

# Learning and Skills Council South East Commissioning Statement 2010-11

## February 2010

Of interest to Local Authorities, providers  
and partner/stakeholders

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

## Foreword

The South East has the largest number of young people aged 15-19 (546,000) of any region in England. It also has the highest number of young people who achieve Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications at 19 and one of the lowest percentages of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). All of this is a great tribute to the work of providers and partners and of our young people themselves. However, if we are to achieve the Government's ambition of all 16-18 year olds participating in education and training by 2015 then there is still much to do.

Despite the recession the South East Region is still a strong and prosperous region. Operating firmly within the global economy it is an advanced, high income and high skill economy. It is also a region of differences, with some areas of significant deprivation with high unemployment and low achievement. If we are to make a real difference in these deprived communities we need to invest our energy and our resources to ensure that disadvantaged young people get the best opportunity to thrive and achieve. The importance of learning and skills is universally recognised and the role of the 14-19 reforms is crucial if we are to secure the best for all our young people and for the economy of the South East.

The South East has many opportunities to offer its young people and most take advantage of these, with 82 per cent staying on in education and training at age 16 and 17. But there are still too many who drop out of learning and become demotivated and disengaged. Wherever they live and whatever their backgrounds, they must all be provided with high quality opportunities to acquire skills, knowledge and the appropriate work ethic. This will enable them to succeed, achieve and contribute as effective citizens, employees and employers of the future. To deliver this aspiration we must work together through the current structural changes to find solutions to retain every young person in learning and inspire them to achieve.

The LSC will transfer its responsibilities along with many of its staff to the local authorities in April 2010 and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) will be launched. Much work has gone on to ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities and there is a real commitment to ensure that our young people secure the tangible benefits of these changes. We have been impressed by the commitment of providers, LSC, local authorities and the emerging Young People's Learning Agency to make the new system work well in order to ensure that young people benefit. We are confident that by 2015 all young people to the age of 18 will be able to remain in learning, achieve their personal ambitions and contribute effectively to the economy of the future.



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Chair  
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# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

## 1. Introduction and National Context

This Regional Commissioning Statement sets out the priorities and the context for local commissioning. It has been informed by the YPLA's regional Young People's Strategic Analysis and Local Authorities' Statements of Needs. The YPLA has been working closely with local authorities to ensure the Regional Commissioning Statement reflects the needs of their local area and their intentions for commissioning. This document will be of interest to a range of organisations including Local Authorities, Government Offices, SEEDA and providers and the voluntary sector.

### New Arrangements

New arrangements for the planning and funding of education and training for young people will come into effect from April 2010. From this time, the priorities for young people and the responsibility for the outcomes achieved by them will be shared by local authorities, the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) and the schools, colleges and training organisations that work directly with all those aged 16-19 and those aged 19-25 who are subject to a learning difficulty assessment<sup>1</sup>. The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will be responsible for increasing the number of Apprenticeships for all ages. Local authorities and the YPLA will work with NAS to make sure young people realise their Apprenticeship ambitions. They will work together to manage their responsibilities through the Regional Planning Group (RPG), who will take a strategic leadership role and support the co-ordination of activity across the region. The Regional Planning Group and local authorities will be supported in this by the Young People's Learning Agency.

The priorities for investment in adult skills in 2010-11 were published in *Skills Investment Strategy* by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) in November 2009.

The *16-19 Statement of Priorities and Investment Strategy* was published on 12 January 2010 jointly by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Learning and Skills Council. The national priorities have been summarised here. Further details of these priorities and the Investment and Allocations Strategy are in the national statement.

A full copy of the document is available at:

<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-statementofpriorities-jan10.pdf>

In planning for 2010/11, the LSC will make allocations direct to providers on behalf of the YPLA. In this transition year the LSC's Young People's Learning Division will work closely with local authorities, Sub-Regional Groupings and the Regional Planning Group to trial key elements of the National Commissioning Framework which will come into effect for 2011/12. The process will be based on the national formula and criteria described in the National Commissioning Framework (NCF). From April 2010, local authorities will actually deliver the allocations to providers.

### Increasing Investment in Young People

The 2009 Budget and the Pre-Budget Report of December 2009 signalled record levels of investment in the education and training of young people in England. The Government is investing nearly £8.5 billion in 2010-11 to fund learning for over 1.6 million young people – the highest level ever.

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<sup>1</sup> Financial year is written as, for example, 2010-11, and the academic year as 2010/11. References to young people aged 16-19 means those who had reached the age of 16 by 31 August 2010, but who had not reached the age of 19 by that date, but includes those whose 19<sup>th</sup> birthday falls within the academic year 2010/11; references to those aged 25 means up to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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## Public Service Agreement targets (NI 79, NI 80, NI 117)<sup>2</sup>

The Public Service Agreements (PSA) with targets specifically in respect of the young people covered by this statement of priorities are:

PSA 10 Increase the proportion of young people achieving:

- Level 2 at age 19 to 82 per cent in 2011 (from 73.9 per cent in 2007);
- Level 3 at age 19 to 54 per cent in 2011 (from 48.0 per cent in 2007).

PSA 14 Reduce the proportion of young people who are not in education, employment or training by 2 percentage points by 2010 (from 9.7 per cent in 2004).

## Guaranteeing Places and Increasing Participation

### Raising the Participation Age

The age of compulsory participation in education or training will be raised to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015. *Raising the Participation Age: supporting local areas to deliver*, published in December 2009, sets out what local authorities and other partners need to do by 2013, and the support available to start their preparations.

### September and January Guarantees

Local authorities have overall responsibility for delivery of the Guarantee at the local level, working in partnership with schools, colleges, training providers, Connexions services and, currently, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), to ensure that they prepare, support and enable all 16- and 17-year-olds to secure a suitable place in learning. Local Authority performance in delivering the Guarantees is measured in September and January each Academic Year.

### Reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training

In December 2009 the Government published *Investing in Potential*, a joint Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) strategy to increase the proportion of 16- to 24-year-olds in education, employment or training.

## Routes for Young People

### Apprenticeships (NI 79, 80, 91)

The Government wants to see continued growth in the number of young people undertaking an Apprenticeship, to meet the long-term ambition that at least one out of every five young people are undertaking an Apprenticeship programme. The ASCL Act will ensure that by 2013 an Apprenticeship place will be available to all suitably qualified young people, increasing the number and variety of places available.

### Diplomas (NI 90)

Diploma consortia will be delivering increased numbers of Diploma places by offering young people a choice of Phase 1, 2 and 3 qualifications. It is also a critical year for 14-19 Partnerships in terms of ensuring that they have robust plans to secure enough places to deliver the Diploma entitlement in 2013.

### Foundation Learning (NI 79, NI 91, NI 117)

By 2010/11, all local authorities should be delivering Foundation Learning for 14-19 year olds in their areas, building on previous programmes, evidence from pilots and the phased implementation of Foundation Learning in the post-16 sector. From 2010/11, the majority of 16-19 providers should be involved in its delivery, as Foundation Learning will encompass all existing programmes at Entry Level and Level 1 for 16- to 19-year-olds, including E2E.

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<sup>2</sup> For the benefit of local authorities any relevant indicators from the National Indicator (NI) Set are identified in brackets.

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## Functional Skills

Functional Skills qualifications are now available at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2. Providers are now expected to deliver these qualifications for young people wherever possible. The number of young people taking adult literacy or numeracy qualifications should fall significantly.

## Community service

It is the Government's ambition that, in time, all young people will complete at least 50 hours of community service by the time they reach the age of 19. The community service for 16- to 18-year-olds initiative will continue and be integrated into Foundation Learning from 2010/11 and, together with the local authority 14-16 pilots to be launched in early 2010, will inform future developments, including on the issues of capacity, delivery and recognition.

## Flexible provision

Flexible and responsive provision is essential if every young person is to be enabled to participate in learning. In order to meet the requirements of vulnerable young people provision may need to be available at different times of the day with a range of flexible start dates should be available from colleges and other providers throughout the year.

## Support for Young People

### Access to learning and transport

A short-term £12 million Transport Partnership Fund has helped local authorities to develop innovative and sustainable transport solutions. This fund will continue in 2010-11 and will be administered by the YPLA.

### Information, Advice and Guidance

Local authorities should take forward the DCSF information, advice and guidance (IAG) Strategy: *Quality, Choice and Aspiration*, to ensure that the right support and guidance is in place for all young people by 2013 as an essential component of the 14-19 Entitlement. Local authorities will be expected to follow the related Directions and Statutory Guidance which is expected to be issued in Spring 2010. Local authorities must work with and through 14-19 Partnerships to ensure that the Common Application Process is in place by September 2011 for all young people in Year 11. The Common Application Process links with the 14-19 Prospectus and aligns with the Apprenticeship Vacancies Online system to give young people ownership of the application process and equal access to all curriculum routes. .

### Work experience for people over compulsory school age

As part of the new vision for work experience and the review of the DCSF's work experience standard (as announced in October 2009 in *Quality, Choice and Aspiration*), more post-16 work experience with employers will be promoted. From 2010, local authorities will have the power to secure the provision of work experience for people aged 16-19 within their area, and for those aged 19-25 who are subject to a learning difficulty assessment.

### Learner voice

The 14-19 Partnerships are developing good practice that enables the learner voice to be heard at the local level. The Learning and Skills Council's YPLA Committee has committed itself to listening to the learner voice in its deliberations, and it is planned that this will continue after April 2010 when the YPLA begins to operate.

### Education of young offenders (NI 19, NI 45)

The YPLA will support local authorities in fulfilling their new responsibilities from 2010 to commission and fund education and training for young offenders in youth custody (this includes

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young people aged 10-17 and some 18-year-olds near the end of their sentence who remain in youth custody).

