

LEARNING and SKILLS COUNCIL NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2002-2005



> FOREWORD

It is often said that the only things in which businesses are interested are profit and growth rather than people. Well, the vast majority of successful businessmen and women I know are interested in both because they know that there cannot be profit and growth without investment in people. They also know that a prosperous society in which many people live with significant disadvantage is a contradiction in terms. So for me economic health and personal and social well-being are two sides of the same coin. This plan aims to bear out this principle in practice.

In Nottinghamshire we have to build upon the positive aspects of our local economy and work to address inequalities. We have strong economic drivers in parts of the county but equally we have damaging disadvantage in other parts.

It seems to me that good education and training opportunities are an entitlement for all people. For this to work the needs of learners have to come first and we have to ensure these drive the agenda of schools, colleges, training organisations and the LSC itself.

We have some excellent provision in Nottinghamshire to build this vision on. We need more people into education and training and more of them achieving more. We need this for all ages and for all groups, eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting diversity positively. Learning can and should be fun.

Our country has been dogged by elitism and complacency in its attitude to learning beyond the school-leaving age. As both a national and a local organisation the Learning and Skills Council will never have a better chance to change this once and for all. This plan aims to do just that.

I hope that you will feel this plan is challenging but that its successful delivery will see us making a real difference to the lives of many people here in Nottinghamshire and beyond.

Duncan Sedgwick
Chairman

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> EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Learning and Skills Council's mission is to raise participation in learning and attainment through high quality education and training which puts the learner first. Our vision is that by 2010 young people and adults in England will have knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world. Over the same period, our vision for Nottinghamshire is that participation and achievement levels in education and training should improve to match or overtake national averages.

Nottinghamshire is a county of contrasts. Greater Nottingham comprises an economically vibrant city and many prosperous suburbs, with development sometimes held back only by the availability of sufficiently skilled workers. In the midst of prosperity, however, there is also disadvantage and disaffection in both the City and County with 37 of the country's most educationally disadvantaged wards and significant numbers of young people who are not making even a first step into the labour market. In the north of the county the economy is still in recovery from the decline of the mining industry. Whilst employment has improved in recent times, it is often low-paid and in industries which are susceptible to global competition.

It is within this mixed picture that the LSC's three-year plan aims to improve the supply of skills. Nottinghamshire is one of 47 local Learning and Skills Councils. As part of the national mission it has 5 key objectives, with associated targets:

National Objectives	National Targets for 2004	1. Baseline 2. Local Target for 2004
Extend participation in education, learning and training	80% of 16 –18 year olds in structured learning (2000:75%)	1. 73.3% 16-18 year olds in structured learning 2. 3950 additional 16-18 year olds in structured learning, bringing overall participation to 83.1%
	Set baseline and target for adults in structured learning in next year's plan	To follow from national baseline and target
Increase engagement of employers in workforce development	Develop measure of employer engagement in next year's plan	To follow from national baseline and target
Raise achievement of young people	85% at level 2 by age 19 (2000:75%)	1. 63.5% achieving level 2 by age 19 2. 1060 additional young people achieving level 2 by age 19, equating to 71.1%
	55% at level 3 by age 19 (2000:51%)	1. 33.2% achieving level 3 by age 19 2. 870 additional young people, equating to 39.4%
Raise achievement of adults	Raise literacy and numeracy skills of 750,000 adults	1. Baseline from BSA – 22.65% (144,318) adults in Notts with Basic Skills needs 2. 19000 adults have literacy and numeracy skills raised
	% of adults at level 2: target to be set in next year's plan	To follow from national baseline and target
	52% of adults at level 3 (2000:47%)	1. 44.5% of adults at level 3 2. 30000 additional adults, equating to 50.2%
Raise quality of education and training and user satisfaction	Set baselines and targets for quality of education and training and user satisfaction in next year's plan	To follow from national baseline and target

The actions detailed in the plan will support the achievement of these targets in the following ways:-

Extend participation

We will: have better information to help track the progress of learners and locate non-learners; make it easier for learners to find their way into learning; work harder to keep them there and help them to move on to further learning; develop ICT skills to give people better access to jobs and e-learning opportunities.

Increase engagement of employers

We will: build on the success of the Investors in People programme; make it easier for people to learn in the workplace; target key sectors for development – construction, creative and cultural, print, media and graphics, engineering, health and social care, food and drink, call centres, tourism, leisure and hospitality; boost ICT skills; promote the benefits of equal opportunities in employment; create opportunities to develop higher level management and leadership skills.

Raise achievement of young people

We will: attack problems of under-achievement at their root by developing a 14-19 framework which gives more young people a greater chance to realise their potential; encourage alternative approaches to learning for those who are hardest to reach and retain in learning; develop centres of excellence for further education and work-based learning which can promote achievement in higher level skills; develop better systems for measuring the value added by different institutions, courses and styles of learning.

Raise achievement of adults

We will: concentrate on improving levels of literacy and numeracy, both to help adults return to learning and work and to help those in work to progress; make more of the opportunities offered by the community and voluntary sectors to reach out to non-learners; make it easier for adults to have their learning accredited and to progress from one stage to another.

Raise quality of education and training

We will: develop clear and public measures of provider performance; concentrate improvement work on those providers with the greatest weaknesses; move below average inspection grades upwards; have a fully operational Development Centre for work-based learning.

The plan describes how we intend to work with our partners to achieve these objectives. It also explains the Nottinghamshire priorities that we have chosen within these overall objectives. These are:-

a. *The most educationally disadvantaged wards*

We need to make the biggest difference in areas which have the poorest levels of participation and achievement. They are almost always the areas with the lowest levels of economic activity.

b. Basic skills

Unless we improve literacy and numeracy levels amongst adults we will have little chance of upgrading the skills of the workforce to make Nottinghamshire competitive, particularly in the north of the county, where small businesses predominate.

c. 14-19 participation

To cope with current skill shortages we need all young people to be economically active and to have levels of skill which will allow them to progress to more demanding jobs.

d. Engagement of small and medium-sized enterprises

98% of businesses in the county employ fewer than 100 people. Nottinghamshire's economic development depends upon the success of these businesses and the LSC has to find ways of making learning more attractive and accessible for them.

e. e-learning

New technology can play a vital role in making learning more accessible, whether it be in the home, at work or in a school or college. Used properly it will accelerate progress in all the other activities described in the plan.

f. Quality of work-based learning

Too much of the work-based training provided for young people is of poor quality. We shall aim to have inspection judgements that are at or above an average or 'satisfactory' grading.

Amongst the 110 actions of this plan, these local priorities emphasise some activity above others, either because they are more urgent, or they represent greater need, or they are the basics without which further success cannot be built.

Nottinghamshire LSC spends around £129m annually. It will aim to deliver its priorities through its contracts with the providers of learning. There is, however, a complex of partnership working without which purchasing will not be as effective as it could be. Getting the right supply of learning and skills for Nottinghamshire's needs requires dialogue at local and county-wide levels to plan effectively. Encouraging those who are distant from learning calls for the closest relationship with the voluntary and community sectors. Sub-regional and local strategic partnerships draw together the key players in social and economic regeneration. Learning to make the best of all of these contributions, to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts, is a priority underlying the whole plan.

> OUR MISSION AND VISION

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

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

In Nottinghamshire, we will work with partners, providers, employers and individual learners to maximise this opportunity. Over the period to 2010, our vision is that participation and achievement levels in education and training should improve to match or overtake national averages

> OUR KEY OBJECTIVES, NATIONAL AND LOCAL TARGETS FOR 2004

National Objectives	National Targets for 2004	1. Baseline
		2. Local Target for 2004
Extend participation in education, learning and training	80% of 16 –18 year olds in structured learning (2000:75%)	3. 73.3% 16-18 year olds in structured learning 4. 3950 additional 16-18 year olds in structured learning, bringing overall participation to 83.1%
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> NOTTINGHAMSHIRE PRIORITIES

Priorities in this plan combine national and local imperatives. Like all other local LSCs, Nottinghamshire must plan to improve participation, achievement and quality of provision. The actions in each of the 5 sections of the plan are designed to do this.

Amongst the 110 actions of this plan, there is also prioritisation on the basis that some changes are most urgent, some changes are necessary for others to happen and some need to catch a window of development opportunity.

The actions which will be prioritised are those concerned with:-

a. The most educationally disadvantaged wards in Nottinghamshire

These are the 37 areas shown by the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation to be most disadvantaged in respect of educational achievement. They are concentrated in the inner-city and former coalfield areas, though not exclusively so. A full list of these areas is provided at Annex 1.

b. Skills for Life/Basic Skills: literacy and numeracy

The damage that basic skills weaknesses do to personal and social well-being, as well as to the exclusion of so many adults from employment and further learning, makes a clear case for this as the major skill priority.

c. 14-19 Participation

The challenge of engaging 100% of young people in post-16 opportunities is a pre-condition for creating a more productive workforce in the medium term. As the level of social problems in disadvantaged areas shows, this is also essential to breaking the cycle of depressed aspiration, achievement and earnings in many areas.

d. Engagement of small and medium-sized enterprises

In a county such as Nottinghamshire, increased prosperity depends very largely upon growth and innovation in smaller businesses. These are also the businesses that often find it hardest to get involved with skills development, or are most sceptical about its value. The LSC needs to break some traditional moulds here, and create some new expectations at all skill levels.

e. e-learning

Providing learning at any time, in any place and in whatever form best suits the learner is an important principle for the whole of this plan. The part which new technologies have to play in this is potentially immense, at all ages, at school or college, at home or in the workplace.

f. Quality of work-based learning

Inspection and review results show the quality of work-based learning provision to be poor overall. There is a particular concern that this should be the case for the young people who often need the best support. Without improvement here, the aspiration for improved level 2 and 3 scores is empty rhetoric.

