

A strategy for learning provision for 14-19 year-olds in Central London

Draft for consultation

October 2004

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References

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This draft 14-19 strategy for central London sets out four strategic aims and a range of proposed actions for London Central Learning and Skills Council and central London providers in schools, colleges and work-based learning. The aims and proposed actions reflect the plans and activities of the seven borough 14-19 partnerships. They also provide an overarching framework to which all providers and boroughs should make reference as they develop their own strategic plans. At the heart of the strategy is the LSC mission of 'putting the learner first'. In this way London Central LSC aims not only to reflect the best of current local practice, but also to lead the way in ensuring that all provision comes up to the standards of the best.
- 1.2 It is important to stress the importance of developing partnership and collaboration in the development and implementation of this strategy. The concept of the 14-19 phase itself presents a major challenge for existing regulatory and funding structures and for the organisation of all the associated learning provision. Key aspects of the draft strategy concern provision not made or regulated by LSC, but result from a process of discussion with partners which takes for granted that strategic development that puts learners first requires innovation and development in partnership and collaborative working. It is hoped that the process and outcomes of consultation on this draft will engender a renewed phase of partnership development, based on discussion leading to eventual consensus and collective ownership of the 14-19 strategy for central London.
- 1.3 The draft strategy is derived from Government policy which has been set out in *14-19: opportunity and excellence* and *Success for All*. The Area Inspection Framework and the Area Inspections have been key documents that have informed the development of the draft. The LSC's national consultation on *Equality and Diversity* underpins the strategy. Its further development will also be influenced and informed by the work of the London regional LSC 14-19 group in developing a London 14-19 framework and a London learner entitlement. London Central LSC also supports the vision of the London regional LSC group:

'To create a clear learning offer across London that meets the needs and aspirations of all its young people regardless of their circumstance, gender, ethnicity or prior attainment, maximising their potential to succeed.'

1.4 The principal themes of the draft strategy are derived from the evidence, issues and priorities considered by London Central LSC and partners in the Strategic Area Review (StAR). The review, which began in Summer 2003, was initiated in all local Learning and Skills Councils as part of the DfES *Success for All* programme. A broad sample of partners and stakeholders are represented on StAR Forums. The work of the review has led to the identification of four strategic aims for the development of provision that are key to realising the vision of a 14-19 phase capable of transforming the level and quality of participation, success and progress of young people throughout central London.

1.5 Our vision is therefore:

*'To **create a coherent 14-19 phase** across central London which puts learners first by maximising **participation and progression** through the provision of high quality **vocational** and other pathways and sustained by **personalised learner and learning support**.'*

The vision is articulated through the 14-19 strategy that will govern the actions of LSC London Central, its partner LEAs and providers.

Strategic aim 1: Creating a coherent 14-19 phase

To achieve coherence in the 14-19 phase for all learners through the development of collaborative arrangements across all providers and through growth of provision to meet projected increases in the population of young learners.

Strategic aim 2: Personalised learner and learning support

To ensure a comprehensive, personalised service for all 14-19 learners through careers education and guidance integrated into all learning programmes and impartial information, advice and guidance for individual learners.

Strategic aim 3: Participation and progression

To develop flexible provision and progression routes to improve choice for learners, and to promote further improvements in participation and success rates through developing the quality of provision.

Strategic aim 4: Vocational, work-related and work-based learning

To increase capacity and strengthen the vocational offer across the 14-19 phase providing young people with a real vocational choice whatever their needs or circumstances.

- 1.6 Concurrent with consultation on this draft strategy, LSC London Central will be consulting on the outcomes of the StAR process (see paragraph 1.4 above). These outcomes take the form of Strategic Options for development across the range of provision for young people, adults and employers that have been identified by the review. Some of the more radical proposals generated by the StAR are shown in a box ('Possible StAR Options') immediately below the list of actions proposed in this draft strategy. The 14-19 strategy will be revised in the light of consultation on this draft and on the Strategic Options for 14-19 provision.
- 1.7 Consultation on the draft 14-19 for central London closes on **4 January 2005**. A proforma for consultation responses is available on the LSC website at: www.londoncentrallsc.gov.uk

2. The central London context

In this section we set out the context against which the four strategic aims and related actions have been set.