## Attainment and Progression

### Narrowing the attainment gaps (NI 81, NI 82, NI 148)

Narrowing the gap between the attainment of the most disadvantaged young people (including those who are looked after or who are care leavers) and their peers is a key policy priority. The YPLA will provide local authorities, sub-regional groupings and regional planning groups with data on, and strategic analysis of, the attainment gaps.

### Equality and diversity

The LSC will ensure that those providers it commissions comply with all the relevant legislation that relates to gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age and transgender equality, and the statutory codes of practice for education published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Equality and diversity will be embedded in the new commissioning arrangements.

### Raising the Quality of Provision for Young People

The Framework for Excellence (FfE) is the Government's performance assessment framework for further education colleges and post-16 education and training providers. The Framework for Excellence will be implemented in schools with sixth forms from 2010.

### Non-section 96 funding

In 2009 an impact assessment, using 2008/09 data, was undertaken of a proposal that external qualifications for young people should only be funded if they have been approved by the Secretary of State under Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. Following consideration of the results of this impact assessment, funding will be withdrawn from 31 July 2010 from over 1,000 qualifications that are currently eligible for funding. A list of those qualifications will be published on the LSC's website in January 2010.

### 14-19 Qualification Strategy

The 14-19 Qualification Strategy is designed to ensure by 2013 the majority of young people will access qualifications through one of the four national learning routes: Apprenticeships; Diplomas; Foundation Learning; and GCSEs/A levels. Providers are responsible for ensuring that they deliver only those qualifications approved by the Secretary of State under section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and should also be working to align their offer to the four national routes.

### Level 2 to Level 3 conversion

Around a quarter of young people who achieve Level 2 do not go on to achieve Level 3. This includes some 30 per cent of those who achieve eight GCSEs at grade A\*-C and 40 per cent of those who achieve seven GCSEs at grades A\*-C. Local authorities should consider with their 14-19 Partnerships how such young people can be best supported to achieve Level 3.

## Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

### Budgetary control

A key challenge for local authorities from 2010 will be to maintain control of the budgets to support learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD). In particular, they should, through Children's Trusts, seek to ensure that third-party contributions are secured wherever appropriate.

### Roles and responsibilities

The ASCL Act fundamentally changes the responsibilities of local authorities for learners with LDD. Local authorities become the sole accountable bodies for all the outcomes and services for learners with LDD aged 0-19 and for those aged 19-25 who are subject to a learning difficulty assessment. Local authorities must secure appropriate provision for these learners.

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## **Local provision and inclusion in mainstream learning**

The inclusion of more young people with LDD in mainstream learning (for example in FE colleges) will remain a key priority. Local authorities should be working towards the development of high-quality provision to enable learners to participate locally (rather than be reliant on residential provision which can often be some considerable distance from the learner's home).

## **Employment and access to Apprenticeships**

By September 2010, providers will no longer be funded to deliver work-preparation programmes for learners with LDD that do not focus on learning in the workplace and the supported employment model.

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## 2. Social and Economic Context

### Economy

Initial signs suggest that the economy in the South East is one of the most resistant to recession given its relatively strong performance in high value added sectors; however the recession is having some negative effect on business performance and employment. In late 2008 manufacturing and construction were most affected by the economic recession, but since then almost every sector of the economy has experienced some business failures and job losses.

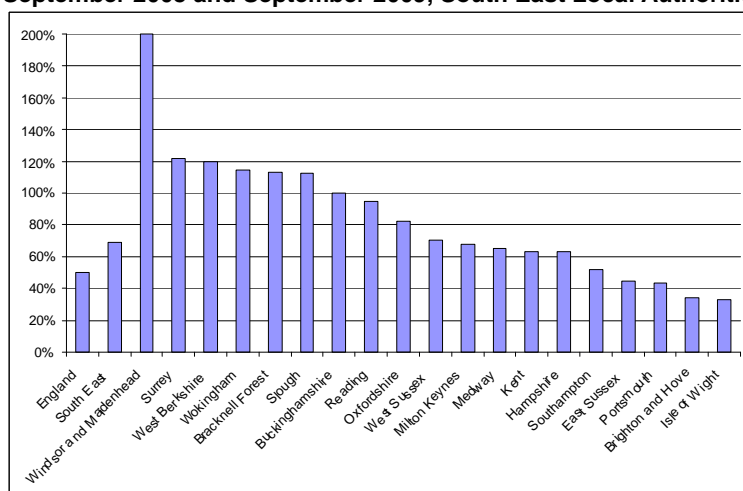
### Unemployment

Youth unemployment has increased, but this varies across the region and in absolute terms, unemployment levels in the South East appear likely to remain lower than in other regions.<sup>3</sup>

As at September 2009 there were just over 6,300 young people under 19 claiming job seekers allowance, an increase of 69 per cent compared with the same period in 2008. However the rate of increase varied considerably across the region – from an increase of 200 per cent in Windsor and Maidenhead to 34 per cent in Brighton and Hove.

Unemployment amongst young people has been on the increase since before the recession, partly because young people are more likely to be employed in more vulnerable low-paid, low skilled jobs.

**Graph 1: Percentage increase in the number of young people (aged 19 and under) claiming JSA between September 2008 and September 2009, South East Local Authorities**



Source: Department for Work and Pensions, Claimant Count

### Employment

The recession has mostly affected industries with male-dominated low-skilled occupations such as the manufacturing and construction sectors. Research indicates that young men are disproportionately likely to be affected by the recession as they both leave school with lower levels of qualifications and are more likely to be employed in the sectors which are hardest hit by the recession.

The recent exodus of migrant workers has created local pockets of demand for low skilled workers, particularly in warehousing and the hospitality industry. A bigger labour pool in industries suffering large scale redundancy has made it easier for employers to recruit skilled staff, resulting in reduced training opportunities for trainees and apprentices and less interest in employing young

<sup>3</sup> LSC/ SEEDA, 'Impact of recession on the labour market in the South East', 2009

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inexperienced workers. There is evidence that employers are also placing more emphasis on qualifications to discriminate between candidates for vacancies as they are inundated with job applications.

There are 3 main sectors that dominate employment in the region, public administration, education & health; distribution, hotels and restaurants; and banking, finance and insurance. The recession has escalated skills shortages in specific engineering skills, high level IT skills, and skills in some areas of manufacturing, while specific occupations in demand include town planners, social workers, teachers, and head chefs.<sup>4</sup>

## Areas of Deprivation

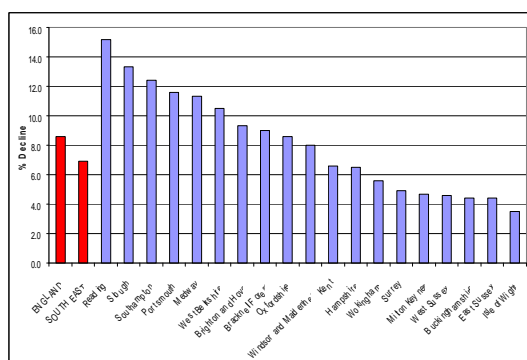
Although the South East is one of the UK's most prosperous regions, there are pockets of severe deprivation. In particular, parts of the coastal fringe of the region perform significantly below regional and national averages. In the South East, 318 lower super output areas were in the 20 per cent most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England. Sussex contains the most deprived area in the South East. Hastings is the 31st most deprived authority in England, followed by Thanet in Kent (65<sup>th</sup>) and Brighton in Hove (79<sup>th</sup>).

Just over 1 in 10 LSOAs in the region are among the 20 per cent most deprived areas in England in terms of educations, skills and training. Whilst these are located across the region, there are significant pockets most notably along the Sussex coast and in parts of Kent and Medway.

## 16-18 Population trends

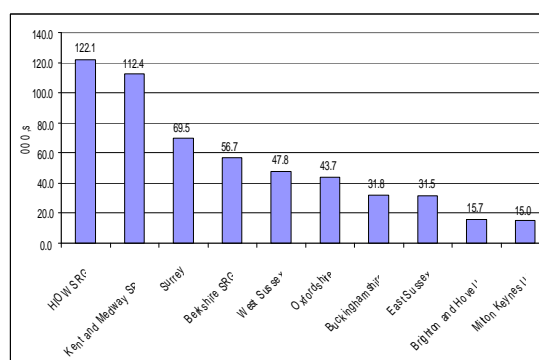
The population of 15-19 year olds in the South East is predicted to decline by 4.0 per cent between 2008 and 2012, which is less than the decline for England (5.1 per cent). This represents a reduction of 22,000 15-19 year olds over this time frame. However, the rate of decline differs across the region. Measures to increase the number of young people participating in learning to achieve full participation for 17 year olds by 2013 and 18 year olds by 2015 are expected to result in an increase in the number in education and training, despite the overall fall in the population.

**Graph 2: Population decline for 15-19 year olds by local authorities, 2008 – 2015**



Source: ONS, 2008 based sub-national population projections

**Graph 3: Population estimates for 15-19 year olds by sub-regional groups, South East, 2008**



Source: ONS, mid-year population estimates, 2008

## Participation

The South East has the largest cohort in education - 181,000. Despite increasing numbers of young people who are participating, the current 82 per cent of 16 and 17 year olds in learning is below the national average (83 per cent).<sup>5</sup>

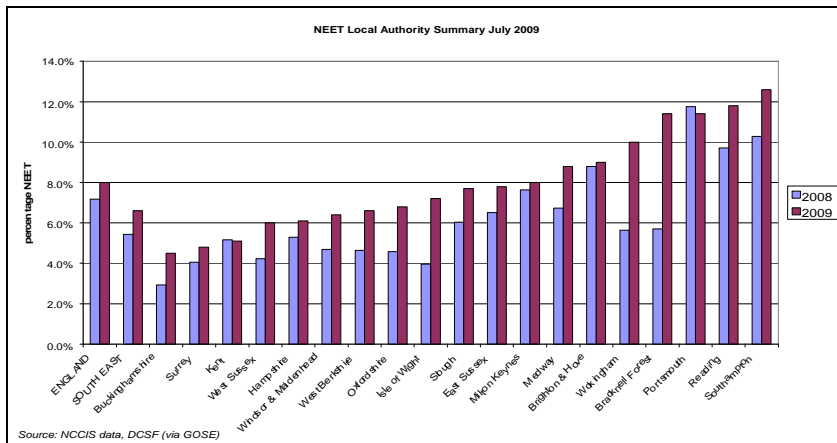
<sup>4</sup> LSC/ SEEDA, 'Impact of recession on the labour market in the South East', 2009

<sup>5</sup> The fall in the number of young people participating in education between 2006 and 2007 is among 16 year olds; the number of 17 year olds increased slightly.