The selection of these priorities affects the delivery of the plan in a number of ways. Some are obvious: the basic skills priority is the subject of a separate plan which drives a whole area of contracting and partnership work; the improvement in work-based learning will be achieved by focussing development resource relentlessly on the weaker providers and replacing those who fail to respond.

Other priorities require an emphasis within the LSC's work rather than an addition to it. In geographical terms, actions which have county-wide significance should be concentrated in disadvantaged wards. Similarly, for 14-19 participation, most effort should go where the problem is greatest in terms of current participation and achievement.

Making SMEs a priority means devoting more of the limited resources available for workforce development to them rather than to larger businesses. Again, this tends to favour the economically weaker areas of the county where employment is concentrated in small businesses.

e-learning is probably the priority which could most easily have been omitted without raising eyebrows. To many it is still an exotic option and to some a threat to conventional learning delivery. It is a priority here because of our belief that it will be as normal a part of the learning landscape as computers themselves within the next three years, and because it will act as an accelerator to all other priorities, through increased access to learning and better support to everyday learning experiences in schools, colleges and the workplace. Those with literacy and numeracy needs can also be enticed back to learning through the novelty of the computer.

Prioritising is more than expressing a value judgement. To mean anything it has to become part of the fabric of the organisation's work. This choice of priorities will drive annual contracting so that their importance is reflected in the programmes for which the LSC pays. It will inform our partnership working, so that when choices are to be made, in bidding for development monies for instance, these priorities are given preference. They will also influence the day-to-day work of staff in deciding where to put an emphasis when there are conflicting demands upon time and resources. It follows from all of this that these priorities will shape the professional development of the staff in LSCN and they will be prominent in the subsequent skills development and performance appraisal of staff.

Prioritising is central to success; for those who might feel excluded by it, however, it is important to say that it is an emphasis on some actions, not

exclusion of all others. The plan has to address the whole population and the whole area. It has to address rural issues, encourage the development of higher level skills, help to make successful businesses better and create the right environment for good providers to prosper. Good management of the plan needs to get the right balance between all of its objectives. Over the period of the plan, also, priorities can change; success in year one can permit a movement of effort to other areas in the following years.

> THE CONTEXT FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Economic Overview

Nottinghamshire is a county with a dynamic and growing economy and a vibrant regional city that is home to 'household name' companies, well known higher education and further education providers, a wealth of leisure and recreational pursuits and cultural diversity. By contrast, the scale, range and severity of deprivation and social exclusion facing local communities in certain areas of the conurbation and the former coalfield areas is clear to see. Nottinghamshire is indeed a county of contrasts, and one of the key challenges we face is to ensure that all parts of the county get their fair share of the economic and social benefits of learning.

This is set in the regional context of the East Midlands ranking 37 out of 77 EU regions in terms of GDP per head. Since the inception of the Regional Development Agency, *emda*, the East Midlands has moved up the European league table. Overall signs are encouraging, with relatively high employment levels and regional growth which is faster than the European average. However, this is set against skills levels and productivity which are a concern when measured against national and European benchmarks.

Emda views Nottingham as the main driver of economic growth in the region, with its significant proportion of higher level skills, greater enterprise resulting from the higher education institutions and the diversity of ethnic minority businesses that are contained within the City.

Further restructuring of the regional and Nottinghamshire economy is inevitable, particularly in the global wake of September 11 2001, with its impact on major employers. This reinforces our focus on continuing to work with national and regional partners, alongside our neighbouring Learning and Skills Councils, to ensure that all residents of Nottinghamshire are equipped with skills for a rapidly changing economy.

Employment

The main influence on employment trends has been the differing rate of industrial re-structuring. The north of the county has failed to attract its share of service sector "business to business" employment opportunities and, although growth has occurred, it remains heavily reliant on manufacturing. According to our most recent Employers Survey, the gulf in service sector employment between the conurbation and the rest of Nottinghamshire will continue to widen up to 2010. The sectoral differences in employment also impact on the differing occupations and earnings of Nottinghamshire residents. Gross average annual pay in the county in 2000 stood at £16,062 which can be contrasted with the initial findings from our most recent Ethnic Minority Skills Audit, which gives gross annual earnings of £10,155 for members of the Afro-Caribbean and Asian communities.

The conurbation of Greater Nottingham attracts a significant proportion of inward commuting, currently occupying around 30,000 jobs, a figure forecast to increase to 34,000 by 2009. Counter to this, 43,000 (15%) of Greater Nottingham residents currently travel to work outside the conurbation. In the north of the county, 29% of residents work outside their place of residence - 13% commuting to the city, 6% to South Yorkshire and the balance to Derbyshire and Lincolnshire. The status of Nottingham as the acknowledged regional capital is reflected in the numbers of students travelling to attend education and training provision. Reflecting the above commuting patterns, as a county we are a net importer of approximately 11,700 further education students estimated to form some 11% of the overall FE student population.

Based upon the current levels of economic activity, and notwithstanding the potential impact of recession following September 11 2001, it is estimated that by 2010 around one million jobs could change hands within Nottinghamshire. Economic forecasts predict that between 1997 and 2010 Greater Nottingham will experience a net increase of 40,000 jobs (14%) over this period compared to a figure of some 6,000 (6%) for the north of the county. The UK forecast is 8.5%. However, it is important to note that many of these jobs will not only require new and higher level skills but will be part-time and/or fixed-term in nature. Furthermore, this increase in part-time employment conventionally attracts more females than males. This trend towards feminisation of the workforce is set to continue as the decline of traditional industries impacts disproportionately on males.

Employer Demand for Skills

Reports from emda, our own analysis of the work of NTO's/Sector Skills Councils and initial findings from our Employer Survey indicate that skill requirements are increasing with employers increasingly demanding multi skilled employees in many occupations with at least a basic level of competence in IT.

Initial findings from our Employer Survey indicate that despite the continual reports of manufacturing decline, local manufacturers are still actively seeking skilled labour; locally a third of recruitment is for manual manufacturing operations with the balance being for white collar occupations. 40% of the companies surveyed are experiencing problems attracting applicants with the required skills. Employers are attaching the highest importance to interpersonal and communication skills with specific manual skills ranked third in line with literacy.

The complexity and contradictions of the labour market are shown by our survey. Some 88% of those recruited are under the age of 40, reaffirming the declining economic activity rates of older workers. However, 48% of employers cite experience as the most important factor when recruiting against only 9% suggesting that qualifications are important. Failure to recruit is manifested by the companies reporting difficulties in meeting customer service objectives, difficulties in meeting quality standards and increased operating costs.

Young People

Whilst the majority of the workforce required for the next ten years is already in the workplace, providing all young people in the county with the education and skills required to enter the labour market, and to remain employable, presents a key challenge. Within the City of Nottingham and the former coalfield communities the proportion of young people achieving five GCSEs grades A to C falls well below the county and national averages and has done so for some time. The performance of young people during their time in compulsory education will continue to have a significant bearing on the progress made towards targets for 19 year olds.

Participation rates in education and training for young people leaving compulsory education also give cause for concern. The regional figure of 73.3% is considerably higher than the provisional figure of 70.3% for Nottinghamshire. National data indicate that at age 16 some 17% of school leavers are 'lost' to education, training and employment. School leaver destination statistics from GuideLine Career Services support this, with some 13.5% of young people failing to make the transition. Over the three years, between the ages of 16 to 18, this equates to over 4,000 young people losing out in their preparation for working life.

Evidence from work based learning programmes indicates that young people from ethnic minority communities have a transition into work that differs from that of their white counterparts. Evidence from our recent Ethnic Minority Skills Audit indicates that for the Black community, especially young men, a negative label is attached to participation in learning and training and this has an impact on the skill levels that such young men are attaining. Although the numbers of students from ethnic minority communities participating in further and indeed higher education has increased over the last decade, in many instances these young people do not attend or complete the courses that they have enrolled on. On a positive note, the gender stereotyping of occupations in industry appears to be shifting, with traditional industry employer bodies targeting females and young people from ethnic minorities.

There is a significant group of young people with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities within the county. The priority given by schools to Government initiatives and current legislation focused on progressing this group of young people in mainstream settings is currently not well reflected in further education or the workplace.

Adult Learning and Skills

The number of young people leaving school in the county will increase by almost ten per cent by 2005, though this is offset by the proportion of the workforce that is ageing. Over the next five years it is estimated that around 60,000 people will reach retirement age.

Nottinghamshire is the only area outside of London to experience higher than average skills shortages alongside higher than average unemployment. Furthermore, with an economic activity rate from the population of 75% compared to a rate of 79% across the rest of England, it is clear that we have

significant unused capacity within the working age population at a time when local employers continue to experience problems attracting skilled, qualified and experienced labour. Many of the long term unemployed are to be found in the ethnic minority communities of the inner city and the former coalfield areas. Despite employers reporting that recruitment of staff proves difficult, roughly one third remain unprepared to pay for job related training, and similar numbers have no training priorities over the next five years.

Worryingly, this indifference is also seen amongst some of the workforce, with one quarter of those economically active in the county believing that nothing would encourage them to develop their skills. The characteristics of people who expect to train or learn include younger people, people in higher order occupations, service sector workers, people who trained or learned in the last 12 months, better qualified people and employees of large organisations. Any significant progress in raising achievements against our targets must therefore involve working with business support agencies and those employed in smaller businesses that typically hold below average levels of qualifications.

