

i For information



Leading learning and skills

Policy Requirements for Planning: Managing the Balance and Mix of Provision (2006/07)

**Any queries on its content should be directed to the appropriate
LSC office contact.**

January 2006

Policy Requirements for Planning: Managing the Balance and Mix of Provision (2006/07)

Context

- 1 This document should be used in conjunction with:
 - a. the Annual Statement of Priorities 2006/07
 - b. the Grant Letter for 2006-07 which sets out the strategic direction for the post-16 learning and skills sector
 - c. *Priorities for Success* as it provides further detail and clarification for the priorities for adult learning
 - d. the Regional Allocation Framework for 2006/07
 - e. the toolbox handbook 2006/07 and supporting documentation
 - f. other Mandatory Requirements for Local LSCs.

Introduction

2 This document is aimed at all regional and local LSC colleagues involved in discussions with providers on planning provision and allocating funds. It focuses on the challenges associated with Managing the Balance and Mix of Provision in an area. This document:

- sets out the context and key changes for 2006/07 and 2007/08
- sets out the LSC's policy and key messages on Managing the Balance and Mix of provision
- provides a clear steer for the regional approach to planning the balance of provision
- should be used as part of the planning process
- identifies emerging qualification and curriculum reform and initiatives which will impact on this work.

Adult learning – Key messages for 2006/07

3 The overall saving to be achieved in 2006-07 from the withdrawal of for certain categories of adult learning in FE is £103 million, rising to £212 million in 2007-08.

4 In practice these savings will be achieved from re-balancing the profile of providers' mix of provision. This will result in less funding being available for provision of a lower order priority. In addition, from 2006/07 the LSC will no longer fund some categories of provision. These are detailed below in paragraph 21 (a)-(f).

5 The LSC also expects that some learners on some programmes will begin to pay more for provision that was previously subsidised or provided at no cost to the individual, that is where those learners had their fees waived or reduced by the provider although they did not qualify for tuition fee relief. The Skills Strategy, Grant Letter and our Annual Statement of Priorities re-iterate Government's intention that a step change is needed in rebalancing public and private contributions to the cost of learning so that they better reflect the benefits and financial returns to learners and employers.

Shifts in Provision

6 Over the last eighteen months local offices have used the planning process to better align more provision to targets and priorities. However, further rebalancing will need to take place to meet the current challenges. The local LSC plan will be crucial as it sets out the shift that is needed locally to meet national, regional and local targets and priorities.

7 Annex A illustrates the shift in provision by enrolments and funding over the three years 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05. Between 2002/03 and 2003/04 the spread of LSC funding shifted dramatically towards embedding the Skills for Life Strategy and aligning more adult provision towards first full Level 2 and also Level 3. The comparatively small increase in provision funded below Level 2 recognises that this area of provision was already proportionately well resourced, and the shift in funding has brought other priority areas up to more equitable levels of funding.

8 This shift continued into 2004/05 but to a lesser degree. However, the pattern of funding re-emphasises the LSC's commitment to fund not simply a 'deficit model' of learning and skills but a rich and diverse portfolio of provision across appropriate levels and taking into account the need to support participation, progression and achievement across agreed targets and priorities.

9 A significant proportion of provision funded by the LSC in past years has not contributed directly to targets or priorities. We need to continue to prioritise our funding to support those who need it most. Ministers' expectations are that the focus of public funds on areas of *market failure* is balanced with ensuring appropriate access and progression opportunities to enable learners to move to and beyond Level 2.

Planning Priorities for 2006/07 and 2007/08

10 The Balance and Mix of Provision within a provider's profile needs to take into account the full range of provision available within an area and within individual institutions. To achieve this balance we need to:

- a. **Increase** the proportion of available funding for priority learners and/or priority provision
- b. **Safeguard** a range of opportunities for personal and community development learning
- c. **Reduce** the commitment from the public purse (or from waived tuition fees) for lower priority provision and for learners who can afford to pay more

- d. **Stop** funding for certain types of provision which no longer will be eligible for funding in 2006/07.

INCREASE – What needs to be done?

11 The white papers and Grant Letter set out clearly the Government's priorities for public funding for adult learning and skills. The LSC will therefore focus and use its resources for the following priority learners and high quality priority provision:

- first Full Level 2 (an entitlement to free learning for adults undertaking a first, Full Level 2 qualification) that is, platform for employability
- Skills for Life (free skills for life provision based on national standards for learners with an identified need)
- appropriate and relevant first steps and progression provision – see also paragraphs 20 and 34.

12 In addition, the LSC needs to make provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in line with its statutory duty. We also need to protect the volume of provision for offenders secured by the transferred offenders' learning and skills budget. Further details are set out in paragraphs 68-74 and also the Requirements for Local Offices document titled *Offenders' Learning and Skills*.

What provision will be covered by the SAFEGUARD?

13 The LSC will safeguard:

- a wide range of appropriate learning opportunities for personal and community development learning (see section on the safeguard).

14 The budget for safeguarded leisure learning provision referred to as *Personal and Community Development Learning* (PCDL) is £153 million (made up of £120 million from the former Adult and Community Learning (ACL) budget and £33 million from the FE adult participation budget).

15 An additional budget of £57 million will fund Family Learning, Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN) and Neighbourhood Learning for Deprived Communities (NLDC).

16 Further details on PCDL are set out in the Requirements for Local Offices document titled *Planning and Funding for the Safeguard – Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL), Family Programmes and Neighbourhood Learning In Deprived Communities*.

What provision do we need to REDUCE?

17 In 2004/05, spend on provision previously classified as type 2/3 for adult learners was £593 million. This activity was identified as:

- internally certificated provision (£45.3 million)
- externally certificated provision not within the NQF (£357 million)

- provision previously on Schedule 2 (£74.5 million)
- externally accredited higher level provision not within the NQF (£6.8 million)
- provision coded as C9OP/X9OP used to describe non-externally certificated other provision (£109.2 million).

18 The quality of and alignment with LSC priorities of some of this provision is not always clear. Some of the activity within these categories will be ineligible from 2006/07 (see paragraph 21), but the remainder will continue to be eligible. However, not only must the total amount of public funding invested in these categories of provision reduce but local offices should also be clear, during the planning process, how the use of public funds for the reduced amount of provision more closely aligns with LSC priorities.

19 This means a higher proportion of LSC funding for adults will be for high quality provision which successfully engages priority learners and/or supports progression to priority provision.

20 Any reductions in provision from these course types will need to be carefully managed by the local LSC to ensure that the mix of programmes and balance of provision will secure a breadth of provision that will deliver as appropriate:

- provision that demonstrably supports return to learning (particularly at entry and Level 1) and progression to *Skills for Life* and Level 2 and 3 provision
- upskilling to Level 3 and Level 4 and above in accordance with regional and local priorities and in line with Sector Skills Agreements and Sector Qualification Strategies and other sector priorities¹
- provision to support learners to re-skill for new careers and those returning to the labour market
- Framework for Achievement trials (including Foundation Learning Tier)
- access to Higher Education provision as it provides an alternative progression route into HE for adult learners and counts towards the LSC's Level 3 target
- TUC provision for union learning representatives
- languages provision to support the National Languages Strategy. See also separate Requirements for Local Offices document *National Languages Strategy*.

What provision will we STOP funding?

21 The rebalancing needed to achieve the LSC's national priorities reflects the redirection of public funding to provision which more directly supports targets and/or priorities. To achieve this refocus **the following categories of provision will be ineligible for LSC funding from 2006/07:**

a. Very short learning aims below 9 guided learning hours (glh) – except Ufl and learning aims approved by the secretary of state under Sections 96 and 97 and those delivered as part of the safeguarded funds for personal and community development learning. These very short learning aims fall into two distinct groups:

¹ See also *Sector Strategies Brief* which is available at <http://intranet/Portal/Portal%20Content/National%20Office%20Teams/Skills%20Group/Sectors/SSA%20page/SECTOR%20STRATEGIES%20BRIEF%2019.12.05.doc>

- Very short Skills for Life courses (3 and 6 glh) currently delivered as ‘taster’ sessions or for initial or diagnostic assessment. In future the LSC expects providers to ensure appropriate assessment of potential learners to be managed in the same way as for all other learning provision, that is, through existing entry and induction processes (see also Skills for Life section at paragraphs 35-50).
- Other very short programmes for adult learners, particularly in information technology (IT) where the public purse already supports significant amounts of IT provision. These very short programmes appear to have limited benefits in terms of progression for learners. This also includes very short learning aims which are not accredited within the NQF in food hygiene, first aid, food hospitality and health and safety and TUC provision.

