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Leading learning and skills

Learning for Living and Work: Improving Education and Training Opportunities for People with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

Going Forward – Implementing
the vision of *Through Inclusion
to Excellence*

The national strategy for LSC-
funded provision for learners
with learning difficulties and/or
disabilities across the FE system:
2006/07 to 2009/10

October 2006

Of interest to everyone involved in improving
skills and learning opportunities across England

For information

This document sets out the LSC's vision for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and how the further education system should respond to meet that vision.

Of interest to everyone involved in improving skills and learning opportunities across England

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The Government has outlined an ambitious vision for improving the life chances of disabled people so that by 2025 disabled people will have full opportunities and choices to improve their quality of life and will be respected and included as equal members of society. A primary purpose of our strategy is to outline how the LSC, over the next four years, will prioritise its actions to delivery parity and to support the sector to fully contribute to this vision.

The strategy represents our next steps towards making England, by 2015, an international exemplar in providing high-quality education and training for post-16 learners with the most complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities. We recognise that our ambition in this arena must be delivered in collaboration with other agencies and government departments.

The vision for the further education (FE) system is unambiguous. Each provider in FE should be absolutely clear about its primary purpose: to improve employability and skills in their local area, and to contribute to economic growth and social inclusion. They must deliver the skills that individuals, businesses and the economy needs that will, in turn, contribute to improving people's prosperity and sense of belonging.

Our goal is that young people and adults in England will have the knowledge and skills to match the best in the world and be part of a competitive workforce. Our commitment to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities means that this goal is just as important for them as it is for all other members of society. Participation in learning and subsequent achievement matter to our whole population and to people of all ages as a contribution to the economy and to learners' communities.

People with learning difficulties and/or disabilities must not be marginalised and we must strive harder to deliver access to, and experience of, post-16 learning, whether in schools, in Apprenticeships, in 'independent living skills' programmes or through Train to Gain, that is equal to that experienced by their peers without learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Our commitment is also underlined by our actions. This is demonstrated by my colleague, Chris Banks CBE, Chair of the LSC National Council, who has recently agreed to be a champion for the Disability Rights Commission for the introduction of the Disability Equality Duty within the FE system.

The vision is clear. The LSC has clearly outlined the destination the sector needs to reach. We must now take up our challenge.



Mark Haysom
Chief Executive

The participation of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the FE system has, since the LSC's inception, increased. An ageing population is likely to mean more acquired disabilities. This issue, combined with increased numbers of individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities currently in compulsory education who will aspire to access FE, implies continued growth. Thus expenditure on this cohort will increase just as the average funding associated with each learner also continues to increase. In response, the LSC strongly embraces the Government-led move towards collaborative deployment of public funding and aligned resources for the delivery of packages of provision for individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly for those with complex support requirements.

In November 2005, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) published the findings and recommendations of the strategic review of the LSC's planning and funding of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across the FE system, *Through Inclusion to Excellence*.

The overarching recommendation of the report was that, in order to take forward its vision, the LSC should develop a national strategy for the delivery of this provision across the FE system. This document responds to that recommendation and is the first LSC strategy for the planning and funding of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The strategy is the blueprint for LSC thinking and reiterates the organisation's intention to ensure that all of the 40 recommendations made in *Through Inclusion to Excellence* are fully explored and met.

The strategy is informed by, and central to, the LSC's *agenda for change*, other wider learning and skills agendas and cross-government agendas relating to individuals with disabilities.

Alongside the move towards multi-agency funding, we are keen to improve the performance of providers, and the LSC itself, in the delivery of this provision. This includes improving the proportion of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities that contribute to our targets. As such, by autumn 2007, the LSC will, in partnership with Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and provider representatives, have developed more sophisticated, robust, appropriate and transparent performance measures with regard to this cohort.

The LSC's vision for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is driven by the concept of learning for living and work. The FE system's role is to drive up participation and to support individuals entering education and training to achieve their ambition, whether this is to improve their lives, strengthen their career opportunities, or develop their skills. Such skills enable economic participation, the development of self-confidence and help people of all ages to live autonomously and contribute to the communities in which they live.

Our vision is also driven by the principles of *Through Inclusion to Excellence*, that individuals' needs should be met through equitable and easily understood systems of planning, funding and placement, enabling all learners to achieve their goals and progress to the maximum possible level of independence and activity in their communities, and in employment.

This single, unified vision will lead to our core ambition that by 2015, England will be an international exemplar in providing high-quality post-16 learning provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whereby poor provision has been eliminated and outstanding provision is the norm. The LSC's strategy outlines our headline work activities and intended outcomes up to 2009/10, and these activities should be seen as part of a longer term programme of reform to achieve this goal by 2015.

By 2009, the LSC intends to have worked with DfES to broker a partnership in which the work undertaken from 2010 to 2015 to improve this provision will be driven by a single strategy that is owned by the national partner organisations that plan, fund, inspect and support the FE system. During 2009/10, new activities and milestones for work up to 2015 will be identified and agreed with key partners.

The current strategy is structured into six themes, four of which are drawn from *Through Inclusion to Excellence*, with two further key themes identified from consultation responses to the report. Each theme, listed below, includes key actions and outcomes that represent a milestone towards this ambition.

Communicating Our Priorities

- In early 2007, the National Learners with Disabilities Panel will be launched. It will have a clear relationship to the National Learners' Panel and the LSC governance structure.

Planning (including LSC Structures)

- By autumn 2007, the LSC will have detailed needs analyses for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across England.
- In autumn/winter 2007, the LSC will publish details of how 'investment to change' funds will be used to achieve systemic transformation and increased supply of high-quality, local provision.
- New definitions of learning difficulties and/or disabilities to be used within the Individualised Learner Record system will be introduced in the 2009/10 academic year.

Quality

- In 2007/08, the LSC and partners will publish a proposed programme of activities to support the development of a fully qualified workforce that teach and support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the FE system.
- By September 2008, the LSC will cease commissioning inadequate provision. This includes provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- By December 2008, the first provider will be awarded Centre of Excellence status for its provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- By 2010, there will be a fully qualified workforce in the FE system, including those working with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Funding

- During 2006/07, the LSC will collect and analyse information from local authorities about the costs associated with supporting learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This information will be used to inform the LSC's development of a planned approach for young people in the FE system.
- In 2008/09, the common funding approach, developed as part of the *agenda for change* funding reforms, will be introduced across FE colleges.
- By 2009/10, the new funding arrangements will be fully implemented across the entire FE system.

Working with Partners (including Capital Investment)

- By the end of 2007, DfES and other government departments will have agreed and published a set of protocols for shared funding responsibilities and partnership working.
- During 2007, the LSC with QIA and the Inspectorate will commission an analysis of the benefits to the learner and financial benefits associated with provider co-location.

Learner Progression

- In 2006, the LSC will commission an analysis of progress and progression in 'work preparation' and 'independent living skills' programmes. The analysis will be used to enhance their contribution to learning for living and work. It will also consider levels of support, time taken for learners to achieve and effectiveness.
- During 2007/08, the LSC's National Employer Service will work with LSC regions to pilot the supported employment model with a range of employers.
- By September 2010, the LSC will no longer fund providers to deliver work preparation programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities that do not focus on learning in the workplace and the supported employment model.