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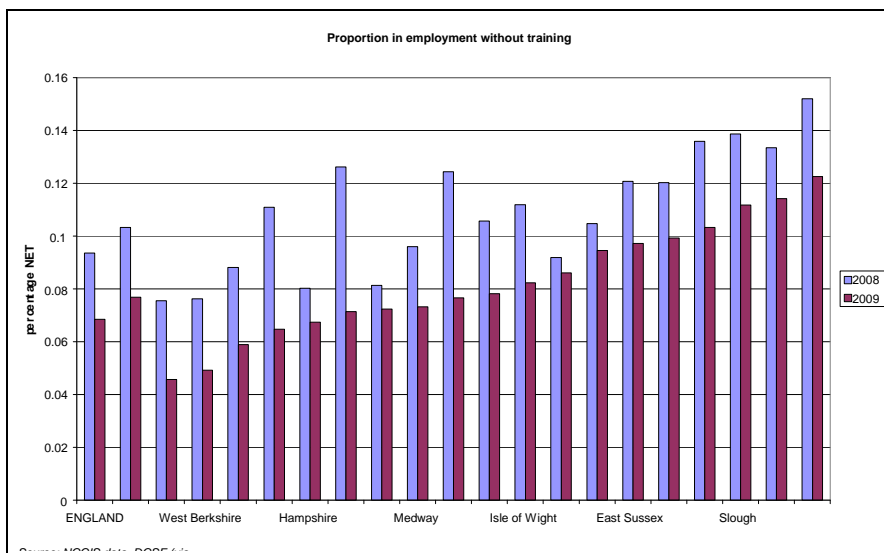
In July 2009, 13,040 (6.6 percent) young people were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in the South East (joint lowest with the South West). However, this is a rise of 1.2 percentage points from the figure for the same period in 2008. Most of the local authorities in the South East have NEET proportions that are below the national average but 7 local authorities have NEET percentages above the national average ; Medway, Brighton and Hove, Wokingham, Bracknell Forest, Portsmouth, Reading, and Southampton

**Graph 4: NEET local authority summary July 2009**



Whilst the proportion of young people in employment without training South East has decreased (from 10.3 per cent in 2008 to 7.7 per cent in 2009), along with all other regions, it still has the highest number of young people in this group (15,500 in July 2009).

**Graph 5: In employment without training local authority summary July 2009**



Estimates also suggest that up to August 2009 there were just over 6,000 teenage mothers in the region, but only 13 per cent took up Care to Learn support. This is well below the national average of 16 per cent and is one of the lowest percentages of young people accessing this support in the country.

## Attainment

The proportion of 16 year olds reaching Level 2 in the South East is 59 per cent in 2007/08, significantly higher than the national rate of 55 per cent. However, the proportion achieving Level 2

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varied across the South East, from 66 per cent in Windsor and Maidenhead to 47 per cent on the Isle of Wight.

The South East had the highest percentage of young people attaining Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications by the age of 19 (79.6 per cent and 56.9 per cent respectively). However, there were wide variations across the region; 11 of the 19 authorities had Level 2 attainment rates at 19 which were below the national rate and 7 were below the national rate at Level 3.

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## 3. Regional Priorities for 16-18 participation and success

In the South East we are committed to continue to work together to provide a high quality range of opportunities which will engage and inspire young people to continue to participate in learning and achieve their full potential. We will continue to work together to provide an increasingly inclusive, flexible, personalised and engaging high quality curriculum offer which will motivate young people, increase their aspirations, improve their success and help them to progress to a productive and fulfilling adult life.

### Participation

**Priority 1: Develop a curriculum offer that delivers the full entitlement for all young people and inspires them to participate in preparation for the Raising of the Participation age.**

#### Challenges

The South East has the largest cohort in education, 181,000. Despite increasing numbers of young people who are participating, currently only 82 per cent of 16 and 17 year olds are in learning which is below the national average. This will need to rise to 100 per cent of 17 year olds by 2013 and of 17 and 18 year olds by 2015. Full participation will require a significantly different mix of provision to engage all young people.

All young people aged 16-18 have a guarantee of a fully funded Level 2 and Level 3 learning provision. The current data on the September Guarantee<sup>6</sup> offer rate differed across the region, ranging from 97 per cent in Slough to 87 per cent in Milton Keynes.

Although the South East is one of UK's most prosperous regions there are pockets of severe deprivation, particularly in Sussex. This is also the case for the education, skills and training deprivation in the region, which is most notably along the Sussex coast and in parts of Kent and Medway.

#### Commissioning response

- Develop a more flexible curriculum with multiple entry points that are easily accessible to all learners. (Including Schools, Further Education, Apprenticeships and Entry to Employment/Foundation Learning routes).
- Work with colleges, schools and independent providers to make significant shifts towards the 4 national routes in the 14-19 qualification strategy, to increase opportunities provided by Foundation Learning<sup>7</sup>, Diplomas<sup>8</sup> and Apprenticeships whilst moving away from standalone qualifications.
- Develop a broader Level 3/4 curriculum offer to fully engage 17/18 year olds.
- Develop plans for the right mix and balance of provision to support the travel to learn patterns of young people.
- Increase participation through providing high quality impartial support and guidance and promoting the Area Wide Prospectus, Common Application Process and Apprenticeship Vacancies on line.

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<sup>6</sup> The September Guarantee was that, by the end of September 2007, every 16 year old who wished to stay in learning would have received an offer of a suitable place. The guarantee has since been extended to all 17 year olds in 2009.

<sup>7</sup> N79,N91,N117

<sup>8</sup> N190

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- Develop new approaches to ensure all young people 16-19 have a period of work experience as outlined in the national IAG strategy.
- Give young people a voice which builds their confidence, self-esteem and motivation and encourages them to develop effective citizenship and to be informed about and influence the provision available to them.
- Direct resources towards re-generation hotspots, negotiate and prioritise expansion of post 16 foundation learning and full Level 2 opportunities in specific subject sectors aligned to sustainable local employment opportunities.

## **Priority 2: Put in place strategies and plans to reduce the number of young people NEET and in employment without training.**

### **Challenges**

In the South East, as elsewhere in the country, the number of young people who are not in education, employment and training is rising and 13,040 young people were NEET in July 2009. The biggest increase has been of 17 year olds. This could, in part, be attributed to the economic downturn which has led to a fall of young people in employment from 21.1 per cent to 15 per cent from 2008 to 2009.

In July 2009, 15,500 (7.7 per cent) young people were in employment without training, which is the highest number of young people in this group of all regions. The percentage is also higher than the national average. The highest proportions of young people in work without training were in Portsmouth, Bracknell Forest and Oxfordshire. It should be recognised that this group will include young people qualified to Level 2/3 as well as those with low or no qualifications. Provision to support those young people in work without training will need to engage employers and the National Apprenticeship Service.

Flexible provision to support those young people in the NEET group is likely to lead to a higher unit cost; smarter use of available funds will be needed.

### **Commissioning response**

- Ensure effective implementation of September Guarantee procedures, to reduce the number of “no offers made” for young people aged 17 and ensure they have an offer to continue or re-engage in learning.
- Prioritise funding to commission flexible, responsive and inclusive provision that is made available through-out the year with in year starts and taster programmes.
- Target provision in NEET hotspots including many parts of the coastal strip, Brighton & Hove, Portsmouth, Southampton, Medway and the urban area of Reading.
- Support providers to evolve from the Entry to Employment programme into Foundation Learning and build capacity for personalised learning programmes based on progression pathways that ultimately leads to employment for young people NEET.
- Work with providers to broaden Foundation Learning and alternative programme provision to engage learners not currently engaged in education and training and to retain those most at risk of becoming NEET , including vulnerable learner groups such as care leavers, teenage parents and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or SEN statements.
- Offer high quality and effective IAG to ensure vulnerable young people of all abilities receive advice on the full range of options available to them and work with other agencies to ensure these young people are provided with appropriate support to retain them in learning.
- Identify those young people at risk of becoming NEET and those in the employment without training group and develop strategies and programmes to engage them in learning.
- NAS to work with employers and young people to promote Apprenticeships for those in employment without training.

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- Support the expansion and better targeting of 14-16 foundation learning, alternative and engagement programmes, including Key Stage 4 (KS4) engagement programme and Young Apprenticeships, to bridge the divide at age 16 and support post 16 participation, particularly with vulnerable learner cohorts.
- Work with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and NAS to develop the 14-19 input for the ESF Joint Co-Financing Plan for 2011-13 and better align ESF programmes to support those in the NEET group and in employment without training through targeted programmes.

## Priority 3: Improve access to local provision for learners with high support needs and from vulnerable groups (inc LLDD)

### Challenges:

From 2010/11 local authorities will become the sole accountable bodies for learners with LDD with a duty to collaborate in commissioning provision. The challenge lies in meeting the local needs and cost of an increasing number of young people with LDD and others with high support needs such as Young Offenders, those in Care and teenage parents.