Further detail to clarify the eligibility of very short courses is provided in the attached short course policy and criteria at annex B and the Regional Allocation Framework and Toolbox guidance.

b. College devised higher level provision (for example in management studies) at notional NQF Levels 4 and 5. This type of provision is lower priority as it does not contribute to LSC targets or priorities and, importantly, is not accredited by a professional or other recognised external body.

c. Provision that was previously approved under Schedule 2 to the former *Further and Higher Education Act 1992* will be ineligible for new learners as this provision is likely to be out-of-date and not meeting current standards. There is also likely to be more appropriate provision available that has been accredited for inclusion in the NQF and approved by the secretary of state under Sections 96 and/or 97 and therefore meets current national standards. Exceptionally, Access to HE courses recognised by the Quality Assurance Agency and previously listed under Schedule 2c continue to be eligible. The LSC is committed to supporting the HE sector to meet its PSA targets and recognised the important role of Access provision in supporting progression to HE – see also *HE Strategy* section at paragraphs 51-54.

d. Adult basic education provision (literacy, numeracy and ESOL) which was formerly regarded as basic skills but since the implementation of the Skills for Life Strategy is no longer based on national standards for adult literacy, numeracy and language.

e. Former ‘proxy’ or ‘legacy’ ESOL qualifications that have been replaced by the new Certificates in ESOL which are based on the national standards for literacy.

f. The LSC will stop funding learning aims in health and safety, first aid and food safety that are not accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) for inclusion in the NQF (and approved by the secretary of state under Sections 96 and/or 97) or without endorsement or regulation by the relevant, independent body. Learning aims without such independent accreditation carry no guarantee that they meet industry standards or needs. This is because Awarding Body certification alone does not provide sufficient evidence (for qualifications outside the NQF). This is part of the overall planned reduction in the volume of enrolments in this area and a corresponding reduction in funding in the financial year 2006-07 of £24 million. This paragraph needs to be read in conjunction with the *Policy and Criteria for funding Health and Safety, First Aid and Food Safety provision from 2006/07*, which provides further detail and is attached at annex C to this document. The LSC has indicated in

paragraph 7 of annex C that it will continue to measure the impact of this strengthening this policy change 2006/07. Regional LSCs are therefore asked to provide feedback² on the outcomes of discussions with providers and to monitor any impact of this policy change, particularly in relation to micro-businesses and the potential displacement of learners from disadvantaged groups.

Impact of proposals and risk management

22 Regional and local LSCs need to have a clear understanding of the implications of re-balancing provision from lower priority into a higher priority area. Providers can and should continue to offer provision outside our priority areas or to recruit non-priority learners at full cost. As the Grant Letter re-iterates the judgement is not about the value of the learning or the merits of the education programme but about how the learner or learning relates to priorities and, therefore, who should pay.

23 Equally the impacts of any refocus of funding should be based on a sound rationale either to re-align more provision with government targets or other sound provider rationale, that is quality of provision or course viability. However, the LSC does not expect providers to cut courses purely because the provision is disproportionately more expensive to deliver, and without taking into consideration individual learner needs. Particularly where this provision equips learners with a range of skills they need for employability and further progression to higher levels of training. One example of this may be British Sign Language.

24 Local offices also need to be mindful of the potential for unintended consequences of the planning process. For example the impact of reducing out-of-area provision and also lower priority provision may for example, result in the reduction of sports coaching courses as they may not directly contribute to LSC targets but may adversely impact on regional arrangements and priorities.

Equality and Diversity

25 Colleagues will need to ensure that any significant shifts in provision at either provider, local or regional level do not adversely and disproportionately impact on the needs of specific groups of learners, including but not restricted to those from ethnic minorities, offenders, older people, and people with disabilities.

Qualification and curriculum reform and initiatives and other key policy areas

26 To support the planning discussion with providers and to Manage the Balance and Mix of Provision, local offices will need to understand the emerging qualification and curriculum reforms and initiatives that may impact on the planning process. These are identified and explained in more detail below:

- Provision categories (section A)
- Framework for Achievement (section B)
- Foundation Learning Tier (section C)

² Feedback to be provided to Kully Jones at National Office

- Skills for Life (section D)
- Higher Education Strategy (section E)
- Sector Qualification Strategies (section F)
- Personal and Community Development Learning for adults or provision identified as “learning for its own sake” (section G)
- Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (section H)
- Ufl (section I)
- Offenders’ Learning and Skills (section J)
- Older learners (section K)
- Key principles for developing a coherent regional approach to manage the balance and mix of provision (section L).

Section A: Provision Categories

27 The provision categories and type classification have been revised for 2006/07. They are intended to inform the planning dialogue with providers by providing a planning tool which enables local LSCs to gain a good understanding and overview of the provision that is likely to count towards targets and/or priorities. The provision categories also help local offices to identify areas for further discussion with providers.

28 The key changes for 2006/07 include:

a. The type classification that is, type 1, 2 and 3 has been further developed, simplified and replaced by three generic types:

- provision that is likely to contribute to LSC priorities and/or targets
- provision that has the potential to contribute to LSC priorities and
- provision that is no longer eligible for LSC funding from 2006/07 for new learners.

b. The addition of two new categories and changes to the descriptors for the provision categories. It is therefore important that local offices are familiar with the revised content (see annex D).

29 The *skills matrix* also provided in the Toolbox reports is a further tool which focuses on skills priorities and the type classification used for the provision categories. This classifies regional priorities, as identified through Strategic Area Reviews and other research, into High, Medium or Low priority using Sub-sector Subject Area definitions.

30 In addition, the matrix developed by the South East region (the *SE Matrix*) is a further tool which focuses on skills priorities and target bearing provision in the context of regional priorities. This matrix is not based on the provision categories and uses recent target definitions to populate its nine boxes in order to inform the migration of activity from low priority provision that does not contribute to the target (dark orange box) into the orange/amber or green boxes.

31 It is critical that local offices have a clear understanding of the appropriateness and purpose of the different tools available to them and understand how they can be

best used to complement each other. For example the *SE Matrix* provides a useful tool to illustrate how regions need to shift provision to meet targets and skills priority provision. However, it does not make explicit the contributions of other lower priority provision, for example, Skills for life (non-approved provision), internal or external accreditation of provision, NQF, MFL or any other policy areas to the planning process.

Section B: Framework for Achievement

32 Significant progress has been made in the programme of work to develop the Framework for Achievement (FfA). The LSC now has a remit from the Minister for Skills to lead on FfA trials with providers in England. This next phase of implementation of the FfA will involve tests and trials of provision in 2006-08. From December 2005, we started putting the systems in place to support the trials, with delivery to learners starting from August 2006. These will be trials of real qualifications and provision with real providers and learners so the link with regional and local LSC planning and funding of provision will be crucial.

33 We will also continue to take forward work on for example, how the FfA will work in practice, how it might be communicated, how regulatory criteria will need to change, how the emerging outcomes of LSC *agenda for change* will support it and how it will link with Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP's) development and prototyping of a Unique Learner Number and so on.

Considerations:

a. The Qualifications and Curriculum Reform team at National Office have invited LSC regions to express interest in the FfA trials. If FfA units or qualifications would help you better to meet learner or employer needs or a target or priority, we would like to discuss what you need and see whether a trial is appropriate and possible in the timescales.

b. Any regional or local LSCs involved in the FfA trials will need to include funding the trial provision as part of their agreements with the relevant providers. There may also be a need to work with others, such as awarding bodies to develop provider capacity for the trials.

c. Any regional or local LSCs not involved in the FfA trials need to start bringing the FfA into forward planning with providers. Those who are involved in trials also need to do this with their non-involved providers. Guidance will be available to support this aspect of discussion which will probably include:

- confirming the timetable for the development of the FfA
- highlighting the key differences of the FfA from the current system
- discussing how a more flexible and responsive offer under the FfA might meet the needs of some or all of the provider's learners and employers
- discussing how the FfA may impact on discussions for 2006/07 and 2007/08
- exploring how the provider will manage its curriculum looking forward to possible implementation of the FfA by December 2010.

Section C: Foundation Learning Tier

34 The LSC is currently working with the QCA on the development of the Foundation Learning Tier. This joint initiative will aim to deliver an inclusive curriculum offer at entry and Level 1 for learners of all ages from 14 upwards. The Foundation Learning Tier will be supported by units and qualifications at entry and Level 1 in the Framework for Achievement. The Foundation Learning Tier will be a coherent offer with clear progression pathways and a straightforward funding mechanism. Limited trials of the Foundation Learning Tier will begin in September 2006 alongside FfA trials with a national roll-out planned from September 2007. In the interim the LSC is continuing to take forward work to ensure that appropriate opportunities are available for all learners below Level 2.

Section D: Skills for Life

35 The Skills for Life Strategy has been successful in attracting increasing numbers of people into learning who want and need to improve their basic literacy, numeracy and English language skills. To July 2005, almost 3.5 million people have engaged in Skills for Life learning and more than 1.1 million of these have achieved a first Skills for Life qualification that has improved their literacy, language or numeracy skills by one (NQF) level.

36 Despite this success, we still spend a significant amount on Skills for Life provision that does not deliver the essential qualifications that people need to progress in further learning and employment. In addition, there are indications that some of the provision we currently fund does not meet quality standards. *Priorities for Success* and the *Annual Statement of Priorities* outline these and other key issues that we must address over the next two years if we are to help those with the greatest needs, reach the 2010 target and remain within budget.

Considerations:

Managing the shift towards nationally approved qualifications

37 Nationally, less than half (45 per cent) of all LSC funded Skills for Life enrolments in 2004/05 were onto nationally approved learning aims. The balance differs across the sector (for example in FE it is currently 62 per cent approved, 38 per cent non-approved) however we must continue to work with all providers so that more learners have the chance to enrol on nationally approved Skills for Life qualifications. The pace of change to nationally approved qualifications will vary for individual providers depending upon the balance of their existing provision, their potential contribution and regional/local priorities.

