towards learning, their experiences and perceptions of learning and the skills and qualifications people had achieved or were working towards.

The scope of the survey includes both taught and non-taught learning in Greater Manchester. The research included different interest groups, such as the economically inactive, unemployed, people with disabilities, people from ethnic minority groups and people who live in deprived areas. The research also provides information at the local authority district level.

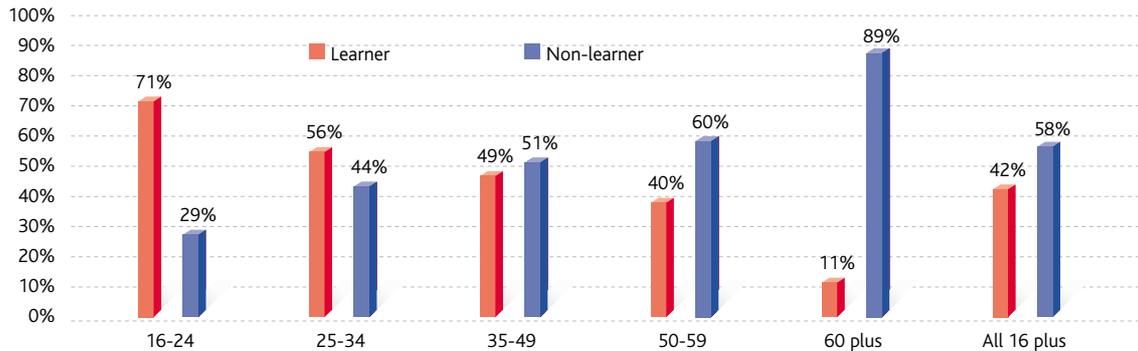
The research had a number of themes including:

- > Levels of participation in different types of learning - including the subject, mode and timing of the learning, information on the learning provider and the pattern of travel undertaken to learn
- > Future plans and aspirations for learning including needs and motivations to learn
- > Information on the different barriers to learning
 - Structural barriers e.g. cost, childcare, transport, time;
 - Personal and social barriers e.g. confidence, apathy, value of learning, peers
 - Individual barriers e.g. language, disability, basic skills
- > Experiences and perceptions of learning – personal achievements and benefits of learning
- > Levels of skills and qualifications and details of employer support for learning
- > Socio-economic information e.g. age, gender, status, ethnic group, disability, economic activity, occupation, income and dependants

'Headline' analysis of the results of the survey indicate that findings in terms of participation in learning are broadly in line with research undertaken by NIACE 'The Learning Divide Revisited' (Sargent, 2000).

At the time of the survey, 42 per cent of respondents had taken part in learning during the last 3 years and 58 per cent of respondents had not participated in learning. As the following figure illustrates, learning participation declines with age.

Participation in learning in the last 3 years by Age Group



*Base: All Respondents Aged 16 & Over Main Sample
(3,136)*

Respondents who were on average more likely to have taken part in learning during the last three years were:

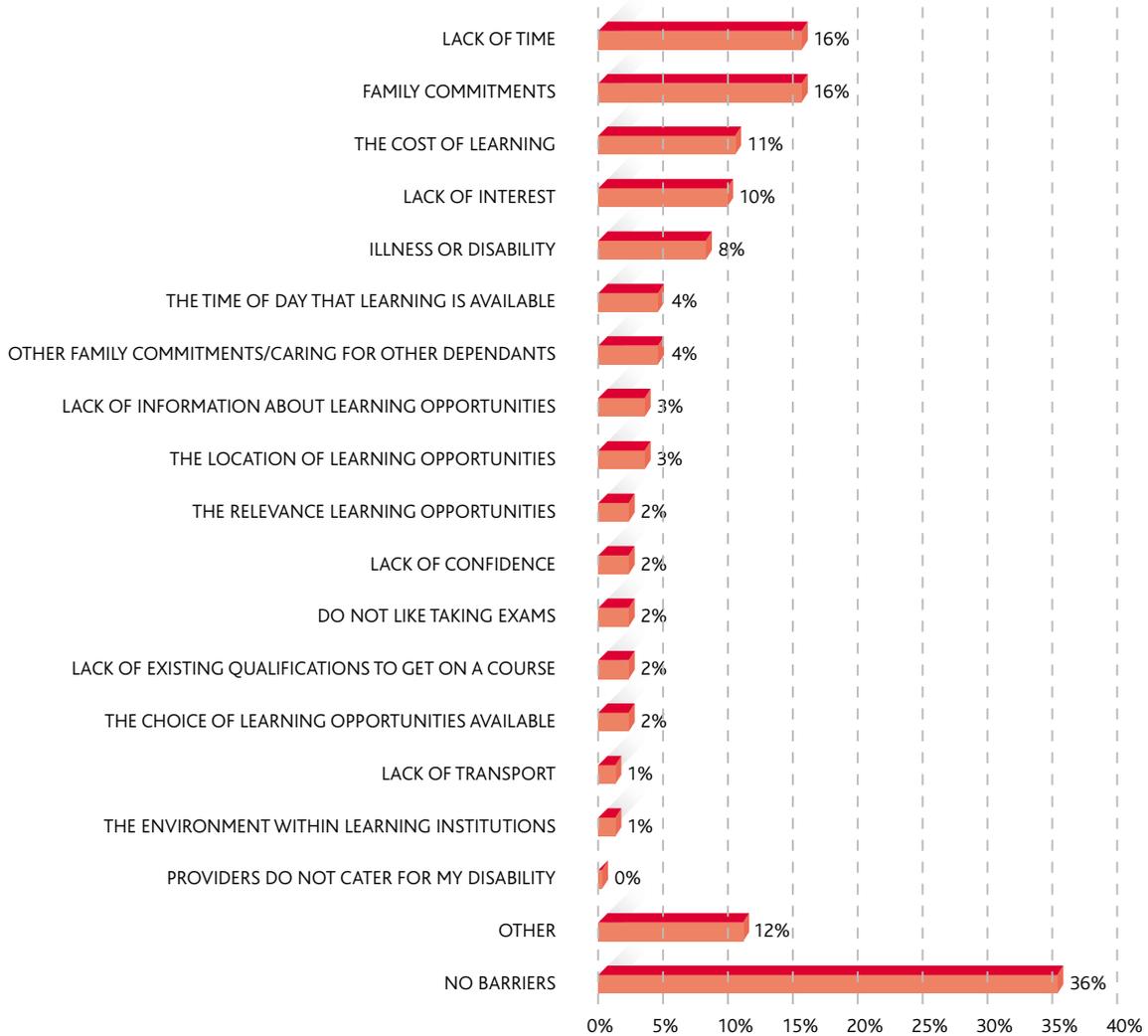
- > People aged between 16 and 49 years old
- > People who are economically active and those in full time or part-time employment
- > People with a Level 2 or higher level qualifications (including equivalents)

Conversely those respondents who on average were less likely to have participated in learning during the last three years were:

- > People aged over 49, especially those over 65 years old
- > The economically inactive, retired and the unemployed
- > People with disabilities
- > People whose first language is other than English

The barriers identified by respondents to participating in learning are shown in the following figure. The main barriers appear to be cost, time and family/caring commitments. Interestingly, 10 per cent of respondents said it was a 'lack of interest in learning' that prevents them from taking part in learning and 36 per cent said there were no barriers preventing them from participating in learning.

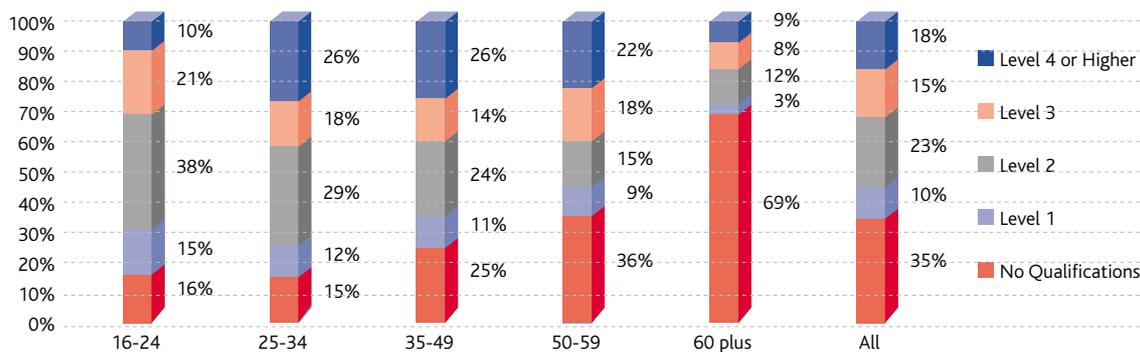
Which of the following prevent or act as a barrier to you taking part in training or learning?



Base: All Respondents Aged 16 & Over Main Sample (3,136)

The figure below shows the level of qualifications held by respondents across Greater Manchester. The proportion of people aged over 16 with no qualification increases with age, particularly after the age of 25. Over a third of those aged between 50 and 59 have no qualifications and for those aged over 60, more than two thirds have no qualifications.

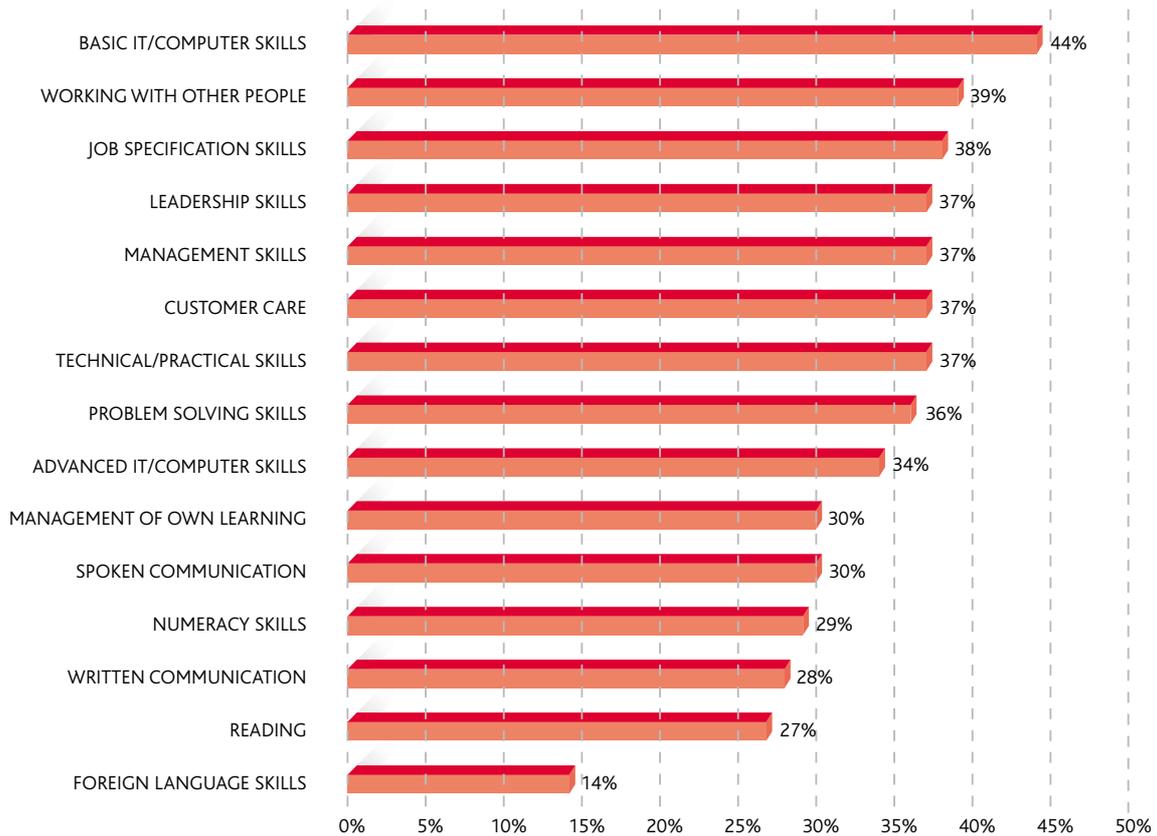
Highest Qualification Level (NVQ or Equivalent) by Age



Base: All Respondents Aged 16 & Over Main Sample (3,136)

Residents were asked to think about the future (over the next 2 to 3 years) in terms of the skills which would become more important for their job. The majority of respondents (44 per cent), on net balance, specified that increasing needs for basic information technology/basic computer skills would be key. Growth in the need for job specific (38 per cent) technical and practical skills (37 per cent) were also important as were team working skills (39 per cent), management/leadership skills (37 per cent), customer care (37 per cent), and problem solving skills (36 per cent). Just under one third (30 per cent) specified that, on net balance, management of one's own learning would become an increasing need.

Anticipated increase in future skills needs over next 2 to 3 years (net balance of residents reporting increase/decrease)



Base: All Respondents Aged 16 & Over Main Sample
(3,136)

Partnership and Stakeholders

The LSC GM covers a large geographical area which includes several areas of deprivation, and performance against the National Learning Targets is below the national average. It is clear therefore that our challenging skills agenda cannot be delivered without harnessing the energies and commitment of the many stakeholders across the area.

The main stakeholders for the LSC are:

- > The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA)
- > Local Authorities
- > Employers and their representative bodies,
- > Regeneration Partnerships
- > Individuals and their representative bodies, including trades unions
- > Careers Services and Connexions Partnerships
- > Sector Skills Councils
- > North West Development Agency

- > Sector Networks
- > Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)
- > Local Learning Partnerships (LPs)
- > Local Education Authorities
- > Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships
- > Equality Organisations
- > Voluntary Sector
- > Education Business Partnerships
- > The Employment Service
- > Government Office for the North West
- > Business Link
- > National Health Service Organisations
- > Youth Service
- > Probation Service
- > Learning Providers

We are wholly committed to partnership working and look to play a full part in the work of local partnerships

Geographical Issues

Greater Manchester is a complex and diverse area, demonstrating some polarisation within the area across a range of socio economic, competitive and skills related issues. For example, in January 2002 Greater Manchester had an unemployment rate of 3.7% compared to 3.4% for the UK. However, underneath that headline figure, unemployment stood at 1.1% in Hale (Trafford), but 18.2% in Hulme (Manchester).

While Greater Manchester contains many prosperous wards, it also possesses some of the most deprived wards in England, as defined by the Index of Multiple Deprivation. For example, Benchill in Manchester is the most deprived ward in the country, and the 20 most deprived wards in Greater Manchester are all within the top 126 of the most deprived wards in England as defined by the Index.