In the long-term, it is our anticipation that the delivery of our vision will be through providers' core funding, and that the revised funding methodology will underpin this strategy, providing greater flexibility for personalised learning and supported employment models. The LSC has also identified additional investment funds, above existing expenditure, to instigate change and transformation. By 2008, the LSC will, via the regions, have invested £35 million.

The funds will be spent on three key priority areas, though development work and investment will occur in other areas, as appropriate to local and regional needs. The three key priority investment areas are:

- investing in provision: understanding demand and building capacity
- raising the quality of provision, including workforce development
- increasing participation in the economy and our communities through sustainable employment.

Underpinning each of these key priority areas is the intention that they will deliver increased social inclusion, improve the skills of individuals and enable them to contribute to local communities and economies.

Alongside improving the LSC's own internal performance measures, we are keen to ensure that we measure how well the strategy is delivered. During early 2007, the LSC will commission an independent longitudinal evaluation study focused on the progress and effectiveness with which the LSC has implemented this strategy. This evaluation will include a consultation with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

4 The following strategy responds to that recommendation and is the first LSC strategy for the planning and funding of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The strategy is the blueprint for our thinking and the actions that, alongside our partners, we intend to take to deliver **all** the recommendations made in *Through Inclusion to Excellence*.

5 The scope of each of the 40 recommendations is extremely varied. As such, the strategy does not provide an action plan of detailed activity but instead, an overview of our headline activities for the period of the strategy. These activities are designed to drive the systemic change that *Through Inclusion to Excellence* envisages. This strategy does, however, clearly demonstrate how it will deliver the five key recommendations of *Through Inclusion to Excellence*. These were that:

Background

1 In March 2004, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) National Council endorsed the need for a strategic review of the LSC's planning and funding of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across post-16 learning. A steering group, chaired by Peter Little, OBE, oversaw the review between July 2004 and September 2005.

2 The LSC published the findings and recommendations of the review as *Through Inclusion to Excellence* in November 2005, and has made a public commitment to delivering the report's recommendations and principles. The subsequent public consultation on the recommendations clearly endorsed and legitimised the proposed actions.

3 The overarching recommendation of *Through Inclusion to Excellence* was that, in order to take forward its vision:

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

- the LSC should commit to a policy of 'investment for change' to achieve systemic transformation and increased supply of high-quality, local provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- the LSC should put in place consistent regional staffing structures to enable strategic and operational oversight of the development of appropriate, co-ordinated, collaborative and consistent provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In particular, there should be a designated individual at a senior level whose role is to provide the necessary operational oversight
- the LSC should consider the development, in line with *agenda for change*, of a common funding approach across the whole of the post-16 learning and skills sector
- the Minister for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education raise the issue of the LSC's spend on health and care costs with appropriate ministers in other government departments and seek to reach an agreement about appropriate funding responsibilities and partnership working

- DfES in its Grant Letter to the LSC for 2006-07 and, LSC in its Annual Statement of Priorities, should give greater prominence and clarity to provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities being a priority.

How Does This Strategy Link to Wider Reforms?

6 To ensure the timely and appropriate delivery of the recommendations from *Through Inclusion to Excellence*, the LSC has instigated immediate work to ensure that the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully embedded within the LSC's core business cycle and processes. As such, this strategy is clearly embedded in the seven themes of *agenda for change*:

- Skills for Employers
- Quality
- Data
- Funding
- Business Excellence
- Reputation
- Internal LSC Transformation.

This will enable a clear understanding and linkage of this area of work within the wider context of LSC-led reforms and activities. The strategy is further informed by, and informs LSC activity within the following agendas and reform programmes:

- Review of the future role of FE Colleges by Sir Andrew Foster
- the Leitch Review
- the Skills Strategy
- Every Child Matters
- the 14–19 Agenda
- Further Education: Raising skills, improving life chances
- Framework for Excellence
- Pursuing Excellence
- Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People

- Valuing People
- Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services
- A New Deal for Welfare – Empowering people to work
- Able to Work
- City Strategies
- Local Area Agreements
- the work of the Social Exclusion Taskforce
- the Disability Agenda (to be published in early 2007 by the Disability Rights Commission).

7 Common to these agendas are the needs for person-centred planning and collaboration, both between delivery partners and agencies. If the LSC and the sector are to make learning truly person centred, it is unlikely that any one institution alone will be able to meet the entire learning needs of the individual. Given the broad needs of individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, this strategy envisages collaboration not just between providers in the FE system to meet learning needs, but also between the FE system and other agencies contributing to a holistic, person-centred approach to meet individuals' needs.

Context

8 *Further Education: Raising skills, improving life chances* introduces the term 'FE system' to refer to the post-16 learning sector. In the context of this document, FE system refers to a range of organisations including, but not exclusively, those providers funded by the LSC. This comprises:

- FE colleges/providers
- independent specialist colleges and schools
- independent training providers
- large employers who contract with the LSC
- learndirect/UFI
- providers of personal and community development learning (PCDL) including local authorities
- providers of learning and skills for offenders

- school sixth forms
- special school sixth forms
- providers within the voluntary and community sector.

9 Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities accessing the FE system represent a vibrant and diverse element of our learning community. They are of all ages, ethnic groups and both genders, and access provision at all levels, and across the whole of the FE system. This range of provision includes pre-Entry Level programmes through to those taking Level 3 qualifications and higher education. Some learners will be in discrete specialist provision, whilst others will be learning alongside their peers without learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In the 2004/05 academic year, there were approximately 641,000 learners in the FE system who self-declared a learning difficulty and/or disability. This represented approximately 10 per cent of the LSC's total funded learners.

Case study: Lucy Wilkins works for Somerset County Council. Lucy has Usher Syndrome; she is deaf and also has Retinitis Pigmentosa, a degenerative eye disease. Lucy completed her Advanced Apprenticeship nine months early, and at the 2006 Apprenticeship Awards, she won the Personal Achiever of the Year Award for the 19–24 year olds category. She says:

"I have not let my disability impede my enthusiasm for learning and working ... being honest about my disability and discussing it with others has enabled me to gain respect and understanding from my colleagues, which makes the working environment more comfortable and pleasant."

10 The total LSC funding associated with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was approximately £1.47 billion. This figure includes:

- on-programmes costs in FE, work-based learning and learndirect/UFI associated with each individual who has declared a learning difficulty and/or disability
- Additional Learning Support costs for FE and learndirect/UFI

- estimated expenditure of Additional Learning Support in work-based learning
- the block Special Educational Needs (SEN) grant passed to local authorities for learners in school sixth forms
- expenditure in specialist colleges for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- estimated on-programmes costs for each individual who has declared a learning difficulty and/or disability in PCDL.