38 We will continue to work towards the current benchmark where 80 per cent of Skills for Life provision is made up of nationally approved qualifications, and the remaining 20 per cent is not.

39 In terms of nationally approved qualifications, the 80 per cent includes those at entry Levels 1, 2 and 3 and Levels 1 and 2. Only those learners who achieve Skills for Life qualifications at entry 3, Level 1 or Level 2 count towards the target, and each learner counts once only, so subsequent achievements as a learner continues to progress will not count. Although achievements at entry 1 and 2 do not count towards the Skills for Life target, this provision provides a crucial progression route for learners with the greatest need. Planning dialogues with providers will need to consider an appropriate balance in the overall Skills for Life curriculum offer that meets local needs.

40 In summary the 80 per cent therefore includes:

- provision that contributes directly to the target when learners achieve for the first time
- nationally approved qualifications at entry 1, and entry 2 (as well as entry 3)
- provision for those who have achieved a first SfL national qualification but who are now progressing further on nationally recognised SfL qualifications.

41 The remaining 20 per cent includes:

- provision for learners not yet ready to enrol on a nationally approved qualification, including those at pre-entry level.

42 This balance should ensure there is sufficient, high quality, first steps learning for those not ready to take a qualification or for whom this is not yet appropriate. Actual proportions will vary according to local and regional needs and the type of provider. The overall balance in the mix of provision should be sought across local and regional areas.

Very short 3 and 6 glh Skills for Life learning aims

43 From August 2006, the LSC will not fund enrolments onto very short 3 and 6 glh Skills for Life courses currently used to deliver 'taster' sessions and diagnostic assessment (these use the generic class codes prefixed by CSC and/or CDT). We expect providers to manage appropriate learner assessment in the same way as for most other learning provision, through existing pre-course guidance, enrolment and on-course induction processes.

44 In line with paragraph 21(a) providers may deliver a whole nationally approved Skills for Life qualification in less than nine hours where they can provide evidence that (a) learners have identified Skills for Life needs and (b) the provision will meet those needs and help the learner to move up a level in under 9 glh. The general rule applies that, following assessment, learners should be enrolled onto learning aims that reflect their needs, not their existing level of ability. LSCs should be satisfied that such delivery does not skew the balance of provision away from helping those with the greatest need. If a Skills for Life approved qualification is being delivered in less than 9 glh the provider must use the relevant NQF qualification code and **not** the CSC or CDT prefixed codes. See also paragraph 50 on external candidates.

Managing poor quality provision

45 In monitoring the balance and mix of provision, the LSC must identify Skills for Life provision that is consistently poor and take steps to support provider quality improvement plans. Where provision does not meet minimum levels of performance as set out in *Planning for Quality*, and there is no improvement, funding should be withdrawn and redirected towards better quality provision.

46 National standards provide a useful (“front-end”) measure of quality. Provision that is not based on the national standards for adult literacy and numeracy is not a priority and is ineligible for funding at the basic skills rate. Funding for such provision should be withdrawn.

Planning for ESOL

47 Skills for Life planning should continue to differentiate between literacy, numeracy and ESOL to ensure the different needs of individuals, communities and employers are addressed. In the regions there is a need to ensure that ESOL plans do not overshadow or mask the need for literacy and numeracy. Adequate resource should be made available to meet a range of needs across the three areas of basic skills provision.

48 Local and regional strategies should ensure that providers have replaced ‘legacy’ and ‘proxy’ ESOL provision with the new Certificates in ESOL Skills for Life, and that these form the core of a provider’s ESOL programme. Although ESOL other provision (based on the national standards for adult literacy and the ESOL core curriculum) remains eligible for funding, the majority of learners are expected to enrol on approved qualifications. There was a shift in the balance of ESOL provision in 2004/05, which currently stands at 15 per cent approved qualifications, 85 per cent non-approved (compared with 27 per cent and 73 per cent respectively in 2003/04). This apparent shift towards greater use of other provision was anticipated and may be due in part to the introduction of new, unfamiliar ESOL Skills for Life qualifications and the result of take up of the new, unitised curriculum. While it may be too early yet to see the true impact of the new qualifications (F05 data for 2004/05 will be available in February 2006) nonetheless the LSC needs to work with providers and influence planning to ensure more learners have the opportunity to take approved qualifications.

49 As demand for ESOL continues to rise, providers should ensure that learners enrol on learning aims appropriate to their needs. Where learners’ needs are best met through non-Skills for Life learning aims and providers can deliver this provision, they should charge the relevant full-cost course and awarding body fees. Alternatively, they should refer learners to independent providers who can offer this provision.

External candidates

50 As indicated in *Priorities for Success*, from August 2006 we will not fund external candidates to take stand-alone tests in Adult Literacy, Numeracy or ESOL Skills for Life. Such candidates are likely to have literacy or numeracy skills at the

level of the test undertaken. In addition, they do not enrol on learning aims and their achievements are not recorded on the ILR, which means they do not count towards the target. Local LSCs should ensure that providers who continue to offer stand-alone tests charge candidates a fee for this service from August 2006.

Section E: HE Strategy

51 The LSC is currently finalising its strategy for higher education (HE) in order to support the delivery of the widening participation agenda across higher education. It is intended that the strategy will establish the LSC as an active and influential strategic partner across the HE landscape, focussing on its strengths, its unique position with relation to HE (both in terms of supporting the preparation of individuals to progress to HE and in terms of supporting the delivery of HE in FE) and on those areas where it can make most impact.

52 A key component of the HE strategy will be to identify and support appropriate progression opportunities to HE and ensure that regional planning frameworks address the importance of higher level skills and learning (particularly with regard to employer involvement).

53 In the context of the balance and mix of provision, local LSCs should be aware that access to HE provision is identified within the strategy as a critical and important component of progression and it remains an expectation that this provision, where quality assured by QAA, should be secured and consolidated. This is because the LSC regards this provision as being equivalent to NQF provision. It is also recognised as a full Level 3 qualification in the Labour Force Survey and contributes to the LSC's Level 3 target.

54 It is expected that the HE strategy will be disseminated to local offices in late spring 2006.

Section F: Sector Qualification Strategies

55 The development of Sector Skills Agreements will fundamentally alter the way skills are demanded, delivered and developed throughout the UK and will help to achieve a step change in employer engagement in identifying and acting on the skills needed for productivity.

56 Local LSCs should be aware of the emerging sector qualification strategies (SQS) as they will identify the range, type and level of provision which a sector needs (in line with workforce development) and will be driven by employers. Since SQS are demand led, they will increasingly inform the LSC in terms of appropriate and fit for purpose qualifications which should be supported by the LSC within the region. They will also be developed within the context of the FfA credit and wider sector qualification reform currently being developed.

Section G: Personal and Community Development Learning for adults (PCDL) or provision identified as “learning for its own sake”

57 Paragraph 4.42b of the 2003 Skills Strategy reiterated the Government’s commitment to lifelong learning and included as one of the priorities for public funding *‘safeguarding a varied range of learning opportunities for personal fulfilment, community development and active citizenship’*.

58 The term ‘personal and community development learning’ was developed to acknowledge that some non-accredited learning has intrinsic value, for the individual and/or for the communities it serves. The LSC is committed to ensuring that personal and community development learning continues to be secured in local areas, that it is of high quality, and in sufficient quantity that publicly funded learning for adults remains responsive, accessible and flexible.

Considerations:

59 The principles underpinning our vision are that:

- overall levels of provision for personal and community development learning are maintained and are of high quality
- we should specifically protect learning that supports families, citizenship, sport and health, culture and community development
- there is a collaborative approach between providers to foster this development
- accountability and quality assurance procedures are proportionate and appropriate
- learning for personal and community development, whether provided through local authorities, colleges or the voluntary sector, should be integrated into a coordinated and coherent learning offer for adults at regional and local level
- our fees policies should ensure that those who can pay for their learning are encouraged to do so while allowing providers sufficient flexibility to apply fee remission appropriately.

60 Strategies need to be local and regional rather than national, although there are some specific national priorities to be taken into account, for example, ensuring that local areas have proper regard for the needs of older learners, for those learners unable to pay for their own learning and for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

61 It will be important to see 2006/07 as the first year in a broad direction of travel. The LSC will need to manage carefully and ensure coordination of and coherence to the range of reforms affecting both FE colleges and Local Authorities from 2006/07.

Section H: Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

62 The national strategic review, across the post-16 sector, of the LSC’s planning and funding of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD) was completed in September 2005. The final report was received by

National Council on 21 September 2005. The review's overarching recommendation to take forward the vision of systemic transformation is that the:

LSC should develop a national strategy for the regional/local delivery, through collaboration with partners, of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across the post-16 learning and skills sector that is high-quality, learner-centred and cost-effective.

63 The majority of the recommendations arising from the review are for the LSC. There are also recommendations for the Department for Education and Skills, where issues need to be dealt with at departmental level, and of course recommendations involving providers across the post-16 sector. Recommendations also relate to the duties of other partners and reflect the fact that as recognised in the LSC's Annual Statement of Priorities, it needs to work collaboratively.