The Basic Skills Agency estimates that almost one in four of the local adult population have low numeracy skills and almost one in five have low literacy skills. Local work has identified that the Nottinghamshire scale of this challenge is estimated to be some 144,000 adults.

Post 16 Learning and Skills Infrastructure

Nottinghamshire has seven general Further Education colleges, one National Residential Specialist College and one Sixth Form college. The majority of secondary schools in the city provide 11-16 education. All but one secondary school in the county offer sixth form provision. The LSC currently contracts with 62 work based learning providers. Adult and Community Learning provision is contracted to both City and County Local Education Authorities. This infrastructure is required to support some 140,000 learners.

Working in Partnership

Effective collaborative working is the only way to deliver the exacting targets proposed in this plan. The Learning and Skills Council is committed to working with a wide range of partners to increase participation in, and achievement from, learning across the county. For example, we will:-

- Work closely with employers and their representative organisations to ensure that provision meets their needs
- Engage with learners through their representatives in the voluntary and community sector or in trade unions to enable us to identify and overcome barriers to learning and support informed choice
- Ensure that our work reflects regional priorities through close co-operation with the regional development agency, other regional players and our neighbouring local Learning and Skills Councils
- Work with local authorities to increase our understanding of learning needs at sub county level and to develop strategies to address the differing needs of individual communities across the county
- Develop strong partnerships with the emerging Strategic Sub Regional and Local Strategic Partnerships to ensure that our plans for learning

form part of a broader economic and social regeneration agenda, particularly in those areas of the county that are in receipt of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. This will involve working alongside other strategic partners such as Greater Nottingham and North Nottinghamshire Learning Partnerships, HEIs, Connexions, Employment Service and Business Link Nottinghamshire to ensure that our collective funding to support the county is maximised

There are certain values that will characterise the way in which we work with our partners. These include:

- Engaging the right people in discussion of the issues to which they can contribute and recognising that other agencies have expertise and experience to bring to the table
- Ensuring that partners share our commitment to making learning more inclusive, eliminating discrimination and promoting diversity and equality
- Being flexible enough to respond quickly to changing practices and new experiences
- Acknowledging that consensus is not always possible and, whilst respecting divergent views, striving to reach decisions that draw upon the best factual evidence currently available
- Keeping a clear focus on the needs of learners and employers to ensure that individual entitlement rather than institutional organisation is the key driver of provision and that our work is not distracted by other agendas.

Promoting Diversity and Inclusion

As a society we are making progress on diversity, but not quickly or consistently enough. It is still the case that factors – such as age, ethnic origin, gender or disability – unrelated to individual contribution or potential can constitute barriers to access and achievement in learning, training and employment. This is wrong, from both a moral and economic perspective, and championing inclusion and equality underpins every section of this Plan.

> KEY OBJECTIVE

1. Extend Participation in Education, Learning and Training

1.a Young People

The Challenges for Nottinghamshire

- To increase overall participation rates in learning amongst those aged 16 to 18. At age 16 participation rates in Notts are 84% compared to 83% for England. At 17 however, the situation worsens to 72% locally against 74% nationally and this trend continues at 18, where the local estimate is 55% against the national figure of 60%.
- To engage the 13.5% of school leavers who do not participate in education or training.
- To address the factors such as geographical isolation, ethnic origin and disability which have a bearing on participation in learning.
- To improve information on young people's destinations and progression in post 16 education and training.
- To develop coherent progression pathways for young people in the context of the emerging 14-19 curriculum.
- To ensure that all young people have access to a wide range of post 16 learning opportunities which is not restricted by geography or institutional limitations.
- To ensure that all young people have access to ICT as a learning entitlement and are equipped with ICT skills that enable them to maximise their learning opportunities.

Target for Improvement:

Local Target for 2004:

3950 additional 16-18 year olds in structured learning, bringing overall participation to 83.1%

The Nottinghamshire current position is 73.3%. The target set reflects the need to close the gap between Nottinghamshire and other areas of the country.

Following the results of the Ethnic Minority Skills Audit, we will develop specific operational targets to increase ethnic minority participation in learning. These will be segmented both by ethnicity and by learning sector. We will

also look for measurable improvements in the disadvantaged areas where participation has historically been low.

Proposed Activities to Meet the Challenges and Deliver our Targets

The policy context in this area is provided by the 2001 Schools White Paper, which emphasises the importance of a seamless transition from pre to post 16 learning within the 14-19 curriculum. There are two fundamental beliefs that underpin our thinking here – firstly, that by 16 it is too late to influence the life choices of many young people and, secondly, getting more young people to stay on at 16 is just one part of the challenge. Ensuring that these young people stay in learning through to 18 is equally important. The establishment of the Connexions service is critical here, concentrating guidance and support where it is most needed.

Activities

1. Improving Baseline Data

- In conjunction with the Local Education Authorities, Connexions and providers we will establish consistent and comprehensive individual tracking systems across all types of provision. This will ensure that our progress can be measured against accurate baselines. This tracking system will be developed in 2002/03 and will be fully operational in the following year.
- We will commission a rolling research programme, including focus groups, to increase our understanding of disengagement, as it develops 14+. Working with partners, most notably Connexions and voluntary/community groups, we will agree effective interventions to tackle disengagement.

2. Progression Pathways

- We will develop with our partners a clear and consistent framework of progression pathways post 14, including links to higher education. We will maximise opportunities provided by HEFCE Widening Participation Funds to forge stronger links between HEIs and FE, Schools, Work Based Learning Providers and employers. This will ensure that all young people have access to a range of options, maximising personal choice alongside the need to respond to the skills agenda. This published framework will be available to all providers, parents and young people by 2003/04.
- We will improve the quality and relevance of the advice and guidance provided to young people by linking it more closely to current labour market skills intelligence. We will update all Connexions advisors on emerging skills trends twice yearly and will also develop multi media approaches for young people which details career opportunities in target sectors.

- Student ‘ambassadors’ will be identified and encouraged to promote progression and high achievement.

3. Segmentation

- We will begin to develop a segmented participation strategy that targets communities, both geographic and cultural, where participation rates are low. This will enable us to target our resources at areas and where disengagement is highest. We will make full use of the emerging Local Strategic Partnerships as a focus for much of our activity in this area. We will also develop innovative communication and marketing approaches to reflect the fact that traditional marketing material is often not relevant for the groups that we wish to engage.

4. Working with Other Agencies

- We will continue to build a strong partnership with the new Connexions service to ensure a shared approach to supporting young people into appropriate 14-19 pathways.
- We will strengthen established links with the other statutory agencies charged with supporting at risk youth. This will support the return to learning of those who have left through factors such as custodial sentence, drug addiction or homelessness. We will also develop linkages with the local authorities to ensure that young asylum seekers are integrated into the learning system.

5. Working with Employers

- In conjunction with business support partners we will, by 2003, target employers who have young people not participating in training. We will engage the support of trade unions where recognised. This strategy will enable us to re-engage at least some of the 4% of the current 16 year old cohort in employment without training.

6. Increasing ICT Skills

- We will seek to establish a baseline for basic ICT skills for young people in Nottinghamshire, particularly those in disadvantaged communities. We will subsequently develop a multi-strand approach to delivering ICT basic skills via connected learning community pilot projects that join school, college, community and business based outlets.

The Inner City in 2005

The City of Nottingham is acknowledged to be the regional capital of the East Midlands. Currently an estimated £800 million worth of construction activity is underway, with major infrastructure developments such as the Nottingham Express Transit system and major city centre housing, retail and commercial developments taking place. It is estimated that some 40,000 new jobs, predominantly in the service sector, will be created by 2010 in the Greater Nottingham area.

Despite prosperity and forecast growth, there are still communities experiencing significant disadvantage measured across a range of indicators including crime, health and education. Many of these communities are characterised by transient populations - students, asylum seekers, local authority housing residents moving or being moved. Over the last decade, many of these communities have attracted significant investment through a succession of Government regeneration initiatives. Despite this, male unemployment in some inner city wards exceeds 20%. For some, this means that they are now third-generation unemployed.

These disadvantaged communities are a significant cause of attainment levels at 16 in the City being adrift of County, regional and national averages. In England in 2001, exactly half of all 16 year olds achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grades A-C. Regionally the figure for the East Midlands is 45%, for the Nottinghamshire LSC area 44% and for the City of Nottingham 30%.

Low attainment levels at 16 clearly impact upon the skills and education levels for adults. Across the County as a whole, 38% people of working age are qualified to NVQ level 3 or above compared to a national average of 47%. For indigenous City residents, the figure will be significantly lower than this.

The key challenge for the Learning and Skills Council and its partners is to ensure that local residents, especially in disadvantaged communities, have the skills and confidence to compete for jobs. This is necessary both for the economic competitiveness of the City and to break the cycle of long-term unemployment that is still the norm in some inner city communities.

One of the key actions to tackle these challenges will be the development of a 14-19 framework which will enable young people to have a wider and more appropriate choice of learning and progression pathways. This will require more collaborative working between colleges, work based learning providers and schools. The expertise of the Education Business Link Organisation will be key here. We will work closely with our partners to design this framework and to ensure that through Connexions, high quality careers advice and guidance is available alongside longer term mentoring support if required. As part of our Area Wide Inspection Action Plan for the City, we will aim to give all 16 year olds a positive progression into further education or training. Better key skills provision is essential for young people and adults to give them the transferable skills for changing work demands. We will ensure that community-based provision is maximised for both adults and young people and clear progression routes into further education and employment are identified. This will be firmly set in the context of identifying barriers to achievement, tackling literacy and numeracy skills and ensuring the opportunity to develop ICT skills is available to all.