11 It should be noted that the expenditure does not include:

- costs associated with Learner Support Funds, such as hardship funds, childcare support and so on
- capital costs associated with improving access to PCDL and FE providers as part of the LSC's work to support the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act
- on-programme costs for ESF short programmes.

12 Some of these learners associated with the total expenditure will not have required additional support to achieve, whereas there will be learners, including those who have not identified themselves as having a learning difficulty and/or disability, who will have such needs. The estimated costs (described above) are based on the percentage of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities within each funding stream and the corresponding funds.

13 There are significant levels of expenditure and participation, and we are working within challenging and dynamic circumstances. These, circumstances, however, also offer great opportunity for change for the better. We are proud that, since the LSC's inception, participation by this group of learners has increased, and continues to do so. In 2001/02, the number of learners who identified themselves as having a learning difficulty and/or disability and accessed FE and work-based learning was 336,537. In 2004/05, the comparable number was 477,417. The population is ageing, which suggests that there will be more acquired disabilities. In addition, there are increased numbers of individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities currently in compulsory education who will aspire to access FE. Both of these factors, along with the data trends, imply continued growth.

14 As numbers increase, the average funding associated with each learner also continues to increase. The LSC does not have unlimited resources, and we recognise that other agencies face similar financial constraints. The concept of a single agency funding holistic programmes for individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outdated and is not in the best interests of either the individual or the agency. Collaborative deployment of public funding is the Government's strategic vision for Children's Services, and is also the LSC's preferred model for commissioning services for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, where it is appropriate. The move towards collaborative deployment of public funding and aligned resources must occur in a measured manner. As such, the vision of *Through Inclusion to Excellence* cannot be delivered immediately. As such, this strategy anticipates that change will be achieved incrementally as all public bodies undergo reform and return more of their investment to the frontline.

Our Vision: Learning for Living and Work

15 Individuals choose to enter education and training to improve their lives, strengthen their career opportunities, and to develop their skills; whether these are for economic participation, to develop self-confidence or to develop the ability to live independently. Publicly funded education and training must always have purpose and aim; learning is for enabling living and work. The choice to begin learning should be driven by an individual's desired endpoint. It is the role of the FE system to support this.

16 The LSC's vision for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is driven by this concept of learning for living and work. It is also driven by the principles of *Through Inclusion to Excellence*, that individuals' needs should be met through equitable and easily understood systems of planning, funding and placement, enabling all learners to achieve their goals and progress to the maximum possible level of independence and activity in their communities, and in employment. Our vision is one of:

- equity and parity of experience (including entitlement) for all learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities with their peers without learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- person-centred learning, based on the principles of Inclusive Learning, whereby learning has purpose, positive outcomes and meets learner aspiration, and in which the environment matches learners' requirements
- accessible local and regional provision, as opposed to provision far from where learners live
- challenging, quality programmes for all, regardless of the complexity of a learner's learning difficulty and/or disability
- performance measures for providers in supporting learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve their learning aims
- recognition of learner achievement through a fit-for-purpose and inclusive credit and qualifications framework

- an increased proportion of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities that contribute to LSC targets
- improved progression to employment for learners who aspire to work
- collaboration and joint funding of programmes for individuals who require holistic packages of provision
- barriers that prevent individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities accessing appropriate learning being addressed and quickly overcome
- all delivery partners within the FE system, as appropriate, contributing to the delivery of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; either through direct delivery, partnership arrangements or sharing effective practice
- an FE system whose culture will continue to improve, so that all delivery partners fully value and recognise the range and diversity of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and their contribution to our learning communities.

17 In particular, the LSC will deliver the following:

- national consistency with local and regional flexibility
- simpler and more flexible funding systems
- expert LSC staff who will lead change
- better control of growth of expenditure, value for money and cost efficiency
- strategies, policies, processes and plans that not only take into account the views of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but are informed by this group. This is in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 2006. We will also empower our providers to fulfil their own duties under this Act.

18 The successful delivery of this strategy will lead to our overarching ambition for the sector that, by 2015, England will be an international exemplar in providing high-quality education and training provision for post-16 learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whereby poor provision has been eliminated and outstanding provision is the norm. The strategy outlines our headline work activities and intended outcomes up to 2009/10, and these activities should be seen as part of a longer term programme of reform to achieve this goal by 2015. Therefore, each of the key actions and outcomes outlined in this strategy represent a milestone towards this final goal.

Delivering Our Vision

19 The strategy itself is structured against the four themes of *Through Inclusion to Excellence*:

- Planning (including LSC Structures)
- Quality
- Funding
- Working with Partners (including Capital Investment)

In addition, we have highlighted two further themes identified from analysis of the consultation responses to the report. Each theme, listed below, includes key actions and outcomes that represent a milestone towards this ambition.

- Communicating Our Priorities – the purpose of this theme is to ensure that the sector and stakeholders, including learners, understand our vision, intentions, commitment and the direction of change.

- Learner Progression – *Through Inclusion to Excellence* highlighted the importance of progression to employment for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities where it is appropriate for them. The consultation responses also identified this as an important issue. As a result, the LSC has identified learner transition and progression (particularly into employment) as an additional key component within this strategy. The LSC will, therefore, through its local and regional teams and the National Employer Service, seek to address this issue through collaboration with other agencies and bodies which have an interest in such progression, such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), local government, Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and Jobcentre Plus.

Investing for Change

20 In the long term, it is our anticipation that the delivery of this vision will be through providers' core funding. The regionalisation of LSC budgets and the greater integration of policy will impact upon existing funding streams contributing to successful and effective use of financial resources. However, in response to the recommendation that 'the LSC should commit to a policy of "investment for change" to achieve systemic transformation', we have identified additional investment funds, above existing expenditure, which will be used to instigate change.

21 In delivering these changes, the LSC shall, via the regions, at a minimum make additional investments of £35 million.

22 Investment levels beyond 2008 cannot be confirmed until the outcomes of the current Comprehensive Spending Review are finalised.

Priority Activities for 2006/07 to 2009/10

23 Each of the themes outlined above is underpinned by three key priority work areas, where investment funds will be used to pump-prime provision. These key priority work areas will be consistent across all the regions which will be used to instigate transformation. They are:

- investing in provision: understanding demand and building capacity
- raising quality of provision, including workforce development
- increasing economic participation through sustainable employment.

24 Underpinning each of these key priority work areas is an ambition that they will deliver increased social inclusion, improve the skills of individuals and enable them to contribute to local communities and economies.

25 It is anticipated that these three areas of work will be our immediate priorities for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through to 2009/10. Importantly, we would like to clarify that the identification of these three priority areas does not mean that other areas of work in relation to provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other recommendations from *Through Inclusion to Excellence* will be neglected or marginalised. These three areas are simply the key headline areas for development.

26 Development work and investment will occur in other areas, as appropriate to local and regional needs. Each region will identify additional, more specific priorities, or may in turn highlight provision for learners with particular learning support requirements, or specific skills areas. For example, the focus for some regions may include the issue of rural location or unique issues regarding transport. To reflect regional differences, each region will present its emerging vision and strategic delivery plans within the context of its plan for the strategic commissioning of provision and this broader national strategy. These plans will be published in winter 2006, and will be used to inform the planning dialogue between all delivery partners and the LSC for 2007/08.