64 The findings of the review will enable the LSC to develop a planning and funding framework that will enable the delivery of provision which is learner centred and cost-effective in the use of LSC funds. This will further allow the LSC, in partnership with other key agencies and learning providers, to build flexible packages of provision (including appropriate progression and transition routes) that meet the learning aspirations and needs of this cohort of learners.

65 The final report *Through Inclusion to Excellence* was published in November 2005 and is available on the LSC website at: <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Documents/SubjectListing/ConsultationsandResponses/Currentconsultations/inclusion-to-excellence.htm> Internal LSC changes will begin to be explored and considered in context of the wider *agenda for change* programme. During autumn/winter 2005 there will be a period of dissemination and engagement with the sector and wider partners on the outcomes and recommendations from the review.

66 These recommendations will particularly impact on FE as this is the largest supplier of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In 2003/04, 382,000 people self-declared as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (of which over three quarters were 19 or older). Locally and regionally there is a need to consider the report in planning provision. This will include an understanding of how:

- this cohort of learners can effectively contribute to current and future targets and how the LSC's planning of provision for LLDD can incorporate and acknowledge realistic timescales for progression as appropriate into employment, education and training
- the need to ensure that appropriate provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities remains a priority
- the planning of provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities needs to be in a collaborative local context of joint planning, and possibly co-funding, and sensitive to existing and long standing arrangements with wider agencies, such as Social Services

- provision can be used to enable progression to employment and the acquisition of skills that enable people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to play a full and active part in their communities
- provision for learners with high support requirements may need to be planned regionally and/or on a sub-regional basis
- quality improvement of discrete provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities can and should be embedded within provider general quality improvement plans and so on.

Section I: Ufl

67 The LSC is working closely with Ufl to develop its learning offer in order to fulfil their key role in supporting the adult learning and skills agenda. Ufl has already demonstrated a firm commitment towards prioritising provision that meets LSC's priorities and targets. Local LSCs will want to ensure that the provision planned in **learnirect** centres actually compliments and supports other learning activity in the area. (See also policy and criteria for funding health and safety, first aid at work and food safety provision, and short courses at annexes B and C.)

Section J: Offenders' Learning and Skills

68 Offenders' Learning and Skills is one of the LSC's key priorities from 2006. The LSC assumes responsibility for planning and funding the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS), across England, from August 2006. This provision comprises learning to offenders in both custodial and community settings. Three 'Development Regions,' the North East, North West and South West commenced this service in August 2005 to inform the national roll-out.

69 In the remaining six English regions, provision for offenders in custody is being secured by an open and competitive tendering process. A specific budget for offenders in custody is transferring to the LSC. We expect to appoint lead providers for the custodial element by April 2006. The service relies upon an effective link between learning provision delivered in custody and in the community to ensure that the Offender's Learning Journey³ can be continued.

70 Alongside the tendering process for custodial provision, the LSC will 'commission' existing LSC providers to make learning and skills provision available for offenders who are under the supervision of the National Probation Service (NPS). Since 2004, the LSC and NPS have worked in partnership to ensure that appropriate Skills for Life provision was available to this group. The new service will maintain the generally good level of provision delivered through these partnerships, but broaden the educational offer, as offenders should be entitled to a comparable educational offer as would be expected for any other citizen. Therefore offenders should have access to the entire mix of provision, where appropriate.

³ The *Offender's Learning Journey* is the specification for learning and skills for offenders. Two versions have been produced, to meet the needs of Juveniles and Adult offenders. The documents can be accessed on the OLASS section of the LSC's website at <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Partners/PolicyandDevelopment/OLASS/Usefuldocuments/default.htm>

71 At regional and local levels, LSCs will need to plan to meet the needs of offenders in their locality. Providers that are commissioned to deliver provision to this group will need to demonstrate through agreed plans their intentions for making provision available to this group. It will also be important for lead providers in custody to work closely with commissioned providers in the community.

72 The LSC's initial priority is to secure competent providers to deliver existing levels of provision within a custodial setting. A large amount of provision delivered in a custodial setting does not directly contribute towards our PSA targets, and we will look to address the mix of provision during years one and two of the new service. Alongside this, for offenders in the community, this group will be accessing mainstream provision, therefore the appropriate guidance relating to the appropriateness of mainstream provision should apply.

73 Due to the nature of this client group, there will be a need for some additional bespoke provision to be secured, which is unlikely to directly contribute towards PSA targets. This provision will be secured through other organisations, and funded through the European Social Fund (ESF) and/or the funds (£9.4 million nationally) currently used to support Skills for Life provision for Offenders in the Community.

74 A separate *Requirements for Local Offices* document is being drafted to cover the high-level principles of procuring, commissioning and planning and funding of offenders' learning and skills. Detailed planning guidance will be made available through the LSC intranet regarding the detailed aspects of this provision.

Section K: Older Learners

75 Older learners represent a key group of adult learners that regional and local LSCs should consider as part of their annual planning process with providers.

76 Older learners in this context are regarded as those over 50. They have an important role in both the achievement of LSC targets and in achieving the aims set out in the Skills Strategy. Consideration should be given to those older learners without a full level 2 qualification and to those who require basic numeracy and literacy provision to help them to progress to, and achieve, the basic level of employability. This is particularly important in terms of the changing demography and the growing need for older workers to help meet the skills shortages in our economy over the next 20 years.

77 Against the background of the age regulations coming into force next year, regional and local LSCs will be required to ensure that when agreeing provider plans these do not discriminate against people on grounds of their age. In this respect, care must also be taken to ensure that in choosing to fund or not fund particular programmes, indirect discrimination against particular groups or other minorities does not occur. A summary of the Age consultation document can be found through the following web link – www.dti.gov.uk/er/equality/age.htm

78 The LSC's 2006/07 Annual Statement of Priorities signals an increased emphasis on demographic change, its impact on the pattern of adult learning and our responsibilities under the new legislation.⁴

⁴ Annual Statement of Priorities, 2006/07 – p2, The Workforce,

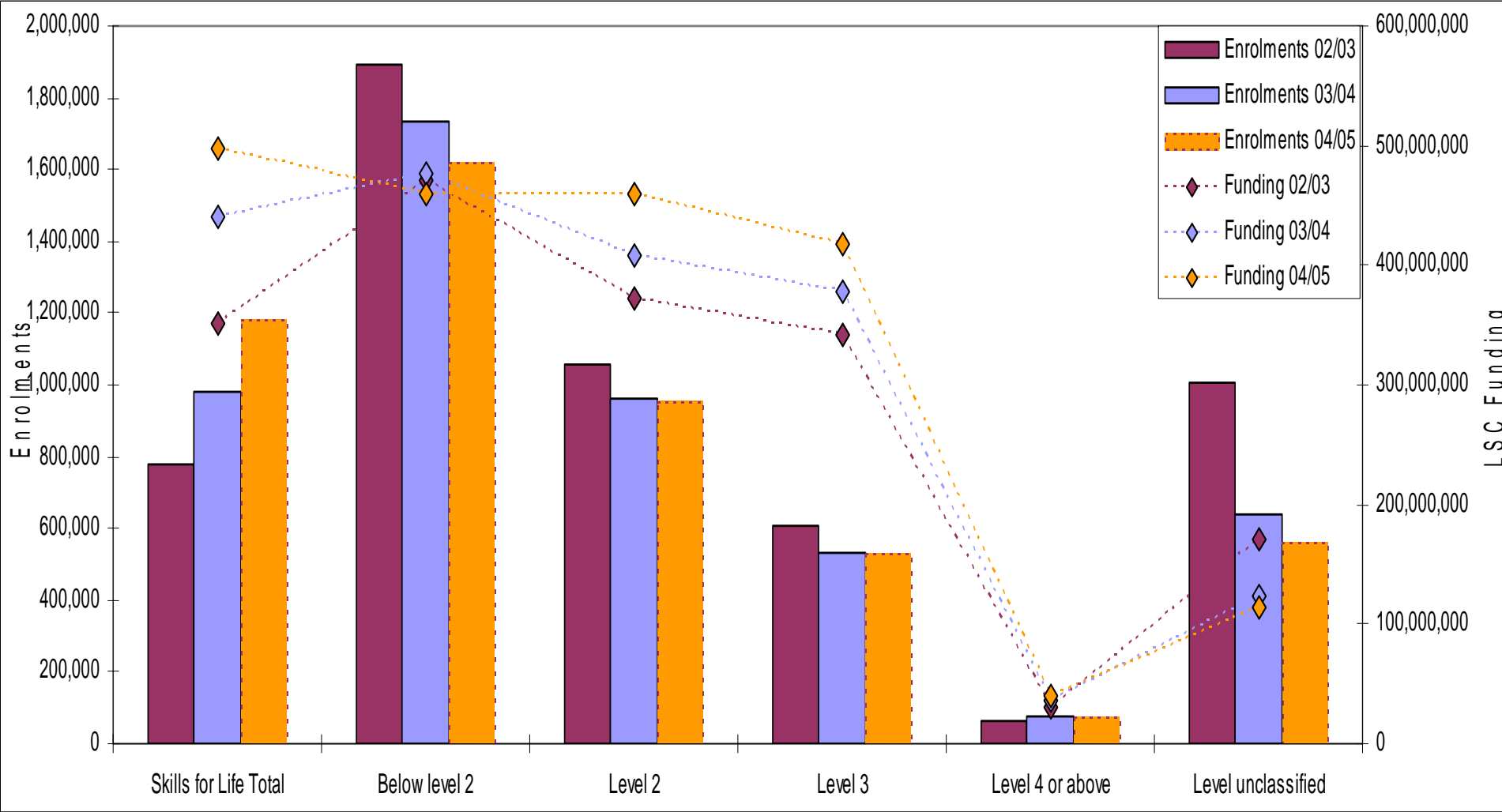
Section L: Key Principles For Developing A Coherent Regional Approach To Manage The Balance And Mix Of Provision

79 A consistent approach to managing the balance and mix of provision across regions is needed to:

- a. maintain a rich and diverse learning offer
- b. assess the extent to which the portfolio of provision directly contributes to LSC targets and priorities and to understand the rationale and need for provision where the relationship to targets and priorities is less clear
- c. develop a coherent and consistent regional approach to decisions regarding the planning and funding of a range of provision (both within and outside the NQF) that meets the needs of learners, employers and communities
- d. develop consistent and coherent strategies and approaches on how changes to mix, level and range of provision are identified and their impact assessed in respect of learner need, local and regional priorities, national targets and funding
- e. improve the quality of provision – (relevance, effectiveness and efficiency)
- f. avoid a simplistic quota approach to reducing lower priority provision without determining the potential for contribution to LSC targets and priorities.