We will work with partners on regeneration activity such as the City Growth Strategy alongside City based employers in target sectors to help them map their projected skills requirements. This will include persuading employers to consider local workers when historically they may not previously have done. This work will support not only larger employers but also inner city micro

businesses and SMEs to enable them to access high quality, cost effective e-learning focused on their business development.

The solution to the City's inner city challenges in terms of aspiration and attainment does not lie solely in more investment. It is about joining together existing funding streams and ensuring that there is a genuine multi-agency approach to common problems.

1.b Adults

The Challenges for Nottinghamshire

- To raise the number of adults engaged in learning and the levels at which that learning takes place.
- To target the 18% of respondents to the 2000 Household Survey who had undertaken no learning in the last 6 years and the additional 13% who had not undertaken any since leaving school.
- Linked to the above, to reach those sections of the community where a lack of qualifications is closer to the norm than the exception. These include unemployed claimants, those in unskilled occupations and workers aged 45+. We will also target groups and communities, defined geographically or culturally, where significant barriers to learning continue to exist.
- To target those needing high levels of pastoral care when entering the learning environment, in particular learners from non-traditional backgrounds.
- To counter the lack of investment in training and development of the workforce. At 11%, Nottinghamshire is almost 2% behind the national average for job related training of the working age population. This issue is at its worst for the male population where only 9% of working age males have received job related training against 13.4% for females.
- To raise basic skills levels in Nottinghamshire, for those in employment as well as those currently not economically active.
- To give all adults user-friendly progression routes from community provision into qualification-based learning.
- To ensure that all adults have access to ICT as a learning entitlement and are equipped with ICT skills that enable them to participate in learning.

Targets for Improvement

No national targets for adult participation have been set as yet as current data sources are incomplete and inaccurate. Pending this, it would be

inappropriate to set quantifiable targets for Nottinghamshire in isolation, although we anticipate that the activities outlined in the next section will lead to early and measurable increases in adult learning participation and subsequent attainment.

Proposed Activities to Meet the Challenges and Deliver our Targets

At national level, the context for our activities has been set by the Moser and Kennedy reports which highlight issues on low participation and skills levels and learning inequalities. These in turn have informed the work of the National Skills Task Force. Alongside these, policy developments towards community based interventions have emerged on a whole range of fronts from Health Action Zones to New Deal for Communities. Of particular relevance here is the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and subsequent development of Local Strategic Partnerships, which will provide a framework for many of our activities in this area.

Given the numbers involved and the scale of the challenge, we need to focus our resources on a number of defined areas through market segmentation. One of our highest priorities is to maximise the contribution of ICT to widening participation by making learning available in a range of non traditional environments.

Activities

1. Improving Baseline Data

- We will develop and implement a robust tracking system to enable more effective monitoring of learning participation and progression.
- We will draw together learning participation information by local authority district to help us to identify non learning communities and target our work with Local Strategic Partnerships.
- Building on the findings of the Household and Ethnic Minority Skills Surveys, we will, establish focus groups to ensure that the 'voice of learner' is instrumental in shaping provision. We will work closely with the Learning Partnerships in this area.

2. Progression Pathways

- We will develop a framework to expand first rung provision in the community with clear pathways to progress further.
- Linked this, we will support the development of impartial advice and guidance services to inform learning choices.

3. Developing Community Learning Capacity

- We will identify and establish best practice in community learning provision and pilot schemes based on this across the county. This approach will be rolled out in 2003 and 2004. We will work with

partners to build the capacity of the provider base, particularly for basic skills delivery.

- We will support community learning provision through Local Strategic Partnerships, SRB partnerships, New Deal for Communities and other partnership activities.
- We will stimulate and motivate traditionally isolated learners, for example those suffering from ill health or those in rural communities, by providing information, advice and guidance to access local or distance learning opportunities.

Prescriptions for Learning

The Prescriptions for Learning project started in September 2000 as a partnership between NIACE, Health Action Zone, emda and the Greater Nottingham Learning Partnership. It involved placing a Learning Adviser in 3 GP Surgeries in the City of Nottingham to take referrals from healthcare staff and individual patients. These patients have expressed an interest in learning but usually have major barriers to participation, be it physical or mental health, finances, childcare or levels of confidence or motivation.

By 'prescribing learning' instead of medication, these hard to reach learners embark on personal goals identified with the Learning Adviser. The target audience includes those who continually attend the GP Surgery, those who have not entered into any formal learning for some time and those for whom the health professional identifies that their health could benefit from a learning activity. To date, the Learning Adviser has seen over 200 individuals with just over 50% progressing into formal or informal learning, many in the area of basic skills and ICT.

The project has grown to cover 7 GP Surgeries in disadvantaged areas of Nottingham and is scheduled to expand to surgeries covering similarly disadvantaged areas in Mansfield and Eastwood. The project addresses both learning and health inequalities that are often inextricably linked, and by tackling these inequalities, addresses both learning and skills and health improvement targets.

The project has attracted much attention regionally and nationally, resulting in a rolling out of the project in other counties of the East Midlands; nationally; there has been much media attention, promotion at conferences, and replication of the project based on the Nottingham model promoted by NIACE.

4. Increasing ICT Skills

- We will seek to establish a baseline for basic ICT skills for adults in Notts, particularly those in disadvantaged communities.
- In the period of this plan we will implement five connected learning community pilots involving schools, colleges, communities and businesses, particularly focussing on those who are disadvantaged.

5. Family Learning

- Family learning opportunities will be developed, including basic ICT skills, access to on-line learning, literacy and numeracy programmes, driving qualifications, vocational and practical skills.

6. Unemployed

- We will continue to work in partnership with Employment Service to ensure that unemployed people are placed in direct contact with employers in expanding sectors, particularly claimants aged 45+.

7. Non- Learning Adults in Employment

- We will develop a targeted approach to reach adult non-learners in employment, particularly recognising the issues for those aged 45+. In the first instance, priority will be given to public sector organisations, retail, hospitality and leisure, making full use of recognised trade unions via the learning representative initiative.
- Longer term, in partnership with business support agencies, we will develop a strategy for engaging employees in non learning SMEs.
- We will form local learning networks, bringing learning to the workplace via learning centres on employer premises across Nottinghamshire.

8. Funding

- We will work with key partners to co-ordinate Local Authority Adult and Community Learning funding with FE and other funds supporting community based learning, including regeneration monies, in order to maximise value for money.

The Former Coalfield and Rural Nottinghamshire in 2005

A key priority for the LSC is to support the regeneration activities in the area of the former coalfield. Fundamental economic restructuring in Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Newark & Sherwood, brought about by the collapse of coal mining and associated industries and the decline of other traditional manufacturing sectors, has created a legacy of economic, social and environmental problems.

The ability to improve skills, raise aspirations and address underachievement is a key challenge that cuts across and influences all aspects of economic development. If these matters are neglected, the consequence will be a socially excluded underclass of people who cannot share the benefits of

growth. Even worse, they will not contribute to the conditions which are needed for growth. Inward investors are deterred by low skill levels; existing businesses need higher skill levels to achieve their potential. The message is stark: if we are not improving, we are losing.

Many of the problems identified are common with those of the inner city. Here, as there, we must concentrate resource relentlessly on areas with the greatest need and provision which gives us a stronger foundation for regeneration. There must be a basic skills crusade to wipe out the debilitating effects of poor literacy and numeracy levels. We must turn “learner-led” rhetoric into reality by exploiting the skills of the voluntary and community sectors to re-connect the disengaged and the discouraged to learning opportunities. We must break through into new ground on the development of the existing workforce, finding new ways of reconciling learning and business effectiveness for the small and medium-sized enterprises on which the economy of the north depends. We must also be ambitious in our approach to skill development. Basic and Level 1 and 2 skill development alone is not enough; the north needs higher level skills and graduate retention to face the innovation and enterprise needs of the modern national and global economy.

Beyond these strategies the lower population density, geographical isolation and rural features of the north of the county present specific challenges. We have chosen e-learning as a priority because we judge that it can make a big impression on the problem of access. This is not because we imagine new populations of self-starting learners flocking to the internet to teach themselves. It is because we feel that the computer has a massive potential to extend conventional learning, and to free it from some of its traditional limitations.

By 2004 we envisage that our formative work on the establishment of a Connected Learning Community for Nottinghamshire will be a reality, tackling the digital divide, widening participation, raising basic skills and the quality and profile of learning.

The key factors that will distinguish our Connected Learning Community are:

- computers as an integral element in the delivery of the curriculum for all school children;
- family learning either “out of hours” at school or utilising school laptops at home where appropriate
- a range of access points, from virtual learning in the home, through use of community centres, libraries and schools, to shared work based learning centres in companies on industrial estates
- a learner centred approach using exemplar content material in a “managed learning environment” providing informed tutorial support when required
- a technical infrastructure that allows access to and integration of Ufi, school and college and private sector broadband networks

objective and impartial advice and guidance to provide supported pathways for people to move from community-based activity into mainstream learning and employment.

Newark and Sherwood College is regarded as one of the leading FE colleges nationally in e-learning. Building on its success, the LSC is supporting all colleges to develop their capacity in this extension to their traditional skills, and working with both LEAs to develop schools as sites for adult learning.