Measuring Our Success

27 Central to any LSC activity must be the measurable benefits to learners, the economy and society. Learners can expect that the LSC and the sector's activities will lead to:

- a safer environment and premises that meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, and the emerging Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups legislation
- improved learner support services
- improved choice and participation in education and training
- increased access to high-quality provision
- improvements in the quality of teaching and learning as a direct result of professionalising the workforce
- increased flexibility in the delivery of provision
- increased economic participation
- increased social inclusion
- increased levels of attainment, both in terms of qualifications and progression.

28 These activities will not only benefit learners. Employers will also benefit. Increased attainment at Level 2 and Level 3 by individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and greater employability skills will support the increased productivity of current and future employees. These activities will also seek to contribute to addressing skills shortages in each region.

Case study: Dilston College, a specialist provider for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, has built links with Newcastle College to deliver provision for learners which targets a local skills gap in catering.

LSC Performance and FE System Performance

29 There are already quantifiable measures and targets, such as attainment, as expressed through PSA targets, which will help us understand the initial impact of these actions. By autumn 2007, the LSC will, in partnership with DfES and provider representatives, have developed more sophisticated, robust, appropriate and transparent performance measures to aid benchmarking and quality improvement. This work will include attention to the requirements of learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and help the LSC recognise successes in increased social inclusion, such as community engagement and volunteering, employment outcomes for learners and particularly in multi-agency working. The LSC will also develop internal performance measures with regard to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and these will be aligned with the development of the Framework for Excellence, in particular the key performance indicator relating to learner responsiveness.

30 From 2008/09, the LSC's planning processes will ensure that we are able to include these more sophisticated performance indicators within provider development plans. In the interim, LSC partnership teams will continue to agree appropriate targets for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as part of the dialogue with senior and executive managers to agree development plans. LSC regional offices will also continue to monitor performance on the extent to which learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities contribute to regional and national priorities and targets. Further development of the Framework for Excellence and the New Measures of Success will also consider how these areas can act as measures for the FE system for this group of learners.

31 Monitoring of, and advising on the implementation of this strategy and the delivery of *Through Inclusion to Excellence* has been delegated by the LSC National Council to its Equality and Diversity Sub-Committee on Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities. During early 2007, the LSC will, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, commission an independent longitudinal evaluation study focused on the effectiveness and progress in implementing this strategy, how well we have delivered or contributed to wider government agendas, and how the strategy has responded to embedding the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities within the delivery of policy and corporate targets. This work will also report on how the strategy has successfully impacted upon provision for learners with all types of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. As part of this work, we will also measure progress towards achieving equality of achievement within the government's stated aims for young people, and adults – in particular the Level 2 PSA target and the target to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

32 Our evaluation will also seek to provide an evidence base of the benefits of shared funding for all agencies, not just the LSC. For example, a positive outcome from independent living skills programmes may be more effective use of wider agency resources and services involved in supporting disabled people to live autonomous lives. The learner consultation performed a valuable role in informing the work of *Through Inclusion to Excellence*. To ensure the learner voice informs the evaluation, we will, in early 2009, commission a further learner consultation as part of the monitoring of this strategy.

33 Both the evaluation and learner consultation will inform our next steps towards making England, by 2015, an international exemplar in providing high-quality education and training provision for post-16 learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. We are committed to working in partnership, and in the future the LSC would wish to adopt the approach taken for *Pursuing Excellence*: the outline national improvement strategy for the FE system, whereby the strategy is owned and will be delivered by national partner organisations that plan, fund, inspect and support the FE system. By 2009, the LSC intends to have worked with DfES to broker a partnership whereby the work undertaken from 2010 to 2015 will be driven by a single strategy owned by the same national partner organisations. During 2009/10, new activities and milestones for work up to 2015 will be identified and agreed with key partners.

Measuring Our Success – Key Actions and Outcomes

- During early 2007, the LSC will commission an independent longitudinal evaluation study focused on the progress and effectiveness with which the LSC has implemented this strategy.
- By autumn 2007, the LSC will, in partnership with DfES and provider representatives, have developed more sophisticated, robust, appropriate and transparent performance measures with regard to this cohort.
- By January 2009, the LSC intends to have worked with DfES to broker a partnership whereby the work undertaken from 2010 to 2015 to improve provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will be driven by a single strategy owned by the national partner organisations that plan, fund, inspect and support the FE system.
- In early 2009, the LSC will commission a consultation with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to inform the evaluation of this strategy.
- During 2009/10, new activities and milestones for work up to 2015 will be identified and agreed with key partners.

34 This strategy clearly outlines our direction of travel. The LSC, however, is aware that this document does not include explicit targets and milestones to enable the quantification of the various improvements and increases that the LSC is committing to delivering by 2010. In 2007, we will outline specific national targets and attainments to support the realisation of this agenda. This will be based upon:

- regional analyses of need
- consideration of the success of local and regional targets set as part of the forthcoming planning cycle and dialogue with our delivery partners
- work to develop appropriate performance measures
- further discussions with our partners.

Communicating Our Priorities

35 As with the delivery of all reform agendas, communication must be clear and precise. To realise our vision, the sector must have a shared understanding of our position, intentions, and our commitment to ensure the ongoing prioritisation of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This is the underpinning aim of the recommendation in *Through Inclusion to Excellence* that DfES in its Grant Letter to the LSC for 2006-07 and, LSC in its *Annual Statement of Priorities*, should give greater prominence and clarity to provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities being a priority.

36 Meeting the learning needs of this group is not just a legal requirement for the LSC, but more importantly, a chosen desire. The LSC has focused on a number of key government priorities including education and training for learners aged 16–18, Apprenticeships, literacy, language and numeracy provision for adults and young people and learners taking their first full Level 2 qualifications. However, securing and funding appropriate high-quality learning provision for learners of all ages with learning difficulties and/or disabilities **remains** a consistent aim and priority.

37 Our commitment to the prioritisation of provision for this group is also reflected in our desire to enable learners themselves to play a pivotal role in the development of policy. DfES, working with a variety of stakeholders including the LSC, Quality Improvement Agency (QIA), Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) and the National Union of Students (NUS), has established a project group to oversee policy development for personalised learning in FE. The personalised learning reforms are designed to raise standards, increase organisational responsiveness and learner involvement, and improve outcomes for learners and employers. The specific proposals aim to transform the learning experience and include:

- assessing learner requirements effectively and appropriately
- developing 'expert learners'
- improving pastoral support
- strengthening learner participation and representation.

38 As a strand of the proposals for strengthening learner participation and representation, the DfES, LSC and NUS are leading the development of a National Learner Panel to influence and inform policy-making. The panel will allow government, policy-makers and other stakeholders the opportunity to improve the responsiveness of the FE system. The National Learner Panel will be launched in November 2006, which will coincide with the release of a vision statement setting out a clear framework for personalised learning. Work is also being commissioned on developing guidance for providers to implement effective learner involvement strategies. Part of this work will also make clear our expectations of providers in terms of involvement of users in the design and evaluation of programmes.