Annex A: Shift in Provision

Data based ILR 2004/05 FE F04 returns



Annex B: Policy and Criteria for Funding Very Short Courses from 2006/07

Introduction

1 The LSC indicated in *Priorities for Success* (Paragraph 54) that very short learning aims of below 9 glh would cease to be funded from 2006/07. The majority of these learning aims fall into two groups; very short Skills for Life programmes of between 3 and 6 glh, and other very short programmes, particularly information technology. The LSC expects very short Skills for Life programmes to be part of larger programmes aiming towards the achievement of qualifications. Other very short courses appear to have limited benefits in terms of progression for learners.⁵

2 This document provides further clarification and detail in terms of eligibility. It should be read in conjunction with *Policy and Criteria for Funding Health and Safety, First Aid and Food Safety Provision from 2006/07* (see annex C).

Eligible for LSC funding

3 There are three specific types of short learning aims of less than 9 glh which are not covered by Paragraph 54 of *Priorities for success*. These learning aims will therefore continue to be eligible for LSC funding:

- learning aims accredited by QCA for inclusion in the NQF and approved by the secretary of state under Sections 96 and/or 97⁶
- learning aims accredited by Ufl
- learning aims delivered and funded through PCDL safeguarded funds.

4 The eligibility of all other learning aims is determined by using the criteria set out below:

Criteria for determining eligibility for 2006/07

5 The eligibility of learning aims not covered by paragraph 3 is determined by the criteria below:

6 All the generic learning aims identified in the following provision categories are ineligible for LSC funding from August 2006:

Category 110 – 3 glh ICT (XSC and/or CSC prefixed codes)

⁵ This document needs to be read in conjunction with the Requirements for Local Offices document *Managing the Balance and Mix of Provision* and in particular, the sections on 'What provision will we stop funding' and 'Skills for Life'.

⁶ However units of approved qualifications (i.e prefixed using CUNA codes) delivered in less than 9 glh will be ineligible

Category 120 – 3 glh basic skills (XSC, CSC and/or CDT prefixed codes)
Category 130 - 6 glh basic skills (XSC and/or CSC prefixed codes)
Category 140 – 6 glh other courses (XSC and/or CSC prefixed codes).

7 The eligibility of all **other** learning aims on the Learning Aims Database of less than 9 glh would be determined using the criteria below (see also flowchart attached at appendix one and a list of eligible and ineligible learning aims at appendix two to this annex):

- I. If a loadbanded learning aim is delivered in less than 9 glh it is ineligible for funding.
- II. If a listed learning aim has a listed rate and monetary value equivalent to less than 9 glh it is ineligible for funding.
Note: If a provider subsequently decides to deliver this listed learning aim in 9 glh or more it is still ineligible. The issue of using Additional Learning Support to increase the glh to recognise an individual's need for extra tuition is not relevant. If the **original** learning aim is ineligible, then simply adding more teaching hours or funding does not change the funding status of the listed qualification.
- III. If a learning aim with a listed rate and monetary value is equivalent to 9 or more glh, but the provider subsequently decides to deliver the learning aim in less than 9 glh, this is acceptable, provided that it does not compromise the quality or the outcome.
Note: However, our annual monitoring of provider returns will help us to analyse whether short courses of more than 9 glh are being shortened in this way and, if there is evidence that particular short course listed learning aims are consistently being delivered in less than 9 glh we may decide to change the listed rate to one which is equivalent to less than 9 glh, at which point the listed learning aim in question becomes ineligible.

8 If a provider wishes to deliver a course of 9 glh or more in one day⁷, they may do so with agreement from their LSC in advance of the course being delivered. The notification process is to signal our determination not to allow 'one-day courses' of less than 9 glh being shielded by the 9 glh or greater threshold. There have been previous cases where providers have claimed funding for 9 glh, when in reality, a one-day course comprised some unsupervised learning that effectively 'stretched' the length of the course to 9 glh, but in reality fewer than 9 glh were delivered in the day.

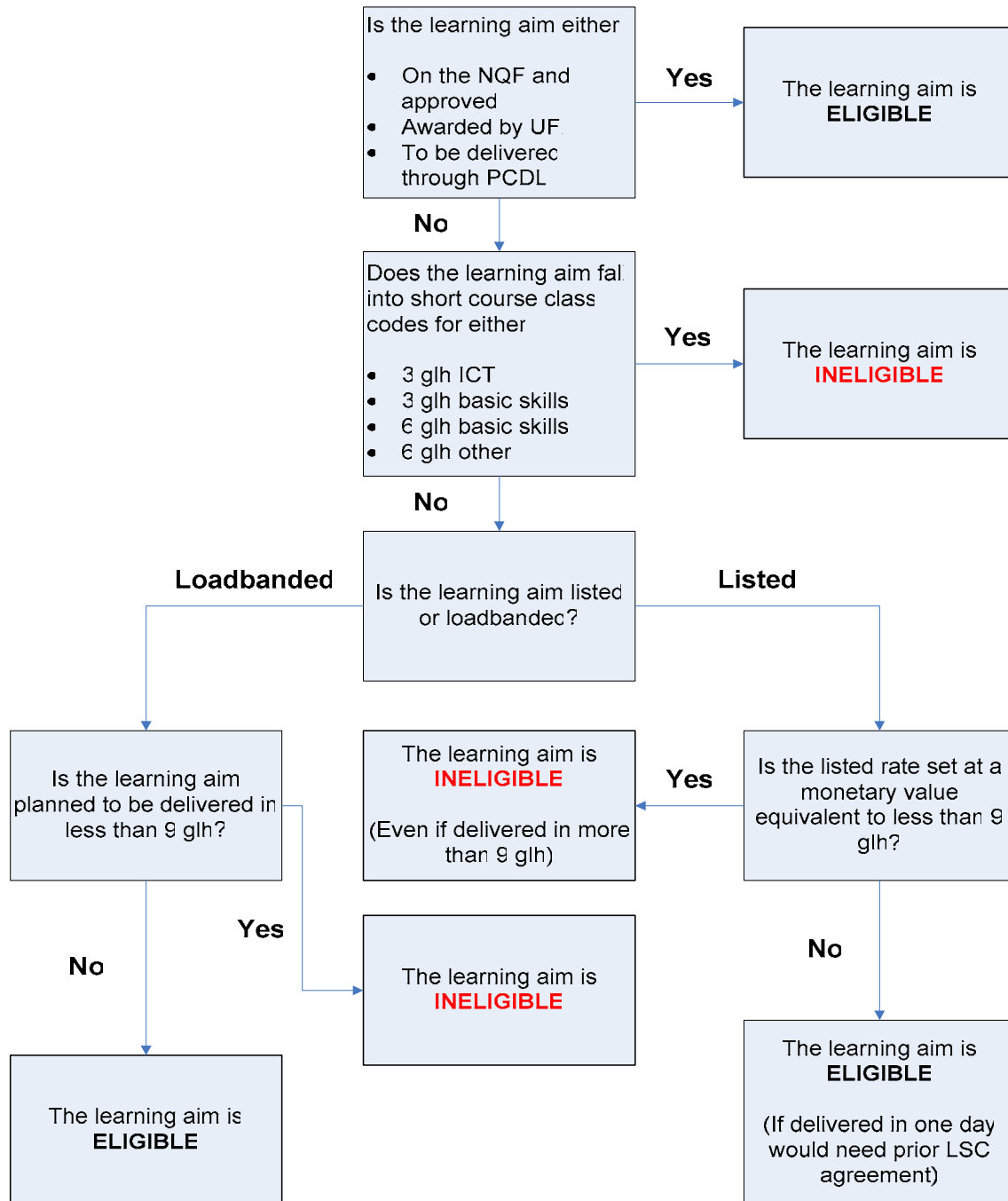
9 The Framework for Achievement defines the smallest component of a qualification as one credit, (the concept of half a credit doesn't exist). One credit is equivalent to the reasonable outcome that can be achieved, on average, by the average learner, in 10 notional learning hours. This policy is therefore in line with future developments.