Strategic aim 1: Creating a coherent 14-19 phase

There are 14-19 partnerships, with action plans, in all 7 boroughs, in response to area inspections. City Academies are being set up which need to become active members of these local partnerships. Nine Centres of Vocational Excellence have been established in central London. There is much communication and collaboration within sectors through groups such as the L7 college principals and the Work Based Learning Alliance. There are various models of collaboration in the delivery of services that have developed in different boroughs, eg. La SWAP schools in Camden, Westminster's 6F partnership, Southwark Pathfinder, South Lambeth Sixth Form. Outside of these arrangements, it is not general practice for providers to share data on performance or development plans openly.

Raising achievement is a key priority for borough-level 14-19 partnerships. Although there is an improving trend in achievement levels, Key Stage 4 achievement rates are still below the national benchmark. The percentage of pupils obtaining more than five A* to C grades (the equivalent of a Level 2 qualification) at state-maintained schools in the central London area has risen from 35% in 1999 to 48% in 2003, compared to the England average of nearly 53% and 51% across the London LSC region. In Islington and Southwark only 38.5% and 39.7% respectively achieved this standard, with Kensington and Chelsea reaching 56%. These measures of performance must be read against the results of recent research that revealed that central London schools have high average 'value-added' scores between GCSEs and A-levels.

Among 16-19 providers, there is wide variation in success rates, value added, and inspection results. Success rates of young people in FE Colleges are expected to increase from 58% in 2002/03 to 63% in 2003/04 for 16-to-18-year-olds taking Level 2 qualifications. Level 3 success rates are expected to rise from 68% in 2002/03 to 72% in 2003/04. These averages for central London mask significant differences in the achievement rates of learners from different ethnic groups and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, in 2002/03 the overall success rate for Pakistani students was 70%, whereas it was 63% for White students and 59% for students in the 'Black Other' category.

The number of 16-to-18-year-olds on LSC funded provision grew by 2% between 2001/02 and 2002/03. It is forecast that the number will grow by 3% between 2003/04 and 2004/05. Population projections produced by the Greater London Authority show that the number of 15-to-19-year-olds is expected to increase by

almost 12,000 in central London between 2001 and 2011 (a 16% increase). Increases in 16-18 places vary from year to year by provider and overall participation varies by borough. Currently provision is increased on the basis of agreed provider-driven plans informed by LSC priorities and taking account of local 14-19 action plans. Work is underway to develop a sub-regional model to forecast demand for 14-19 provision.

Strategic aim 2. Personalised learning and learner support

The Connexions Service delivers information, advice and guidance for young people aged 14-19. The service aims to be universal, with a particular focus on those at risk of disengagement. There is a large group of young people in central London not in education, employment or training (NEET). Schools, colleges and work-based learning providers also offer programmes of careers education and guidance to their students and trainees. The Connexions service provides in-service training to staff, and a resource library of information to staff and students. Many providers develop individual action plans with individual students to guide their progression. Post-16 learning providers hold open days and admissions advice services to guide young people. Connexions services provide area-wide events for schools and targeted cohorts of students.

There is evidence of lack of clarity and definitions of the responsibilities of those involved in young peoples' progression, and therefore not all are making fully informed choices based on an awareness of the full range of post-14 and post-16 learning opportunities. Some boroughs operate an 'entitlement' model that include personal development opportunities, or establish a 'guarantee' system to ensure progression through the offer of a suitable place within a certain period after leaving school. 14-19 Pathfinders are modelling new approaches to planning progression and integrating IAG within delivery of learning programmes.

London Central has prioritised the following groups of young people for particular support: young people leaving care; young offenders and those at risk of offending; young people excluded from mainstream education. In addition, there is targeting of young people who are currently employed but not undertaking training, to help them take part in the Apprenticeship programme, and young Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) learners to promote their progression to higher education.