Case study: LSC Greater Manchester has worked with Trafford Local Authority, Community Learning Trafford, Future Visions, the local Learning Disability Partnership, and Nextstep to develop and deliver a pilot business preparation course for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, leading to establishment of a self-sustaining organisation led by adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The resulting organisation will provide awareness training on learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

40 This will build on our 'Talk to Des' campaign (www.lsc.gov.uk), which involves talking to people with disabilities and their families so that the LSC can understand the issues they face when accessing learning and the obstacles that prevent them engaging in learning. These findings will help to shape the LSC's future policies to promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities. The role of our voluntary and community sector partners, particularly user-led organisations, will be vitally important in supporting the delivery of the strategy, and helping us to hear the learner voice.

Communicating Our Priorities – Key Actions and Outcomes

– In early 2007, the National Learners with Disabilities Panel will be launched. It will have a clear relationship to the National Learners' Panel and the LSC governance structure.

39 Linking to the National Learner Panel, the LSC will create a National Learners with Disabilities Panel. Its purpose will be to advise specifically on policy that will directly affect the experience of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It is envisaged that this Panel will enable the LSC, on a long-term basis, to ensure ongoing consultation with people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to involve them in the LSC's strategy, thus supporting the LSC to meet its duty to promote disability equality. The National Learners with Disabilities Panel will be launched in early 2007, and will draw on the initial experiences of the National Learner Panel. The membership of the National Learners with Disabilities Panel will be drawn from learners across the sector and will include members of the main National Learner Panel. Its format will be designed by its membership. It is, however, intended that the panel will formally be linked to other existing forums, such the National Forum for People with Learning Disabilities. Once the Panel has been launched, we will discuss with partner organisations, how they may use it as a resource to hear the voice of the learner and inform their own work. The ongoing feedback from the National Learners with Disabilities Panel will complement the learner consultation that the LSC will commission in 2009.

41 The LSC will also determine how best to capture the views and experiences of employers involved in open and supported employment of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This will ensure that the LSC can help improve the work of the delivery partners involved, and also use the information to help attract more employers into this area. In addition, the LSC will create a short-term advisory group to advise the LSC on its implementation of *Through Inclusion to Excellence*. This group will be populated predominantly by delivery partners.

42 A major challenge in taking forward the LSC's strategy for its funding and planning of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will be the need to improve the mixed reputation (specifically the perceptions of learners, their families and carers and other agencies) of the FE system to be able to provide high-quality, learner-centred further education and training to meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Therefore, the LSC is keen to ensure that there is clear communication with learners, families and carers, pre-16 schools, providers, local authorities, Connexions, employers and other agencies. All of these groups have expectations, and there must be clear understanding of what the LSC is able to deliver and what other agencies are able to deliver.

43 During the implementation of this strategy, the LSC at national, regional and local level will devise and produce internal communication plans to ensure messages are consistently understood by all interested parties. The internal communication plans will include approaches to ensure that learners and, if appropriate, parents, carers and guardians understand how the changes this strategy will deliver will increase equity of experience.

46 The information gathered during 2006/07 will be used to create detailed costings, which will indicate how 'investment to change' funds will be used to achieve systemic transformation and increased supply of high-quality, local provision. The LSC believes that this investment will provide greater control over the rate of growth of expenditure on provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, so that growth is comparable to the rest of the FE system. If the costing exercise identifies potential savings, these monies will be used to support increased participation of and attainment by learners. This document will be published by the LSC in autumn/winter 2007. It will also include the national targets and attainments, discussed earlier, to support the realisation of this agenda

44 Inefficient data-gathering across providers and agencies, and the failure to share accurate data between these partners inhibits the understanding of the current and future demand for provision, and this prevents the LSC effectively using that data to plan to meet that demand. Poor-quality data, combined with weaknesses in sharing data, also prevents sufficient planning for transition to and from further education.

45 Demand is fundamental to our planning and commissioning activities. As part of each region's work, where this has not already been done, assessments will be carried out to identify regional gaps in provision. These assessments will add to the considerable work already undertaken by the LSC in Strategic Area Reviews and other mapping exercises. Using this evidence base, each region will build regional strategic delivery plans, in consultation and collaboration with its partners, for the development of provision. As our intelligence base becomes greater, the regions will, accordingly, produce more detailed strategic commissioning plans for provision and priorities for this group of learners. By autumn 2007, the LSC will have detailed needs analyses to inform this process.

47 Inconsistencies between the data definitions used by agencies and providers present further difficulties in planning and responding to the requirements of learners. The principle of 'collect once, use many times' that the Managing Information Across Partners network is working towards will also support greater consistency. *Through Inclusion to Excellence* further recommended that there should be shared common datasets based on common definitions and terminology to be used throughout compulsory education and into post-16 education and training. This process will ensure that there is a clear understanding between agencies and providers.

48 The LSC has therefore begun scoping work to develop new data definitions to be used within the Individualised Learner Record system from 2009/10. These definitions will be comparable to the definitions of SEN used by schools for the Pupil Level Annual Schools Census (PLASC), and those of other agencies such as social services, to allow a clearer understanding of participation trends, and, more importantly, enable genuine common understanding. It is anticipated that the emerging new definitions will be utilised by the Managing Information Across Partners network.

49 The LSC will work with DfES and SEN Regional Partnerships to ensure that high-level data is available to local and regional teams to enable provision to be well planned and responsive to individuals' learning support requirements. Furthermore, linking to the data that will be stored within the new Children's Database, it is anticipated that the LSC will form data agreements with local authorities to ensure that post-16 learning providers are sufficiently informed of the level of learning support requirements of young people moving through the compulsory education system.

Case study: LSC Essex and Connexions Berkshire working with representatives of education and social services departments across the county, school, providers, parents and representatives of voluntary and other organisations have developed a set of protocols to support transition by young people. The protocols are designed to allow practitioners working together to support the young person with a clear understanding and respect for one another's roles and with arrangements for sharing information and assessment outcomes.

50 The LSC also wishes to work more closely with Jobcentre Plus to understand better the learning and skills needs of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities claiming Jobseekers' Allowance and Incapacity Benefit. This will enable the LSC to better support providers to plan provision for the full range of local skills needs. Similarly, the LSC will work closely with regional offender managers to ensure our collaborative commissioning of provision for offenders takes full account of that population's individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

LSC Structures

51 To plan, lead and instigate change nationally, regionally and locally, the LSC will uphold our core values of trust, expertise, ambition and urgency. Just as the LSC has laid out the challenges for the FE system, there has also been the challenge of making the LSC fit for purpose. *Through Inclusion to Excellence* tasked the LSC to 'put in place consistent regional staffing structures to enable strategic and operational oversight of the development of appropriate, coordinated, collaborative and consistent provision'. As part of the seventh theme of *agenda for change*, which focused on internal LSC transformation, we have already created new local and regional structures.