The NEET rate among young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities increased by 4.1 percentage points in the South East. This is higher than the national average of 3.4 percentage points.

For the academic year 2008/09, there were 473 LLDD residents in the South East attending independent specialist providers (ISP). Spending on LLDD in ISPs in 2008/09 was £26,749,000 an increase of 5.6 per cent compared with 2007/08 (£25,328,000). Of the 473 residents in learning, 240 were attending institutions outside the region.

The latest L04 data indicates that there are currently 264 learners participating in 3 South East Youth Offender Institutions (YOI). A key challenge for 2010/11 will be to ensure appropriate liaison between home LAs (resident) and host LAs (place of YOI).

During 2008/09 just 13 per cent of the total cohort of teenage mothers benefited from Care to Learn scheme (16 per cent nationally).

### Commissioning responses

- Support the development of collaborative arrangements between ISPs and local providers to commission appropriate provision for LDD learners.
- Support opportunities for collaborative working across the post 16 provider network; addressing gaps, establishing clear progression pathways and developing local provision to reduce the number of out of area placements.
- Support FE colleges and other providers to increase the range of high quality 16-25 mainstream local provision for learners with LDD to include building effective provision in the area which supports progression to independent living and employment.
- Improve the use of ALS and dLSF and other learner support funds to increase the number of learners with high support needs to participate in local mainstream provision.
- Ensure young people are aware of the financial support available and how they can access it, including EMA and Care to Learn childcare support.
- Work with NAS/SFA to improve access to Apprenticeships for vulnerable learners (inc LDD) and BME groups where participation is low.
- LAs to develop a coherent Transport Policy to facilitate participation, particularly by those people with LDD up to the age of 25 and the 14-19 entitlement.

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- YPLA to provide support to LAs with host providers for YOIs (Huntercombe, Josephine Butler unit and Cookham Wood) and develop and co-ordinate networks to facilitate the effective delivery between host and home LAs<sup>9</sup>.
- Improve the targeting of teenage parents and care leavers to support cohort participation post 16 (linked to Care to Learn take-up).

## Priority 4: Build significant growth in Apprenticeships for young people

### Challenges:

The key challenge for Apprenticeships centres on engaging more employers and increasing Apprenticeship provision in order to meet the 2020 trajectory of 1 in 5 16-18 year olds undertaking an Apprenticeship. There will be an additional challenge to engage more employers in a more difficult economic climate.

In order to achieve this ambition, the quality of information, advice and guidance will be key to promoting Apprenticeships as one of the four key routes for young people, alongside the more traditional academic mainstream options.

In 2007/08 more than 13,700 young people living in the South East started an Apprenticeship, with around three-quarters (78 per cent) at Level 2 Apprenticeship and the remaining at Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship. In 2008/09 (period 12) just over 12,000 young people resident in the South East started an Apprenticeship. This represents a fall in learner starts of 13 per cent over the previous year. However, the fall in learner starts is not uniform across the region. The change in starts varies from a 23 per cent decline in West Sussex to a 10 per cent increase in Bracknell Forest.

The Skills for Business Network, The Skills Development Agency and the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils suggest that half of the growth targets for Apprenticeships will come from the current employer places, 14 per cent will be new places with the same employer and over a third will come from new places, with new employers, often in sectors where there is not a significant tradition of Apprenticeships.

### Commissioning responses

- Identify potential gaps in provision and to broaden the Apprenticeship offer to provide access to a greater range of local provision informed by local economic need.
- Provide local labour market intelligence and Apprenticeship profiles to support local authorities towards ensuring that Apprenticeship places are more closely aligned to key sectors and identified growth sectors in the local economy.
- Co-ordinated employer engagement to increase the demand from employers for Apprenticeships and in particular the development of the public sector offer.
- Support and encourage further development of collaborative working to increase the breadth of offer and deliver the highest quality and choice of provision and use resources most effectively and secure alternative funding resources, including ESF.
- Work with providers to continue the improvement in Success Rates for Apprenticeships.
- Promote and increase awareness of Apprenticeships with a particular focus on vulnerable learners and with BME groups, where participation is low.
- Promote the progression for young people to a Level 3 Apprenticeship. From April 2011 all Level 3/4 frameworks will have UCAS tariff points.

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<sup>9</sup> NI 19, NI 45

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

## Quality & Achievement

### Priority 5: Raise the attainment of young people, in particular to narrow the attainment gap

#### Challenges:

The South East region has already exceeded the <sup>10</sup>PSA target for 2008 for young people achieving a Level 2 and Level 3 qualification at aged 19 and continues to have the highest level of attainment for young people for both Level 2 at 79.6 per cent (national 76.7 per cent) and Level 3 at 56.9 per cent (national 49.8 per cent) at age 19. However, there were wide variations across the region; 11 of the 19 authorities had Level 2 attainment rates below the national rate and 7 were below at Level 3.

Research shows that the gap between those who are eligible for free school meals and those who are not is over 20 percentage points at every stage at which attainment is measured.

Research also shows that 80 percent of young people who achieve a Level 2 including Maths and English go on to achieve a Level 3. In the South East just 53 per cent of young people achieved 5+ A\*-C GCSEs including Maths and English, compared to the overall GCSE results (5+A\*-C grades) of 69 per cent.

In the South East there are currently 6 providers with a Notice to Improve and operating below minimum levels of performance in some areas of their provision. This will need to be managed to ensure underperformance is reduced and only high quality provision is commissioned.

Inspection grades are improving and analysis of latest Ofsted inspection grades for General Further Education Colleges showed that 95 per cent of the providers inspected were graded at least Satisfactory for Overall Effectiveness. However, we need to aim for a higher proportion of providers achieving good or excellent grades.

#### Commissioning responses

- Work to improve the Apprenticeship success rates in the South East to 75 per cent based on residency. Between 2007/08 and 2008/09, success rates in the region moved from 64.1 per cent to 69.7 per cent (against a 69.6 per cent national average).
- Work with Schools and Further Education providers to increase the percentage of 16 year olds who achieve Level 2 in English and Mathematics; and by further developing alternative and vocational Key Stage 4 provision.
- Work with the SFA and providers to reduce the proportion of guided learning hours (GLH) that fall below Minimum Levels of Performance (MLP) and commission high quality provision to improve progression and attainment.
- Local authorities monitor school sixth forms' performance, using Framework for Excellence where appropriate, to agree an improvement plan and use of School Improvement resources.
- SFA work with the YPLA and local authorities to support the implementation of Framework for Excellence in a way that develops a self-critical provider network with a focus on quality improvement and development of better progression routes to improve attainment of full Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications by aged 19 and progress to higher education.
- More analysis will be undertaken by the YPLA to support LAs to understand the learner characteristics and to identify what actions are needed to narrow the attainment gap for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (using eligibility for free school meals as a proxy).

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<sup>10</sup> NI 79, NI 80

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

## Glossary

**ADCS:** The Association of Directors of Children's Services  
**BME:** Black and Minority Ethnic  
**CEL:** Centre for Excellence in Leadership  
**CSR:** Comprehensive Spending Review  
**CYPP:** Children and Young People's Plan  
**DCSF:** Department of Children, Schools and Families  
**DIUS:** Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills  
**DWP:** Department for Work and Pensions  
**E2E:** Entry to Employment  
**EDIMS:** Equality and diversity impact measures  
**EMA:** Education Maintenance Allowance  
**ESF:** European Social Fund  
**ESOL:** English for speakers of other languages  
**ESP:** Employability Skills Programme  
**FE:** further education  
**FLT:** Foundation Learning Tier  
**FSB:** Federation of Small Businesses  
**Full Level 2:** equates to five GCSEs at grades A\* to C  
**Full Level 3:** equates to two GCE A-level passes or equivalent  
**GLH:** guided learning hours  
**GOSE:** Government Office for the South East  
**HE:** higher education  
**ISP:** independent specialist provider  
**JCP:** Jobcentre Plus  
**JSA:** Job Seeker's Allowance  
**LA:** Local Authority  
**LAA:** local area agreement  
**LLDD:** Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities  
**LLUK:** Lifelong Learning UK  
**LSOA:** Lower Super Output Area  
**MAA:** Multi-area agreement  
**MLP:** Minimum Level of Performance  
**NEET:** not in education, employment or training  
**MLP:** Minimum Level of Performance  
**MOG:** Machinery of Government  
**NAS:** National Apprenticeship Service  
**NIS:** National Indicator Set  
**NLDC:** Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities  
**NOMS:** National Offender Management Service  
**NSA:** National Skills Academy  
**NVQ:** National Vocational Qualification  
**Ofsted:** Office for Standards in Education  
**OLASS:** Offender Learning and Skills Service  
**PCDL:** personal and community development learning  
**Progression pathways:** high-quality, coherent curriculum offer for entry and Level 1  
**PSA:** Public Service Agreement  
**QCF:** Qualifications and Credit Framework  
**QIA:** Quality Improvement Agency  
**RDA:** Regional Development Agency  
**RES:** Regional Economic Strategy  
**RPA:** Raising of Compulsory Participation Age  
**RQIP:** Regional Quality Improvement Partnerships

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**S6F:** School Sixth Forms

**SES:** Single Equality Scheme

**SEEDA:** South East England Development Agency

**SFA:** Skills Funding Agency

**SRG:** Sub Regional Groups

**SSC:** Sector Skills Council

**YOI:** Young Offenders Institution

**YPLA:** Young People's Learning Agency

**WBL:** Work Based Learning

**Learning and Skills Council**

**South East Regional Office**

**Learning and Skills Council**

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**Learning and  
Skills Council  
South East  
Commissioning  
Statement  
2010-11**

**February 2010**

Of interest to Local Authorities, providers  
and partner/stakeholders

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

## Foreword

The South East has the largest number of young people aged 15-19 (546,000) of any region in England. It also has the highest number of young people who achieve Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications at 19 and one of the lowest percentages of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). All of this is a great tribute to the work of providers and partners and of our young people themselves. However, if we are to achieve the Government's ambition of all 16-18 year olds participating in education and training by 2015 then there is still much to do.