Ward Name	LA Name	Index of Multiple Deprivation Score	Rank in Index of Multiple Deprivation
1 Benchill	Manchester	83.77	1
2 Harpurhey	Manchester	78.28	16
3 Beswick and Clayton	Manchester	77.58	17
4 Bradford	Manchester	76.63	22
5 Ardwick	Manchester	75.73	29
6 Central	Manchester	73.75	41
7 Newton Heath	Manchester	73.13	45
8 Central	Bolton	72.71	51
9 Central and Falinge	Rochdale	72.48	52
10 Gorton South	Manchester	71.39	63
11 Woodhouse Park	Manchester	71.38	64
12 Middleton West	Rochdale	71.37	66
13 Moss Side	Manchester	71.01	73
14 Coldhurst	Oldham	70.82	75
15 Werneth	Oldham	70.45	80
16 Alexandra	Oldham	70.19	83
17 Smallbridge and Wardleworth	Rochdale	68.84	100
18 St. Marys	Oldham	68.59	103
19 Longsight	Manchester	68.48	105
20 Broughton	Salford	67.17	126

Source: Index of Deprivation 2000

We recognise that this limited list is not sufficiently comprehensive, as all the local authorities in our area are in the top one third of most deprived in England. We intend to work with our partners to identify those areas where need is greatest, not necessarily a regeneration area as defined by government, and accept that within relatively prosperous areas there exist pockets of deprivation. We are also committed to supporting those areas within Greater Manchester that are eligible for the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund³.

These are:

- > Bolton
- > Oldham
- > Salford
- > Wigan
- > Manchester
- > Rochdale
- > Tameside

³ The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) was announced by John Prescott on 10 October 2000. The NRF is a non-ring fenced fund amounting to £900m over the next 3 years. The fund aims to help the most deprived communities within these areas to tackle their main concerns. Receipt of the funding is conditional on commitment to establish a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) by April 2002. The 88 districts in receipt of NRF have been chosen using the Indices of Deprivation 2000, which provides deprivation scores and ranks for each District.

Compared to the rest of the country, these deprived areas have:

- > Twice as many people dependent on means tested benefits
- > 30% higher mortality rates
- > Three times more child poverty
- > 70% of all English ethnic minority residents

This degree of social exclusion and deprivation has serious implications for our planning, targets and approach to delivery, as people resident in these areas are likely to need more encouragement to participate in learning and more support to complete their learning successfully. For example, we would expect to see more Basic Skills provision in place, more community based learning and more flexible and accessible provision than in an area without these levels of deprivation. Our eventual aim is to develop local delivery plans for our services that address the specific needs of each local authority district, and within these to target support on the most deprived areas.

Regeneration areas (i.e. those areas identified by local authorities as being in need of extra support) within Greater Manchester are:

Bolton	> Farnworth	Salford	> Seedley & Langworthy
	> East Bolton		> Broughton
	> Great Lever		> Little Hulton
			> Kersal & Charlestown
Bury	> East Bury	Stockport	> Brinnington
			> Adswold
			> Offerton
			> Stockport Town Centre
Manchester	> East Manchester	Tameside	> Ashton Renewal Area
	> Moss Side & Hulme		> Hattersley
	> Cheetham		
	> Stockport Road Corridor		
	> Wythenshawe		
Oldham	> Westwood	Trafford	> Old Trafford & Gorse Hill
	> Glodwick		> Partington & Carrington
Rochdale	> East Central Rochdale	Wigan	> Atherton/Hag Fold
	> Middleton		> Worsley Mesnes
	> Heywood		> Abram

Cross Cutting Themes

This section is about the themes that underpin the whole plan.

Basic Skills

As the LSC definition shows, basic skills is not just about literacy and numeracy. However, most of the available statistics focus on these two indicators and we have therefore used them as a proxy for the wider range of skills.

In Greater Manchester the average of poor numeracy levels is estimated at 27.3% of the population, a figure that is slightly higher than the North West average (26.5%) and National average (24%). Similarly, poor literacy levels in Greater Manchester are estimated to be 26.2%, compared to the regional and national averages of 25.6% and 24% respectively.

Within our area, seven out of the ten local authority districts have poor numeracy and literacy levels that are higher than both the national and regional averages. Those districts are Manchester, Salford, Rochdale, Tameside, Oldham, Bolton and Wigan. The remaining three districts of Bury, Trafford and Stockport, are either level with or below the national average.

The LSC GM funds a range of programmes which deliver basic skills provision – Adult and Community Learning, Family Learning, Family Literacy and Numeracy, Further Education and Work Based Learning. It is recognised that other funding streams are also contributing to providing basic skills programmes for a large number of residents, primarily Employment Service, Single Regeneration Budget, European Structural Fund, Basic Skills Agency and Ufi.

The role of the voluntary and community sector is recognised in the part that they can play in engaging adults in learning where formal learning providers may not. Whilst we are supporting a small number of these organisations through Local Initiative Funding we will continue to investigate how longer term funding can be made available to these organisations.

AN LSC DEFINITION OF BASIC SKILLS

Provision which caters for the literacy, language and numeric needs of post-16 learners. This includes those with learning difficulties or disabilities, from pre-entry level to level 2, and covers the key skills of communication and application of number up to level 2. Basic skills can be delivered as stand alone provision or as part of a vocational programme or bolt on course and can be undertaken as a full time or part-time option or thorough self study or ICT

*Skills for Life – The LSC Literacy and Numeracy
Delivery Plan 2001*

Although there is a wide range of basic skills provision across Greater Manchester it is not clear where this is actually being delivered and to which priority groups. We have therefore carried out an audit of provision to map delivery against the information held on wards with highest needs. This information will be used to support the process for planning and allocation of funding for basic skills provision. The information will be shared with Learning Partnerships to add to any local data that they hold.

In order to build a coherent approach to basic skills work across the whole of Greater Manchester it will be important to work with partner organisations. We will work closely with partners such as the Probation Service, NHS, Small Business Service, Further Education Colleges, Work Based Learning providers, Chambers of Commerce, Ufi, Trades Union Congress, Adult Education Services, Workers Educational Association, Learndirect providers, Voluntary Sector, Refugee Action and Employment Service who are working with specific priority groups. In addition we shall be working with government and national agencies and departments to promote a coherent approach in the delivery of local and national initiatives.

We are currently working to produce a local **Basic Skills Strategy**, which will set out our intended approach to addressing the needs of individuals who are experiencing barriers due to basic skills deficiencies in Greater Manchester. We will encourage providers working specifically with priority target groups to update us on progress and to share any areas of good practice. Priority groups, as outlined in Skills for Life are:

- > young adults in the workforce
- > those living in disadvantaged communities, including homeless people
- > parents
- > workers in low skilled jobs
- > unemployed people
- > benefit claimants
- > prisoners and those on probation
- > groups at high risk of exclusion
- > public sector employees
- > refugees and successful asylum seekers
- > speakers of English as an additional language

Limited basic skills will present a serious disadvantage to people who are not currently in employment and who wish to engage in learning to improve their chances of obtaining employment and to those who are in work and aspire to improving their skills to secure a better job.

Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

The Council nationally has a duty to consider placing students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at residential specialist establishments, where it is satisfied that this is necessary to meet their needs. The LSC GM currently funds 170 learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at specialist colleges and there are 60 providers who are offering support to young people with learning needs engaged in work based learning. This includes funding for aids, adaptations and additional support in order that the young person can achieve their vocational goal .

We have just prepared a report which was presented to the Young People Committee in January 2002 looking at the adequacy of provision for learners with learning difficulties and /or disabilities in the Greater Manchester area. The report focused on FE provision and a further report will follow detailing work based learning opportunities available for this group of learners. As part of this exercise LSC staff consulted with the 25 FE colleges in the area through questionnaires and in some cases visits, and held discussions with local careers services and the 10 local education authorities.

Equal Opportunities

The LSC GM is committed to promoting equal opportunities in a way that impacts favourably upon the community it serves. We have a statutory duty (Learning and Skills Act 2000:14) to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- > people from different racial groups
- > men and women
- > people with and without a disability

Also, the need to have due regard to the needs of the growing proportion of older people is highlighted in the Secretary of State's remit letter to the Learning and Skills Council. Legislation, regulation and policy provide a framework within which we will strive to deliver equality of opportunity for all learners, irrespective of their age, race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, whether or not they have a disability, learning difficulty or any other characteristic. All actions will be underpinned by the relevant legislation.

We have produced a draft Equal Opportunities Strategy, to be formally adopted in April/early May 2002. This strategy will guide our medium-term plans for meeting our commitment to achieving equality of opportunity across post-16 learning. In doing so we will take into consideration statistical data relating to Greater Manchester, including the Learning Survey and the Employer Survey carried out in 2001 and the conclusions drawn. We will also be consulting widely with key partners, local partners, voluntary organisations and community groups. It is intended that the Equal Opportunities Strategy will give a clear view of the LSC GM priorities for closing equality gaps in access, participation, retention and attainment, challenging stereotyping particularly in terms of gender, ethnicity, age and disability. Within the draft plan the following mission and vision are proposed:

Mission

To develop the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester as an equal opportunities organisation and champion of equality by mainstreaming equal opportunities in all policies and programmes.

Vision

Create a learning society which is free from discrimination and prejudice and which encourages and helps all learners reach their full potential.

The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester will deliver equality of opportunity by:

- > Mainstreaming equality and diversity in all aspects of its work
- > Building effective partnerships with key national, regional and local organisations
- > Consulting with key partners, providers and learners

Social Inclusion

Social inclusion and equal opportunities provide a recurrent theme within both The Secretary of State's Remit Letter to the Learning and Skills Council (November 2000) and the LSC Corporate Plan to 2004. The headline message is that the Council, as an organisation, should promote and offer equality of opportunity, widen access and promote diversity.

A DEFINITION OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

"a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown."

The Government's Social Exclusion Unit

The Government's three goals for tackling social exclusion are set out in a key document Preventing Social Exclusion (Social Exclusion Unit 2001). These are:

- **preventing** social exclusion happening in the first place - by reducing risk factors and acting with those who are already at risk;
- **reintegrating** those who become excluded back into society; and
- delivering **basic minimum standards** to everyone – this includes education and training.

We have produced a local Equal Opportunities Policy Statement, which appears at Annexe 6. We intend to work in partnership with businesses, local government, communities, voluntary groups and providers of education and training in our area and national and local organisations including: the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission, the Employers Forum on Age, The Probation Service and engaging in networking arrangements so that best practice on equal opportunities can underpin the work of the Council and ensure that realistic pathways can be created for the disadvantaged.

Childcare

Lack of childcare is a major barrier to participation in learning and work for many, especially those who are lone parents. In recognition of this, the Government has produced a childcare strategy – The Childcare Challenge – with the following goals:

To create new childcare places for 1.6 million children by March 2004 which, taking account of turnover in existing places, should allow around 1 million extra children to benefit from childcare in England alone.

By March 2004, the Government's ambition is that there should be a childcare place in the most disadvantaged areas for every lone parent entering employment. The percentage of lone parents perceiving childcare as a barrier will be monitored nationally to help measure progress.

To set targets to close the childcare gap between disadvantaged areas and others.

To put in place universal nursery education for 3 year olds by September 2004.

To ensure that 94% of early years settings, inspected by OfSTED, are making satisfactory or better progress in delivering the Early Learning Goals, by September 2004.

The ten Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCPs) in our area have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding with us. The main LSC contribution to the national strategy and local plans is to ensure that childcare training which meets local needs is planned and funded. Through our relationship with Business Link, we can also help employers to play their part by encouraging them to adopt family friendly employment policies.

Initial discussions with the EYDCPs suggest that there may be some under-provision of work based training opportunities. EYDCPs also feel that much of the training available through FE colleges is not meeting their needs. However at least some of these issues have emerged as a result of the introduction of the new national arrangements that include the establishment of the LSC. There is evidently a need to introduce greater flexibility into childcare training. For example, it has been necessary to utilise the LSC GM Local Initiative Fund to contribute towards the cost of training for individuals, working in childcare, who are over 25 years and who require Basic Skills training. The funding will also be used to train existing employees to become assessors – TDLB D32/D33 and D34.

Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships are responsible for:

- > assessing the demand for childcare and the supply of places available to meet it, and setting achievable local targets for filling the gap between the two;
- > acting as a source of advice for the New Opportunities Fund on local needs for out of school provision and priorities between bids for Lottery funding;
- > identifying how the locality can draw on other potential sources of funds to develop childcare;
- > providing support to parents and informal carers;
- > ensuring childcare information services are available which meet national standards;
- > identifying and meeting training needs; and
- > securing employer involvement and commitment.

We will continue to work with local EYDCPs to improve the effectiveness and local availability of childcare training, and will offer our support to them in achieving their objectives, especially that of setting targets to close the childcare gap between disadvantaged areas and others.

Health and Safety

The LSC GM Health and Safety Advisory Team will support colleagues within the organisation and Providers under contract to us in fulfilling the following four primary objectives.

- > The promotion of provider responsibility and accountability for learner health and safety – especially through an expectation of continuous improvement and via high quality health and safety content in self-assessment and development planning.
- > The management of transition from the previous approaches to one of maximising influence and effect through the newer, more appropriate and targeted ways of working with work based learning providers, FE colleges, and the voluntary sector adult and community learning providers.
- > To increasingly apply a selective, risk-based approach targeted towards the concept of the “safe learner”.
- > For learner health and safety to be pro-active, influential and an integrated part of the growing remit of local offices.

Cross Cutting Themes - Summary of Actions and Performance Measures

Theme	Objective	Performance Measure	Date
Basic Skills	1. Production of a Basic Skills Strategy for Greater Manchester setting out how the LSC GM will address Basic Skills targets	Strategy Produced.	April 2002
	2. Strategy and targets implemented	Contracts agreed for basic skills training.	2002
	3. Evaluation of effectiveness and recommendations for future action	Results reviewed and recommendations made.	2003
Equal Opportunities	1. Equal Opportunities Policy Statement produced which sets out how the LSC GM will mainstream equal opportunities in its funded provision	Statement produced and endorsed by national office.	2002
	2. Equal Opportunities targets set for LSC funded provision	Targets set during next contracting round.	2002
	3. Monitoring of performance	Results reviewed and recommendations made.	Ongoing
Childcare	1. Childcare strategy produced which sets out how the LSC GM will work with the 10 local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships and local learning providers to identify and meet local childcare training needs, as well as to support the EYDCPs in delivering their objective of closing the childcare gap between disadvantaged areas and others.	Strategy produced.	2002
	2. Strategy and targets implemented	Contracts agreed for childcare training.	2002
	3. Evaluation of effectiveness and recommendations for future action	Results reviewed and recommendations made.	2003/4
Health and Safety	1. Health and Safety Policy Statement produced which sets out how the LSC GM will ensure the health and safety of trainees on its funded provision	Statement produced.	2001
	2. Monitoring of provider health and safety arrangements	Results reviewed and recommendations made.	Ongoing

The Participation Strategy

This part of the plan is about widening participation in learning by all people and contains two key sections; the first is on young people and the second on adults.

We need to improve skills and qualifications across the workforce if we are to close the productivity gap that exists between ourselves and the most successful economies in the United States, Germany and Japan. This productivity gap limits the growth of our economy and therefore impacts on the whole population.