52 Each regional structure is led by a Regional Director, who is supported by several key post-holders responsible for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The strategic lead in each region is the Director of Learning, Planning and Performance. A Regional Manager provides the operational oversight and is supported by a team of advisers, the numbers of which vary in relation to regional need. These roles will complement the Partnership Directors and their teams who develop and sustain local relationships with partner agencies and delivery partners, and therefore drive implementation of this strategy at local level. Local actions will also be informed and complemented by the work of the LSC's Economic Development Managers and Regional Directors of Skills.

53 The creation of the LSC's regional tier provides the organisation with greater flexibility to meet local and regional need. Thus, as highlighted above, each region will be publishing its own approach to provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The regional tier will also support greater consistency. In itself, however, having consistent staffing structures is only an element of delivering consistency. Alongside, consistent staffing structures, the LSC will create effective internal processes to better support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, underpinned by consistent application across regions. For example, the placements process for attendance at specialist colleges will be delivered to set criteria designed by LSC National Office and regional offices.

Planning – Key Actions and Outcomes

- By autumn 2007, the LSC will have detailed needs analyses for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across England.
- In autumn/winter 2007, the LSC will publish details of how 'investment to change' funds will be used to achieve systemic transformation and increased supply of high-quality, local provision. This will include national targets and attainments, discussed earlier, to support the realisation of the Learning for Living and Work Strategy.
- New definitions of learning difficulties and/or disabilities to be used within the ILR system will be introduced in the 2009/10 academic year.

54 The LSC will invest in the development of innovative provision to address any identified local and regional gaps. This will be achieved by building upon existing provision to expand capacity and improve quality, and, where appropriate, through the introduction of new providers. Such investment will enable the LSC to cease commissioning inadequate provision by September 2008, an action committed to in *Further Education: Raising skills, improving life chances*.

55 The potential inability to plan and develop sustainable local provision is a major barrier for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities accessing the full range of provision across the FE system. This issue, combined with insufficient workforce development and sharing of expertise, contributes to continuing poor inspection outcomes for some provision. Failure to tackle this will only prolong and worsen the current situation of there being limited options for high-quality learning opportunities available to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

56 Responsibility for improving the quality of provision is first and foremost that of providers. Self-improvement must not be reliant on the anticipation of inspection, but be part of planned continuous improvement. As we progress towards self-regulation, the core of quality improvement must be providers' rigorous self-assessment. This, in turn, is central to the shared approach to strategic commissioning of high-quality provision.

57 The LSC wishes to work with its partners to empower providers to raise the quality of their provision. Our plans to facilitate quality improvement fall under two strands. The first strand is provision focused and the second is workforce development. The first strand has three broad aims; to:

- eliminate poor, unnecessary and duplicated provision
- build on and expand existing high-quality provision
- commission and develop new provision.

58 The LSC puts the quality of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as central to its vision. As is the case for all providers, and evidenced in the LSC's *Intervention Strategy*, we wish to eliminate underperformance. Therefore, from 2007/08, any provider that is declared by the Inspectorate as being both unsatisfactory, and with poor capacity to improve its provision, will have one year to demonstrate sufficient progress. During this period, the LSC will continue to work with the QIA to support these failing providers. Failure to demonstrate sufficient progress will result in the LSC adopting one of the four intervention options listed in *Further Education: Raising skills, improving life chances*. For those providers with which the LSC holds non grant-in-aid contracts, the contract will be withdrawn. In these circumstances, the LSC will work with learners and appropriate agencies, to find alternative appropriate programmes to ensure continuity of learning. For other providers, comparable sanctions will be applied to similarly failing provision, with funding for the provision being ceased, and new provision will be commissioned. The LSC will work with the QIA to support these failing providers, and to ensure continuity for learners. Commencing in September 2007, performance of providers will also be judged by the use of the Framework for Excellence, which provides a basis for robust self-assessment alongside standard key performance indicators.

59 Using the investment monies identified above, the LSC will steadily reshape the local landscape by building on and expanding existing high-quality provision. Where required, the LSC will also commission and develop new provision and services, and where appropriate, this will be on a competitions basis. Collaborative approaches to delivery will be a key assessment criterion in any competition for specialist provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

60 Innovative delivery across the sector is of prime importance. This is our expectation of our current providers. In order to support more dynamic change in the system, the LSC recognises that innovative provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is often made by small providers, who may not traditionally hold direct contracts with the LSC.

61 The LSC's strategy for developing small providers will be to encourage the development of specialist federations and trusts. Our initial concept is that of a 'development federation', which would build on work already under way on peer review and the nurturing of emerging provision and new providers. Regions may adopt a number of possible models, but the core aim would be to partner high-quality established providers (both general and specialist) with new providers to mentor and nurture emerging provision. The focus would be on specialist provision for those learners that are unlikely to be able to access, with support, mainstream learning. The LSC will examine how this model can be applied to our current providers, and how other emerging trust and federation models will develop, and determine the advantages of these models in the delivery of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

62 Partnership working and the sharing of expertise should be in place across the sector. In some areas of the FE system, there is a growing rich vein of partnership working, which the LSC wishes to support. Special schools and specialist colleges for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities need to work more closely with other local providers. This will be essential for sharing expertise and effective practice, to deliver provision for adults, and particularly for delivering the 14–19 agenda for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The LSC believes that the QIA's Excellence Gateway will also offer a valuable resource for providers seeking to share effective practice in the delivery of innovative teaching and learning.

Case study: The LSC London region is piloting a project to build capacity and specialist–FE college joint working. The project will act as a pilot to identify ways of enabling providers to share knowledge and expertise through observations of teaching and learning between colleges across the region.

63 Linking to the broader quality improvement agenda, the LSC requires that each Regional Quality Improvement Partnership (RQIP) will identify provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as a regional priority for improvement and that this will be reflected in the regional improvement framework that each RQIP will develop.

64 Quality improvement will also be enabled by the sharing of effective practice across the FE system, continuing the LSC's commitment to eliminating poor-quality provision and encouraging the development of innovative new collaborative provision in response to learner need. As part of this work, the LSC will work with QIA, Ofsted, delivery partners and other partners to develop criteria under which providers can be formally awarded Centre of Excellence status for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

65 It is anticipated that the Centre of Excellence award will, like Learning and Skills Beacons, be awarded by Ministers and applications would be by invitation only. The award will provide public recognition of the excellence and innovation that exists within the FE system. Candidate providers will be invited to apply in September 2008. The first provider will be awarded Centre of Excellence status for its provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by December 2008.

66 To deliver systemic transformation, the LSC at regional and local level will be working with providers to develop high-quality provision. It is anticipated that some of these providers will act as trailblazers, and will likely be among the first candidates to be invited to apply for Centre of Excellence status.

67 These Centres of Excellence will mimic the Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) and Learning and Skills Beacon models. Thus, alongside the delivery of teaching and learning, the centres will help:

- promote innovation
- sharing and transfer of effective practice
- cross-sectoral working
- development of peer referencing methodologies.