Despite the recession the South East Region is still a strong and prosperous region. Operating firmly within the global economy it is an advanced, high income and high skill economy. It is also a region of differences, with some areas of significant deprivation with high unemployment and low achievement. If we are to make a real difference in these deprived communities we need to invest our energy and our resources to ensure that disadvantaged young people get the best opportunity to thrive and achieve. The importance of learning and skills is universally recognised and the role of the 14-19 reforms is crucial if we are to secure the best for all our young people and for the economy of the South East.

The South East has many opportunities to offer its young people and most take advantage of these, with 82 per cent staying on in education and training at age 16 and 17. But there are still too many who drop out of learning and become demotivated and disengaged. Wherever they live and whatever their backgrounds, they must all be provided with high quality opportunities to acquire skills, knowledge and the appropriate work ethic. This will enable them to succeed, achieve and contribute as effective citizens, employees and employers of the future. To deliver this aspiration we must work together through the current structural changes to find solutions to retain every young person in learning and inspire them to achieve.

The LSC will transfer its responsibilities along with many of its staff to the local authorities in April 2010 and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) will be launched. Much work has gone on to ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities and there is a real commitment to ensure that our young people secure the tangible benefits of these changes. We have been impressed by the commitment of providers, LSC, local authorities and the emerging Young People's Learning Agency to make the new system work well in order to ensure that young people benefit. We are confident that by 2015 all young people to the age of 18 will be able to remain in learning, achieve their personal ambitions and contribute effectively to the economy of the future.



**Sue Samson**

Regional Director of Young People's Learning  
LSC South East



**Clive Webster**

Chair  
Regional Planning Group

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

## 1. Introduction and National Context

This Regional Commissioning Statement sets out the priorities and the context for local commissioning. It has been informed by the YPLA's regional Young People's Strategic Analysis and Local Authorities' Statements of Needs. The YPLA has been working closely with local authorities to ensure the Regional Commissioning Statement reflects the needs of their local area and their intentions for commissioning. This document will be of interest to a range of organisations including Local Authorities, Government Offices, SEEDA and providers and the voluntary sector.

### New Arrangements

New arrangements for the planning and funding of education and training for young people will come into effect from April 2010. From this time, the priorities for young people and the responsibility for the outcomes achieved by them will be shared by local authorities, the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) and the schools, colleges and training organisations that work directly with all those aged 16-19 and those aged 19-25 who are subject to a learning difficulty assessment<sup>1</sup>. The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will be responsible for increasing the number of Apprenticeships for all ages. Local authorities and the YPLA will work with NAS to make sure young people realise their Apprenticeship ambitions. They will work together to manage their responsibilities through the Regional Planning Group (RPG), who will take a strategic leadership role and support the co-ordination of activity across the region. The Regional Planning Group and local authorities will be supported in this by the Young People's Learning Agency.

The priorities for investment in adult skills in 2010-11 were published in *Skills Investment Strategy* by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) in November 2009.

The *16-19 Statement of Priorities and Investment Strategy* was published on 12 January 2010 jointly by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Learning and Skills Council. The national priorities have been summarised here. Further details of these priorities and the Investment and Allocations Strategy are in the national statement.

A full copy of the document is available at:

<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-statementofpriorities-jan10.pdf>

In planning for 2010/11, the LSC will make allocations direct to providers on behalf of the YPLA. In this transition year the LSC's Young People's Learning Division will work closely with local authorities, Sub-Regional Groupings and the Regional Planning Group to trial key elements of the National Commissioning Framework which will come into effect for 2011/12. The process will be based on the national formula and criteria described in the National Commissioning Framework (NCF). From April 2010, local authorities will actually deliver the allocations to providers.

### Increasing Investment in Young People

The 2009 Budget and the Pre-Budget Report of December 2009 signalled record levels of investment in the education and training of young people in England. The Government is investing nearly £8.5 billion in 2010-11 to fund learning for over 1.6 million young people – the highest level ever.

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<sup>1</sup> Financial year is written as, for example, 2010-11, and the academic year as 2010/11. References to young people aged 16-19 means those who had reached the age of 16 by 31 August 2010, but who had not reached the age of 19 by that date, but includes those whose 19<sup>th</sup> birthday falls within the academic year 2010/11; references to those aged 25 means up to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

## Public Service Agreement targets (NI 79, NI 80, NI 117)<sup>2</sup>

The Public Service Agreements (PSA) with targets specifically in respect of the young people covered by this statement of priorities are:

PSA 10 Increase the proportion of young people achieving:

- Level 2 at age 19 to 82 per cent in 2011 (from 73.9 per cent in 2007);
- Level 3 at age 19 to 54 per cent in 2011 (from 48.0 per cent in 2007).

PSA 14 Reduce the proportion of young people who are not in education, employment or training by 2 percentage points by 2010 (from 9.7 per cent in 2004).

## Guaranteeing Places and Increasing Participation

### Raising the Participation Age

The age of compulsory participation in education or training will be raised to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015. *Raising the Participation Age: supporting local areas to deliver*, published in December 2009, sets out what local authorities and other partners need to do by 2013, and the support available to start their preparations.

### September and January Guarantees

Local authorities have overall responsibility for delivery of the Guarantee at the local level, working in partnership with schools, colleges, training providers, Connexions services and, currently, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), to ensure that they prepare, support and enable all 16- and 17-year-olds to secure a suitable place in learning. Local Authority performance in delivering the Guarantees is measured in September and January each Academic Year.

### Reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training

In December 2009 the Government published *Investing in Potential*, a joint Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) strategy to increase the proportion of 16- to 24-year-olds in education, employment or training.

## Routes for Young People

### Apprenticeships (NI 79, 80, 91)

The Government wants to see continued growth in the number of young people undertaking an Apprenticeship, to meet the long-term ambition that at least one out of every five young people are undertaking an Apprenticeship programme. The ASCL Act will ensure that by 2013 an Apprenticeship place will be available to all suitably qualified young people, increasing the number and variety of places available.

### Diplomas (NI 90)

Diploma consortia will be delivering increased numbers of Diploma places by offering young people a choice of Phase 1, 2 and 3 qualifications. It is also a critical year for 14-19 Partnerships in terms of ensuring that they have robust plans to secure enough places to deliver the Diploma entitlement in 2013.

### Foundation Learning (NI 79, NI 91, NI 117)

By 2010/11, all local authorities should be delivering Foundation Learning for 14-19 year olds in their areas, building on previous programmes, evidence from pilots and the phased implementation of Foundation Learning in the post-16 sector. From 2010/11, the majority of 16-19 providers should be involved in its delivery, as Foundation Learning will encompass all existing programmes at Entry Level and Level 1 for 16- to 19-year-olds, including E2E.

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<sup>2</sup> For the benefit of local authorities any relevant indicators from the National Indicator (NI) Set are identified in brackets.

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

## Functional Skills

Functional Skills qualifications are now available at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2. Providers are now expected to deliver these qualifications for young people wherever possible. The number of young people taking adult literacy or numeracy qualifications should fall significantly.

## Community service

It is the Government's ambition that, in time, all young people will complete at least 50 hours of community service by the time they reach the age of 19. The community service for 16- to 18-year-olds initiative will continue and be integrated into Foundation Learning from 2010/11 and, together with the local authority 14-16 pilots to be launched in early 2010, will inform future developments, including on the issues of capacity, delivery and recognition.

## Flexible provision

Flexible and responsive provision is essential if every young person is to be enabled to participate in learning. In order to meet the requirements of vulnerable young people provision may need to be available at different times of the day with a range of flexible start dates should be available from colleges and other providers throughout the year.

## Support for Young People

### Access to learning and transport

A short-term £12 million Transport Partnership Fund has helped local authorities to develop innovative and sustainable transport solutions. This fund will continue in 2010-11 and will be administered by the YPLA.

### Information, Advice and Guidance

Local authorities should take forward the DCSF information, advice and guidance (IAG) Strategy: *Quality, Choice and Aspiration*, to ensure that the right support and guidance is in place for all young people by 2013 as an essential component of the 14-19 Entitlement. Local authorities will be expected to follow the related Directions and Statutory Guidance which is expected to be issued in Spring 2010. Local authorities must work with and through 14-19 Partnerships to ensure that the Common Application Process is in place by September 2011 for all young people in Year 11. The Common Application Process links with the 14-19 Prospectus and aligns with the Apprenticeship Vacancies Online system to give young people ownership of the application process and equal access to all curriculum routes. .

### Work experience for people over compulsory school age

As part of the new vision for work experience and the review of the DCSF's work experience standard (as announced in October 2009 in *Quality, Choice and Aspiration*), more post-16 work experience with employers will be promoted. From 2010, local authorities will have the power to secure the provision of work experience for people aged 16-19 within their area, and for those aged 19-25 who are subject to a learning difficulty assessment.

### Learner voice

The 14-19 Partnerships are developing good practice that enables the learner voice to be heard at the local level. The Learning and Skills Council's YPLA Committee has committed itself to listening to the learner voice in its deliberations, and it is planned that this will continue after April 2010 when the YPLA begins to operate.

### Education of young offenders (NI 19, NI 45)

The YPLA will support local authorities in fulfilling their new responsibilities from 2010 to commission and fund education and training for young offenders in youth custody (this includes

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

young people aged 10-17 and some 18-year-olds near the end of their sentence who remain in youth custody).