To improve skills and qualifications we will have to address issues of non-participation and underachievement across the whole range of government funded learning, as well as seeking to influence training funded by employers. This is a massive task, but the LSC is in a position to influence very directly the majority of post-16 learning, through its planning and funding role. We are also about to assume a strategic responsibility for the 14-16 age group. The main challenge for us is employer funded training, over which we have a limited influence. Research has shown that employers are the largest funders of training; clearly, if we were able to ensure that the majority of that training led to vocational qualifications there would be a huge impact on skills levels.

Participation in learning is determined by a variety of factors, some of which we can influence and some we cannot. The style, format, location and timing of learning opportunities can present barriers to participation or progression for some individuals and communities. The LSC should identify those barriers which it can realistically address and prioritise the actions needed to overcome them.

The implications of this agenda for change are wide ranging. The LSC and its partners must transform attitudes to learning among the people and employers of Greater Manchester.

The reasons for non-participation in learning are varied and complex. Barriers include the physical, such as the location of training, the structural, such as the unavailability of specific qualifications (e.g. vendor qualifications in ICT) and the attitudinal. Attitudinal barriers are the most problematic for the planners and providers of learning.

We now have a government target that aims to provide a place in higher education for 50% of people aged up to 30 by 2010. This target will be especially challenging in Greater Manchester, where learning participation rates are below the national average. However, we are determined to make an impact and help local people access higher education, and will work with local providers and the Higher Education sector to develop effective access routes.

Key Task : To Raise Participation & Achievement By Young People

Why is this important?

At present many young people in Greater Manchester are not reaching their full potential in education and training.

We have inherited an infrastructure for young people's learning which is large, diverse and complex and where the funding of qualifications through different routes (such as work based learning and further education) can be inconsistent. The supporting mechanisms which help young people to decide about the right route and qualifications for them, such as Careers Services, can be at some distance from the labour market.

The result is that young people often make choices about learning post-16 which are not informed by the right labour market information, or which are not appropriate for them. At worst, this leads to premature drop-out and disaffection. At best, it means some young people have to transfer between different types of provision until they find the one that works for them.

As the LSC remit widens to embrace learning from age 14 onwards, we must ensure that all learning across this age group supports progression, is informed by good labour market information, is responsive to the differing needs of learners and receives funding that enables it to achieve its aims. In delivering this challenging agenda, it is important that, in attempting to increase participation, we do not favour any single learning route, whether academic or vocational. We must widen participation across all of the learning routes. In doing so, we are recognising that each learner is an individual who will respond to some types of provision and not to others.

The key strategic partners for all of this activity are Careers Services, Connexions Partnerships, LEAs, Learning Partnerships and employers.

The Issues

- > Around 33,600 young people left school in the area last year, and 5,000 of these did not progress into further learning, either in a school sixth form, with an employer through a Modern Apprenticeship, or in further education. These young people represent a considerable wasted resource for the area, and clearly their own individual life chances will be affected.
- > In most of Greater Manchester, young people are less likely than in other parts of the country to continue learning at the age of 16 (about 68% of young people in Greater Manchester participated in post-16 learning in 1998/9, compared with 77% nationally). However, there is evidence to suggest that many young people subsequently enter work based learning, so this low participation rate at 16 may be misleading.

- > Young people's achievements at age 16 are below the national average (in 2001 46.9% of young people achieved 5+ A-C grades at GCSE, compared with 50% nationally, but this figure masks a wide variation across the local education authorities).
- > The percentage of 16 year olds entering further education in Greater Manchester is lower than the national average – with the exception of Bury, Stockport and Trafford. However, the percentage has increased in every area over the last three years.
- > Learning/employment choices at age 16 should be informed by comprehensive and well informed careers guidance and labour market information.
- > The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is available to young people in parts of Greater Manchester. The EMA provides financial support to young people aged 16-18 to enable them to continue learning. Government research has shown that where it is available it has a good effect on attendance, behaviour and effort, but there is no conclusive evidence that it increases participation, and anecdotal evidence locally suggests that it may encourage young people who would have entered work based learning to remain in full time education instead. Piloting of the allowance is continuing.

We must work with schools, LEAs and education business partnerships to address low motivation, underachievement and disengagement from learning from early on in young people's school life.

Young people in Greater Manchester are as capable as any others in England. We can see this in school assessments, where young people start well but then underachieve progressively (See Annexe 1). For example, results from assessments at Key Stage 1 (children aged 7) show Greater Manchester performing about one percentage point below the national average. By Key Stage 3 (children aged 14), performance in 6 out of the 10 local education authorities is below the national average, with boys consistently doing worse than girls (except in Science). The other four local education authorities are performing at the national average or above.

With so many young people underachieving during their school life in Greater Manchester it is hardly surprising that educational attainment at age 16 is below average, or that many young people do not go into further learning after the age of 16.

14-19 Strategy

This failure to maximise the potential of young people is a fundamental weakness for Greater Manchester. As a first step in tackling this problem, the LSC GM is developing its strategy for young people aged 14-19 that will provide a framework for the education, training and supporting services that young people require through this critical period in their lives, in collaboration with key partners such as Local Education Authorities. A crucial element will be the development of intervention strategies that detect under-achievement early

enough in a child's school life to make a difference. These approaches will have to be customised, collaborative and highly responsive. In recognition of the important role that the family plays in supporting children's learning, family learning will play a major part.

The main focus of the 14-19 strategy will be on widening the range of options for young people from the age of 14, in line with emerging government thinking (key documents are the Cassells Report on Modern Apprenticeship and the Green Paper "14-19: extending opportunities, raising standards"). The net effect of these changes is to give parity of esteem to vocational and academic learning from the age of 14, with new learning programmes and qualifications that support progression into Apprenticeship or full time learning at 16. We will use the new flexibilities (including the "Increasing Flexibility for 14-16 year olds" initiative) to develop vocational opportunities that extend choice for young people.

The challenge for the Learning and Skills Council and its partners is to find ways of re-engaging young people, of making learning exciting and, above all, of giving them the help they need to achieve their full potential.

Current Activities to Support Learning Pre-16

Education Business Link activities include:

- > Support and brokerage for schools to help them further develop and embed whole school strategies for education business links
- > Teacher professional development placements
- > Work Experience
- > Curriculum Enhancement
- > Mentoring
- > Skills Development
- > Preparation for the world of work

Local education authorities and schools have the primary responsibility for young people aged 14-16. Nevertheless, the LSC has an important part to play. Currently, we fund a range of services through the Education Business Link Organisation Consortium (EBLOC). These are focused, in the main, on young people aged 14-16, but clearly there is a case to be made for providing them to younger children (some EBLOC activity already occurs with young people as young as 5 years old). The main aim of these activities is to improve understanding of the world of work among teachers and school students including challenging gender stereotyping. The activities are also designed to help young people make a smooth transition at the age of 16 and to raise attainment pre-16.

The EBLO Consortium (EBLOC) is a relatively new organisation that brings together a number of local Education Business Link organisations with the aim of co-ordinating services across Greater Manchester. Over the next few years, the EBLOC for Greater Manchester will make a specific contribution to increasing participation, retention and achievement in learning, by moving from a diverse range of activities to an extended core of common activities which have demonstrated the most cost effective and sustainable impact in supporting LEA and school development plans.

The EBLOC will ensure that Education Business Link Organisations widen their activities for school pupils to explore the opportunities offered by work based learning and will work with partners to ensure parity for this route. It will make a major contribution to all of the following:

- > Raising standards of achievement, in particular supporting literacy and numeracy
- > Supporting Social Inclusion Strategies and working with the emerging Connexions Service
- > Preparing young people for the world of work by giving pupils an insight to the working world and the skills they will require
- > Skill development, in particular Key Skill Development
- > Enhanced work experience which offers better preparation and de-briefing for young people.
- > Support for the National Curriculum with activities related to and taking place within the world of work.

Education Business Link Organisations are well placed in their work with employers to identify and address skill requirements for young people entering the labour market . The EBLOC will play a crucial role in raising skill levels by improving pupil, parent and teacher awareness of current and future labour market, skill shortages and the skill requirements of industry. The Consortium is active in supporting the North West Festival of Skills and in developing links with other partners to support similar projects.

Learning Choices Post-16

If we are to convince more young people to continue learning post-16 we must offer them learning opportunities that are attractive and relevant to their interests and goals. Employment is a key motivator for many young people, and all those working with young people need to recognise this and ensure that the post-16 curriculum has labour market relevance.

The current learning menu for young people aged 16 includes:

- > Further Education College (a wide range of courses, ranging from foundation studies to A levels and level 3 vocational qualifications)
- > Sixth Form College and School Sixth Form (a levels, AS levels, Advanced Vocational Certificates in Education)
- > Advanced Modern Apprenticeship (a job with a structured training programme leading to a qualification at NVQ Level 3)
- > Foundation Modern Apprenticeship (NVQ Level 2 rather than Level 3)

These are highly structured, formal learning processes which may not suit all young people. For those who need more time and help to choose their learning route, LifeSkills courses offer tasters, activities designed to improve confidence and in depth guidance.

Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures

Strategic Objective 1. Increasing the Participation of Young People in Education and Training

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
1.1	Ensure the funding system is used flexibly to meet learner needs	1, 5	Develop new learning opportunities that mix employer placements & classroom based provision. Use flexible funds (Local Initiative Funding & ESF Co-Financing) to support innovation, capacity building & enhancements to existing opportunities	Piloting throughout 2002. Evaluate & produce report late 2002 that recommends future actions
1.2	To improve the accessibility of opportunities for all young people, including disadvantaged groups	1	Develop innovative provision & supporting arrangements that remove barriers to access Ensure that providers have adequate resources to work with the hardest to help Undertake a study to identify examples of provision that are successful in overcoming barriers. Determine what makes the provision successful & promote the good practice to others. Encourage collaborative approaches between providers to ensure smooth transition & widen choice for learners.	Development of pilot pre-apprenticeship programme in 2002 Consider as part of provider review process on an ongoing basis Review conducted by August 2002. Dissemination in September 2002. Improved accessibility by April 2003 (measure to be developed)
1.3	To ensure that young people have access to appropriate information, advice & guidance in school	1	Support the Education Business Link Organisation Consortium to provide effective support for young people making the transition from school to work or further education	Report on results of a review of EBLO services to be produced in March 2002

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
1.4	To increase the number, range & quality of Modern Apprenticeships to meet labour market needs & fill gaps in provision	1	<p>Support the development of the Connexions Service by providing pilot projects that will inform & assist local partners to establish the networks & services needed to support young people in maximising their potential.</p> <p>Agree joint marketing approaches with providers & partners to mutually reinforce key messages for young people. Ensure that agencies advising young people recognise employment is a motivator for young people to engage in further learning</p> <p>Support the agreed action to implement "The Way to Work", the report of the Modern Apprenticeship Advisory Committee chaired by Sir John Cassells.</p> <p>Develop Apprenticeship to include vendor qualifications (e.g. ICT qualifications such as Microsoft Certified Professional), additional qualifications in demand in some occupations, & the opportunity to progress to higher level qualifications.</p> <p>Raise young people's awareness of their learning entitlement & encourage them to promote Modern Apprenticeships to their employers.</p> <p>Encourage employers to use Modern Apprenticeship as their key recruitment & training mechanism.</p>	<p>Pilot projects delivered in the period up to September 2002</p> <p>Marketing approaches agreed by September 2002.</p> <p>Implementation during 2002/3</p> <p>Vendor qualifications developed during 2002/3.</p> <p>Key messages & promotional approaches agreed with partners (Careers, Connexions etc) in 2002</p> <p>Key messages & promotional approaches agreed with partners (Business Links, employer organisations etc) in 2002</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
1.5	To increase young people's participation in learning for occupations with an identified future skill shortage	1	<p>Work with the North West Development Agency, local & sub regional partners responsible for the production of local economic development strategies, employers & employer groups to identify occupational skill shortages.</p> <p>Work with work based learning providers to ensure that the range of future provision in Greater Manchester reflects the skills requirements of local commerce and industry and is delivered to a level of quality which meets the standards of these industries.</p> <p>Work with local further education colleges to identify & establish Centres of Vocational Excellence. Providers will be supported in the introduction of appropriate monitoring & reporting systems & improvement strategies. Colleges in co-operation with work based learning providers, employers & higher education will develop foundation degrees in specific areas of sector need.</p>	<p>Joint Planning Forum established 2002</p> <p>Develop LSC/ Key Sector joint planning groups by 2003</p> <p>Key areas of excellence identified by 2002</p> <p>Establish collaborative project to set up a multi-centre CoVE by 2003. Establish a collaboration between work based learning providers & colleges to form a CoVE consortium by 2003</p> <p>Increase number of CoVEs by 2005</p>
1.6	To make contact with those young people who have dropped out of learning, or who are unsure of their next steps at age 16, & develop ways of re-engaging them	1	<p>Work with agencies who are in touch with disaffected/disengaged young people (e.g. Local regeneration partnerships, careers services Connexions pilot, Probation Service, Youth Offending Teams, Social Services, voluntary & community organisations) & agree an approach that gets the "Learning Pays" message across.</p>	<p>Agreement reached with partners by September 2002.</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
		<p>Develop partnership projects that use LIF & other funding & focus on particular groups or areas with a high rate of drop out from learning</p>	<p>Agree allocation of LIF & other funding to projects in 2002.</p>	
		<p>Develop & pilot new learning approaches that will attract disengaged young people back into learning, e.g. pre Lifeskills courses, motivational programmes & increased use of mentoring. One idea is to develop a range of motivational activities for those not ready to enter the Learning Gateway</p>	<p>Pre Lifeskills courses developed throughout 2002</p>	
		<p>Utilise Local Initiative Funding to enhance Lifeskills & provide more intensive one to one support where it is needed.</p>	<p>LIF project developed in 2002</p>	
		<p>The lack of an effective tracking system for learners in all learning routes leads to learners "disappearing" from the system & prevents effective follow-up. We need to work with Careers Services, Connexions & Learning Partnerships to develop the application of the Individual Learner Record (ILR) system to all learning routes.</p>	<p>ILR system applied to all routes by 2005.</p>	

Strategic Objective 2. To increase the achievements of young people in education & training

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
2.1	To identify & assist those people who need further help to progress	3	<p>Ensure that initial assessment & review processes are effective, including assessment of prior achievement at school.</p> <p>Ensure that a range of alternative provision is available to provide additional support for those lacking skills by testing alternative learning approaches which address barriers to progress both in pre & post-16 provision.</p>	<p>Review effectiveness of current processes early in 2002 & recommend future actions.</p> <p>Pilot alternatives in 2002, review & recommend future actions.</p>
2.2	To improve the quality of opportunities for disadvantaged groups	3	<p>Review the take-up & success rates of provision aimed at disadvantaged groups.</p> <p>Identify what makes provision successful for these groups & ensure that other providers are able to adopt good practices.</p>	<p>Review carried out & report produced in late 2002.</p> <p>Implement recommendations as above, commencing in 2002</p>
2.3	To ensure that young people receive effective careers education which enables them to make an informed & appropriate choice of learning route at age 16 that maximises their chances of success.	1, 3	<p>Work with Careers Services & Connexions Partnerships to ensure that young people have access to accurate & up to date labour market information as well as information on the learning routes that apply to their chosen career</p> <p>Ensure that an appropriate range of work experience & taster activity is available to young people in years 10/11 both at school & through the Learning Gateway to help the development of their vocational aims.</p>	<p>Agreement on the provision of LMI by end March 2003.</p> <p>Review of provision complete by end March 2002. Changes implemented throughout 2002.</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
2.4	To ensure that young people have the support they need to achieve their learning goal. E.g. childcare, mentoring, Education Maintenance Allowance	3	<p>Encourage local colleges & schools to develop proposals to address the "increased flexibility for 14-16 year olds" initiative</p> <p>Build effective progress monitoring into LSC contracts that identify young people at risk of under-achievement & trigger appropriate responsive action</p> <p>Ensure that young people have equal access to support arrangements regardless of their chosen learning route</p> <p>Ensure that funding levels across all learning routes are based on meeting learner need, not programme constraints (although LSC GM will be committed to the national funding formula)</p> <p>Develop effective alternative approaches to the delivery of Key Skills in Modern Apprenticeship to improve completion rates.</p>	<p>Proposals submitted December 2001</p> <p>Improved contracts in place by July 2002.</p> <p>Learner Support needs & plans for meeting them to be identified in individual learning plans by 2004.</p> <p>Implement new funding arrangements as they are developed nationally.</p> <p>Alternative approaches tested in 2002/3.</p>

Key Task: To Increase the Demand for Learning by Adults and Equalise Opportunities through Better Access to Learning

Adult learning is taken to be all activity funded by the LSC for individuals aged 19 and above.