68 The process of raising the quality of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities further needs to be complemented by raising learner attainment and achievement. We believe that the development of the Foundation Learning Tier for England and the proposed credit and qualifications framework (being developed as part of the UK programme of reform of vocational qualifications) will provide this opportunity and improve routes for progression, where appropriate, from Foundation Level upwards.

69 The second key element of the LSC's plan to raise quality is workforce development. It is of prime importance to address workforce development for teachers, trainers, tutors and support workers, since without a workforce with the right skills, the sector will not be able to deliver high-quality provision to meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The skills base and gaps in expertise have been identified as a key issue by providers in their responses to the consultation on *Through Inclusion to Excellence*.

70 Insufficient specialist qualifications for all staff and a lack of appropriate professional standards severely limit the capacity and capability to deliver. Significant work has already been undertaken by DfES, LLUK, Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL) and other partners to develop the workforce of the FE system. New professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector have been developed and new standards for learning support staff are being developed over the coming months by LLUK. Qualifications frameworks are also under development for teachers and learning support staff. In this development, LLUK is seeking to ensure that all teachers and learning support staff are prepared to teach inclusively and have appropriate knowledge and skills. This includes working with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

71 The LSC will work with LLUK and others to develop initial training pathways for specialist learning support staff and teachers of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This will include pathways within teaching and learning support qualifications frameworks. The range and complexity of learning difficulties and disabilities will demand the development of both generalist and highly specific specialist training opportunities.

72 The LSC will also continue to support and work our partners to deliver:

- strengthened initial teacher training that is flexible and accessible
- initial training for existing unqualified staff that is equally fit for purpose
- accredited opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD).

73 The LSC plans to invest in a nationally co-ordinated, but regionally delivered, training support programme to develop staff competences and skills. We wish to explore with the QIA, CEL, DfES, LLUK and delivery partners, the content for a programme of strategic reform in workforce skills that recognises the diversity of need. This may include:

- development of CPD partnerships with HE institutions
- organisational approaches to staff knowledge and awareness
- creation of bespoke training programmes to target specific gaps.

74 Therefore, by 2010, there will be an appropriately fully qualified workforce, whereby all teachers and trainers will be qualified to teach and train. In addition, we wish to ensure that specialist learner support workers are also fully qualified by this date.

75 Providers sharing experiences and expertise will be important, and the LSC will work with QIA to facilitate some of this cross-sectoral management development. Following discussions with our partners in 2007/08, we will publish our proposed programme of activities. Additionally, the target of a fully qualified workforce by 2010 will be monitored through data collection processes by both LLUK and the LSC.

Quality – Key Actions and Outcomes

- In 2007/08, the LSC and partners will publish a proposed programme of activities to support the development of a fully qualified workforce in the FE system.
- By September 2008, the LSC will cease commissioning inadequate provision. This includes inadequate provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- By December 2008, the first provider will be awarded Centre of Excellence status for its provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- By 2010, there will be a fully qualified workforce in the FE system, including those working with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

78 The funding approaches for adults, though demand-led, will remain informed by the principle of comparable funding allocations for comparable activities. In 2008/09, following consultation with the FE system, the new funding approaches will be introduced in FE and work based learning. By 2009/10, the new funding arrangements will be fully implemented across the entire FE system.

79 A crucial part of the funding reform is the development of the funding approach for Additional Learning Support. The LSC wishes to develop an approach that meets learners' needs and that offers equitable and consistent treatment across the sector. Central to this is the wish to ensure that the funding approach does not limit learner choice. Details of the funding developments are not presented here because they are and will be contained within current and future publications associated with the LSC's wider reform of funding methodologies.

76 To deliver our vision, funding for post compulsory education and training will be fit for purpose, equitable across all areas of the FE system and provide appropriate levels of support for learning. It will encourage an increased collaborative and interagency approach, with enough flexibility to allow for innovative practice to be quickly mainstreamed. This will be delivered through arrangements based on the *agenda for change* proposals. The funding process will enable, encourage and incentivise greater collaboration and partnership to deliver learner-centred packages of provision.

77 Following commitments in *Further Education: Raising skills, improving life chances* for a funding system for adult provision to be progressively driven by customer choice, the LSC has been commissioned by Ministers to develop demand-led models of funding. This autumn, the LSC will publish a consultation document setting out three approaches to funding. This will include:

- a planned approach for young people
- a demand-led approach suited to meet the needs of adults choosing their own programme of study
- a demand-led approach suited to meet the needs of adults accessing employer based training.

80 In addition to the wider *agenda for change* funding reforms, the LSC has identified two further areas of work to deliver the principles of *Through Inclusion to Excellence*. First, the LSC will examine the development of individualised budgets and the interaction with LSC funding. The Government is progressively moving towards individualised budgets, whereby disabled people, or families of disabled children, are able to choose whether they take their individualised budget in cash, in some combination of services and cash payments, or entirely as services commissioned by their local authority. The budgets will be used to obtain the support the individual needs – whether it is equipment, personal assistance, housing adaptations, help with transport to work or learning. This represents an exciting opportunity to empower people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and increasingly to personalise services. The LSC wishes to engage fully and establish clarity in this area to ensure that the individual and funding body are purchasing the service required and without the possibility of duplication.

81 The second key area is to focus on the funds that form the block SEN grant passed to local authorities by the LSC to enable them to fulfil their duties towards learners with SEN in school. During 2006/07, as part of the development of a planned approach and common funding levels for young people in the FE system we will work with 14–19 Partnerships to gain better understanding of arrangements for learners with SEN in school provision, and consider how the arrangements in FE and schools sectors might be better designed to maximise choice.

Funding – Key Actions and Outcomes

- During 2006/07, the LSC will collect and analyse information from local authorities about the costs associated with supporting learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This information will be used to inform the LSC's development of a planned approach for young people in the FE system.
- In 2008/09, the new funding approaches will be implemented across FE and work based learning.
- By 2009/10, the new funding approaches will be fully implemented across the entire FE system.

84 As Children's Services develop, there will be an increase in local joint strategic commissioning, planning and aligning of resources. As such, it is envisaged that at local level the LSC will liaise with local authorities to encourage a joint commissioning approach. The needs of the young person will therefore be met, through multi-agency collaboration and the role of the LSC will be one of contributor to that package, that is, providing post-16 learning, whilst other agencies contribute other elements of the package, for example care, housing.

85 This approach will enable the shared delivery of skills for participation in public life, such as self-care, and personal and social skills. The FE system can clearly contribute to this agenda and can support progression for individuals with the most complex needs to a range of supported living options and activities in the community. Most importantly, increasing levels of independence and autonomy will improve the quality of life of individuals and by doing so, will improve the effectiveness of support services, benefits and care budgets. As discussed elsewhere in this strategy, supported and open employment, will also contribute to these packages.

86 The Children Act 2004 provides a clear framework for collaboration for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to the age of 25. For purchasing provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the LSC wishes to adopt a similar joint commissioning approach, with local adult social services, Primary Care Trusts and Jobcentre Plus. This will support the development of collaborative packages that enable participation in public life by this age group. The LSC also considers that local Learning Disability Partnership Boards will play a valuable role in brokering a joint commissioning approach for adults. Working with the Valuing People Support Team, the LSC will improve its own and providers' links with Learning Disability Partnership Boards.