> KEY OBJECTIVE

2. Increase Engagement of Employers in Workforce Development

The Challenges for Nottinghamshire

- To address the fact that the Nottinghamshire workforce is largely low skilled and low paid, with many people still working in industries at risk from international competition.
- To support initiatives to develop skills in the workforce that stimulates innovation and enterprise.
- To promote the importance of leadership as a driver of organisational and workforce development.
- To identify the reasons why some businesses and sectors remain reluctant to invest in workforce development and convince more leaders and decision makers of the economic value of investment in human capital and knowledge.
- To raise the skills level of the entire workforce to ensure the competitiveness of local employers.
- To support skills needs of businesses in growth sectors such as the ICT Services Industry.
- To up-grade and extend the ICT skills of those in work, and increase the number of technical ICT trainers.
- To encourage Nottinghamshire employers to recruit from groups traditionally under-represented in their sector.
- To ensure that Nottinghamshire benefits from its strengths in higher education and retains graduates locally.

Targets for Improvement

Nationally the target for engaging employers in workforce development will be set in 2002. In the interim, we will develop a range of specific measures relating to the activities detailed below that enable us to achieve quantifiable improvements in workforce development.

Proposed Activities to Meet the Challenges and Deliver our Targets

We must raise skill levels in Nottinghamshire if we are to make a positive impact on the economic profile and performance of the local economy. We will put our energies into supporting employers to do this.

The recently published Performance Innovation Unit report 'In Demand – Adult Skills in the 21st Century' promotes the need to implement a demand-led approach to skills development. We support the observations contained within the report and will seek to integrate the PIU's action plan, scheduled for publication in Summer 2002, into our future workforce development activities.

1. Investors in People

- The continuing success of the Investors in People standard illustrates the recognition by many organisations of the relationship between the achievement of their business objectives and investment in their workforce. We will continue to promote and build upon the success of the Investor in People standard, working closely with business support agencies and sector bodies to promote its benefits.

GMB Midland and East Coast Region

The GMB is one of the largest unions in the UK, employing 60 people across the Midlands and East Coast region. It is the first trade union in the UK to achieve the Investors in People Standard and has been successfully re-assessed on a number of occasions. The organisation reports that the Investors in People route has ensured that all its activity is now project managed and more strategic, with development reviews, evaluation reports and focused training.

2. Working with Target Sectors

- We will consult local employers in key sectors to gain a clear picture of recruitment, retention, skills gaps and skills shortages and the impact of skills deficiencies on business performance. We will launch or support initiatives that address key workforce skills issues within the following sectors:-
- Construction: Employment in the county as a whole is likely to remain broadly constant over the next 10 years, with the City projecting a 5.6% increase between 2001-2010. The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), reports that there are skills shortages in plastering, carpentry, joinery and roofing.
- Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality: This sector currently employs some 26,000 people locally with further growth predicted at national and regional levels.
- Call Centres: The county is home to a host of household names with call centres ranging from emergency services, financial services and teleflorists. These companies range from micro businesses to global operations. Employment in the sector is forecast to continue to grow rapidly.

Call Centre Skills Dialogue

In a world where employers have difficulty in recruiting people with the right skills and people with low or no skills are unable to gain employment, the LSC and its partners have made a difference by piloting the following approach.

A skills dialogue process was developed to bring together employers and learning providers to discuss sectoral issues and common skills needs. Focussing on the growing call or communications centre sector, trainers learned exactly what skills the employers needed and set about delivering them. With 1,500 new jobs created in the sector in Nottinghamshire in 2001 alone, we needed to expand the source of labour to include people returning to the labour market, for example those who had retired early or who had brought up a family. This was done through a series of employer-led training pilot programmes.

This included Prudential who focussed on women returners to work, in partnership with Jesse Boot Primary School Lifelong Learning Centre and theatre and communications trainer, Indigo Brave. The company was seeking a more diverse workforce who lived close to their office in Nottingham by using alternative recruitment methods in the community. The benefits were job specific training for people learning general vocational skills, establishing part-time roles within school hours and key and basic skills attainment.

A second phase to the pilot programme is under discussion, featuring ongoing input and assessment by the company, which will result in their recruitment of about 10 people per quarter.

- **Engineering Manufacturing:** This covers a wide range of activities from electronics to foundries. Although the relevant national training organisation, Engineering and Marine Training Authority (EMTA), is projecting an overall downturn in numbers employed, it recognises that the skills of those in work must increase as technology advances, with many skills shortages already emerging.

Formula Schools

The LSC and partners have supported thirteen Nottinghamshire schools to become involved with this national project that aims to stimulate young people to choose technological/engineering career pathways.

The project links year ten and eleven pupils with an engineering based company to design and build a radio controlled car powered by a petrol engine. In addition to dispelling historical myths surrounding technology and engineering, the young people involved also develop their teamworking skills, and the whole culminates in the fun of a Race Day at Silverstone Raceway.

- Health and Social Care: This covers caring and personal service occupations, with large increases projected in the workforce required locally to tackle the issues of an ageing population and the increase in demand for childcare. By 2005 all care workers will be required to have achieved a relevant NVQ Level 2 qualification.
- Food and Drink Manufacturing: Some 9,000 people are employed in this sector locally, with 38% of those being female and 75% at production operative level. The industry is dominated by micro businesses, with skills gaps being cited as basic skills, generic skills and higher-level product technology and development skills.
- Creative and Cultural:
Emda identifies Nottinghamshire as the principal county in the East Midlands for broadcasting and the moving image, yet little information exists on the current and future growth and skills needs at either a local or regional level.
- Print, Media and Graphics:
As the 5th largest manufacturing sector in the UK, this industry employs approximately 5200 people in Nottinghamshire. New technologies, increased use of ICT and the amalgamation of previously separate processes have seen the need for a higher skilled and more multi-skilled workforce.

Print Sector

In partnership with the Graphical Paper and Media Union, Print Media and Graphics Network, the Sector Skills Council and South Nottingham College, the LSC is supporting a project to ensure that training provision is available to SMEs within the printing industry. The speed of technological change and the importance of ICT for this sector has meant that all companies must enhance the skills of their workforce and ensure that they become multi-skilled. This training is designed to build on the industry's ethos of a strong commitment to lifelong learning and includes Basic and Key Skills, Management training and NVQ's at Levels 2 and 3.

3. Promoting Learning in the Workplace

- We recognise the key role that the Trade Unions play in promoting learning in the workplace and in particular the network of Learning Representatives who provide information, advice and guidance, and support employers and individuals in accessing learning. The LSC will work closely with Trade Unions to ensure the continued promotion of learning and the delivery of basic skills in the workplace.
- We will continue to provide and promote local examples of how investment in learning has benefited local business. Examples will be

sought from businesses that represent the key sectors identified above.

- We will work with our partners to ensure that support is available for micro-businesses in a format that meets their needs. Training will be focused on business solutions on a “right time, right place, right product” basis, with the emphasis on flexible learning and high quality, advice that supports growth.
- We will pilot cluster-based approaches to learning, identifying industrial estates with a common industry-base or learning need. By forming local learning networks, we will bring learning to the workplace and into an environment where businesses share a common link.
- We will continue to work with learndirect and FE colleges to make inroads into the SME market by utilising ICT to provide cost effective, learning materials on-line.

4. Supporting ICT Skills Needs

- We will promote the ICT services industry to those sectors of society that are currently underrepresented in its workforce, particularly women (men make up 58% of the ICT workforce in Nottinghamshire). We will actively encourage increased participation by these groups as part of the LSCN’s ICT Challenge 2002 initiative, aimed at giving 2002 people working in SMEs the opportunity to upgrade their ICT skills.
- We will develop and deliver a marketing campaign aimed at increasing the take-up of Modern Apprenticeships in IT Services and practitioner qualifications at the Systems Technician level. The campaign will actively promote careers in the IT Services to key groups; women, ethnic minorities, older people and graduates, (with non-IT degrees).

5. Promoting Diversity in the Workplace

- We will work with Sector Skills Councils to gain a more detailed understanding of local skill and diversity issues within key sectors and develop workable solutions for identified local problems.
- There are 8.5 million people in the UK aged 50 – to retirement, 29% of whom are economically inactive. Older people are at greater risk of unemployment as traditional industries decline. Older people possess valuable skills, knowledge and ‘know-how’ but need help to remain economically active in an increasingly technological workplace. We will work specifically with non-learning adults in employment aged 45+ to access higher-level skills.

6. Promoting Literacy and Numeracy in the Workplace

- We will work with partners, including Trades Unions, to seek innovative ways of supporting people in work to raise their levels of literacy and numeracy.

7. Encouraging Innovation, Enterprise and Higher Level Skills

- We will foster processes that encourage technology transfer, particularly forging stronger links between universities, schools, communities, FE colleges and employers.
- We will bring graduates and business together to develop opportunities to encourage graduates to seek employment within SMEs. We will equally encourage and support those SMEs wishing to recruit graduates to make maximum use of these skills through initiatives such as Graduate Apprenticeships and the Teaching Company Scheme.
- We will continue to contribute to the development of a proposal to HEFCE for the development of an East Midlands New Technology Institute. This collaborative approach will provide ICT and other advanced technology programmes from NVQ 3 to Foundation Degrees and work closely with SMEs to ensure that they have the know-how to apply advanced technology.

8. Developing Management Competence

- By 2003 we will complete an in-depth analysis of the skills and competencies of managers in key sectors locally to better understand the profile within the county. This will enable us to identify skills gaps and inform the development of management and leadership support initiatives.
- We will work with key employers, intermediaries and business influencers to promote the value of networking for managers.
- We will work with partners to develop a leadership strategy. This will include the creation of a Leaders Forum with membership drawn from private, public, and voluntary and community organisations.