Why is this important?

Increasing the demand for learning by adults is an essential step in developing a culture of lifelong learning in Greater Manchester, which will contribute to economic and employment growth. Individual commitment to learning is very much dependant on a personal recognition by individuals that **learning pays** and that by investing their time and other resources, they will achieve a realistic return i.e. securing or retaining a job, an increase in income, progression into further learning or by the achievement of a personal goal. However, this must be supported by a **learning system which is responsive to the needs of individuals**, policies and **activities which increase motivation**, an increase in **the availability of information advice and guidance** to turn motivation into a plan of action, **improved access to learning** by increasing the choice an individual may make in selecting a desired learning route and by **reducing barriers** which may prevent participation in learning.

Learning providers are being required to adapt and change to meet new demands which are being placed upon them from employers and individuals. The drivers of change include globalisation leading to increased competition in all industries including competition between learning providers.

The future of learning will be driven by:

- Globalisation
- The Knowledge Economy
- Changing Consumer Demands
- New Technology

The **knowledge economy**, where value lies in the procession of information and new ideas has implications for jobs, people and organisations and learning providers should be supported to prepare people for this new environment. Changing **consumer demands** means that individual learners are increasingly seeking new and different methods of learning designed to meet their own specific need. Learning providers need to consider how they can meet this demand and provide a **learner centred approach**. A shift is necessary not only to secure effective learning but also for the survival of learning providers. **New technology** is having a huge impact on many organisations and the learning industry is particularly affected by information communication technology (ICT), which in demand terms is becoming a valued and often necessary workforce skill whilst as a supply issue it opens up new distribution channels and access to learners who previously were inaccessible.

There is therefore a great deal to be done both in developing the supply of effective and appropriate training and education and equally importantly ensuring that all individuals have the opportunity to access such provision at a level which is appropriate to them and which meets their own individual need. The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester intends to support individuals to develop the skills required by the economy ensuring that people who are at risk of being excluded are provided with specific help to prevent them from being left behind.

We recognise that too many people are at risk of being excluded from participation in learning, often locked into a cycle of disadvantage. We are committed to ensuring that people who are currently excluded are provided with every opportunity to access and progress in their chosen learning route.

.....too many people are at risk of being excluded from participation in learning, often locked into a cycle of disadvantage

Our challenge will be to: reach non-learners and gain their attention; change their attitudes towards learning; provide routes into learning which will attract them; build on initial success to provide opportunities to continue and progress.

We recognise that adults can face many barriers in pursuit of their learning goal. These include: significant problems with confidence and self esteem, perhaps leading to communicative problems or low interaction with those who are providing training; they may have a lack of motivation or negative attitude towards learning, maybe brought about by poor previous

experiences or by a lack of knowledge of the availability of appropriate training; they may suffer from health problems which preclude participation through traditional learning routes; they may face barriers which are driven by personal circumstance and which are of course of a higher priority such as caring for dependents from children through to the elderly; they may have a disability which prevents them from engaging in the method of learning which is on offer; they may be people for whom English is not their first language ; they may have low levels of basic skills.

In a recent survey for example, learners listed their preferred learning locations as: at home, at work, in libraries, in community settings, in colleges, in church. We will be working with providers of learning to ensure that these barriers are overcome through the delivery of flexible and learner centred approaches.

The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal offers a comprehensive approach to tackling area deprivation at community level. It combines improvements to services with new mechanisms to join up local services and involve communities, and strong regional and national leadership. Local Strategic Partnerships will make joined-up working the norm at local level, drawing up Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies and Action Plans. **We intend to ensure that the actions of the LSC are closely aligned to those aspects of local action planning which relate to education and training.**

The Issues

Within Greater Manchester we have identified a series of issues in respect of the adult population which must be addressed if we are to progress the ambitions stated above.

PARTICIPATION ISSUES

A significant element of the population experience substantial difficulty in participating in the labour market – either because of where they live or because of personal circumstances. Examples include those residents in the most deprived and regeneration areas, people with basic skills needs, people from ethnic communities with participation rates in learning that are lower than average, young white males and unemployed people.

A lack of information makes it difficult to obtain an accurate picture of how many adults participate in learning funded by the LSC. We do not have information relating to learner and non-learner feedback to support strategy development and action planning.

Low rates of economic activity within certain parts of the community will reduce the likelihood of these residents becoming involved within education and training e.g. work based learning opportunities. Understanding the variability of economic activity rates across Greater Manchester within different sections of the community warrants further research to assess the extent to which a poor skills-base, socio-economic factors, exclusive barriers etc. are preventing social and economic inclusion. This implies further research to address how to target learning at 'hard to reach' sections of the community.

A lack of comprehensive and accessible information, advice and guidance for adults in Greater Manchester severely inhibits engagement and progression in learning. The current funding regime does not support an extensive approach to adult guidance. There is an issue of how the LSC works with partners, including employers, to identify the needs of people, particularly those in work.

DELIVERY ISSUES

The current inflexibility of the learning and training infrastructure prevents individuals from choosing routes of learning which best meet their needs and circumstances. The current funding arrangements do not encourage and support individuals to choose and use a mix of learning routes to achieve their desired outcome at a time that suits them. From a supply perspective, it does not encourage providers to develop truly learner centred approaches. For example, the system is not flexible enough to encourage learners to transfer between different training and learning routes – college based – work based – home based, if a mixture of these options best serves their individual needs.

ACHIEVEMENT AND SKILLS ISSUES

Levels of educational achievement for adults are generally low across Greater Manchester. Attainment at age 16 is an important indicator of an individual's future employment prospects and income. 7 out of 10 Local Education Authorities achieve less than the national average for 5 GCSEs Grade A to C. Achievement at 16 also gives rise to concern with high levels of young people failing to participate in post-16 structured learning. Although the trend is one of improvement the legacy of earlier years is clearly manifest within the group now defined as adult, in particular within groups from particular geographical areas and specific groupings of individuals who face barriers or difficulties in the labour market.

Employers rank the possession of generic or key skills as a top priority when recruiting and developing their workforce. There is also a linkage between some of these skills and pay. Computer skills are highly valued, even at moderate levels of complexity and possession will attract higher pay levels. Other skills, which are positively valued, include professional communication skills, problem solving skills and the ability to work as part of a team. Again there is evidence to suggest that possession of these skills will attract higher levels of income.

There are significant basic skills issues, the worst parts of our area have 30% of adults with basic skills difficulties, the best have 17%. Basic skills training, which includes English as a Second Language (ESOL), remains a traditional route for learners who are identified as non-participants or low achievers in education and training. For these reasons this type of provision becomes stigmatised in the minds of learners and providers as a low level alternative to vocational learning. Consequently drop out is very high i.e. 50% of adults do not complete such training.

Current Support for Adult Learners

The opportunities for meeting the demands of adult learners in Greater Manchester are significant and diverse. The majority of learning is actually carried out in the workplace and is funded by employers. There are numerous examples of good practice and provision of a high quality. Within Greater Manchester there are many examples of colleges developing initiatives to increase and widen participation amongst under-represented groups, and retain those students once recruited. However there remain serious issues which need to be addressed if adult learning is to become truly inclusive and demand led. The major routes for adult learning in Greater Manchester are as follows:

Further Education Colleges

Greater Manchester has the largest number of further education colleges in the UK. Within our area there are 25 colleges, comprising 12 Sixth Form Colleges and 13 Further Education or Tertiary Colleges. As would be expected, student numbers are high. In 2000 –2001, over 200,000 students were supported by the Further Education Funding Council funding, a predecessor organisation of the Learning and Skills Council, resulting in approximately £200,000,000 of expenditure. In 1999 –2000 approximately 70% of the total number of students were aged between 19 and 59. Of these, 9% undertook full time full year courses, 8% were engaged on full time , part year courses and 83% undertook part time courses.

Currently it is difficult to take a strategic view of adult and community learning due to a lack of data, information and knowledge relating to the characteristics of individuals who engage in learning through this route and the performance of providers.

Much work needs to be carried out with local authorities and providers to ensure that adult and community education is developed alongside the other routes of learning which are available to individuals and that it promotes a learner centred approach.

Adult and Community Learning

Adult and community based learning forms an important part of our drive to widen participation in learning. It is used:-

- **as a 'first rung' approach** to engage individuals into learning for the first time
- **to build the capacity and self-confidence of communities** so that they can take the initiative to address specific issues in their area which they feel are a priority, perhaps of a regeneration nature and help create healthy communities and civic society
- **to address key government policy issues** such as increasing the level of basic skills, which prohibit individuals from engaging and progressing in learning e.g. via Family Learning initiatives
- **by a wide range of people** with different needs, interests and who possess a varying range of knowledge, skills and qualifications, to achieve a personal learning goal or ambition

Undertaking a learning programme through this route does not necessarily mean embarking on a formal qualification, which can be off putting to many individuals.

It embraces a wide variety of learning locations, such as pubs, clubs, community and leisure centres, health centres as well as opportunities arranged by local authorities in adult education institutions or schools or by voluntary organisations. Many of these venues provide individuals with an alternative to a more formal institutional learning which can be a barrier for some people. In short, it probably provides the most opportunities and flexibilities in terms of meeting the needs of individuals.

In 2001-2002 the assumption of Greater Manchester Local Education Authorities in planning adult and community learning is that the number of learners who intend to engage in adult education and training courses will be approximately 62,000. Of these participants, 30% will be male and 70% female.

The voluntary and community sector have a large role to play in encouraging people to learn and develop social skills, particularly working with individuals at a pre-skill level to get them to a point where they have the confidence and social skills to engage in more formal learning. We intend to work with this sector to build up the voluntary sector learning infrastructure in order to underpin learning in communities.

Learndirect

The aims of Learndirect are to build 'a learning society which drives up demand for learning, to help adults improve their employability by acquiring new knowledge and skills, and to help businesses become more competitive. It uses Information Communications Technology (ICT) to support a flexible learning infrastructure which allows people and businesses to learn in

We will continue to work alongside Learndirect to ensure that this flexible and accessible method of learning is extended across Greater Manchester. With its distinctive role as a driver of virtual learning, we expect Learndirect to play a key role in meeting the new skill needs of individuals and businesses, in particular SMEs through world class web based learning.

'bite-sized chunks' on-line through the Internet at a pace and at times that suit them and wherever they have access to the Internet – at **learning centres**, at home or at work.

There are a growing number of **Learndirect** e-learning centres across Greater Manchester in addition to 38 Access Points which offer the client a wide variety of courses including IT skills; business skills; the basics of reading, writing and number; retail and distribution; environmental services; and multimedia. They are operated as a partnership of local, employer and sector-based organisations and link into a UK **Learndirect** network.

Stimulating Demand for Learning

The LSC recognises that the major challenge will be to devise new and innovative ways of attracting learners in addition to understanding and mainstreaming existing good practice. We intend to work with key partners to develop strategies which will attract new learners and stimulate the demand for learning. Much local knowledge has been gained via the LSC GM Learner Survey but we will also work with local partnerships to collaborate on local data and information and to take account of local issues. We expect that strategic and operational approaches will include:

- > assessing and taking account of what learners want and need;
- > working with communities via organisations such as the Council for Voluntary Service, the Workers Educational Association and the Youth Service;
- > working with other key providers such as colleges of further education, work based learning providers, adult and community learning providers;
- > the engagement of employers and trade unions.

In addition we would expect the LSC to lead on a targeted marketing campaign which will be supported by related marketing drives at a local level.

Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures

Strategic Objective 3. To increase participation & achievement in learning by adults

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
3.1	<p>To increase participation by adults from different priority groups in formal learning. These groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adults who are unemployed, specifically those that have been unemployed for less than 6 months - adults who are employed but have basic skill needs - adults from ethnic minority groups where participation is as lower than average - adults who are disabled - adults who are white males between the ages of 19 & 30 years - adults with caring responsibilities - lone parents - adults who are returners to the labour market 	1,4	<p>Evaluate the results of the Learner Survey to support the development of local strategies for stimulating the demand for learning and attracting new learners.</p> <p>Undertake research to understand the mechanics of local (local authority area) & sub regional (Greater Manchester) labour markets & use this information to develop participation strategies & action plans.</p> <p>Work with the voluntary & community sector to facilitate a co-ordinated & appropriate approach to promote learning & encourage non-learners from local communities to engage in formal learning.</p> <p>Work alongside Local Authorities & Community Education to ensure that local Adult Learning Plans are meeting the needs of individuals & local & national priorities</p> <p>Develop the capacity of new & existing adult & community learning providers who can attract & retain non-learners from priority groups & those who reside in areas of regeneration. Develop the use of non traditional venues, such as sports facilities, to encourage non-learners into a learning environment by building on existing individual interests.</p>	<p>Research undertaken 2002. Report published June 2002. Strategies published Sept 2002.</p> <p>Ongoing. Joint local area participation strategies in place by Sept 2002</p> <p>% increase in the number of non-learners from communities participating in learning by 2004</p> <p>Increased number of plans in place which meet LSC & LA requirements by 2004</p> <p>% increase in numbers of adult community learning providers by 2005</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
			<p>Develop effective working relationships with partners at a local, Greater Manchester and North West regional level to ensure a complementary & coherent planning approach relating to adult participation & achievement in learning</p> <p>Work with Learning Partnerships to develop effective mechanisms for existing learner & non-learner feedback, which will support & ensure an effective planning process.</p> <p>Work with providers to ensure that barriers to learning are acknowledged & that in planning & delivering training & education to adults these barriers, where possible, are reduced or eliminated</p>	<p>Approach to be agreed by end 2002</p> <p>Pilot learner feedback programme 2002. Implement full learner feedback programme by 2003</p> <p>Measure learner feedback to reduce incidence where barriers are cited as reason for non-learning by 2005</p>
3.2	<p>To increase the participation by adults from regeneration areas in formal learning</p>	1,4	<p>Work with Local Strategic Partnerships to ensure that the 6 Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies & Community Strategies (particularly 'Local Action on Learning') approved in Greater Manchester, are consistent with LSC strategies & action plans. Develop arrangements to improve planning & marketing across Greater Manchester</p> <p>Work with Local Strategic Partnerships & local Learning Partnerships to develop pilot projects to raise the level of adult skills in deprived neighbourhoods, particularly developing neighbourhood learning centres & 'first rung' provision to encourage participation in learning</p>	<p>Approach agreed 2003</p> <p>Development of pilot projects by 2003 Increase number of Neighbourhood Learning Centres by 2004</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
			<p>Work with the 4 New Deal for Communities Pathfinder Partnerships approved in Greater Manchester to ensure that strategies & action plans relating to skills development are consistent with the LSC approach</p> <p>Work with Local Strategic Partnerships to map specific areas of deprivation which fall inside their areas & agree Action Plans to address education & training issues</p>	<p>Approach agreed by 2002</p> <p>Production of Gtr Manchester regeneration map by 2002. Action Plans agreed by end 2002</p>
3.3	<p>To increase the basic skills of identified learners & non-learners by increasing providers' understanding & awareness of the needs of individuals with basic/generic/key skills needs, & by increasing providers' levels of knowledge relating to the targeting & achievement of learners undertaking basic/generic/key skills training</p>	1,4	<p>Develop a Basic Skills Strategy & Action Plan for Greater Manchester to support increased access to basic skills provision & to improve the retention & achievement of individuals undertaking basic skills provision</p> <p>Develop effective working partnerships with local organisations identified as being successful in targeting & training adults with basic skill needs in order to ensure complementary planning & delivery strategies & dissemination of good practice relating to the marketing & the delivery of basic skills training. Partners include Further Education Colleges, Work Based Learning Providers, Adult Education Services, The Voluntary & Community Sector, The Youth Service, Workers Educational Association, The Prison & Probation Service, the Employment Service, those working with asylum seekers including providers of ESOL</p> <p>Work with partners to ensure that the strategy & action plan takes account of the wide remit of basic skills provision including English as a Second Language, asylum seekers, family learning initiatives</p>	<p>Basic Skills Strategy published 2002</p> <p>% increase in number of adults achieving progression in literacy & numeracy skills by 2004</p> <p>% increase in numbers of ESOL, Asylum Seekers undertaking basic skills training. Increased number of family learning initiatives by 2004</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
3.4	To increase the employability of adults in employment by improving their basic, key & generic skills	1,4	Work with partners to develop effective methods of identifying individuals who have a basic skills requirement & to develop effective measurement techniques to recognise & monitor progress Work with organisations, such as trades unions, that can target support to people in the workplace (for example, through the Workplace Learning Fund) to identify generic skills needs & with learning providers develop effective training approaches to address them.	Identification Strategy in place by 2002 Performance measures in development – operational by 2003 Pilot projects to be implemented in 2002 & evaluated in 2003, with recommendations made on future action.
3.5	To increase the participation by adults in occupations with an identified future skill shortage	1,2	Work with the North West Development Agency, local & sub regional partners responsible for the production of local economic development strategies & employers & employer groups to identify occupational skill shortages. Work with training providers to ensure that the range of future provision in Greater Manchester reflects the skills requirements of local commerce & industry & is delivered to a level of quality which meets the standards of these industries.	Joint planning forum established 2002 Develop LSC/key sector joint planning groups by 2003

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
			<p>Work with local further education colleges to identify & establish Centres of Vocational Excellence. Providers will be supported in the introduction of appropriate monitoring & reporting systems & improvement strategies. Colleges in co-operation with work based learning providers, employers & higher education will develop foundation degrees in specific areas of sector need.</p> <p>Work with employers & identified sector groups & providers to develop & deliver generic workforce skills to adults from priority groups & regeneration areas</p>	<p>Key areas of excellence identified by 2002.</p> <p>Establish collaborative project to set up a multi-centre CoVE by 2003.</p> <p>Establish a collaboration between work based learning providers & colleges to form a CoVE consortium by 2003.</p> <p>Increase number of CoVEs by 2005.</p> <p>Pilot project established 2002.</p> <p>Generic workforce skills integrated in mainstream programmes by 2004.</p>
3.6	<p>To increase the level of high quality information advice & guidance relating to education & training opportunities made available to adults</p>	1	<p>Work with local Information Advice & Guidance Partnerships to ensure that adults have access to & use effective labour market information relating to these occupations</p> <p>Increase the level of high quality information, advice & guidance to adults on basic skills education & training opportunities</p>	<p>Joint LSC IAG planning forum established 2002.</p> <p>Increased number of adults receiving IAG by 2003.</p>

The Skills Strategy

Key Task: To raise skill levels for national competitiveness

Why is this important?

A skilled workforce is essential for regional and sub-regional economic growth. A significant number of the new jobs created in the future will require relatively high qualifications/skills. It is forecast that replacement jobs will require skilled people at all levels but with an emphasis on intermediate levels mainly at levels 2 and 3. All jobs will require a minimum level of basic skills. This presents a tremendous challenge, given the skills and qualifications issues identified in this plan.

In developing this strategy we have taken into account local, regional and national strategies and local sectoral strengths and weaknesses and these have influenced our approach to addressing the skills agenda for Greater Manchester.

Within our strategy it is not only important to consider the number of employees within employment sectors but the skills and skill levels which employers will need in the future. The general trend is for employers to require more highly skilled labour and if the labour market is to be able to fulfil this demand we must ensure that levels of participation and achievement increase at least at the same level.

Overall qualifications of the existing workforce need to be improved alongside retention rates.

Generic skills such as ICT, basic skills, problem solving, supervisory and management skills will be key to increasing employees' ability to contribute to the success of an organisation. Without these skills employees will become more marginalised, de-motivated and less able to progress.

The emerging Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) will be a key vehicle for the development of higher-level skills within Greater Manchester and will enable a more specific focus on improving skill levels and raising participation within a sector based approach. Higher Education and Further Education Institutes will therefore play a key role in the delivery of this agenda through their progression routes from Foundation to Degree level. The Participation Strategy details the specific actions we will take in relation to CoVEs.

Most Learning Partnerships are working on skills issues and their role in assisting the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester in delivering its skills agenda will be crucial to its success.

Convincing the SME sector of the business benefits of training is key to increasing the skill levels of the current and future workforce.

The Issues

The key issues arising from the Cabinet Office Performance & Innovation Unit report (Nov 2001) are:

Workforce development can help to raise labour productivity and increase social inclusion. Higher skilled workers are more productive, more innovative and better able to adapt.

A relatively high proportion of the UK population of working age lack basic and intermediate skills. A particular problem is the large number of low-skilled adults in the workforce. Though levels of attainment of young, new entrants to the labour market have been rising, they are not keeping pace with those of other industrialised countries.

The benefits of education and training are, in large part, captured by individuals through increased earnings and by firms through increased productivity. But the benefits for society as a whole can outweigh individual benefits at lower skill levels since numeracy, literacy and other key skills, such as communication and IT skills, contribute generally to economic performance.

Without basic skills – literacy and numeracy – individuals cannot start to develop a career path and may be trapped in a low pay/no pay cycle. Once on the development ladder, the chances of individuals accessing further training and moving on to better jobs are increased, but the personal benefits in higher earnings are still relatively low up to a level 2 (5 GCSEs A*– C or vocational equivalent).

Tackling basic skills must be the top priority. However the report argues that Government's long-term aim should be to ensure that all adults have the opportunity to achieve a level 2 qualification.

The key issues for Greater Manchester with regard to skills and the workforce are:

Employers and Training

Although employers are the major funders of training, most of this training is company specific and not linked to occupational standards. Learning within small employers (who form the majority) is fragmented and the quality of what is delivered is variable (Skills in England 2001). One in ten SMEs nationally do not spend anything on training and one in five spend less than £1,000. Those that spend nothing on training report their profit growth to be around 7% over the last three years compared with a growth of 9% for those who do spend on training.

There is a need to provide and fund learning programmes that up-skill employees, to address basic skills deficits, to enable workers to improve their skills and obtain qualifications, or to re-skill in the light of changing economic demand. We need to be able to support employers to train employees to recognised standards.

Skill Levels, Skills Shortages and Skills Gaps

Skill levels and educational attainment in Greater Manchester are not in line with the needs of the economy. Attainment levels are described elsewhere in the plan. By 2010, a quarter of all jobs in the North West are forecast to require qualifications at NVQ level 4 or equivalent.

In 1998 14% of employers in the NW reported skills gaps (defined as the gap between the skills of employees and the skills needed to meet business objectives). Hard to fill vacancies stood at 21%. (Labour market and skill trends 2000, DfEE). Year 2001 data indicates this gap still to be around 14% in parts of the sub-region (Skills 2001, Manchester Enterprises Ltd).

Reported skills gaps are not just occupationally specific but include basic and key skills, ICT skills and generic customer care skills. Sectors such as Care and Construction have particular difficulties both in identifying the real cause of the skills gaps/recruitment difficulties and in devising effective solutions. Further detail on sectoral and occupational needs has been described in the Planning Framework. The situation is not helped by the fact that these industries have traditionally suffered from low pay which results in a lack of motivation to improve individual skill levels.

Access to Jobs via Learning

There is a need for better access routes via learning to highly skilled jobs, for example in Health & Education, where there are substantial skills shortages and recruitment difficulties. This applies both to new entrants and to those returning to the labour market.

Access routes need to be opened up via learning both for young people & adults who are currently under-employed, under-qualified or under-skilled. These must be flexible, accessible & responsive to employer & individual needs.

There is a lack of demand for graduates within the SME sector, which results in a net loss of highly qualified people and skills available to businesses.

The Current Situation

The primary responsibility for supporting business over recent years has rested with the Business Link network and this has continued with the formation of the Small Business Service which will still use the Business Link brand.

Within Greater Manchester there are two Business Links, North Manchester Chambers' Business Services (covering the former TEC/CCTE areas of Wigan, Bolton, Bury, Rochdale and Oldham) and Chamber Business Enterprises (covering the areas of Manchester, Salford, Trafford, Tameside and Stockport).

Support for promoting and delivering the Investors in People standard (IiP) to SMEs rests with the two Business Links, with the Learning and Skills Council having responsibility for the voluntary sector and organisations employing over 200 people. The LSC GM is actively supporting the two Business Links by co-locating our workforce development advisers within the Business Links. This provides a more coherent approach to the provision available to employers by ensuring the full range of workforce development services are delivered across the whole range of sectors and size bands.

The advisers encourage employers to train their staff to national standards and beyond through the delivery of the Investors in People standard (IiP), the Business Excellence Model (BEM) and other recognised standards.

Employers are also encouraged to develop their staff to full occupational competence by promoting, advising and referring employers to providers of NVQs in relevant occupational areas. These range from private training organisations through to FE/HE institutions. Wider skills development for career progression is also encouraged through services such as the Learndirect initiative and TUC Learning Services.

Management skills and knowledge to levels 3, 4 and 5 are supported through referrals to the appropriate providers. Provision also exists within the Management Training Centres of many FE/HE institutions which are accredited to deliver nationally recognised qualifications.

Business Link services to employers also involve encouraging them to develop recruitment, selection and employment practices for the whole of the local workforce. This includes the use of flexible working and learning. However more emphasis will need to be placed on encouraging under-represented groups to consider self-employment as an option. This will be considered when developing our strategies in conjunction with the Business Links.

Another important route for the delivery of workforce development services is through Trades Unions. The LSC GM will work with them and with the TUC to target employees and encourage employers to invest in training. Workplace Learning Representatives have proved effective in delivering this agenda, and we will look to them to continue to increase take-up of Investors in People, NVQs and Basic/Key Skills.

The 2002 National Skills Show is to be held in Manchester from 13 - 16 November 2002. To gain the maximum benefit from holding this major event in the region and to capitalise on a number of related activities and events (e.g. the Commonwealth Games and the associated legacy programmes – the Spirit of Friendship Festival and the SRB projects), the North West region will be mounting a major campaign during 2002 to promote a demand for learning from individuals across the region. This will be called **The North West Festival of Skills and Learning**.

Although the target groups for the Festival are young people and in particular those not engaged in learning or acquiring new skills, the campaign will target all people who can benefit from skills and learning.

In July 2000, the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) launched the Skills Development Fund, established to help the region develop and implement regional skills strategies that meet priority skills needs. The Regional Skills Fund will support projects that directly relate to 20 measures set out in the Agency's Learning and Skills Strategy, which aims to contribute to regional economic development as highlighted in the Regional Strategy.

Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures

Strategic Objective 4. To Engage Employers to Identify and Address Skills Development Issues

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
4.1	To raise current employee skill levels and competence.	1, 2, 4	<p>Engage with current, & facilitate development of new, local specific Employer Sector Groups & work with them to formulate strategies which will raise current & future employee skills levels, taking into account Sector Skills Council plans, Regional & Sub-Regional Strategies.</p> <p>Facilitate the development of Employer Learning Champion Networks which will operate cross sector & drive the principles of a learning culture through their supply chains.</p> <p>Increase the awareness & understanding by employers of the work based learning route in providing a skilled future workforce.</p> <p>Deliver a promotional campaign for learning aimed at employers & utilising national skills shows, National Training Awards, Bite Sized Learning. This will include NW Festival of Skills & Learning.</p>	<p>Relationships established with Employer Sector Networks by 2003.</p> <p>Agreed strategies in place by 2003.</p> <p>Number of Employer Learning Champions Networks in operation by 2003.</p> <p>Relationships established with the Networks by 2003.</p> <p>Agreed strategies in place by 2003.</p> <p>Employers aware of work based learning opportunities by 2003.</p> <p>Promotional campaign delivered in 2002.</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
			<p>Widen the participation of employers in Investors in People initiative, Business Excellence Model & National Training Awards.</p> <p>Engage with employers, providers & individuals to promote, extend & raise ICT skills within the current & future workforce.</p> <p>Raise the level of basic/key/employability skills with particular emphasis on communication & management skills.</p> <p>Engage with representative bodies, Trades Unions, NWDA, Business Advisers, Business Development Organisations, Sector Skills Councils & Voluntary Sector to develop strategies to address skill development needs of key growth sectors.</p> <p>Re-skill employees displaced or about to be displaced as a result of decline in traditional industries</p>	<p>No of employers participating in IIP 2002/05.</p> <p>No of employers recognised as IIP 2002/05.</p> <p>No of employers involved in BEM 2002/05.</p> <p>No of employers participating in NTA 2002/05.</p> <p>Number of employees with higher level ICT skills 2002/05.</p> <p>Number of employees with higher basic skills 2002/05.</p> <p>Number of employees with key skills 2002/05.</p> <p>Number of employees with increased employability skills 2002/05.</p> <p>Strategies developed by 2003</p> <p>Number of employees re-skilled 2002/05.</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
4.2	To improve the links between learning providers & industry by improving providers understanding of skills issues.	1, 2, 4, 5	<p>Work with the two local Business Links to develop & deliver effective workforce development strategies and services. This will include assisting employers (particularly small employers) to develop strategies that increase the demand for workforce development.</p> <p>Work with the two local Business Links to increase the supply of high quality workforce development through capacity building of providers.</p> <p>Work with the TUC & individual trades unions to promote & support the individual development of their members</p>	<p>Agreed outputs delivered as set out in the contracts 2002/05.</p> <p>Agree strategies with Business Links 2002/05.</p> <p>Agreed outputs delivered as set out in the contracts 2002/05</p>
			<p>Facilitate the development of more learning companies in partnership with learning providers.</p> <p>Ensure the development of school industry links to more closely match the skills needs of young people (pre-16) & industry.</p> <p>Encourage more SMEs & HE institutions to work together to retain more graduates within the GM area.</p> <p>Encourage the development of more Foundation Degrees, Graduate Apprenticeships and Teaching Companies through work with HEIs and FE.</p> <p>Improve providers' understanding of skills issues by helping them make more effective use of labour market information.</p>	<p>Number of learning companies in operation by 2003.</p> <p>Number of young people & employers involved in education business link activities by 2003.</p> <p>Action plans agreed with HEIs by 2003.</p> <p>Number of progression routes developed 2002/05.</p> <p>Number of providers supported by 2003.</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
4.3	To improve access to skilled jobs through learning routes.	1, 2, 4	Encourage the development of clearer communication channels between industry and education, identifying examples of good practice and sharing these. Engage with providers to provide more vocational qualifications and progression routes to address the need for higher level skills in the future.	Action plans agreed with both parties by 2003. Number of new vocational qualifications and progression routes provided 2002/05.

The Learning Strategy

Key Task: To Improve the Quality, Effectiveness and Efficiency of Education and Training Delivery

Why is this important?

Our Learning Strategy supports the Skills and Participation Strategies by ensuring that provision available for learners in Greater Manchester through school sixth forms, further education colleges, the work based learning route and adult & community education meets our commitment to put the learner first.

The LSC GM is determined to secure high quality learning which:

- > Meets the needs of individuals, business and the community;
- > Demonstrates improving learner retention and achievement rates;
- > Ensures that learning is delivered by competent and qualified staff;
- > Is well managed and led and offers value for money.

Raising Standards must mean that learners are better served than in the past and are better able to succeed in their learning.

The quality of post-16 education and training in Greater Manchester is generally good. However, inspection evidence reveals some poorly performing providers.

The overall strategy is to introduce robust quality arrangements to tackle inconsistency of standards by challenging poor and under-performing providers, and by ensuring excellence in teaching and learning. National strategies to reward and promote excellence will be developed. It is also essential that the information, advice and guidance provided to learners is of the highest quality. The LSC will also work with the Connexions service as it develops across Greater Manchester to ensure that the right information is provided at the right place for all young learners.

The Learning Strategy aims to create a self sustaining drive for inclusion and equality by strengthening the development of learning communities, employment sectors, groups and a provider environment which:

- > Fits the opportunities offered with the learner's preferred learning style, method and goals and
- > Places inclusion at the heart of the evaluation of learning.

The LSC will seek to fund new providers where there is a shortage of good quality provision such as in certain vocational areas or in provision for socially excluded groups.

It is vital that providers improve the availability and effectiveness of learning support, including support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The Issues

College Inspections in Greater Manchester show:

- > Inconsistent quality of provision across curriculum/occupational areas – but there are some centres of excellence.
- > Significant amount of good or outstanding provision in engineering; business; health and social care; art and design; English, communications and foreign languages; humanities
- > Significant amount of provision which is no better than satisfactory in maths, information technology and science; construction; hospitality, catering, leisure and tourism; basic skills
- > Majority of colleges have good or outstanding support for students, quality assurance and general resources; at least satisfactory governance and management

Learner Retention & Achievement:

- > A significant proportion of general further education and tertiary colleges in Greater Manchester had full time retention rates below England average.
- > A significant proportion of community education services in Greater Manchester had part time retention rates below England average.
- > All sixth form colleges had achievement rates for long courses above England average.
- > A significant proportion of general further education and tertiary colleges had achievement rates for medium and long courses below England average.
- > A significant proportion of community education services had achievement rates for short courses below the average for England.
- > Learner achievement rates are inconsistent across work based learning providers.
- > Achievement of NVQs per 100 work based learning leavers is below England average in Manchester, Rochdale and Stockport.
- > Proportion of non-ethnic minority leavers in GM achieving at least one NVQ was below England average.
- > Proportion of ethnic minority leavers achieving at least one NVQ was below England average in Bolton and Bury, Manchester and Oldham.
- > Proportion of disabled leavers achieving at least one NVQ was below England average in all areas of Greater Manchester, except Bolton and Bury.
- > Participation and progression in learning is also hampered to an extent by the inflexibility in the infrastructure which restricts movement of learners between a college based environment and other forms of learning. There is a case for developing a package of support, which resolves non-competitive infrastructure issues.

The Current Situation

There is a real need to increase the quality of the learning infrastructure in Greater Manchester.

The introduction of the Common Inspection Framework and Area Wide Inspections has had major implications for the local learning infrastructure and the role of the Learning and Skills Council in addressing the findings of these inspections. We have developed a robust quality assurance framework which includes Local Area Teams. This enables us to respond quickly to issues raised in the Area Inspections. It also involves us in building strong, long-term relationships with a wide range of providers, ensuring that learners are placed at the heart of every provider's business.

The LSC works with providers to ensure that each undertakes an annual self-assessment and produces and implements a development plan. Providers are helped to use reliable and accurate data and information and to make rigorous and objective assessments of their own performance. Whilst much work can be carried out as a result of reviews this is responsive rather than proactive. Over time, we also aim to work with providers to embed a culture of continuous improvement and sharing of good practice.

The standards fund is targeted to encourage providers to give priority to quality improvement in areas such as: learner retention and achievement, key skills, basic skills, development programmes for managers, and governance in FE colleges. Funds will also be provided to facilitate additional childcare places and training to remove barriers for learners. Strategies to raise the level of the competence of lecturers, trainers and teachers will be actively supported through the standards fund.

The Council will also encourage providers to investigate the reasons for learners leaving programmes early and take action. Tracking learners' progress to further and higher learning and/or employment must be improved to ensure appropriate and relevant curriculum pathways are in place.

Work Based Learning Inspections in Greater Manchester show:

- > A significant amount of good or outstanding provision in hospitality; hair and beauty; foundation for work
- > A significant amount of provision which is no better than satisfactory in agriculture; construction; engineering; manufacturing; business; retail; leisure; health care and public services
- > Majority of providers have equal opportunities; trainee support; management of training and quality assurance which is no better than satisfactory
- > Work based learning providers need support to improve leadership, management and quality assurance
- > Quality of adult and community learning; Ufi/learndirect; information, advice and guidance providers not yet consistently assessed

Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures

Strategic Objective 5. To improve the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of learning funded by the LSC

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
5.1	To ensure that the provider base can meet the needs of learners & has the capacity to improve	5	<p>Providers will be supported in continuous improvement activity through self-assessment, monitoring quality of delivery & by commissioning specific quality improvement projects. Monitoring systems will be established to track improvements</p> <p>We will develop & implement programmes to brief/train/develop providers on continuous improvement</p> <p>We will regularly review the performance of each provider by establishing a cycle of performance reviews which involve a structured assessment of all providers against a set of common criteria⁵.</p> <p>Reports on provider performance will be produced annually.</p>	<p>Rise in overall provider performance against LSC five-point scale by 2005</p> <p>Rise in provider grades at inspection & re-inspection. Timing is dependent on the scheduling of inspections for each individual provider.</p> <p>Rise in proportion of providers which participate in development initiatives by 2003</p> <p>By 2003 fully implement system of Provider Performance review.</p>

⁵ Providers' overall performance in each area will be assessed against a five-point scale – from excellent performance through to serious concerns. The performance review process is designed to be an effective 'early warning' system for identifying difficulties, so that immediate steps can be taken to rectify emerging problems

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
5.2	Support existing providers & encourage new providers to areas where local capacity is identified as being inadequate	5	<p>Develop & pilot a support package for new providers – developing an assessment process for new providers' capacity building of staff to deliver education & training to emerging quality standards.</p> <p>Procedures to identify new providers will be developed to ensure that there is proper & reasonable provision to meet learners' needs.</p>	<p>Support package piloted by 2002</p> <p>Procedures implemented by 2002</p>
5.3	Recognise the differences between providers & ensure that good practice is identified, communicated & implemented	5	<p>During 2002-03, a new national system for the recognition of excellence will be developed suited to the breadth & diversity of LSC-funded post-16 provision.</p> <p>Develop a good practice library which we offer to providers & the LSC to locate high quality good practice materials rapidly. The standards fund will be targeted to encourage providers to raise standards & disseminate good practice. Build good practice into funding/contracting agreements with providers.</p>	<p>System for recognition of excellence developed by 2002</p> <p>Rise in proportion of providers recognised as excellent by 2003</p>
5.4	Encourage collaboration between providers	5	<p>The Greater Manchester Provider Network will be established & will be used as a forum for dissemination of good practice & benchmarking with external partners.</p> <p>We will work with providers & partners in our 10 local authority areas to develop appropriate infrastructure to deliver high quality learning for young people & adults.</p>	<p>Raised quality against five-point scale & user satisfaction measures by 2005</p> <p>Rise in grades at inspection & re-inspection identified through the network 2002/3</p>

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
5.5	Improve ability levels in maths, IT & basic skills	5	Pilot new approaches by providers to delivery of key skills & basic skills which attract & retain learners.	New approaches developed & piloted by 2002 Rise in achievement levels for maths, IT & basic skills courses by 2003
5.6	To deliver the LSC contribution to the concordat of LSC/OfSTED/ALI	5	<p>Support providers in implementing OfSTED/ALI inspection recommendations We will focus resources on assisting providers that are failing to achieve their potential.</p> <p>In addition, through a local capacity building project, we aim to encourage application of continuous improvement tools based on best value principles.</p> <p>The target audience for this project includes 100 WBL providers, 25 FE Colleges (including 10 with a WBL delivery unit), 10 Adult & Community Learning providers together with 40 LSC contracting and development staff.</p> <p>Linked to this project is an initiative to enhance the Provider Performance Review process through the development of a local toolkit which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clear definitions on the criteria for key areas and critical factors so that they are more meaningful to providers and local LSC staff; - evidence lists for each of the key areas and how the evidence should be used and interpreted; - guidance on the review papers for completion with providers; - guidelines for post review feedback to providers. 	<p>Rise in provider grades at inspection & re-inspection. (Timing is dependent on the schedule of inspections for each individual provider.)</p> <p>The expected outcomes and benefits from the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clearer understanding of the criteria and grading - joint inputs to the reviews from local LSC and provider - ownership of grades and actions - improved links to other activities, e.g. monitoring and standards fund - toolkit that is easily adapted to other types of provision as they come into the scope of the reviews.

Ref	Supporting Objective	Corporate Objective	Action	Performance Indicator
5.7	To develop a measure of learner satisfaction		<p>Pilot a programme to determine appropriate measures of learner satisfaction that includes a mechanism for obtaining the views of learners who are not successful or who do not complete their learning.</p> <p>We have now completed the Greater Manchester Post-16 Learning Survey. The aim of the research is to provide a detailed understanding of the learning needs, experiences and preferences of the people of Greater Manchester and their current level of skills. Collaboration and co-ordination with other local LSC's has taken place to enable results to be compared and aggregated where appropriate.</p> <p>The fieldwork, which was undertaken by a research agency on our behalf, was conducted during October and November last year. We surveyed over 3,400 residents in Greater Manchester providing robust information by priority group and local authority district. The results and findings from the research are currently being compiled.</p>	Local data analysed by April 2002 & national measures to be developed by 2002

Annexe 1 – National and Local Targets

The Local Target Setting Process

In assessing the achievability of each of these targets it is vital to consider the past performance and contribution of each sector. However, locally this has proved problematic due to the unavailability of past performance statistics and the administrative data for those targets where ranges have been provided by National Office.

For those targets relating to participation and attainment by young people we have attempted to set out the scale of the challenge, given past performance, using what little data is available. The analyses below examine the issues in more detail, and set out the implications for Greater Manchester. Clearly, further work on developing our understanding of the targets locally will need to be done.

Participation by Young People in Learning Aged 16 to 18

The number of young people aged 16 to 18 was estimated to be just over 99,000 in 2000. When we take into account the number of young people who travel into Greater Manchester to participate in learning the number of 16 to 18 year olds increases to almost 105,000. For the base year of 2000 there were just over 73,000 (70%) young people participating in learning in Greater Manchester. By 2004 the target is for participation by young people to have increased by almost 14% to 83,500 – an average growth in participation of 3.5% per annum.

Presently, there are almost 50,000 16 to 18 year olds participating in FE institutions in Greater Manchester and approximately 21,000 participating in work based learning. Administrative data indicates that past participation of 16-18 year olds in FE institutions in Greater Manchester has grown by 2.2% for the periods 1997-98 and 2000-01, an average annual growth rate of 0.5% per annum. Similarly, growth in the number of young people entering Advanced Modern Apprenticeships has grown by 8% between 1995-96 and 1999-00, an average annual growth rate of 1.6%.

Raise Achievement of Young People (Level 2) by Age 19

The number of young people aged 19 was estimated to be almost 33,000 in 2000. When we take into account the number of young people aged 19 who travel into Greater Manchester to participate in learning the number of 19 year olds increases to approximately 35,000. For the base year of 2000 there were just over 24,000 (68.7%) young people aged 19 who had achieved a Level 2 qualification. By 2004 the target is for achievement by young people aged 19 at Level 2 to have increased by more than 10% to 26,600 an average growth in attainment of 2.6% per annum.