Strategic aim 3: Participation and progression

DfES data at the end of 2001 showed that 17% of young people in the central London area aged 16 were not enrolled in learning provision; a 3% improvement on the previous year's figure. By age 17, the non-participation rate at the end

2001 had risen to 24% (cf 31% for 2000). Wards with particularly low participation rates were concentrated in Lambeth and Southwark.

March 2004 data from Central London Connexions showed there were 2871 young people (after the end of year 11) categorised as being not in education, employment or training (NEET). This represents 10.5% of the cohort. In addition, another 3520 were missing from the survey ('not known'), many of whom may also be NEET. There were also 130 young people who were in employment but not receiving any training.

The number of young people in state-maintained schools falls by more than 40% between Years 12 and 13. This is derived from pupil counts in the two year groups; the fall is partly accounted for by completion of short courses, but no data is available to distinguish 'drop-out' from other reasons for leaving school. The leaving rates for Black pupils and those eligible for free school meals are particularly high. In FE, 16% of 16 to 18 year-olds in the London Central LSC area withdrew from all their learning aims in 2001/02. The poorest retention rates were recorded for White ethnic groups. For many young people, disengagement with education will have begun before the age of 16. Central London Connexions' data shows that 9% of Year 10 client pupils and 10% of those in Year 11 were receiving intensive support.

Many employers in central London do not recruit any young people aged between 16 and 18 into jobs, and where they do take on young staff, the range of jobs is limited. There are three occupational areas that account for 70% of jobs held by young people: Administration, Customer Service and Elementary occupations. Most of these jobs will provide a low level of training and offer limited career development options.

The number of LSC London Central resident 19 year-olds participating in higher education increased by 820 between 2000/01 and 2002/03. This represents an increase of 13%, which compares favourably with the national increase of 7% during the same period.

The nature of the current inspection regime means that preparing for, and responding to, inspections assume a disproportionate importance in individual institutions' quality improvement strategies. In some cases, this leads a greater degree of selection in the recruitment of learners. Three-year development plans in colleges and work-based learning have begun to articulate a longer-term, more strategic approach to quality improvement.

Strategic aim 4: Vocational, work-related and work-based learning

The quality and availability of vocational provision are important priorities in the London Central LSC Annual Plan, and in the plans of the borough-level 14-19 partnerships. Improvements in volume and type of work-based learning provision, learner success rates and inspection grades have been achieved in recent years. Only 4% of 16-year-old residents in central London move on to a work-based Learning programme. The three 14-19 pathfinders are developing vocational provision and exploring greater employer engagement. Nevertheless, more vocational provision is needed, including 14-16, and success rates and progression need to improve further.

The 2002 *London Employers' Survey* showed that only 9% of London's employers had recruited a 16 to 18 year-old in the previous year. This figure rose to 15% in the Retail sector and to 10% in Construction. Among London's employers, 16% do not employ 16-to-18-year-olds at all. There is low demand from employers for 16-18 year old Apprentices and many young people lack the skills and qualifications needed to become an Apprentice. Less than 1% of central London's employers have staff aged 16 to 24 on an Apprenticeship programme. Sectors with above average rates in London are Construction (7%), Education (4%), Health and Social Work (3%), and Retail and Wholesale (3%).

Coherence in employer engagement activities needs to be developed and continuity and predictability in work-based learning funding streams is also needed. The Entry to Employment (E2E) programme has been successful in increasing 16-18 participation, particularly among the NEET group. Disappointing progression rates are attributable to factors affecting the readiness of E2E completers for employment and to the availability of further learning at the point of completion, as well as to the short supply of appropriate progression opportunities. A significant improvement in the quality of work-based learning provision overall, attested by ALI inspections, is reflected in the reduction of the number of work-based learning providers from 70 to 42 over three years. This improvement though, has added to the problem of lack of overall capacity in work-based learning.

New statutory requirements for work-related learning and work experience in school, together with anticipated outcomes of the 14-19 (Tomlinson) Working Group are laying the foundation for a curriculum that integrates general and work-based or work-related learning in all 14-19 programmes.