> KEY OBJECTIVE

3. Raise Achievement of Young People

The Challenges for Nottinghamshire

- To raise the proportion of young people who attain 5 or more GCSEs at grades A to C or equivalent. In 2001, 30.3% of young people in the City LEA and 45.6% in the county LEA achieved this standard against the national average of 50%.
- To ensure that strategic planning and collaboration across all 14-19 provision provides quality, breadth and choice of learning programmes.
- To ensure that the organisation of institutions maximises opportunities for all young people.
- To raise the standards of teaching and learning practice across all provision.
- To develop new approaches to learning, particularly e-learning, which increases access to and effectiveness of learning.
- To improve retention of learners, particularly on work based learning programmes.
- To improve key skills provision and better integrate it in mainstream learning.
- To tackle inequalities in attainment from particular groups.
- To develop value added approaches to the measurement of effectiveness amongst all providers.
- To increase the scope of provision for people with learning difficulties and disabilities, in both mainstream and specialist college provision.

Targets for Improvement

Local targets for 2004:

Level 2 by age 19 - 1060 additional young people, equating to 71.1%

Level 3 by age 19 - 870 additional young people, equating to 39.4%

The Nottinghamshire position is currently at 63.5% for Level 2. Local data indicates that the current position at Level 3 is 33.2%. The proposed

Nottinghamshire target for Level 2, linked to improved participation rates for 16-18 year olds, represents a stretching 12% increase in attainment rates over the period to 2005. This will require much dedicated work from all partners concerned. The proposed Level 3 target is 39% and achieving this will be crucial if we are to respond to the need for higher level skills in the local economy.

Following detailed analysis of learner data, we will develop specific targets to increase attainment in our disadvantaged areas where achievement has been historically low.

Proposed Activities to Meet the Challenges and Deliver our Targets

Our work in this area is in the context of the emerging 14-19 curriculum, including the modernising of the vocational curriculum. This is set alongside the drive to ensure that we have a future workforce that has the key skills and competences to work in a rapidly changing economy and that we have partners who are in a position to provide this.

Institutional specialism, in Centres of Vocational Excellence and New Technology Institutes, is a necessary development to ensure excellence, choice and value for money.

Activities

1. Establish Clear Vocational Pathways from 14 to 19

- We will audit current vocational pathways from Key Stage 4 to 19 to ensure that these are matched to the needs of all young people. This will enable us to provide clear guidance and enable us to track progression. We will work with providers to focus on new initiatives to engage young people with disabilities and to bring coherence to their transition within training.
- By 2003 we will have worked with partners and other agencies to ensure that the curriculum is developed to offer new opportunities at Levels 1 and 2. We will ensure that the needs of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are addressed by working with all partners with specialist expertise to provide for transition planning and support across all post 16 learning options, with clear progression routes into employment and voluntary sector opportunities. We will work with partner organisations to chart transition and progress of these young people from pre- to post-16 education.
- We will also work with partners to increase attainment at both Level 2 and 3 through the development of enhanced entry and on programme support and tutorial models together with learning resources.
- We will embed good practice models from the current Level 2 targets initiative.

- To support the specific need to capacity-build work based learning providers, we will be establishing a Development Centre in 2002.
- We will review all transition policies and procedures for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities with both Local Education Authorities.

2. Establishing Centres of Vocational Excellence

- By 2004 we will establish a minimum of four Centres of Vocational Excellence across the county to address skills shortages and changes to the local economy and to act as a focus for training local and regional employers. We will commence work with FE partners, using our skills and labour market intelligence, to target the necessary specialisms.

3. Developing a 14-19 Entitlement Framework

- We will build on work with both Local Education Authorities and 14-19 providers to encourage collaborative delivery amongst schools and between schools, colleges and work based learning providers.
- We will embed the work-related curriculum in secondary school practice through working closely with the Education Business Partnership.
- We will continue to work with partners to establish effective learner support models, for example, mentors, learning champions and buddies.
- We will work with higher education institutions and employers to confirm the value of Key Skills qualifications in selection processes.

4. Improving Value Added Performance

- We will embed value added target setting in all programmes to measure learner progress and provider effectiveness.

5. Raising ICT Skill Levels

- We will work with all providers to increase the number of young people achieving Level 2 ICT skills. We will set improvement and progression targets with partners and ensure that resources are directed to support this priority. The sharing of best practice in ICT within the curriculum will be paramount, including the use of ICT in learning in all curriculum areas.

6. Establishing Progression for 'Hard to Reach' Learners

- We will develop robust entry and progression routes for the Lifeskills programme to help tackle the group of young people who are not engaging in education or training. We will work with partners who have particular expertise in working with disaffected young people,

particularly looking to improve learner support to establish a preferred provider base by 2003.

7. Identifying Barriers to Progression

- In 2002 we will develop a better understanding of reasons for dropping out and identify the barriers to achievement and progression. We will implement support structures to overcome these barriers by 2004.

8. Working with Employers

- From 2003 we will work with employers and their representative bodies to challenge stereotypes, particularly those relating to parity of esteem of vocational and academic qualifications, and to support them in recruiting and supporting young people in the workplace.
- We will promote the skills development required to ensure good citizenship, employability and entrepreneurship.

> KEY OBJECTIVE

4. Raise Achievement of Adults

The Challenges for Nottinghamshire

- To address the basic skills needs of the adult population, both those in employment and those who are not currently economically active.
- To ensure that adult learning opportunities are available across the county, particularly targeted at those who may be at risk of social exclusion.
- To improve and develop the capacity of those voluntary and community organisations who engage with 'hard to reach' adult learners.
- To develop learning programmes with clear progression pathways into 'mainstream' skills development.
- To simplify a complex funding and provision base, ensuring that maximum opportunity and choice is afforded to adult learners whilst at the same time ensuring value for money.
- To ensure that adult learning activity is not a 'marginal' but 'core' activity and that quality standards, resources and long term planning reflect this.
- To maximise funding opportunities available to support adult learners from European and wider regeneration sources, particularly supporting agencies from the voluntary and community sectors.
- To ensure that all adult learners are equipped with ICT skills, both generic and specific, relevant to their employability.

Targets for Improvement:

Local Targets for 2004:

Raise the literacy and numeracy skills of 19000 adults

% of adults at Level 2: target to be set in national plan for 2002

Level 3 – 30000 additional adults, equating to 50.2%

Reflecting the national position identified by the Moser Report, almost one in five of the population in Nottinghamshire has low literacy skills and one in four low numeracy skills.

The most recent Labour Force Survey data indicates that some 44.5% of adults in Nottinghamshire hold a Level 3 qualification. However this figure must be viewed with caution as the sample was small.

Proposed Activities to Meet the Challenges and Deliver our Targets

Unless we address the skills deficits in our adult population we are unable to remove a major barrier to economic and social wellbeing. This has been highlighted in the national context by the work of Moser, Kennedy and Tomlinson and has shaped much of national policy towards addressing basic skills issues and widening participation.

This work has been complemented by the Government drive to push the ICT to the top of the learning and skill agenda for all and the work of Ufi/learnirect has begun to address many of the areas of learning inequality. In addition, the wider social inclusion and regeneration agenda has brought the issue of adult skills to the fore.

Given the complexity of this task and the scale of the challenge, as identified earlier in this plan, LSCN will focus its work on a number of defined areas. We will seek to add value to the work of partners and to fully integrate our own work with those agencies seeking to tackle areas of multiple disadvantage.

Activities

1. Tackling Basic Skills

- We will develop a comprehensive system for identifying basic skills needs, particularly working with the voluntary and community sector to target activities and funding for 2003/2004.
- We will develop a tracking system to establish what provision is available at individual, Local Education Authority and Learning Partnership levels and compile a directory to support providers.
- From 2003 we will target all Level 1 and 2 adult provision to ensure that basic skills diagnostics, assessment and delivery are fully integrated into all programmes by 2005. Throughout we will ensure that the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are addressed. We will work with Employment Service, Business Link Nottinghamshire, and employer forums to promote job related training for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- We will promote the importance of raising basic skills within the workplace via a targeted promotional campaign with employers and trade unions. We will work with trade unions to expand the role of learning representatives in developing work-based support structures.
- We will work with other key agencies to address the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and other support needs of

refugees and asylum seekers. We will target funding accordingly to build an infrastructure to meet increasing demands.

- We will increase the number of qualified Basic Skills and ESOL support tutors including those who are able to work fewer than 6 hours per week.
- We will develop Basic Skills / Support Tutors to FENTO (Further Education NTO) standards.
- By 2003 we will develop ICT based solutions for diagnostic assessment and as a medium for delivery of basic and key skills.
- By 2003 we will ensure that all ICT based learning programmes address basic skills issues.
- We will target a range of public sector employers to draw up 'compact' type agreements to develop Level 1 and 2 skills in the workplace, with integrated basic skills delivery.
- We will review all policies and procedures for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- From 2003 we will establish a free helpline to refer, advise and signpost learners in a confidential manner.
- From 2003 we will promote a buddy system designed to link new learners with more experienced learners.

2. Developing Community Learning Capacity

- We will map current adult and community learning in order to identify gaps and overlaps in coverage by different providers and funding streams.
- We will ensure that Adult and Community Learning plans will embrace a wider range of provision and contract new provision where there are gaps in infrastructure, based on the guiding principle of community accountability.
- We will build on existing work in the community and voluntary sector to reach out into communities where provision is currently weak, ensuring that a robust community sector infrastructure is in place by 2004. This will include strengthening the relationship between the voluntary and community sector and FE colleges.
- We will support the voluntary and community sector to further develop its role in giving information, advice and guidance to adults.