## Attainment and Progression

### Narrowing the attainment gaps (NI 81, NI 82, NI 148)

Narrowing the gap between the attainment of the most disadvantaged young people (including those who are looked after or who are care leavers) and their peers is a key policy priority. The YPLA will provide local authorities, sub-regional groupings and regional planning groups with data on, and strategic analysis of, the attainment gaps.

### Equality and diversity

The LSC will ensure that those providers it commissions comply with all the relevant legislation that relates to gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age and transgender equality, and the statutory codes of practice for education published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Equality and diversity will be embedded in the new commissioning arrangements.

### Raising the Quality of Provision for Young People

The Framework for Excellence (FfE) is the Government's performance assessment framework for further education colleges and post-16 education and training providers. The Framework for Excellence will be implemented in schools with sixth forms from 2010.

### Non-section 96 funding

In 2009 an impact assessment, using 2008/09 data, was undertaken of a proposal that external qualifications for young people should only be funded if they have been approved by the Secretary of State under Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. Following consideration of the results of this impact assessment, funding will be withdrawn from 31 July 2010 from over 1,000 qualifications that are currently eligible for funding. A list of those qualifications will be published on the LSC's website in January 2010.

### 14-19 Qualification Strategy

The 14-19 Qualification Strategy is designed to ensure by 2013 the majority of young people will access qualifications through one of the four national learning routes: Apprenticeships; Diplomas; Foundation Learning; and GCSEs/A levels. Providers are responsible for ensuring that they deliver only those qualifications approved by the Secretary of State under section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and should also be working to align their offer to the four national routes.

### Level 2 to Level 3 conversion

Around a quarter of young people who achieve Level 2 do not go on to achieve Level 3. This includes some 30 per cent of those who achieve eight GCSEs at grade A\*-C and 40 per cent of those who achieve seven GCSEs at grades A\*-C. Local authorities should consider with their 14-19 Partnerships how such young people can be best supported to achieve Level 3.

## Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

### Budgetary control

A key challenge for local authorities from 2010 will be to maintain control of the budgets to support learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD). In particular, they should, through Children's Trusts, seek to ensure that third-party contributions are secured wherever appropriate.

### Roles and responsibilities

The ASCL Act fundamentally changes the responsibilities of local authorities for learners with LDD. Local authorities become the sole accountable bodies for all the outcomes and services for learners with LDD aged 0-19 and for those aged 19-25 who are subject to a learning difficulty assessment. Local authorities must secure appropriate provision for these learners.

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## **Local provision and inclusion in mainstream learning**

The inclusion of more young people with LDD in mainstream learning (for example in FE colleges) will remain a key priority. Local authorities should be working towards the development of high-quality provision to enable learners to participate locally (rather than be reliant on residential provision which can often be some considerable distance from the learner's home).

## **Employment and access to Apprenticeships**

By September 2010, providers will no longer be funded to deliver work-preparation programmes for learners with LDD that do not focus on learning in the workplace and the supported employment model.

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## 2. Social and Economic Context

### Economy

Initial signs suggest that the economy in the South East is one of the most resistant to recession given its relatively strong performance in high value added sectors; however the recession is having some negative effect on business performance and employment. In late 2008 manufacturing and construction were most affected by the economic recession, but since then almost every sector of the economy has experienced some business failures and job losses.

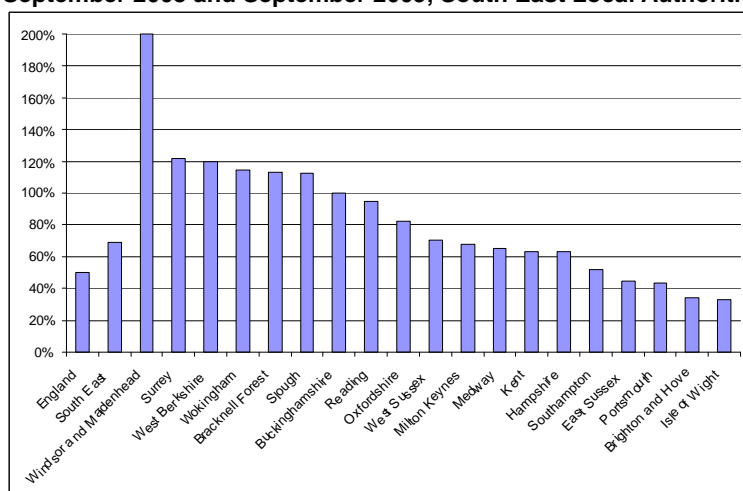
### Unemployment

Youth unemployment has increased, but this varies across the region and in absolute terms, unemployment levels in the South East appear likely to remain lower than in other regions.<sup>3</sup>

As at September 2009 there were just over 6,300 young people under 19 claiming job seekers allowance, an increase of 69 per cent compared with the same period in 2008. However the rate of increase varied considerably across the region – from an increase of 200 per cent in Windsor and Maidenhead to 34 per cent in Brighton and Hove.

Unemployment amongst young people has been on the increase since before the recession, partly because young people are more likely to be employed in more vulnerable low-paid, low skilled jobs.

**Graph 1: Percentage increase in the number of young people (aged 19 and under) claiming JSA between September 2008 and September 2009, South East Local Authorities**



Source: Department for Work and Pensions, Claimant Count

### Employment

The recession has mostly affected industries with male-dominated low-skilled occupations such as the manufacturing and construction sectors. Research indicates that young men are disproportionately likely to be affected by the recession as they both leave school with lower levels of qualifications and are more likely to be employed in the sectors which are hardest hit by the recession.

The recent exodus of migrant workers has created local pockets of demand for low skilled workers, particularly in warehousing and the hospitality industry. A bigger labour pool in industries suffering large scale redundancy has made it easier for employers to recruit skilled staff, resulting in reduced training opportunities for trainees and apprentices and less interest in employing young

<sup>3</sup> LSC/ SEEDA, 'Impact of recession on the labour market in the South East', 2009

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inexperienced workers. There is evidence that employers are also placing more emphasis on qualifications to discriminate between candidates for vacancies as they are inundated with job applications.

There are 3 main sectors that dominate employment in the region, public administration, education & health; distribution, hotels and restaurants; and banking, finance and insurance. The recession has escalated skills shortages in specific engineering skills, high level IT skills, and skills in some areas of manufacturing, while specific occupations in demand include town planners, social workers, teachers, and head chefs.<sup>4</sup>

## Areas of Deprivation

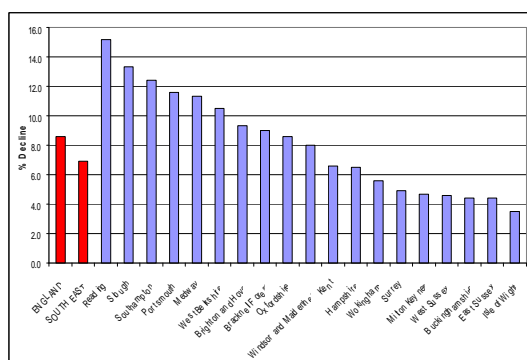
Although the South East is one of the UK's most prosperous regions, there are pockets of severe deprivation. In particular, parts of the coastal fringe of the region perform significantly below regional and national averages. In the South East, 318 lower super output areas were in the 20 per cent most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England. Sussex contains the most deprived area in the South East. Hastings is the 31st most deprived authority in England, followed by Thanet in Kent (65<sup>th</sup>) and Brighton in Hove (79<sup>th</sup>).

Just over 1 in 10 LSOAs in the region are among the 20 per cent most deprived areas in England in terms of educations, skills and training. Whilst these are located across the region, there are significant pockets most notably along the Sussex coast and in parts of Kent and Medway.

## 16-18 Population trends

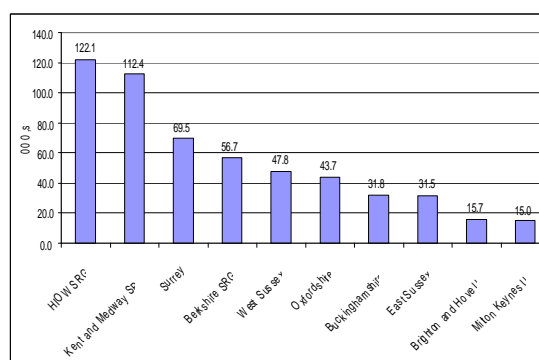
The population of 15-19 year olds in the South East is predicted to decline by 4.0 per cent between 2008 and 2012, which is less than the decline for England (5.1 per cent). This represents a reduction of 22,000 15-19 year olds over this time frame. However, the rate of decline differs across the region. Measures to increase the number of young people participating in learning to achieve full participation for 17 year olds by 2013 and 18 year olds by 2015 are expected to result in an increase in the number in education and training, despite the overall fall in the population.