Local data on the achievement of Level 2 for 19 year olds is not available from administrative sources for previous years for FE institutions. For year 11 school leavers 46.9% achieved a Level 2 at 15 in Greater Manchester in 2000-1. The figure for England was 50%. These young people who were 15 in 2000-01 will be 19 in 2004. It is estimated that there were almost 34,000 year 11 school leavers in 2000-01 in Greater Manchester. Taking account of current achievement leaves almost 16,000 without a Level 2 – of these almost a further 11,000 need to achieve a Level 2 by the time they reach 19 for the target to be achieved.

National Learning Target data indicates that over 3,000 Level 2 qualifications were achieved in further education for Greater Manchester and a further 4,100 from work based learning in 1998-99, a total of over 24,200 when the GCSE and GNVQ data is included. When compared to the previous years data, Level 2 attainment in further education and work based learning has fallen. In 1997-98 the number of Level 2 qualifications achieved in further education was almost 2,900 and for work based learning just over 4,500, a total of 7,400.

Raise Achievement of Young People (Level 3) by Age 19

Of the 35,000 19 year olds in Greater Manchester just over 13,200 (37.7%) young people aged 19 had achieved a Level 3 qualification. By 2004 the target is for achievement by young people aged 19 at Level 3 to have increased by more than 15.3% to 15,300, an average growth in participation of 3.8% per annum.

Currently, there is no reliable statistical or administrative data on past performance available for this target.

Annexe 2 – The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester

Council Members

The Learning and Skills Council is a national organisation, with headquarters in Coventry and a network of 47 local offices. The National Council is chaired by Bryan Sanderson, with Chief Executive John Harwood and representatives of employers, trades unions, learning providers and community groups. Adult Learning and Young Persons Learning Committees are responsible for the specific needs of those two groups of learners, and these arrangements are mirrored locally.

The Local Council

Local Council member appointments, in accordance with Lord Nolan's principles, have been merit based and free from political bias, they represent the areas they serve, and reflect the diversity of the population of England.

Anthony Goldstone	Chair
Rachael Charlton	Director of Workforce Development for the NHS Workforce Development Confederation, Greater Manchester
Bill Grady	Principal of North Trafford College of Further Education
Pauline Green	Chief Executive and General Secretary of the Co-operative Union Ltd
Richard Hurst	Chairman of the Richard Threlfall Group Ltd
Abdul Jabba	Member of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Jean Llewellyn	Regional Manager, Skills and Employment Network, at the North West Tourist Board
Alan Manning	Secretary of the TUC North West Regional Council
John Merry	Deputy Leader of Salford City Council
Nigel Newton	Managing Director of Medlock Communications
David Page	Managing Director of Patak's Foods Ltd
David Seddon	Director of Educational Services at the Boys and Girls Welfare Society
Ray Short	Education Service Manager for Unison in the North West region
Mollie Temple	Principal of Bolton Institute
Chris Woodcock	Director, Community and Public Affairs, Kellogg Marketing and Sales Company (UK) Ltd

Annexe 3 – Building the Capacity of the LSC GM

Delivering all the objectives set out in this plan is dependent upon the capability of the LSC, as well as its ability to harness the energies of partner organisations. We are a new organisation, but we are determined to become fully effective as soon as possible. We believe that the best way of achieving this is to implement a robust approach to developing quality, using formal mechanisms but also building a culture that underpins the processes.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5 TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS & EFFICIENCY OF OUR ORGANISATION				
Key Task: To engender a culture of continuous improvement underpinned by approved quality initiatives				
The Greater Manchester Dimension	Nationally the LSC has the following remit: "to be an exemplary public service organisation, committing early to the achievement of the Investors in People standard & being at the forefront of the Modernising Government agenda" (Remit Letter – November 2000). LSC GM has been given as yet no specific remit for the implementation of internal quality initiatives, other than Investors in People, at this early stage of the development of the LSC. There is a move within the national office to initiate some work in this area but for the time being it is recognised that there will be no specific direction. That said, it is recognised that there is a firm commitment placed upon providers of services on behalf of LSC GM to raise standards & ensure the quality of the service & thus it behoves LSC GM to at least match the commitments in qualitative terms that it places upon its providers.			
Framework	2002	2003	2004	2005
1. Determine & agree a framework for the quality initiatives	✓			
2. Undertake self-assessment within the framework	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Accept external validation of the self-assessment		✓	✓	✓
Quality Management System				
1. Determine & agree the format of the quality management system	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Establish & maintain electronic management & document & data control	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Introduce & maintain a quality manual & associated procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Undertake process reviews of the system	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Accept external validation of the system	✓	✓	✓	✓
Risk Management				
1. Determine & implement a risk management policy & procedure	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Develop & maintain risk registers at functional & corporate level	✓	✓	✓	✓

Project Management	2002	2003	2004	2005
1. Determine & implement a project management system for significant project work	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Effect project co-ordination & project evaluation	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Spearhead & support projects, as required, that are important to raising standards & awareness of qualitative issues	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Factors affecting our ability to address the task</p> <p>The following factors may have an impact upon the tasks indicated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Government policy > LSC policy > Changes in & developments to existing quality frameworks, standards & techniques > The introduction of new frameworks, standards & techniques. 				

Annexe 4 – Key Sectors

Key Sectors in Greater Manchester

The following 10 sectors account for approximately three quarters of both Greater Manchester's employment and businesses. (Source: Annual Business Inquiry 1999). Skills issues have been sourced from the relevant NTO workforce development plans.

Finance and Business Services

17.8% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (199,791)

The sector covers financial intermediation e.g. banking, building societies, insurance and pension funding, real estate, renting of machinery and equipment, computer and related activities, research and development, legal, accounting, market research, consultancy, advertising, recruitment, industrial cleaning.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	172,664	199,791	+15.7
Businesses	17,189	22,421	+30.4

Skill Issues

In the main, the industry employs a high calibre of staff, who are well educated, articulate and numerate. Skills requirements in the industry will be: IT and website skills; Flexibility; Emphasis on self-learning/lifelong learning; New and specific technical skills; IT literacy; creativity; multi-skilling; ability to deal with change; generic skills – communication, team working, problem-solving, organisation; business awareness; customer service skills; call centre operations. Generic skill requirements (e.g. customer; care/handling, communication skills) is high, as is product knowledge, linguistic dexterity etc; – thereby increasing demand for training and qualifications. **This sector is one of the NWDA's identified growth clusters.**

Retail Trade

10.9% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (122,808)

The sector covers sale of new and used goods for personal or household consumption by shops, department stores, mail order etc., repair of household goods.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	106,278	122,808	+15.6
Businesses	14,105	13,286	-5.8

Skill Issues

The retail sector like the wholesale trade sector experiences internal skills gaps in sales occupations and to a lesser extent managerial and administrative posts. Customer handling and service and IT skills are of major concern. In terms of recruitment, basic skills – literacy and numeracy and employability skills, are issues within the retail sector. In terms of skills gaps, customer handling, service and selling skills are also lacking.

Hotels and Restaurants (account for large proportion of tourism employment)

5.6% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (62,929)

The sector covers hotels, camp sites and short stay accommodation, restaurants, bars, canteens and catering.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	55,685	62,929	+13.0
Businesses	5,773	5,956	+3.2

Skill Issues

Key issue is the need to attract and hold on to quality staff who possess the skills and attributes today's industry demands. Higher competition for staff from other sectors. High proportion with hard to fill vacancies. Hotels and restaurants experience most difficulties recruiting permanent full-time staff such as chefs and cooks, whereas attractions have greatest difficulties with part-time staff - particularly retention of waiting-on staff, bar staff, kitchen porters and catering assistants. Priority skills needed are: ability to follow instructions, communication, customer care, flexibility, initiative, basic hygiene, food preparation, health and safety. Management level - managerial, IT and sales skills. **The tourism sector, of which hotels and restaurants are a major element, is one of the NWDA's identified growth clusters.**

Wholesale Trade

5.5% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (61,987)

The sector covers sale of new and used goods to retailers and other business to business re-sale.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	52,851	61,987	+17.3
Businesses	5,993	6,815	+13.7

Skill Issues

Akin to the retail sector in many respects, the wholesale trade sector experiences internal skills gaps in sales occupations and to a lesser extent managerial and administrative posts. Customer handling and service and IT skills are of major concern.

Health and Social Work

10.3% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (115,419)

The sector covers hospitals, medical and dental practices, veterinary practices, social work.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	115,469	115,419	-0.04
Businesses	4,093	4,121	+0.7

Skill Issues

Difficulties in both attracting and retaining qualified nurses. Also a shortage of GPs. Skills shortages in the social care sector include, occupational therapists, approved social workers, managers at all levels, people to work with drug and other substance users, foster carers and part-time frontline staff. Skills gaps include management at all levels, leadership, information management, IT, managing challenging behaviour.

Education

9.5% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (106,872)

The sector covers primary, secondary, technical and vocational secondary, higher and adult education, driving schools, private training providers.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	79,583	106,872	+34.3
Businesses	1,994	2,303	+15.5

Skill Issues

The education sector cites key skills gaps in IT and management skills. There are serious shortages of technical/ teaching staff, for example IT specialists, lecturers in engineering, construction and accounting, and course or programme managers and leaders. **This is an important sector for Greater Manchester as a regional educational centre.**

Public Administration/Defence

5.6% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (63,218)

The sector covers public administration, regulation of public services, foreign affairs, defence activities, justice activities, public security, fire service, compulsory social security.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	58,634	63,218	+7.8
Businesses	1,019	1,000	-1.9

Skill Issues

A number of skills gaps have been recognised in the public sector in the following areas, management, interpersonal and communication, commercial and project and contract management. Skill shortages are in the areas of policy skills, IT and in certain specific occupations including economic development. **This is an important sector for Greater Manchester as a regional administrative centre.**

Construction

4.2% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (47,695)

The sector covers construction, restoration and repair of built environment.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	42,237	47,695	+12.9
Businesses	7,317	6,781	-7.3

Skill Issues

In construction and specialist contracting, managers will account for an increasing share of employment and skilled crafts a declining share. There will be a growing need for customer-focused staff and a possible increase in less-skilled manual workers if prefabrication techniques become more widespread. Although projections suggest a decline in the overall number of skilled craft workers in construction, there is still a need to recruit new workers to replace those who leave the industry. Skills lacking amongst applicants for skilled craft jobs are technical and practical skills (other than IT) and customer service skills. Managerial level workers mostly lack management and team working skills. A significant proportion of labour requirement is for carpenters, joiners, electricians, bricklayers, managers and clerical staff. **The construction sector is very important for Greater Manchester in order for it to maintain its position as one of the leading sub regions in the UK.**

Food and Drink Manufacture

2.5% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (28,159)

The sector covers manufacture of food products and alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	24,510	28,159	+14.9
Businesses	406	494	+21.7

Skill Issues

In the food and manufacturing sector, skills gaps pertain to inadequate personal attributes (e.g. team working, problem solving, a lack of willingness to change/learn), basic skills, customer service, management skills (people and personnel) and legislative knowledge in smaller companies. Key skill shortages in management, production, engineering (technical/maintenance) and LGV Drivers. Employers need to be more pro-active in addressing skills issues, reviewing pay and conditions, high staff turnover and the approach to training. **This sector is recognised by the NWDA as one of the North West region's core established industries.**

Clothing and Textiles Manufacture

2.3% of Greater Manchester jobs in 1999 (24,971)

The sector covers preparation and finishing of textiles and manufacture of clothing.

Employment profile

	1995	1999	% change
Employees	33,982	24,971	-26.5
Businesses	1,241	1,106	-10.9

Skill Issues

Sector needs to shift to high value added niche markets and technical textiles. Pervasive 'technology' effect means improved operational technology and computer skills. Skills shortages identified mainly textile engineers-mechanics, technical operatives (computer literacy aligned with textile process skills), managerial, communication and selling & marketing skills. Future focus on textiles research, design talent and product innovation. **This sector is recognised by the NWDA as one of the North West region's core established industries.**

Annexe 5 – Further Planned Research

Young People's Attitudes and Experiences of Learning In Greater Manchester

The aim of the research is twofold:

- a) to provide a detailed, up to date and consistent understanding of the learning needs, experiences and aspirations of the young people of Greater Manchester
- b) to provide a benchmark for the ongoing monitoring of young people's attitudes towards learning and the impact of the organisations activities

The content of the research will include:

- > Effectiveness of Careers Guidance – pre and post-16:
 - Accessibility – where and when provided
 - Value in informing career and learning options
 - Quality and relevance of the advice
 - What improvements could be made and how
- > Experiences and perceptions of learning:
 - Experiences in school
 - Experiences since school – quality, relevance, choice, delivery
 - Achievements and perceived benefits of learning
 - Positive and negative aspects of learning undertaken
- > Participation of those currently in learning:
 - What prompted them to take up learning
 - When undertaken, what area, mode, where
 - Travel to learn patterns
 - Quality of learning experience and expectations – have they been met
 - Are they likely to complete this learning episode, if not why
- > Plans and aspirations for future careers and learning:
 - Personal aspirations – what options are considered available and why
 - Who and what motivates young people to learn
 - Progression into career routes and higher education
- > Barriers and difficulties faced in or to continuing in learning:
 - Structural e.g. cost, transport, location of provider, mode of delivery
 - Personal and social e.g. confidence, apathy, value of learning, peer/family pressure
 - Individual e.g. language, disability, basic skills, caring responsibility
- > Profile of learners/non learners:
 - Employed - travel to work area, occupation and employment
 - Inactive, unemployed, disengaged
 - Status, income/allowances, dependants, living and family arrangements
 - Disability, ethnic group, faith
 - Skills levels – qualification/non-qualification based, employer supported training

Interest Groups for the Study

Whilst we would want the results to be robust for all 16 to 19 year olds we are particularly interested in ensuring we include sufficient detail on the following groups:

- Out of work, disengaged and disaffected
- People with disabilities
- Ethnic minority groups
- People in deprived neighbourhoods

Review of Post-16 Learning Provision in Greater Manchester

The aim of the review in Greater Manchester is twofold:

- a) to assess the current capacity of the education and training infrastructure, identifying strengths and weaknesses, gaps and duplication of delivery in relation to the needs of learners and the local economy
- b) to identify the anticipated future demand for education and training provision and the implications for the current education and training delivery infrastructure

The outcome of the review will support the development of strategic and business plans, in particular:

- the roll-over of our Strategic Plan for 2002-2005, helping to identify where we need to focus our resources
- the business planning and contracting/funding allocation processes from 2002 onwards, assisting in the integration of planning across different provider sectors
- to be proactive in our response to area wide inspections and developing action plans
- the development of a coherent asset management plan for the area

The scope of the review will include:

- Supply of education and training – providers, volume, delivery, curricula, specialisms, progression routes
- Cross cutting issues include – transport, quality, infrastructure, capacity, equal opportunities
- Demand for education and training – market size, participation (present and forecast), basic skills, adult learning and the local economy

The review will be managed by an internal steering group and will be guided by an external steering group made up of representatives of providers, key partners and stakeholders.