3. Creating a coherent 14-19 phase

Strategic aim 1:

To achieve coherence in the 14-19 phase for all learners through the development of collaborative arrangements across all providers.

The strategic objectives of LSC London Central are to:

- 1.1 Support the development of collaborative arrangements (and seek the support of voluntary aided schools and city academies etc) to rationalise provision and to improve the range of options available to learners, eg. through:
 - ➔ funding for partnership forums and 14-19 borough coordinators
 - ➔ joint prospectus and timetabling arrangements (effecting economies of scale and facilitating cross-borough travelling to learn);
 - ➔ common entry/admission requirements;
 - ➔ common 14-19 mapping methodology;
 - ➔ borough-level, cross-phase, professional-development programmes;
 - ➔ standardised approaches to data collection on all aspects of 14-19 provision.
- 1.2 Support central London schools in achieving City Academy or Specialist School status and work to engage these schools in collaboration with the 14-19 strategy.
- 1.3 Ensure that all providers and borough partnerships produce policies and coordinated, three-year development plans that address key priorities set out in the London Central LSC's 14-19 Strategy, including a strategy for improving the quality of teaching and learning, and to promote equality and diversity through inclusive learning.
- 1.4 Support the development and establishment of a London learner entitlement which will provide all young people with a quality benchmark incorporating a curriculum offer, teaching and learning, and information, advice and guidance.
- 1.5 Support 14-19 Pathfinders and facilitate the sharing of best practice across borough 14-19 partnerships.
- 1.6 Promote the sharing of plans and performance data (a) within borough partnerships and then (b) across boroughs and (c) within sectors (i.e. colleges, schools and work-based learning providers in different boroughs).

- 1.7 Support cross-borough and borough level, cross-phase continuing professional development for teachers, lecturers, personal advisers and trainers, organized on a flexible basis to maximize development opportunities.

Possible StAR options:

Require providers to place their three-year development plans and specified performance data in the public domain.

Expand provision in a targeted way to address the strategic needs of learners across central London.

The longer term objective is to:

- Incorporate and ensure the delivery of the recommendations from the *Working Group on 14-19 Reform* ('Tomlinson') in all future 14-19 developments.

4. Personalised learner and learning support

Strategic aim 2:

To ensure a comprehensive, personalised service for all 14-19 learners through careers education and guidance integrated into all learning programmes and impartial information, advice and guidance.

The strategic objectives of LSC London Central are to:

- 2.1 Promote equality and diversity throughout 14-19 provision by ensuring that inclusive learning is at the heart of all provider and borough plans.
- 2.2 Support the re-focussing of IAG services including: access to impartial provision for all 14-19 learners; appropriate resources in schools, colleges and work-based learning providers; CEG training and briefings for school, college, work-based learning and Connexions staff; a protocol for improved data recording and tracking of IAG recipients (ensuring that such approaches do not impose unnecessary burdens).
- 2.3 Establish a framework and quality assurance standard for IAG and learning support (based on an audit of careers provision) that all students can expect to receive with particular emphasis upon minimum standards at Key Stage 4.
- 2.4 Ensure agreement on clear roles and responsibilities for Connexions and schools in the provision of careers education, advice and guidance, including protocols to facilitate the sharing of data about progression and destinations.
- 2.5 Ensure regular labour market information in formats accessible to learners and support open day events to publicise the full range of provision.
- 2.6 Promote peer, HE student, business and community mentoring as a vehicle for learner support across all providers.
- 2.7 Ensure that all 14-19 providers have strategies for learner involvement and feedback to reduce drop-out and improve the quality of provision; and that they understand and put into practice the principles of inclusive learning.
- 2.8 Support pilot programmes for individual learning plans and develop a protocol for customised career progression plans for individual learners.

2.9 Ensure that all Personal Advisors in the London Central area are appropriately qualified and hold at least a NVQ Level 4 Training and Guidance qualification.

2.10 Ensure that the LSC 'safe learner' concept permeates provision.

Possible StAR option:

Establish in each borough, through the 14-19 partnership, a guaranteed offer of an appropriate post-16 place for all residents.