**Graph 2: Population decline for 15-19 year olds by local authorities, 2008 – 2015**



Source: ONS, 2008 based sub-national population projections

**Graph 3: Population estimates for 15-19 year olds by sub-regional groups, South East, 2008**



Source: ONS, mid-year population estimates, 2008

## Participation

The South East has the largest cohort in education - 181,000. Despite increasing numbers of young people who are participating, the current 82 per cent of 16 and 17 year olds in learning is below the national average (83 per cent).<sup>5</sup>

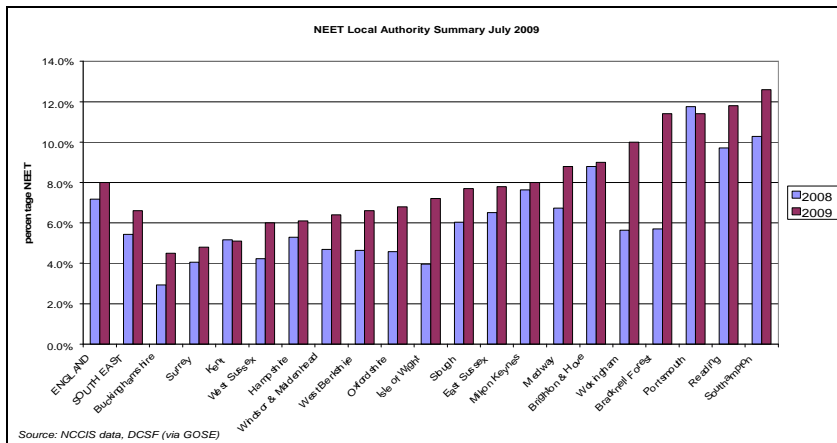
<sup>4</sup> LSC/ SEEDA, 'Impact of recession on the labour market in the South East', 2009

<sup>5</sup> The fall in the number of young people participating in education between 2006 and 2007 is among 16 year olds; the number of 17 year olds increased slightly.

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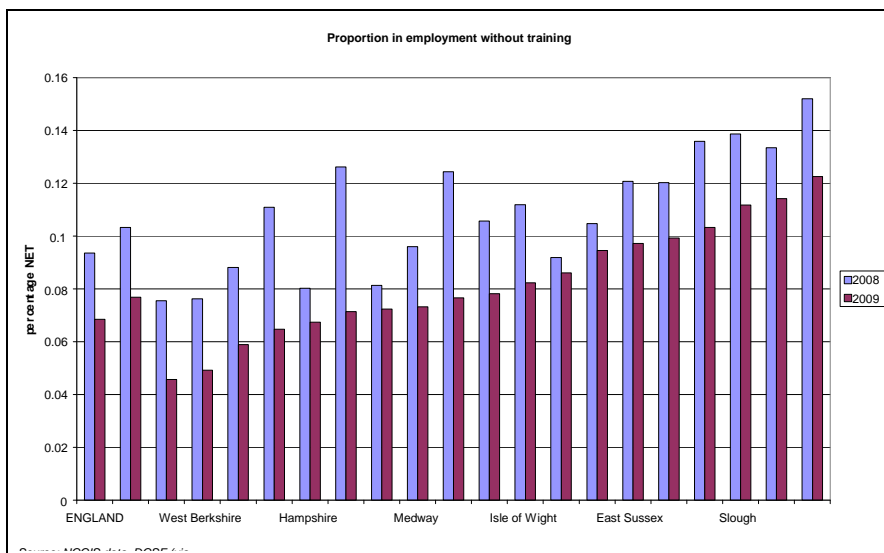
In July 2009, 13,040 (6.6 percent) young people were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in the South East (joint lowest with the South West). However, this is a rise of 1.2 percentage points from the figure for the same period in 2008. Most of the local authorities in the South East have NEET proportions that are below the national average but 7 local authorities have NEET percentages above the national average ; Medway, Brighton and Hove, Wokingham, Bracknell Forest, Portsmouth, Reading, and Southampton

**Graph 4: NEET local authority summary July 2009**



Whilst the proportion of young people in employment without training South East has decreased (from 10.3 per cent in 2008 to 7.7 per cent in 2009), along with all other regions, it still has the highest number of young people in this group (15,500 in July 2009).

**Graph 5: In employment without training local authority summary July 2009**



Estimates also suggest that up to August 2009 there were just over 6,000 teenage mothers in the region, but only 13 per cent took up Care to Learn support. This is well below the national average of 16 per cent and is one of the lowest percentages of young people accessing this support in the country.

## Attainment

The proportion of 16 year olds reaching Level 2 in the South East is 59 per cent in 2007/08, significantly higher than the national rate of 55 per cent. However, the proportion achieving Level 2

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

varied across the South East, from 66 per cent in Windsor and Maidenhead to 47 per cent on the Isle of Wight.

The South East had the highest percentage of young people attaining Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications by the age of 19 (79.6 per cent and 56.9 per cent respectively). However, there were wide variations across the region; 11 of the 19 authorities had Level 2 attainment rates at 19 which were below the national rate and 7 were below the national rate at Level 3.

# South East Regional Commissioning Statement 2010/11

## 3. Regional Priorities for 16-18 participation and success

In the South East we are committed to continue to work together to provide a high quality range of opportunities which will engage and inspire young people to continue to participate in learning and achieve their full potential. We will continue to work together to provide an increasingly inclusive, flexible, personalised and engaging high quality curriculum offer which will motivate young people, increase their aspirations, improve their success and help them to progress to a productive and fulfilling adult life.

### Participation

**Priority 1: Develop a curriculum offer that delivers the full entitlement for all young people and inspires them to participate in preparation for the Raising of the Participation age.**

#### Challenges

The South East has the largest cohort in education, 181,000. Despite increasing numbers of young people who are participating, currently only 82 per cent of 16 and 17 year olds are in learning which is below the national average. This will need to rise to 100 per cent of 17 year olds by 2013 and of 17 and 18 year olds by 2015. Full participation will require a significantly different mix of provision to engage all young people.

All young people aged 16-18 have a guarantee of a fully funded Level 2 and Level 3 learning provision. The current data on the September Guarantee<sup>6</sup> offer rate differed across the region, ranging from 97 per cent in Slough to 87 per cent in Milton Keynes.

Although the South East is one of UK's most prosperous regions there are pockets of severe deprivation, particularly in Sussex. This is also the case for the education, skills and training deprivation in the region, which is most notably along the Sussex coast and in parts of Kent and Medway.

#### Commissioning response

- Develop a more flexible curriculum with multiple entry points that are easily accessible to all learners. (Including Schools, Further Education, Apprenticeships and Entry to Employment/Foundation Learning routes).
- Work with colleges, schools and independent providers to make significant shifts towards the 4 national routes in the 14-19 qualification strategy, to increase opportunities provided by Foundation Learning<sup>7</sup>, Diplomas<sup>8</sup> and Apprenticeships whilst moving away from standalone qualifications.
- Develop a broader Level 3/4 curriculum offer to fully engage 17/18 year olds.
- Develop plans for the right mix and balance of provision to support the travel to learn patterns of young people.
- Increase participation through providing high quality impartial support and guidance and promoting the Area Wide Prospectus, Common Application Process and Apprenticeship Vacancies on line.

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<sup>6</sup> The September Guarantee was that, by the end of September 2007, every 16 year old who wished to stay in learning would have received an offer of a suitable place. The guarantee has since been extended to all 17 year olds in 2009.

<sup>7</sup> N79,N91,N117

<sup>8</sup> N190

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- Develop new approaches to ensure all young people 16-19 have a period of work experience as outlined in the national IAG strategy.
- Give young people a voice which builds their confidence, self-esteem and motivation and encourages them to develop effective citizenship and to be informed about and influence the provision available to them.
- Direct resources towards re-generation hotspots, negotiate and prioritise expansion of post 16 foundation learning and full Level 2 opportunities in specific subject sectors aligned to sustainable local employment opportunities.

## **Priority 2: Put in place strategies and plans to reduce the number of young people NEET and in employment without training.**

### **Challenges**

In the South East, as elsewhere in the country, the number of young people who are not in education, employment and training is rising and 13,040 young people were NEET in July 2009. The biggest increase has been of 17 year olds. This could, in part, be attributed to the economic downturn which has led to a fall of young people in employment from 21.1 per cent to 15 per cent from 2008 to 2009.

In July 2009, 15,500 (7.7 per cent) young people were in employment without training, which is the highest number of young people in this group of all regions. The percentage is also higher than the national average. The highest proportions of young people in work without training were in Portsmouth, Bracknell Forest and Oxfordshire. It should be recognised that this group will include young people qualified to Level 2/3 as well as those with low or no qualifications. Provision to support those young people in work without training will need to engage employers and the National Apprenticeship Service.

Flexible provision to support those young people in the NEET group is likely to lead to a higher unit cost; smarter use of available funds will be needed.

### **Commissioning response**

- Ensure effective implementation of September Guarantee procedures, to reduce the number of “no offers made” for young people aged 17 and ensure they have an offer to continue or re-engage in learning.
- Prioritise funding to commission flexible, responsive and inclusive provision that is made available through-out the year with in year starts and taster programmes.
- Target provision in NEET hotspots including many parts of the coastal strip, Brighton & Hove, Portsmouth, Southampton, Medway and the urban area of Reading.
- Support providers to evolve from the Entry to Employment programme into Foundation Learning and build capacity for personalised learning programmes based on progression pathways that ultimately leads to employment for young people NEET.
- Work with providers to broaden Foundation Learning and alternative programme provision to engage learners not currently engaged in education and training and to retain those most at risk of becoming NEET , including vulnerable learner groups such as care leavers, teenage parents and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or SEN statements.
- Offer high quality and effective IAG to ensure vulnerable young people of all abilities receive advice on the full range of options available to them and work with other agencies to ensure these young people are provided with appropriate support to retain them in learning.
- Identify those young people at risk of becoming NEET and those in the employment without training group and develop strategies and programmes to engage them in learning.
- NAS to work with employers and young people to promote Apprenticeships for those in employment without training.

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- Support the expansion and better targeting of 14-16 foundation learning, alternative and engagement programmes, including Key Stage 4 (KS4) engagement programme and Young Apprenticeships, to bridge the divide at age 16 and support post 16 participation, particularly with vulnerable learner cohorts.
- Work with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and NAS to develop the 14-19 input for the ESF Joint Co-Financing Plan for 2011-13 and better align ESF programmes to support those in the NEET group and in employment without training through targeted programmes.