Annexe 6 – Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester is committed to promoting equal opportunities throughout the organisation in a way that impacts favourably upon the community it serves. This will be evident from the way it recruits, selects and develops its employees, and its relationship with those who feel excluded from opportunities that other sections of society enjoy and take for granted.

The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester will seek to equalise opportunities, thereby outlawing discrimination, by ensuring access to all its services by all sections of the community regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, sexuality, marital status, nationality, colour, religion, political affiliation, class, spent or irrelevant convictions or any other individual characteristics which may previously have been perceived as barriers to the attainment of goals.

The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester will be looking to do more than comply with legislation; it will also be committed to the promotion of best practice.

Developing a Strategic Approach to Equal Opportunities

- > Work with key equality organisations – the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission, the Employers Forum on Age and local equality networks to be included in the partnership and networking arrangements so that best practice on equal opportunities can underpin the work of the Council and ensure that realistic pathways can be created for the disadvantaged
- > Draw up a local Equal Opportunity strategy and action plan – taking account of national policy including equal opportunity targets and performance indicators - indicators to tackle under-representation, under-achievement and stereotyping in terms of gender, race, age, disability and other people facing disadvantages in particular occupational and learning sectors and publish comparative data disaggregated by gender, race, age and disability
- > Consult widely with ethnic minority communities and groups representing gender, disability and age diversity interest and draw on good practice
- > Establish a Greater Manchester equal opportunities advisory group to review the impact on provision and learners and disseminate good practice
- > Take account of national LSC policy re:- the Young Peoples Learning Committee – advise on potential for family learning
- > Take account of national LSC policy re:- the Adult Learning Committee – advise on basic skills, social inclusion and community development. The Council to put in place detailed arrangements which facilitate close working arrangements with the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Unit - develop an innovative and flexible approach – build on Family Learning Initiative, adult and community learning, neighbourhood learning centres and work with employers

- > Ensure that clear and robust arrangements are put in place for working with the Connexions Service to ensure that people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have access to suitable provision which meets their needs and, where appropriate, the additional support they require. Ensure that the Learning Gateway and related arrangements address individual young people's basic skills needs

Developing an Approach to Funding

- > Ensure local funding does not disadvantage any group, use of discretionary funding to support innovative projects
- > Ensure that Local Initiative Fund funding principles/proposals should be underpinned by clear linkages between proposed activities and promotion of equal opportunity and social inclusion for all the potential beneficiaries – particularly relevant are contributions to National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and how the project will help build the capacity of people living in deprived neighbourhoods, development of a wider range of learning opportunities and support the development of stronger communities
- > Determine how local LSC approach/ strategy fits with new co-financing arrangements for the ESF and ensure consistency with local SRB arrangements
- > Identify specific specialist funding issues e.g. boarding accommodation where appropriate, complex or specialised care – placement at specialist colleges

Developing the supply of flexible and high quality training

- > Widen adult participation in further education increasing the number drawn from those whose background/circumstances have disadvantaged
- > Draw into learning those who have not engaged in any form of structured learning over the previous three years building on Ufi and working with local authorities in the context of their continuing role in adult and community learning
- > Ensure that the LSC improves the flexibility and attractiveness of learning opportunities including ensuring a very wide availability of first step opportunities to attract into learning disadvantaged learners ensuring access to suitable provision which meets their needs and where appropriate to the additional support which they may require to undertake it
- > Develop innovative approaches/delivery. Work with CAPITA and UFi at local and national level and network of learning centres – work with adult and community learning to ensure accessible support for local communities – flexible and innovative – new assessments for people with learning difficulties introduced in the Learning and Skills Act led by the Connexions Service
- > Develop a co-ordinated strategy which allows this new form of learning – identify overlap, gaps in provision and accessibility to disadvantaged communities

- > Ensure that the LSC raises the sustainable level of employment through the updating of skills and the embracing of new technology and to reach out and draw into learning those who have experienced economical inactivity or have been the victims of industrial and economic change – raise the skills of the working population as a whole so that we have a flexible and skilled workforce to support a prosperous economy and meet the needs of business
- > Ensure a supply of trained childcare workers – working with early years development and childcare partnerships
- > Work with providers to improve capacity to deliver lifelong learning and employment objectives to provide continuity of provision for learners – addressing the needs of all learners including the most disadvantaged and excluded

Developing Guidance Mechanisms

- > Ensure that high quality information, advice and guidance is readily available. Ensure the effective development of IAG

Developing a Quality Approach

- > Develop a Quality Improvement Strategy drawing on the Common Inspection Framework published by OfSTED and the Adult Learning Inspectorate – outcome of Raising Standards in Post-16 Learning and DfEE work in developing practitioner skills and qualifications in the FE sector
- > LSC to set targets, monitor and evaluate providers' equal opportunities performance. We will use management information and business systems that gather all appropriate customer data, including individual starts, outcomes and destinations, supported by information from provider inspections, quality monitoring, etc.

Annexe 7 – Health and Safety Policy Statement

“The Learning and Skills Council is committed to being an exemplary employer. This means we must regard health and safety as a priority and an integral part of our work”

John Harwood. Chief Executive LSC April 2001

The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester regards the promotion of Health and Safety measures as a mutual objective for both management and employees at all levels. It is committed to ensuring high standards of health, safety, welfare and environmental awareness and will actively promote this through its operations and initiatives. It is the policy of the LSC GM to maintain these standards by continually reviewing its operations against developing legislation and codes of practice.

LSC GM recognises its responsibilities relative to Health, Safety and Welfare at work in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, other relevant Health and Safety legislation and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations.

LSC GM will maintain a Health and Safety Policy which recognises the standards and reflects the commitments laid out in the LSC National Health and Safety Policy.

This is the Health and Safety Policy Statement of the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester (LSC GM). It indicates our intentions, organisation and arrangements regarding the safety and health at work of employees and others, whilst in LSC GM premises, undertaking LSC GM activities within the community or placed with other companies (secondment).

This Policy also addresses the LSC GM's approach regarding the safety and health of the public, visitors and contractors whilst on its premises and those participating in learning/training/development initiatives under contract by the organisation through other parties.

Supporting this general policy statement specific assessment of risk and supporting operational policies and procedures set out the health and safety arrangements which the LSC GM will implement. These seek to eliminate, or reduce to minimum practicable levels, any risk to staff or others.

INTENT

It is the policy of Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees while they are at work and of others who may be affected by their undertakings, and to comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other allied relevant legislation as appropriate. To these ends it is the responsibility and duty of all staff, secondees and others to co-operate with the LLSC and to conform and comply with the requirements of this policy and associated arrangements, procedures and codes of practice which apply.

OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve compliance with the statement of policy, the LSC GM has set the following objectives:

- 1.1 To set and maintain high standards for health and safety in connection with its operations LSC GM will provide;
 - a) a working environment within its operational premises that is safe, without significant risk to health and adequate regarding facilities and arrangements for the welfare of those at work - offering means of access and egress that are safe and without risk
 - b) plant and systems of work that are safe and without significant risk to health
 - c) information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety, at work, of staff undertaking their working activities, operating equipment and handling materials
 - d) arrangements for ensuring safety and absence of significant risk to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transportation of articles and substances
- 1.2 To identify risks and set in place procedures to remove or reduce these risks;
- 1.3 To enter into joint consultation on health, safety and welfare at work with its staff through a Safety Committee meeting at least twice yearly. Communicating this policy and relevant information on safety and health issues via induction and ongoing training and through safety committee representation;
- 1.4 To provide protective clothing and equipment where necessary to meet the needs arising out of activities undertaken by staff in connection with the operations of the LSC GM;
- 1.5 To provide first aid facilities and training for nominated personnel responsible for the administering of first aid; and to implement accident, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence investigation and recording arrangements;
- 1.6 To have in place emergency procedures and nominated trained personnel to facilitate the evacuation of staff under such circumstances;
- 1.7 To monitor health and safety arrangements and systems of work within LSC GM offices and in connection with its activities and operations;
- 1.8 To review, revise and add where necessary to this policy and operational procedures at least annually to ensure that current National LSC/LSC GM arrangements or legislation and best practice are incorporated. Any such revisions or additions will be brought to the notice of staff and others to whom they apply;
- 1.9 The LSC GM also recognises its duty to conduct its undertaking in such a way as to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that persons not in its employment but who may be affected by its activities are not exposed to risks to their health or safety.

Annexe 8 – Glossary of Terms

ACL	Adult and Community Learning	ISR	Individual Student Record
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate	IT	Information Technology
AMA	Advanced Modern Apprenticeship		
BEM	Business Excellence Model	LA	Local Authority
CCTE	Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise	LAD	Local Authority District
CIF	Common Inspection Framework	LEA	Local Education Authority
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions	LLP	Lifelong Learning Partnership
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment	LLSC	Local Learning and Skills Council
DfES	Department for Education and Skills (Replaced DfEE in April 2001)	LSC	Learning and Skills Council
EAZ	Education Action Zone	LSC GM	Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester
EBLOC	Education Business Link Organisations Consortium	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
EBP	Education Business Partnership	NLTs	National Learning Targets
ED	Enumeration District	NOF	New Opportunities Fund
EI	External Institution	NTO	National Training Organisation
EiC	Excellence in Cities	NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
EMA	Education Maintenance Allowance	NW	North West
ERIN	Economic Research and Information Network	NWDA	North West Development Agency
ES	Employment Service	OfSTED	Office for Standards in Education
ESF	European Social Fund	PI	Performance Indicator
EYDCP	Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships	PT	Part Time
FE	Further Education	RDA	Regional Development Agency
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council	RIU	Regional Intelligence Unit
FMA	Foundation Modern Apprenticeship	SAR	Self Assessment Report
FT	Full Time	SBS	Small Business Service
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education	SFC	Sixth Form College
GFE	General Further Education (College)	SLLP	Strategic Lifelong Learning Partnership
GM	Greater Manchester	SOC	Standard Occupational Classification or School Organisation Committee
		SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
HEI	Higher Education Institution	SSC	Sector Skills Council
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance	TDLB	Training and Development Lead Body
ICT	Information and Communications Technology	TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
iiP	Investors in People	TTWA	Travel to Work Area
ILA	Individual Learning Account	TUC	Trades Union Congress
ILM	Intermediate Labour Market	Ufi	University for Industry
ILO	International Labour Organisation	WBLfA	Work Based Learning for Adults
ILR	Individual Learner Record	WBLfYP	Work Based Learning for Young People
		WFD	Workforce Development

Annexe 9 – Partner Consultation

During the drafting of this plan the Learning and Skill Council Greater Manchester has engaged in extensive consultation with our partners and stakeholders. We wish to thank those organisations who have attended one of our consultation events and/or provided their views and comments verbally or in writing.

(OMBC) YCES/TES (Lifeskills)	Employment Service
4th Dimension Decorators Ltd	Engineering and Construction ITB
Alliance Learning	EPDU
Altrincham Grammar School for Boys	Equality NW
Altrincham Grammar School for Girls	Equal Opportunities Commission
Aquinas College	
Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College	Financial Training Company (Manchester)
Association for Ceramic Training & Development	Firmstart
Association of Colleges NW	
Association of Gtr Manchester Authorities	GDN Childcare Training & Assessment Centre Ltd
Awaaz Learning Centre	General Physics Corporation
	Glass Training Limited
Bolton Community College	Government Office North West
Bolton Early Years Development and Childcare Ptrship	Graham Austin Training
Bolton Evening News	Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People
Bolton Institute	Greater Manchester Council for Voluntary Organisations
Bolton Learning Partnership	Greater Manchester Probation Service
Bolton MBC	
Bolton/ Bury EBP	Hattersley Development Trust
Boys and Girls Welfare Society	Higher Blackley Careerlines Centre (MYS)
BPIF	Hinebeck Associates
Breakthrough UK Limited	Holy Cross College
Bridge College	Hopwood Hall College
Bury College	Hospitality Plus
Bury Employment Support and Training (EST)	
Bury Local Learning Partnership	KYP
Bury MBC	
Businessdynamics	Lifetime Careers
	Loreto College
Canon Slade School	Loreto Grammar School
Central Sports Management & Training	
Chamber Business Enterprises	Manchester Adult Education Service
City Pride Local Learning Partnership	Manchester Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CLES	Manchester City Council
Community Justice NTO	Manchester Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership
Co-operative Union Ltd	Manchester Enterprises Limited
	Manchester IAG Partnership
DDI (Manchester) Ltd	Manchester Metropolitan University

Manchester Training Ltd	Sale Grammar School
Manchester University	Salford Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
Mansel Training	Salford Careerlines Centre
Metropolitan Training	Salford College
MIDAS	Salford Consortium
Moss Side & Hulme Community Trust	Salford LEA
Motor Industry Training Council	Salford SRB 5 Partnership
NACRO	SBC Training and Consultancy
Norman & Philip	Selection Training
North Area College	SETA
North Lancs Training Group	SITEC Training Ltd
North Trafford College of Further Education	Salford & Trafford Education Action Zone
North West Chambers of Commerce	Skills and Employment Network
NWDA	Skills Solution
North West Tourist Council	South Trafford College
Oldham Bangladeshi Association	Start Training (Manchester & Ashton) Ltd
Oldham Career Training Ltd	STEGTA
Oldham College	Stockport Learning Partnership
Oldham Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership	Stockport MBC
Oldham NHS Trust	Stockport Overdale Centre
Oldham Sixth Form College	Stockport Road Corridor Partnership
ORC International	Tameside EBP
OTC	Tameside MBC/ Learning Partnership
Oulder Hill Community School & 6th Form Centre	Taurus Training Ltd
Pendleton College	The Deanery CofE High School
Peter Martin Associates	The PDA Partnership Limited
PPG Industries UK Ltd	Toucan Europe
Princess Christian College	Touchstone
Prospects	Trafford Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership
Rathbones CI	Trafford MBC
Rochdale Borough CCTE	Training for Today (formerly Michaeljohn Training Ltd)
Rochdale Borough Chamber	Training Into Employment
Rochdale Borough Training Services	TUC NW
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council	TUC Learning Services
Rochdale Training Association	University of Salford
Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID)	
RSM Robson Rhodes	

Wardle High School Sixth Form Centre
Wellington School
Whalley Range 11-18 High School
Wheelan Associates UK
Wigan & Leigh CVS
Wigan Careers Service
Wigan Council
Wigan Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
Wigan Learning Partnership
Wincanton Logistics
Workers Educational Association
Work Link Employment and Training Consultancy
Wythenshawe Partnership

Xaverian College

YMCA Training
YMCA Yale Training Service

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Alternative Formats This document is available in alternative formats and other languages as required. Please contact Policy Adviser (Equal Opportunities) Lynne Williams on email lynne.williams@lsc.gov.uk (tel: 0161 261 0448) or Stanton Durant on email stanton.durant@lsc.gov.uk (tel: 0161 261 0440), or post to the above address.