3. Developing a Credit Accumulation Transfer Framework for Accreditation of Learning

- We will expand 'first' and 'second' step learning activity in the community as a means of attracting 'hard to reach' adult learners. This will be developed to provide progression pathways and transition for all adults into further learning as part of an entitlement curriculum for adults by 2004.
- We will develop ICT based taster activities linked to progression pathways and set annual targets to raise skills levels.
- Through the period to 2004 we will develop a credit framework at Levels 1, 2 and 3, including Foundation Degrees, to provide all adult learners with a progression ladder into higher education and/or employment.

> KEY OBJECTIVE

5. Raise the Quality of Education and Training and User Satisfaction

The Challenges for Nottinghamshire

- To raise standards by focusing on the quality of the learner experience.
- Implement a quality improvement strategy, which will include the analysis of structured feedback from learners and employers.
- To ensure that OFSTED recognised good practice in FE college provision is disseminated across all providers.
- To raise quality standards in work based learning provision from the low levels highlighted in recent inspections.
- To encourage more and better collaborative working between schools, sixth forms, FE colleges and work based learning providers which offers enhanced choice for the learner.
- To develop the 'safe learner' concept in all learning situations.

Targets for Improvement:

No national baseline or targets for quality and user satisfaction have been set as yet. These will be included in next year's national plan. However, we have a number of locally defined targets which will seek to address the challenges identified above.

These are:-

- To establish appropriate baselines and targets for inspection grades for all providers and to eradicate grade 5/4 at provider inspection.
- To continually move all providers up in relation to inspection grade and provider review findings.
- To set continuous improvement targets linked to provider review, with all providers achieving at least satisfactory ratings across all areas of provision.
- To establish learner/customer satisfaction targets.
- To establish post 16 transition targets to measure provider effectiveness in supporting at risk young people.
- To establish diversity targets for learner participation and achievement.
- To establish a system for dealing with whistle blowing and learner complaints.
- To support accident reduction targets by adopting a risk-based, targeted approach.

Proposed Activities to Meet the Challenges and Deliver our Targets

Much of the context for our work in this area has been set by the work of OFSTED and Adult Learning Inspectorate. We welcome the fact that we begin our strategic work with the findings of the recent Ofsted/ALI 16 –19 City of Nottingham Area Wide Inspection as a baseline. We shall be taking forward the action plan to respond to its findings in 2002.

Activities

Raising Standards *(many of the activities detailed below cross-reference to previous sections of the plan):-*

1. Achievement Targets

- We will work with providers to set and monitor challenging targets for raising participation, retention, achievement and progression throughout all post 16 provision.
- From 2003 we will develop benchmarking data for assessing provider performance on retention and achievement across all provision.
- By 2003 we will design success criteria for those programmes that do not lead to accredited learning outcomes.
- We will set and monitor diversity targets to reduce participation and achievement gaps between different groups of learners.

2. Learning Programmes

- We will be innovative in our approach to contracting with new providers using learner and employer surveys to inform the contracting process.

3. Learner Support

- From 2002, we will work with providers to improve the availability and effectiveness of learning support, including support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- By 2003 best practice in supporting learners will be disseminated across the county and reviewed and evaluated annually.
- We will contract with new providers who match and surpass quality criteria to enhance learner choice and access.
- We will continue to ensure through a quality assured process that all providers have a safe, healthy and supportive environment for learners.

4. Learning Provider Development

- We will implement the Ofsted/ALI 16 – 19 City of Nottingham Area Wide Inspection action plan.

- We will manage the LSC Standards Fund to support programmes of continuing professional development for all managers and staff across FE and work based learning providers. This will include professional development programmes for governors in FE colleges.
- From 2003 we will target additional resources to enhancing teaching and training for those working with learners at Levels 1 and 2, and particularly for existing unqualified staff.
- We will work with inspectorates and providers to ensure effective follow up of inspections.

Quality Improvement Strategy with Providers

1. Quality Standards

- We will work with learning providers to develop comprehensive and robust measures of quality, based on learner satisfaction and success rates.
- We will move inspection grades upwards by developing provider continuous improvement strategies.

2. Information Systems

- From 2003 we will work with providers to improve the accuracy and timeliness of data within a continuous improvement framework.
- From 2003 we will develop systems to investigate early leaving on programmes and use this data to improve retention.
- We will develop systems to track learners' progress to more advanced learning and/or employment.
- From 2003 we will explore ways of gauging how learners apply their learning in other contexts to help record broader achievements and impacts of learning.

4. Improvement Process

- We will implement reward and sanction strategies linked to provider review and inspection findings to promote excellence within approved suppliers.
- We will encourage innovative approaches to tackling basic and key skills provision.
- By 2003 we will develop rigorous self assessment and development planning processes with providers to enable them to make objective assessments of their own performance.

- We will target support on providers who have been identified as having significant weaknesses.
- We will develop and implement a provider complaints mechanism and a system for dealing with whistle blowing.
- We will work with other agencies such as the work based learning Development Centre, NTOs/Skills Sector Councils and the Basic Skills Strategy Unit on quality development.
- We will target innovation in learning provision in our discretionary funding.

5. Health and Safety

We recognise that whilst the Learner duty of care lies firmly with the Learning Provider, we have a responsibility to ensure that all people who are learning and training on LSC funded programmes are afforded the appropriate level of protection in respect of their Health, Safety and Welfare.

Our aim will be to ensure that learner health and safety is seen as an integral component of high quality training provision and also an area for continuous improvement.

We will endeavour to ensure:-

- The promotion of provider responsibility and accountability for learner health and safety through an expectation of continuous improvement and via high quality health and safety content in self assessment and development plans
- Effectively manage the transition from previous approaches to one of maximising influence and effect through the newer, operationally appropriate targeted ways of working with all LSC funded learning providers
- Apply a selective, risk based approach targeted towards the concept of the 'safe learner'.
- Compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation will be regarded as the minimum standard
- Influence a reduction in learner accidents and ill health, in particular the contribution made by providers to the Revitalising Health and Safety Strategy targets as they relate to learner health and safety
- Ensure that Learner health and safety is a pro – active, influential and integrated part of the overall remit of the LSC

- Ensure learning provider competence levels are commensurate with the level of risk
- Providers will be assessed on their capacity to provide a safe, healthy and supportive environment for all learners and will be required to demonstrate:-
 - A planned approach to health and safety
 - Resources available to provide competent health and safety management
 - Arrangements to promote safe working and supervision within all learning programmes
 - Systems to check adequate supervision and a safe learning environment at employer placements
 - Mechanisms for informing learners about health and safety arrangements including their entitlements and responsibilities
 - Systems in place for the discovery, reporting and recording of accidents and incidents
 - A system in place for the investigation of accidents and incidents and evidence that measures have been taken to prevent reoccurrence

Our policy will be regularly reviewed and when necessary revised in response to strategic and operational requirements but foremost to ensure that it continues to adequately protect learners on Nottinghamshire LSC funded programmes.

> RESOURCING THE PLAN

We have inherited a range of funding mechanisms to support the provision of education in Nottinghamshire. Over the period of the plan a new national funding system is being introduced. We have been successful in securing ESF Co-Financing Organisation status. This enables us to work with partners to address the priorities contained within this plan and to maximise our discretionary funding to support local initiatives.

Objective	Target and impact measures (by 2004)	Funding	Key partners
Extend participation in education, learning and training.	3950 additional young people, equating to 83.1%. Adults participation target to follow from national baseline and target.	Work-based learning budget (Modern apprenticeships, Foundation training, NVQ training), FE student support funding, ESF co-financing funds.	Colleges, voluntary sector organisations, LEAs, Connexions, employers.
Increase engagement of employers in workforce development.	Target to follow from national baseline and target.	Workforce development budget, ESF co-financing funds.	Employers, employer groups, Sector Skills Councils, sector bodies, trade unions, Business Link, FE Colleges, LEAs, WBL providers, <i>emda</i> , HEIs.
Raise achievement of young people.	Level 2 - 1060 additional young people, equating to 71.1%. Level 3 - 870 additional young people, equating to 39.4%	Work-based learning budget (Modern apprenticeships, Foundation training, NVQ training), FE student support funding, ESF co-financing funds.	Colleges, voluntary sector organisations, LEAs, schools, Connexions, WBL providers, employers.
Raise achievement of adults.	Basic Skills - 19000 adults. Level 2 - to follow from national baseline and target. Level 3 - 30000 additional adults, equating to 50.2%.	Work-based learning budget (19 – 24 year olds only), FE funding, Adult and community learning budget, National LSC FE student support funding, ESF co-financing funds	FE colleges, HEIs, WBL providers, community and voluntary organisations, Business Link, LEAs, trade unions, Basic Skills Agency, employers
Raise quality and training and user satisfaction.	Target to follow from national baseline and target.	FE Standards Fund, Work-based learning Standards Fund, Core budgets of all providers LSC capital funds	Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI), OFSTED, Sector Skills Councils, post 16 providers, Connexions, Business Link, LEAs, employers

> DEVELOPING AND EVALUATING OUR PLAN

In developing this plan to date we have consulted extensively with partners on the priorities for learning and skills in Nottinghamshire and this feedback has been used in developing the plan.

This plan will form the basis for our annual operating plans and will inform those of our providers. We will monitor our progress against this strategic plan on an annual basis via a published progress report, which will include a consultation process with our own Council members and partners to confirm their views.