## Priority 3: Improve access to local provision for learners with high support needs and from vulnerable groups (inc LLDD)

### Challenges:

From 2010/11 local authorities will become the sole accountable bodies for learners with LDD with a duty to collaborate in commissioning provision. The challenge lies in meeting the local needs and cost of an increasing number of young people with LDD and others with high support needs such as Young Offenders, those in Care and teenage parents.

The NEET rate among young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities increased by 4.1 percentage points in the South East. This is higher than the national average of 3.4 percentage points.

For the academic year 2008/09, there were 473 LLDD residents in the South East attending independent specialist providers (ISP). Spending on LLDD in ISPs in 2008/09 was £26,749,000 an increase of 5.6 per cent compared with 2007/08 (£25,328,000). Of the 473 residents in learning, 240 were attending institutions outside the region.

The latest L04 data indicates that there are currently 264 learners participating in 3 South East Youth Offender Institutions (YOI). A key challenge for 2010/11 will be to ensure appropriate liaison between home LAs (resident) and host LAs (place of YOI).

During 2008/09 just 13 per cent of the total cohort of teenage mothers benefited from Care to Learn scheme (16 per cent nationally).

### Commissioning responses

- Support the development of collaborative arrangements between ISPs and local providers to commission appropriate provision for LDD learners.
- Support opportunities for collaborative working across the post 16 provider network; addressing gaps, establishing clear progression pathways and developing local provision to reduce the number of out of area placements.
- Support FE colleges and other providers to increase the range of high quality 16-25 mainstream local provision for learners with LDD to include building effective provision in the area which supports progression to independent living and employment.
- Improve the use of ALS and dLSF and other learner support funds to increase the number of learners with high support needs to participate in local mainstream provision.
- Ensure young people are aware of the financial support available and how they can access it, including EMA and Care to Learn childcare support.
- Work with NAS/SFA to improve access to Apprenticeships for vulnerable learners (inc LDD) and BME groups where participation is low.
- LAs to develop a coherent Transport Policy to facilitate participation, particularly by those people with LDD up to the age of 25 and the 14-19 entitlement.

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- YPLA to provide support to LAs with host providers for YOIs (Huntercombe, Josephine Butler unit and Cookham Wood) and develop and co-ordinate networks to facilitate the effective delivery between host and home LAs<sup>9</sup>.
- Improve the targeting of teenage parents and care leavers to support cohort participation post 16 (linked to Care to Learn take-up).

## Priority 4: Build significant growth in Apprenticeships for young people

### Challenges:

The key challenge for Apprenticeships centres on engaging more employers and increasing Apprenticeship provision in order to meet the 2020 trajectory of 1 in 5 16-18 year olds undertaking an Apprenticeship. There will be an additional challenge to engage more employers in a more difficult economic climate.

In order to achieve this ambition, the quality of information, advice and guidance will be key to promoting Apprenticeships as one of the four key routes for young people, alongside the more traditional academic mainstream options.

In 2007/08 more than 13,700 young people living in the South East started an Apprenticeship, with around three-quarters (78 per cent) at Level 2 Apprenticeship and the remaining at Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship. In 2008/09 (period 12) just over 12,000 young people resident in the South East started an Apprenticeship. This represents a fall in learner starts of 13 per cent over the previous year. However, the fall in learner starts is not uniform across the region. The change in starts varies from a 23 per cent decline in West Sussex to a 10 per cent increase in Bracknell Forest.

The Skills for Business Network, The Skills Development Agency and the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils suggest that half of the growth targets for Apprenticeships will come from the current employer places, 14 per cent will be new places with the same employer and over a third will come from new places, with new employers, often in sectors where there is not a significant tradition of Apprenticeships.

### Commissioning responses

- Identify potential gaps in provision and to broaden the Apprenticeship offer to provide access to a greater range of local provision informed by local economic need.
- Provide local labour market intelligence and Apprenticeship profiles to support local authorities towards ensuring that Apprenticeship places are more closely aligned to key sectors and identified growth sectors in the local economy.
- Co-ordinated employer engagement to increase the demand from employers for Apprenticeships and in particular the development of the public sector offer.
- Support and encourage further development of collaborative working to increase the breadth of offer and deliver the highest quality and choice of provision and use resources most effectively and secure alternative funding resources, including ESF.
- Work with providers to continue the improvement in Success Rates for Apprenticeships.
- Promote and increase awareness of Apprenticeships with a particular focus on vulnerable learners and with BME groups, where participation is low.
- Promote the progression for young people to a Level 3 Apprenticeship. From April 2011 all Level 3/4 frameworks will have UCAS tariff points.

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<sup>9</sup> NI 19, NI 45

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## Quality & Achievement

### Priority 5: Raise the attainment of young people, in particular to narrow the attainment gap

#### Challenges:

The South East region has already exceeded the <sup>10</sup>PSA target for 2008 for young people achieving a Level 2 and Level 3 qualification at aged 19 and continues to have the highest level of attainment for young people for both Level 2 at 79.6 per cent (national 76.7 per cent) and Level 3 at 56.9 per cent (national 49.8 per cent) at age 19. However, there were wide variations across the region; 11 of the 19 authorities had Level 2 attainment rates below the national rate and 7 were below at Level 3.

Research shows that the gap between those who are eligible for free school meals and those who are not is over 20 percentage points at every stage at which attainment is measured.

Research also shows that 80 percent of young people who achieve a Level 2 including Maths and English go on to achieve a Level 3. In the South East just 53 per cent of young people achieved 5+ A\*-C GCSEs including Maths and English, compared to the overall GCSE results (5+A\*-C grades) of 69 per cent.

In the South East there are currently 6 providers with a Notice to Improve and operating below minimum levels of performance in some areas of their provision. This will need to be managed to ensure underperformance is reduced and only high quality provision is commissioned.

Inspection grades are improving and analysis of latest Ofsted inspection grades for General Further Education Colleges showed that 95 per cent of the providers inspected were graded at least Satisfactory for Overall Effectiveness. However, we need to aim for a higher proportion of providers achieving good or excellent grades.

#### Commissioning responses

- Work to improve the Apprenticeship success rates in the South East to 75 per cent based on residency. Between 2007/08 and 2008/09, success rates in the region moved from 64.1 per cent to 69.7 per cent (against a 69.6 per cent national average).
- Work with Schools and Further Education providers to increase the percentage of 16 year olds who achieve Level 2 in English and Mathematics; and by further developing alternative and vocational Key Stage 4 provision.
- Work with the SFA and providers to reduce the proportion of guided learning hours (GLH) that fall below Minimum Levels of Performance (MLP) and commission high quality provision to improve progression and attainment.
- Local authorities monitor school sixth forms' performance, using Framework for Excellence where appropriate, to agree an improvement plan and use of School Improvement resources.
- SFA work with the YPLA and local authorities to support the implementation of Framework for Excellence in a way that develops a self-critical provider network with a focus on quality improvement and development of better progression routes to improve attainment of full Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications by aged 19 and progress to higher education.
- More analysis will be undertaken by the YPLA to support LAs to understand the learner characteristics and to identify what actions are needed to narrow the attainment gap for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (using eligibility for free school meals as a proxy).

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<sup>10</sup> NI 79, NI 80

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## Glossary

**ADCS:** The Association of Directors of Children's Services  
**BME:** Black and Minority Ethnic  
**CEL:** Centre for Excellence in Leadership  
**CSR:** Comprehensive Spending Review  
**CYPP:** Children and Young People's Plan  
**DCSF:** Department of Children, Schools and Families  
**DIUS:** Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills  
**DWP:** Department for Work and Pensions  
**E2E:** Entry to Employment  
**EDIMS:** Equality and diversity impact measures  
**EMA:** Education Maintenance Allowance  
**ESF:** European Social Fund  
**ESOL:** English for speakers of other languages  
**ESP:** Employability Skills Programme  
**FE:** further education  
**FLT:** Foundation Learning Tier  
**FSB:** Federation of Small Businesses  
**Full Level 2:** equates to five GCSEs at grades A\* to C  
**Full Level 3:** equates to two GCE A-level passes or equivalent  
**GLH:** guided learning hours  
**GOSE:** Government Office for the South East  
**HE:** higher education  
**ISP:** independent specialist provider  
**JCP:** Jobcentre Plus  
**JSA:** Job Seeker's Allowance  
**LA:** Local Authority  
**LAA:** local area agreement  
**LLDD:** Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities  
**LLUK:** Lifelong Learning UK  
**LSOA:** Lower Super Output Area  
**MAA:** Multi-area agreement  
**MLP:** Minimum Level of Performance  
**NEET:** not in education, employment or training  
**MLP:** Minimum Level of Performance  
**MOG:** Machinery of Government  
**NAS:** National Apprenticeship Service  
**NIS:** National Indicator Set  
**NLDC:** Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities  
**NOMS:** National Offender Management Service  
**NSA:** National Skills Academy  
**NVQ:** National Vocational Qualification  
**Ofsted:** Office for Standards in Education  
**OLASS:** Offender Learning and Skills Service  
**PCDL:** personal and community development learning  
**Progression pathways:** high-quality, coherent curriculum offer for entry and Level 1  
**PSA:** Public Service Agreement  
**QCF:** Qualifications and Credit Framework  
**QIA:** Quality Improvement Agency  
**RDA:** Regional Development Agency  
**RES:** Regional Economic Strategy  
**RPA:** Raising of Compulsory Participation Age  
**RQIP:** Regional Quality Improvement Partnerships

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**S6F:** School Sixth Forms

**SES:** Single Equality Scheme

**SEEDA:** South East England Development Agency

**SFA:** Skills Funding Agency

**SRG:** Sub Regional Groups

**SSC:** Sector Skills Council

**YOI:** Young Offenders Institution

**YPLA:** Young People's Learning Agency

**WBL:** Work Based Learning

**Learning and Skills Council**

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