⁷ Paragraph 8 applies equally to NQF provision delivered in one-day

Appendix one to annex B

Very Short Course Learning Aims – LSC Funding Eligibility Flowchart

The eligibility for LSC funding of very short course learning aims can be determined using this flowchart. This applies to learning aims funded through FE only and should not be used in isolation from other policies.



Note: Paragraph 569 of the *Funding Guidance for Further Education in 2004/05* states that only programmes equivalent in size to 6 glh or more are eligible for LSC funding if delivered by distance learning. From 2006/07 the minimum will be 9 glh in line with the policy on very short courses.

Appendix two to annex B

This document should be read in conjunction with *Policy and Criteria for Funding Health and Safety, First Aid and Food Safety Provision from 2006/07* (see annex C).

ELIGIBLE NQF LEARNING AIMS

Snapshot from the LAD Download: 31/10/05

Reference	Title	AWB	Level	QCA GLH	FE Status	NBR	Year	
10020238	Certificate in Risk Assessment Principles and Practice	CIEH	2	6	1	62	0506	GLH below 9 and Rate 6 - 8 LB
10053542	Award in Providing a Healthier School Meals Service	CG	1	6	1	62	0506	
10056415	Award in Providing a Healthier School Meals Service	ASET	1	6	1	62	0506	
10015395	Certificate in Food Hygiene	CIEH	1	6-10	1	62	0506	
10043305	Introductory Certificate in Conflict Handling	HAB	1	7	1	62	0506	
10029679	Introductory Certificate in Hospitality Conflict Handling	HAB	1	7	1	-	0506	
10031716	Introductory Certificate in Selling	HAB	1	7	1	-	0506	
10032113	Introductory Certificate in Customer Service (Service Sector)	HAB	1	7	1	-	0506	
10015024	Foundation Certificate in Meat and Poultry Hygiene	MTC	1	8	1	62	0506	
10020019	Certificate of Competence in the Safe Use of Abrasive Wheel Machines	NPTC	2	8	1	62	0506	
10056518	Certificate in Food Hygiene	MTC	1	8	1	62	0506	
10018037	Diploma in Bookkeeping	ABC	3		2	62	0506	
10024840	National Certificate for Licensees (Drugs Awareness)	BII	2	9	1	62	0506	GLH above 9 Rate Below 6-8 LB
10018074	Certificate of Competence in Manual Handling Operations Risk Assessment	NPTC	2	9	1	62	0506	
10019492	Certificate in Health and Safety in the Workplace	CIEH	1	10	1	62	0506	
10016181	Foundation Certificate in Food Hygiene	RIPH	1	6-9	1	93	0506	GLH below 9 Rate Above 6-8 LB
10027506	Introductory Certificate in Hospitality Customer Service	HAB	1	7	1	93	0506	
10027518	Introductory Certificate in Hospitality Selling	HAB	1	7	1	93	0506	
10032642	Foundation Certificate in Wines	WSET	1	6-9	1	93	0506	

INELIGIBLE LEARNING AIMS

Note: Learning aims not included in the NQF nor approved by the secretary of state under Sections 96 and 97 funded through the loadbands that are planned to be delivered in less than 9 glh are also ineligible for LSC funding.

Reference	Title	AWB	Level	QCA GLH	FE Status	NBR	Year
00259582	Basic Food Hygiene Certificate - Level 1	ASET	1	1		62	0506
00274496	National Award in Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations	ASET	2	1		62	0506
00274490	National Award in Influencing Skills	ASET	2	1		62	0506
00274483	National Award in Lifting and Slings	ASET	1	1		62	0506
00274478	National Award in Fire Risk Assessment	ASET	2	1		62	0506
00274674	First Steps on Your Computer	ASET	E	1		62	0506
00274468	National Award in Basic Holistic Gas Turbines	ASET	2	1		62	0506
00269420	Certificate in Care Skills	ASET	1	1		62	0506
00269411	Certificate in Supervisory Development	ASET	3	1		62	0506
00261240	1 day Appointed Persons First Aid Course	ASET	E	1		62	0506
00259585	Certificate in Retailing	ASET	2	1		62	0506
00220090	Emergency First Aid for Appointed Persons	CFAC	1	1		62	0506
00220631	C&G 2377-01 Code of Practice - Certificate of Competent Management of Electrical Equipment	CG	X	2		62	0506
00267022	Stress Awareness	CIEH	X	1		62	0506
00103184	Basic Food Hygiene Certificate	CIEH	2	1		62	0506
00259835	Principles of Manual Handling	CIEH	1	1		62	0506
00259836	Principles of COSHH	CIEH	1	1		62	0506
00257688	First Fix Commercial Appliances	CITB	3	1		62	0506
00233046	Indirect Fired Heating Appliances	CITB	3	1		62	0506
00233047	Direct Fired Heating Appliances	CITB	3	1		62	0506
00233050	Overhead Radiant Heaters	CITB	3	1		62	0506
00269098	Practical Computing Level 1	EDI	1	1		62	0506
00269100	Practical Computing Level 3	EDI	3	1		62	0506
00269099	Practical Computing Level 2	EDI	2	1		62	0506
00263113	Medic First Aid - Care Initiator Course	EMP	2	1		62	0506
00269282	Domestic Gas Fires and Wall Heaters	ERS	X	1		62	0506
00269227	Domestic Gas Fired Central Heating Boilers	ERS	X	1		62	0506
00269226	Domestic Gas Cooking Appliances	ERS	X	1		62	0506
00114152	Emergency Aid Certificate	FOOT BALL	1	1		62	0506
00229223	Public First Aid	HSE	X	2		62	0506
00103258	Working Safely	IOSH	1	1		62	0506
00114041	Emergency Aid for Appointed Persons	J9156	1	2		62	0506
00237143	All-Terrain Vehicles - Basic	LANT RA	2	1		62	0506
00101818	Book-keeping and Accounts Second Level	LCCI	2	2		62	0506
00263131	Domestic Gas Water Heater Assessment	LTC	X	2		62	0506

00263317	Certificate in Customer Care	NCFE	X	2		62	0506
00229828	Certificate in Occupational Safety - Health & Safety in the Office	NCFE	2	1		62	0506
00235104	Diploma in Performance Coaching	NCFE	2	1		62	0506
00263318	Certificate in Food Hygiene and Handling	NCFE	X	1		62	0506
00259732	Emergency First Aid (Appointed Person)	NCFE	X	1		62	0506
00259742	Health and Safety Awareness	NCFE	2	1		62	0506
00270289	Certificate in Fresh Foods (Fruit and Vegetables)	NCFE	1	1		62	0506
00240494	Initial Assessment of Basic Skills Need (CYCOL)	NONE	X	1		62	0506
00270472	Certificate in Basic Food Hygiene	OCR	U	1		62	0506
00116030	Basic First Aid	REDC ROSS	1	1		62	0506
00259962	Preparing for an Emergency: The British Red Cross Response	REDC ROSS	1	1		62	0506
00116027	Basic First Aid at Work Certificate	REDC ROSS	1	1		62	0506
00119764	RYA First Aid Certificate	RYA	1	1		62	0506
00206742	Manual Handling - Patient Handling	STJO HN	1	2		62	0506
00119108	Emergency Aid	STJO HN	1	1		62	0506
00119109	Lifesaver First Aid Course	STJO HN	1	1		62	0506
00220025	Emergency Aid in the Workplace for Appointed Persons	STJO HN	1	1		62	0506
00119106	Lifesaver for Babies and Children	STJO HN	1	1		62	0506
00206738	Emergency Aid in Schools	STJO HN	1	1		62	0506
00260725	International/European 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260715	Health and Safety 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260747	Union Learning Reps 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260756	Working in Partnership 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260737	Skills 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260733	Personal and Professional Development 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260720	Information Communications Technology 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260711	Equality 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260706	Employment Law 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260701	Collective Bargaining/Industrial Relations 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260752	Work Organisation 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260729	Pensions 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
00260742	Union Representatives 6 glh	TUC	X	1		86	0506
CDT00001	Diagnostic Test in Literacy, 3 glh	NONE	X	1		41	0506
CDT00002	Diagnostic Test in ESOL, 3 glh	NONE	X	1		41	0506
CDT00003	Diagnostic Test in Numeracy, 3 glh	NONE	X	1		41	0506
CSC30001	Short Course in ICT, 3 glh	NONE	X	1		34	0506
CSC30002	Short Course in Literacy, 3 glh	NONE	X	1		41	0506
CSC30003	Short Course in ESOL, 3 glh	NONE	X	1		41	0506
CSC30004	Short Course in Numeracy, 3 glh	NONE	X	1		41	0506
CSC6000A	Short Course, 6 glh, PW A	NONE	X	1		-	0506

CSC6000B	Short Course, 6 glh, PW B	NONE	X	1		-	0506
CSC6000C	Short Course, 6 glh, PW C	NONE	X	1		-	0506
CSC60002	Short Course in Literacy, 6glh	NONE	X	1		-	0506
CSC60003	Short Course in ESOL, 6lh	NONE	X	1		-	0506
CSC60004	Short Course in Numeracy, 6glh	NONE	X	1		-	0506
CSC6000D	Short Course, 6 glh, PW D	NONE	X	1		-	0506
CSC6000E	Short Course, 6 glh, PW E	NONE	X	1		-	0506
XSC6000A	Short Course, 6 glh, CWF A	NONE	X	2		-	0506
XSC6000B	Short Course, 6 glh, CWF B	NONE	X	2		-	0506
XSC6000C	Short Course, 6 glh, CWF C	NONE	X	2		-	0506

Annex C: Policy and Criteria for Funding Health and Safety, First Aid and Food Safety Provision from 2006/07

Introduction

1 The LSC indicated in *Priorities for Success* (Paragraph 57) that it was actively and urgently considering its funding for health and safety, first aid and food hygiene/safety provision as part of the potential rebalancing and refocusing of public funds to meet the Government's key priorities for adult learning.