> CONSULTEES FOR DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Learning and Skills Council Nottinghamshire has consulted partners, providers and stakeholders throughout the development of its Strategic Plan. The first phase of formal consultation took place in May 2001. This involved meetings with over 20 key groups who were given an overview of the organisation's aims and objectives, and preliminary indications of local priorities. Feedback from these meetings informed the development of the first draft of the Strategic Plan, which was taken out for consultation during November 2002. Again, the emphasis was on face-to-face meetings, with over 20 sessions taking place with key players across the county. Providers, partners, the voluntary and community sector and employers were all involved and, having received a draft of the Plan in advance, detailed and meaningful feedback was received. Organisations who were unable to attend a meeting were invited to comment in writing or via the website. A smaller group, mainly comprising representatives from learning providers and Local Education Authorities, was invited to focus on the proposed targets.

The draft Plan was reviewed in the light of the feedback received and the version submitted to National Office reflects, in total, contributions from over 30 organisations across a wide range of employment sectors.

African Caribbean and Asian Forum
African Caribbean Development Agency
Ashfield District Council
Bassetlaw District Council
Broxtowe Borough Council
Broxtowe College
Business Link Nottinghamshire
Coalfield Alliance
East Midlands and South Yorkshire Learning and Skills Councils
East Midlands Development Agency
Employment Service
First Enterprise Business Agency
Gedling Borough Council
Greater Nottingham Business Alliance (including – Institute of Directors, Confederation of British Industry, Federation of Small Businesses, Nottinghamshire Business Venture, Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry)
Greater Nottingham Learning Partnership
Greater Nottingham Partnership
GuideLine Career Services/Connexions
Mansfield District Council
New College Nottingham
Newark and Sherwood College
Newark and Sherwood District Council
North Nottinghamshire College
North Nottinghamshire Learning Partnership
Nottingham Black Partnership
Nottingham City Council/Local Education Authority

Nottingham Trent University
 Nottinghamshire County Council/Local Education Authority
 Rushcliffe Borough Council
 South Nottingham College
 The Peoples College
 The University of Nottingham
 Trades Union Congress
 UFI:/Learndirect
 Voluntary Sector Learning and Skills Consortium
 West Nottinghamshire College
 Work Based Learning Provider Network

**> LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
 COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Duncan Sedgwick (Chair)	Director of Business Transformation, Powergen UK plc
Jon Collins	Councillor, City of Nottingham (Chair of Education Committee)
Milton Crosdale OBE	Director, Nottingham and District Racial Equality Council
Samantha Gemmell	Managing Director, Creative Media Matrix (emda representative)
Roger Hursthouse Christine Larson	Chairman and Partner, PKF Regional Director, East Midlands Business in the Community
Bill McCosh CBE	Chairman, Tom Cobleigh
Gillian Moore	Deputy Head of Centre for Broadcasting and Journalism, Nottingham Trent University
Bernard Rutter	Branch Secretary, Graphical Paper and Media Union Central Midlands
Keith Stanyard	Chairman, Greater Nottingham Partnership
Michael Storey	Councillor, Nottinghamshire County Council (Chair of Education Committee)
Mike Syms OBE	Principal, Portland College
Rob Valentine	Executive Director, Learning and Skills Council Nottinghamshire
Janet Watson	National Policy Officer, National Forum for the Development of Rural Youth Work

SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES

2002 – 2005

Annex 1 – Indices of Multiple Deprivation Education, Skills and Training Measure – Nottinghamshire wards within the lowest ranked 500 in England

	Ward Name	Local Authority District	Rank (1 = worst)
1	Strelley	Nottingham	1
2	Aspley	Nottingham	17
3	Manvers	Nottingham	24
4	Beechdale	Nottingham	25
5	Clipstone	Newark and Sherwood	27
6	Worksop South East	Bassetlaw	32
7	Bestwood Park	Nottingham	45
8	Bulwell West	Nottingham	61
9	Byron	Nottingham	65
10	Kirkby in Ashfield East	Ashfield	69
11	Northfield	Mansfield	78
12	Kirkby in Ashfield Central	Ashfield	82
13	Radford	Nottingham	119
14	St. Ann's	Nottingham	124
15	Trent	Nottingham	133
16	Bilborough	Nottingham	135
17	Portland	Nottingham	139
18	Bulwell East	Nottingham	146
19	Woodhouse	Ashfield	188
20	Basford	Nottingham	210
21	Ollerton North	Newark and Sherwood	249
22	Sutton in Ashfield West	Ashfield	278
23	Kirkby in Ashfield West	Ashfield	291
24	Robin Hood	Nottingham	296
25	Eastwood South	Broxtowe	303
26	Hucknall West	Ashfield	312
27	Pleasleyhill	Mansfield	344
28	Oxclose	Gedling	349
29	Cumberlands	Mansfield	352
30	Bilsthorpe	Newark and Sherwood	369
31	Awsorth and Cossall	Broxtowe	397
32	Sutton in Ashfield Central	Ashfield	408
33	Birklands	Mansfield	411
34	Bridge	Nottingham	418
35	Boughton	Newark and Sherwood	431
36	Ladybrook	Mansfield	432
37	Park	Nottingham	452

Annex 2 - Health and Safety Policy

Learning and Skills Council Nottinghamshire 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 pro-actively promote this throughout all of its activities.

It is the policy of the organisation to ensure that standards are continually maintained through regular review and revision against existing and changes to legislation and codes of practice. We will maintain a Health and Safety Policy, which recognises the standards and supports the commitments laid out in the LSC National Health and Safety Policy. This Health and Safety Policy states our intentions, organisational response and the arrangements in respect of health, safety and welfare of employees and others whilst on LSCN premises.

In support of the policy statement specific risk assessments, supporting policies and procedures have been undertaken / produced to compliment the policy arrangements. These seek to eliminate or reduce to practicable levels, any risk to employees or others.

Statement of Intent

It is the policy of Learning and Skills Council Nottinghamshire to do all that is reasonably practicable to prevent personal injury, damage to property and to protect everyone from foreseeable work hazards, including incidents involving the public in so far as they come into contact with the organisation either directly or indirectly. To this end it is the responsibility and duty of all staff, secondees and visitors to co-operate with the requirements of the policy and to conduct themselves in a safe manner. It is also our aim to ensure the same high standards of Health and Safety will be reflected in all initiatives, projects and activities and at the same time enhancing business performance.

Objectives

In order to achieve compliance with the statement of general policy LSCN will provide:

- A safe working environment without risk to health and adequate facilities and arrangements for the welfare of those at work;
- Information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure employees can undertake their work activities in a safe, competent manner;
- To identify risks and set in place controls and procedures to remove or reduce risks;
- To encourage and endorse consultation on Health, Safety and Welfare at work with employees through a Safety Committee;
- Provide relevant information on health and safety issues via an appropriate induction process and ongoing communication with the Safety Committee;

- To ensure competent persons are employed to effectively manage the policy arrangements;
- Where necessary provide staff with appropriate protective clothing to meet the needs arising from work activities;
- To provide first aid facilities and training for nominated personnel responsible for administering first aid;
- To have in place emergency evacuation procedures and trained personnel to facilitate to evacuation of staff and visitors from the building;
- To regularly review and revise the policy to ensure that the current National LSC / LSCN arrangements and changes in legislation are incorporated into the policy;
- To monitor Health and Safety arrangements within LSCN to ensure compliance with the policy arrangements.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

ALL: the Adult Learning Inspectorate.

Anytime Anywhere Learning : a Microsoft initiative that aims to provide all teachers and pupils in England with access to a laptop computer.

Basic Skills : the ability to read, write and speak English and use Mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress at work and in society in general.

CoVEs : Centres of Vocational Excellence, a government initiative to recognise and develop specialisms in the Further Education sector.

Connected Learning Communities: communities where homes, schools and business are connected by computer.

Connexions : the new service which combines all previous forms of advice and guidance to young people aged 13 to 19.

Emda : the East Midlands Development Agency.

ESF : European Social Fund.

ESF Co-Financing : a simpler method to access ESF funding via approved co-financing organisations where the match funding is provided and paperwork reduced.

ESOL : English for Speakers of Other Languages.

FENTO : Further Education National Training Organisation

HAZ : Health Action Zone.

HEI : Higher Education Institution.

HEFCE : Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Kennedy Reports : a series of reports led by Dame Helena Kennedy QC focussing on barriers to learning.

Key Skills : refers to the following – communicating both orally and in writing; applying number, using information technology, working with other people; being able to improve own learning and performance; problem-solving skills.

LAD : Local Authority District

LEA : Local Education Authority

LLDD : Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

LSP : Local Strategic Partnership.

Moser Report : a study on improving basic skills led by Sir Klaus Moser published in 1999.

National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal : a government strategy to target support at disadvantaged communities.

NIACE : National Institute for Adult Continuing Education.

NVQ : National Vocational Qualification

OFSTED : Office for Standards in Education.

PIU : Performance and Innovation unit.

Skills Levels : are equated to qualification levels and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

Level 1 – Foundation Skills/Basic Skills/NVQ Level 1

Level 2 – 5GCSEs/Intermediate GNVQ/NVQ Level 2

Level 3 – A/AS Levels/Advanced GNVQ/NVQ Level 3

Level 4 – first degree/ NVQ Level 4

Level 5 – post graduate/NVQ Level 5

SME : Small to Medium Sized Enterprise (organisations with between 1 and 250 employees).

SRB : Single Regeneration Budget

SSP : Sub-Regional Strategic Partnership.

Standards Fund : national funding available to support quality improvements in Further Education and work-based learning provision.

Tomlinson Reports : a series of research reports undertaken by the Tomlinson Committee culminating in the Learning Age 1998.