The longer term objectives are to:

- Develop personalised learning as the cornerstone of all teaching and learning activity at 14-19.
- Ensure the use of individual learning plans by all 14-19 providers and learners.

5. Progression and participation

Strategic aim 3:

To develop flexible provision and progression routes to improve choice for learners, and to promote further improvements in participation and success rates through developing the quality of provision.

The strategic objectives of LSC London Central are to:

- 3.1 Ensure that all learning provides easy access to relevant and appropriate progression routes for all 14-19 learners through support for collaborative arrangements among all providers; especially ensuring that there are effective partnerships in place to widen participation.
- 3.2 Encourage the development of guaranteed progression routes post-16 at a borough level.
- 3.3 Work with the Aimhigher Steering Groups in order to increase progression to higher education from under-represented groups, i.e. through links between the universities and schools, colleges, and work-based learning providers; and through guaranteed admission interviews for appropriately qualified learners.
- 3.4 Develop targeted strategies (e.g. improved personal and employability skills; and more flexible approaches to course organisation and delivery) to promote improved participation and establish progression routes for key priority learner groups including: young black and ethnic minority learners, speakers of languages other than English, young people leaving care, young offenders, those excluded from mainstream education, and learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- 3.5 Increase provision of post-16 courses at entry level and levels 1 and 2 and investigate, with partners, the development of an effective progression tracking system for students taking such courses who may be at risk of dropping out.
- 3.6 Develop opportunities for active citizenship and personal development for all 14-19 learners.

Possible StAR option:

Expand only that provision that meets a prescribed quality benchmark applicable to all providers.

The longer term objectives are to:

- Ensure the development of progression routes to higher education from all vocational pathways.
- Cease to fund provision that does not reach the prescribed quality benchmark.

6. Vocational, work-related and work-based learning

Strategic aim 4:

To increase capacity and strengthen the vocational offer across the 14-19 phase providing young people with a real vocational choice whatever their needs or circumstances.

The strategic objectives of LSC London Central are to:

- 4.1 Ensure that there are learning opportunities addressing skills shortage areas in all the key sectors of the central London area including: new media, creative industries, business and professional services, ICT, construction, wholesale and retail trade, education, health and social work, hotels and catering, and other services.
- 4.2 Develop diverse models to engage employers of different sizes and from all key sectors (including especially black and minority ethnic employers), e.g. a strategy to involve employers in course design drawing on the lessons of the 14-19 pathfinders.
- 4.3 Develop the partnerships between Centres of Vocational Excellence and other providers so that COVEs help to improve the quality of vocational provision more widely.
- 4.4 Promote and extend Apprenticeship (and Young Apprenticeship) opportunities and increase take up, particularly through programme-led apprenticeship pathways, especially in FE colleges.
- 4.5 Increase the number of E2E opportunities for central London residents and enhance the associated progression routes.
- 4.6 Increase the range and take up of vocational opportunities to Level 3, and progression into Foundation degrees.
- 4.7 Support the work of the Central London Work-Based Learning Alliance in raising the status and profile of work-based learning.
- 4.8 Increase the range and number of vocational courses at Key Stage 4 creating vocational progression pathways into post-16 education and training, i.e. by encouraging schools to offer more Applied and 'hybrid' GCSEs.

- 4.9 Support delivery of the statutory requirement for work-related learning at Key Stage 4 in central London and the entitlement to the equivalent of five days of enterprise education (from September 2005).

Possible StAR option:

Establish specialised 14-19 vocational skills centres as an alternative to expanding provision across all providers.

The longer term objectives are to:

- Increase the number of employers willing to participate in work-based learning and Apprenticeship programmes.
- Work towards parity of status and esteem between vocational and other 14-19 options among providers, learners and their carers through improving the quality of vocational provision.
- Implement the *Working Group on 14-19 Reform* recommendations to ensure choice for learners through the availability of a comprehensive and coherent set of vocational qualifications over the next ten years.

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