2 The LSC has planned for an overall reduction in the volume of enrolments on publicly funded food hygiene, first aid and health and safety learning aims in 2006/07 and 2007/08. The LSC has also indicated a policy direction that where such provision is used by employers to help them meet their statutory responsibilities in these areas, then the provision should be charged at full cost, with no support from the public purse. As such the LSC has estimated that in the financial year 2006-07 support for health and safety, first aid and food hygiene provision will reduce by £24 million.

LSC policy – 2006/07

3 This document sets out the LSC's policy for 2006/07

⁸. The key features of which are to:

- build on the guidance issued to local LSCs in 2004/05 (as part of the planning requirements) which signalled that funding for training used by employers to help them meet their statutory responsibilities should be considered as a key area for developing a more coherent and consistent national approach
- address the rebalancing and refocusing of provision that is identified as needed but also
- withdraw funding for provision which is either of poor quality or which is not part of a coherent curriculum offer.

4 The LSC recognises that while there is qualified in-principle support for a policy that signals that employers, rather than the state, should meet the full costs of health and safety, first aid at work and food hygiene training (where it is used by them to discharge their statutory responsibilities or other employer obligations in order to minimise risk), there remain some stakeholder concerns over the potential

⁸ This policy document needs to be read in conjunction with the *Policy and Criteria for Funding Very Short Courses for 2006/07*

impact this change of policy may have on, for example, micro-businesses⁹, especially in the food industry.

5 This change is part of the wider policy to share responsibility for funding of training and skills between the parties who benefit; namely, employers, individuals and the state. The challenging Government targets on skills – on Skills for Life and Level 2 – cannot be met without a significant increase in the level of investment in skills made by employers. Key areas for employer investment include those where they need to bring staff up to standard in vital skill areas necessary for successful business operation.

6 There is currently considerable variation across the country in terms of levels of public subsidy for such provision. LSC data suggests that the costs of these courses has the potential to be sustained without recourse to public funding, as evidence indicates that this is largely the case in some areas of the country. The LSC has a responsibility and commitment to minimise ‘deadweight’ in public funding – that is, not to use public funding to pay for provision which can and would otherwise be supported by employer or individual investment. However where such provision is part of a larger learning aim which is a priority for public funding – for example, where a learner is undertaking a First Full Level 2 – it will continue to be eligible for LSC funding.

7 A fuller impact assessment of strengthening the existing policy will continue to be measured during 2006/07, but the general policy principle of meeting this training need for employers (and understanding the rationale for other learners) by full cost provision should be the opening stance when agreeing funding with providers for this area of provision. However, in 2006/07 local offices may exercise some limited flexibility here, especially for micro-businesses, depending on the assessment of need (that is, regional and sectoral priorities) and the public interest. All such employer-led and stand-alone¹⁰ provision must be agreed in advance.

Criteria for determining eligibility for 2006/07

8 The scope of this policy includes the further education (including Ufl provision) and work based learning funding streams but not provision funded through the *Personal and Community Development Learning Safeguard*.

***Ineligible for LSC funding:*¹¹**

⁹ That is, less than 10 people

¹⁰ Individual Health and Safety, Food Hygiene/Safety and First Aid short courses provided as stand-alone courses as distinct from provision which is made available to existing learners to support their relevant individual learning programme(s)

¹¹ Provided there is sufficient equivalent provision available in the NQF

9 Any health and safety¹², first aid and food safety learning aim not accredited within the NQF (and approved by the secretary of state under Sections 96 and/or 97) or without endorsement or regulation by the relevant, independent body, will be ineligible for funding. Learning aims without such independent accreditation carry no guarantee that they meet industry standards or needs. This is because awarding body certification alone does not provide sufficient evidence (for qualifications outside the NQF).

10 In addition, the first aid at work qualifications regulated by the Health and Safety Executive will be ineligible for LSC funding where that provision is used by employers to meet their regulatory requirement.

Eligible for LSC funding:

16-18 Year Old Learners

11 Programmes for full-time 16-18 year old learners which include learning aims in health and safety, first aid and/or food safety which are in addition to the learner's main programme may be eligible for funding either as:

- additionality **with prior agreement** from their LSC. However, the provider must demonstrate how such additional learning aims support the learner's main programme and that there is a sound rationale for the curriculum offer *or, where there is no rationale or evidence, as*
- enrichment activity and funded as part of the entitlement.

12 16-18 year old learners on part-time programmes enrolled solely on a single learning aim in health and safety, first aid and/or food safety are eligible for funding **only with prior agreement** from their LSC.

Adult Learners (19+)

13 Providers planning to deliver the following will need **prior agreement** from their LSC:

- learning aims for full-time adult learners which are in addition to their main learning aim in health and safety, first aid and/or food safety
- programmes with multiple learning aims for part-time adult learners which include learning aims in health and safety, first aid at work and/or food safety
- learning aims in health and safety, first aid and/or food safety to part-time adult learners as their sole learning aim.

¹² Excluding TUC health and safety provision of 9 glh or more for union representatives specified as part of the LSC/TUC protocol (For further details see Issue 26 Qualifications and Curriculum Bulletin *Trade Union Congress (TUC), National Open College Network (NOCN) and Open College Network (OCN) Provision* published on 5 September 2005
http://intranet/Portal/Portal/Local%20Council/National%20Office/learning-group/adult-learning/qualifications_curriculum-reform/balance_mix-of-provision/documents/)

14 The LSC will need fully to understand the provider rationale for offering these courses if they are to be supported in future by the public purse. The provider needs to be able to demonstrate that the curriculum offer has coherence and a clearly stated rationale for an identified learner or learner group.

Apprenticeships

15 Sector Skills Councils are responsible for the content of an Apprenticeship Framework. Following approval by the Skills for Business Apprenticeship Approval Group the LSC then determines the funding of the components. Learning aims identified within an Apprenticeship Framework in Health and Safety, First Aid and/or Food Safety continue to be ineligible for LSC funding as they are considered to be the responsibility of employers.

Annex D: Managing the Balance and Mix of Provision – Provision Categories for 2006/07

The categories of provision identified below have each been classified under the following headings for the funding year 2006/07 and, for future planning purposes. This classification broadly indicates each category's potential for contributing to current LSC priorities and targets.

Likely to contribute towards LSC targets and/or priorities

Potential to contribute towards LSC priorities

No longer eligible for LSC funding from 2006/07 (for new learners)

Provision Categories (version 3.0 – as at 25 November 2005)

Category	Title	Description
Likely to contribute to LSC targets and/or priorities		
10	Within NQF	This category includes qualifications which have been accredited by the QCA for inclusion within the NQF at entry, L1, L2 and L3 and are approved by the Secretary of State (SoS) under Section 96 and/or Section 97 (S96/S97). It also includes some components of approved qualifications, i.e. conversion from Advanced VCE to Advanced VCE (Double Award). It does not include NQF qualifications at L4 and above, GCE A Levels, Skills for Life (SfL) and languages qualifications or units of NQF qualifications.
40	Access to HE Programmes (QAA recognised)	This is Level 3 provision that was formerly on Schedule 2c, but now falls within the Other Provision (OP) category. The LSC considers this provision to be valuable because it offers a route for adults into HE and helps to contribute to the 2010 HE progression target. It also counts as a full L3 in the labour force survey. Units of QAA recognised Access to HE provision are not regulated by QAA under their recognition scheme. One implication of this is that the age restriction does not apply. Local offices should therefore seek to understand the provider rationale behind the unregulated offer (where this exists) and seek evidence of progression to the full Access to HE course.
51	Wider Key Skills (Recorded on LAD as NQF)	The three wider key skills at levels 1 to 4 - working with others, improving own learning and performance and problem solving - did not become accredited and approved qualifications until September 2004. They are valued by Government and employers, and take up is and has been encouraged. This is why they have been eligible for funding as additional to the entitlement.
60	GCE A2 (Recorded on LAD as OP)	These are not qualifications in their own right, but are a component of a GCE A level. Therefore they do not have an accreditation number from QCA, and appear on LAD as OP until 2003/04 i.e. the funding status code is set to code '98'. They are now recorded on the LAD as a component of S96 and S97.
61	GCE A2 (Recorded on LAD as NQF)	These are not qualifications in their own right, but are a component of a GCE A level. Qualifications in this category are recorded on the LAD as 'components' of S96/S97 i.e. the funding status code is set to '06'.
71	Skills for Life (Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL) Counting towards the target within the NQF.	These are all whole qualifications that count towards the Skills for Life target. This includes the following approved qualifications: Certificates in Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL SfL at E3, L1 and L2; Key Skills in Communication and Application of Number at L1 and L2, and GCSEs in Maths and English, where the funding status has been set in the LAD to '01' '02' or '03'.
91	ESOL SfL (Within NQF but does not count towards the target)	This category includes all Certificates in ESOL SfL (all modes, i.e. reading, writing, speaking and listening) and all Certificates in ESOL SfL (speaking and listening) at entry 1 and 2.
171	Higher level (Within NQF)	This includes provision at Levels 4, 5 and 6 (non-prescribed HE) accredited and approved under Section 97 and which the LSC has a power to fund. While the LSC does not have a participation target at level 4 and above, widening participation into and through HE from under-represented groups, and up-skilling remain the LSC's main priority in HE. LSC policy has therefore been to continue to fund this provision but we do not expect to see automatic growth unless agreed by the Local LSC.

180	CUNA/XUN prefixed (Recorded as OP)	This category includes units of qualifications on S96/S97 or former Schedule 2 provision (codes prefixed 'CUNA' or 'XUN'). These were recorded on the LAD as OP in earlier years, i.e. the funding status was set to '98'. From April 2004 LAD was amended to recognise these units as components of approved qualifications. Local offices need to find out what is being offered and why.
181	CUNA (Recorded on LAD as NQF)	Units of qualifications on S96/S97. The LAD was amended to recognise these as components of S96/S97 qualifications from April 2004. (i.e. codes prefixed with 'CUNA'). Unitised programmes should have coherence and a clearly stated rationale for an identified learner group, local offices therefore need to find out what is being offered and why, particularly where providers are offering large programmes made up of 10 or more units. Local offices need also to remind providers that vendor certificated units outside an approved qualification are ineligible for LSC funding.
190	GNVQ/NVQ UNITS	Additional GNVQ or NVQ units. These are units of approved qualifications that are recorded on the LAD as OP and not attributed to an awarding body. Local offices will need to find out what is being offered and why.
220	Languages within the NQF	These are all language qualifications (within Area of Learning 13 and defined using the learndirect system of classification), which are on Section 96 and/or Section 97 and/or components of approved qualifications.
Potential to contribute to LSC priorities		
200	Other Provision Codes prefixed C9OP or X9OP	These two areas of non accredited learning are largely non-externally certificated OP (learning aim codes prefixed 'C9OP' or 'X9OP'). Personal and community development learning and family learning could make up a large proportion of the provision. Local offices need to understand not only what this provision is but also what the learner profile is in order to determine how it has the potential to contribute to LSC priorities. Some of this provision may also support priority learners i.e. LLDD. Otherwise it is unlikely that this provision would align with LSC priorities, however it may be funded as part of the 'safeguard' for personal and community development learning from 2006/07. The associated volumes and activities should still be monitored locally –particularly to ensure that a broad adult education 'leisure' curriculum is available for any adult over 19.
20	Not within NQF (internally certificated and non-certificated)	
21	CMIS Codes	This is mainly activity that is funded as part of the entitlement for 16-18 year old 'full-time' learners such as the 'tutorial and enrichment' component or studies for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (codes 'CMIS') which were previously listed within category 20.
30	Not within NQF (externally accredited)	Courses at notional levels entry – 3 that are accredited by awarding bodies or other external organisations that have not been submitted/accredited within the NQF. Local offices need to look carefully at the value of this provision and particularly its potential to contribute to LSC priorities. Where alternative provision exists within the NQF, providers need to justify why that is not appropriate. The overall volume of activity funded in this category is therefore expected to decrease.
41	Access to HE Programmes	This is likely to be locally devised Access to HE provision that is not recognised by QAA. This category does not include learning aims with 'access' in the title which have been assigned level X in the LAD.
72	Skills for Life (Literacy and Numeracy) – not counting towards the target (recorded on the LAD as OP)	Skills for Life provision that is internally certificated (identified on LAD by the generic class codes i.e. prefixed by 'CBS') or externally accredited (for example CNBS codes). These programmes are based on the national standards for adult literacy and numeracy.
80	ESOL (internally certificated)	This includes college devised provision based on the national standards for adult literacy but which does not count towards the Sfl target. They are recorded on the LAD using generic class codes prefixed 'CBS'.
150	CUNE prefixed	Units of externally accredited OP outside the NQF (Codes prefixed 'CUNE'). These do not count towards the targets and growth in this area is not expected.
170	Higher level (externally accredited and recorded as OP)	Provision at notional levels 4, 5, 6 and H non-prescribed HE lying outside the NQF. LSC policy in the past has been to fund this provision but we do not expect to see growth unless agreed by the Local LSC. Where alternative provision exists within the NQF, providers need to justify why it is not appropriate to offer it. As this will not contribute to LSC targets we do not want to encourage further growth.
210	Languages* recorded as Other Provision	Language courses that are within Area of Learning 13 and defined using the learndirect system of classification. These may be internally certificated or externally accredited by awarding bodies or other external organisations that have not been submitted/accredited within the NQF. This may also include provision which is part of the Languages Ladder, i.e. the teacher assessed aims which are part of the Asset Language Scheme offered by OCR. Local offices will need to look carefully at the value of this provision and see whether there is alternative language provision within the NQF.

No longer eligible for LSC funding for new learners		
50	Wider Key Skills (Recorded as OP)	2003/04 was the last funding year for which the three wider key skills were recorded as OP as they became approved qualifications on Section 96 and 97 from September 2004. These learning aims are therefore ineligible for new learners for 2006/07.
70	Skills for Life (Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL) - counting towards the target as part of transitional arrangements, and recorded on the LAD as OP.	These are all qualifications that previously counted towards the Skills for Life Target as part of the transitional arrangements. This includes some entry, L1, L2 English qualifications that became ineligible for new learners from 1 August 2002. It also includes 'legacy' ESOL qualifications which were recorded as counting towards the target in 2002/03 and 2003/04, and where the funding status in the LAD was set to '98'. These are no longer eligible for LSC funding for new learners or count towards the national target from 1 August 2004. However, continuing learners enrolled before 1 August 2004 will be funded to their agreed learning aim end-date and any 'first' achievements will count towards the SfL target.
73	Adult Basic Education (literacy and numeracy)	Adult Basic Education provision (literacy and numeracy) which was formerly seen as basic skills but was not based on the national standards for adult literacy and numeracy, and ceased to be treated as basic skills provision from August 2002 (see also paragraph 420 Funding Guidance for FE in 2004/05).
81	Adult Basic Education (ESOL)	This includes college certificated ESOL courses which pre-dated the current SfL standards and ceased to be eligible as basic skills provision for new learners from August 2002 (see also paragraph 420 Funding Guidance for FE in 2004/05).
82	Skills for Life ('proxy' ESOL)	This category includes the externally certificated 'proxy' ESOL qualifications which were recorded as counting towards the SfL target as part of the transitional arrangements for ESOL up to 31 December 2004. These became ineligible for LSC funding for new learners from 1 January 2005 and therefore no longer count towards the national target. However, continuing learners enrolled before 31 December 2004 will be funded to their agreed learning aim end-date or until the last awarding body certification date (which ever is sooner) and any 'first' achievements will count towards the SfL target.
90	ESOL (externally accredited)	ESOL courses accredited by an awarding body or other external organisation do not count towards the target because they are not based on the new standards and are therefore no longer eligible for funding. This category may also include some notional L3 provision which is not SfL.
100	Provision previously on Schedule 2	Provision that was previously on Schedule 2a or 2b that has not been accredited for inclusion within the NQF and approved under S96/S97. This is now unlikely to include continuing learners on programmes.
110	3glh ICT courses**	3 Hour ICT courses (learning aim codes 'XSC30001' and 'CSC30001'). These codes were used to record taster programmes to attract new learners.
120	3 glh Basic Skills**	3 Hour Basic Skills courses (learning aim codes 'XSC30002/3/4' or 'XSC300D2/D3/D4' or 'CSC30002/3/4' or prefixed 'CDT'). These codes were used to record provision used for taster sessions to attract new learners or for diagnostic assessment. The LSC wants to ensure learners continue to have access to diagnostic assessment where this is appropriate to their needs, and expects providers to incorporate the assessment process into the learner's learning aim.
130	6 glh Basic Skills**	6 Hour Basic Skills Course (learning codes 'XSC60002/3/4' or 'CSC60002/3/4'). These codes were used to record extended diagnostic testing and short introductory courses.
140	6 glh other courses**	Other 6 Hour courses (learning codes 'XSC6000A/B/C/D/E' or 'CSC6000A/B/C/D/E'). These were first introduced in 2000/01. Adult learning and family learning will make up a large proportion of the provision.
160	Higher level (internally certificated)	This includes college devised courses at notional levels 4, 5 and H.
Other		
230	Ufl	These are all learning aims recorded on the LAD where the awarding body is Ufl.
999	Category Unknown or Not assigned	As far as we are aware all learning aims recorded on the LAD should have been assigned to one of the above categories.

* Access to HE provision in languages will appear in Category 40

** Provision identified in categories 110-140 is still eligible where delivered as a Ufi programme or through the safeguard.