82 The LSC cannot achieve effective use of public funds or eliminate any unnecessary duplication of provision unless delivery partners and agencies work together to plan, fund and monitor performance of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In addition, it is evident that if the FE system is to achieve the aim of developing provision that is truly learner-centred, it is unlikely that any one institution or agency can meet all the needs of an individual. This is especially true for learners with more profound and complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities where providers and agencies will need to work together to enable effective delivery of publicly funded services.

83 The *agenda for change* programme highlights the benefits of providers pursuing collective procurement arrangements to deliver better value for money. The LSC strongly believes that similar arrangements should be put in place for securing holistic provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements through which key agencies, including the LSC, co-operate to improve the well-being of children and young people. Agencies may pool resources if they wish. The LSC will, however, seek to align resources to secure jointly agreed outcomes.

Case study: LSC Greater Merseyside has led work to support collaboration between the Royal National Institute for the Blind and Liverpool Community College, which is now being extended across other LSC regions. This has built the long-term capacity of local provision to include learners with visual impairment in mainstream learning. Initially, the work was funded through discretionary monies, but is now funded through mainstream allocations.

87 Importantly, multi-agency collaboration to support adults will link to the development of local LSC partnerships as discussed in *Further Education: Raising skills, improving life chances*, and also further relates to the current reforms in the way personal and community development learning (PCDL) (including family and neighbourhood learning) is planned and funded. The aim is to reinvigorate it and to make it more relevant to the changing needs of local communities, including learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

88 This should not mean, however, that provision previously funded under FE will be funded in future under PCDL. This subverts the purpose of PCDL as a universal offering of a range of learning opportunities for their intrinsic value. Instead we would expect local LSC-convened partnerships, which will plan and co-ordinate this provision, to consider ways in which PCDL can be made attractive and best serve the needs of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This will build on work by NIACE commissioned by DfES to identify and disseminate good practice in this area.

89 These partnerships will also look beyond LSC funding to develop aligned activity in both recreational and cultural learning. For example, they will have a vital role in linking agency resources in relation to health related learning, sport and leisure, conservation and a whole range of other types of activity which can improve the confidence and integration into the community of people with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

90 *Through Inclusion to Excellence* proposed that there should be discussions between the DfES and the Department of Health (DoH) regarding the LSC's current spend on health and care costs for some learners, with an outcome being an agreement about appropriate funding responsibilities and partnership working. The DfES has informed the LSC that discussions are under way (which will include other government departments) and has confirmed that it is expected that a nationally agreed and published set of protocols will be in place by the end of 2007. The LSC will offer its full support to all government departments in delivering these protocols, which it is anticipated will act as a framework, within which local agreements can be brokered. The LSC believes that these protocols will deliver a truly transformational and revolutionary change in the creation of local funding agreements.

91 The LSC also anticipates that the increased availability of high-quality local and regional learning provision will further facilitate better engagement with other local agencies involved with individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Working with Partners – Key Actions and Outcomes

- By the end of 2007, the DfES and other government departments will have agreed and published a set of protocols for shared funding responsibilities and partnership working.

Capital

92 The LSC's national and regional capital strategies and local capital plans will continue to be informed by the need to develop premises that are fit for purpose and offer improved curriculum opportunities and learning environments. As part of the continuing capital programme to improve the FE estate, any new build proposals should consider, following consultation with the LSC, the need for, and possibility of, the delivery of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, even if the college does not currently deliver the provision itself. For example, another provider may be able enter into a partnership, brokered by the LSC, with a college to deliver such provision. Providers' own capital strategies must also consider all access and support requirements to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act.

93 It is envisaged that co-location of providers and provision will enable greater access for increased numbers of learners with a variety of needs to a greater range of provision, specialisms and facilities. The LSC, with QIA and the Inspectorate, will commission an analysis of the benefits to the learner and financial benefits associated with provider co-location. This will be carried out during 2007. The development of better local facilities for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will enable greater choice for learners to attend local provision. They are intended to encourage and enable the movement of this area of provision towards sustainable, high-quality, collaborative provision that fits with local and regional plans for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

94 Notwithstanding the focus on local provision, the LSC would consider supporting facilities with a regional or national focus, for example, a capital bid to provide semi-independent living accommodation as part of an independent living programme and transition planning for learners (that is, where the residential accommodation would also be used as a teaching and learning facility). Such facilities would normally operate in a regional context and their need would be reflected in regional capital strategies.

Case study: Following the withdrawal of a contract from a failing provider, LSC Nottinghamshire and West Nottinghamshire College worked together to create new provision for learners with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Provision is delivered, developed and quality-assured by the college, with specialist support and behavioural management provided by ASD expert practitioners. The arrangement is succeeding, and early discussions are taking place with local special schools to explore sharing of sites, expertise and provision. It is expected that models of effective practice will be disseminated across the region.

95 In parallel with the importance of capital developments recognising physically accessible buildings, local provision must be accessible. Transport is not part of the LSC's legal remit; however, we will support the DfES in ensuring that there is equity in transport for young people and greater clarity in transport funding responsibilities for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged over 19.

Capital – Key Actions and Outcomes

- During early 2007, the LSC, with QIA and the Inspectorate, will commission an analysis of the benefits to the learner and financial benefits associated with provider co-location.

98 The LSC and the sector must support the integration of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into communities. Key to this integration is economic participation. *Able to Work*, the report of the National Employment Panel's Employers' Working Group on Disability, highlighted that 50 per cent of working age disabled people are economically inactive (neither working nor actively seeking work), compared with just 15 per cent of non-disabled people. A key target for all agencies must ultimately be that the economic participation of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will be proportionate to their peers without learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

99 The significant change the LSC and the sector must deliver is to ensure that the FE system delivers flexible, planned progression to employment as a central goal for those learners for whom it is appropriate. Achieving this ambition will, however, take time, sustained commitment from employers, and profound shifts in all our attitudes, assumptions and behaviour.

96 Continued learner transition is central to our strategy. Providers must adhere to a vision of the FE system as not being an endpoint for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but as part of the route map to social and economic participation, as it is for all other post-16 learners. Supporting these individuals to progress beyond learning does not deny them learning. This group of learners should, like all other individuals, access learning when they need to improve skills or to access learning for leisure. To retain this group of individuals in learning without direction or purpose, is simply a holding activity and will not support their integration into our local communities.

97 In response, providers, as part of their self-assessment processes should examine their specialist programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure that they are still learning focused and evaluate how these, programmes, in the context of this strategy, can better contribute to learners' aspirations and progression. Proposed changes to provision should, of course, be discussed as part of a provider's planning discussions with local LSC partnership teams.

100 The LSC is keen to ensure that, for learners working at Entry Level and Level 1 who are unlikely to progress to an Apprenticeship or NVQ Level 2, or for whom Entry to Employment is inappropriate, there are improved opportunities for work-based learning. Therefore, as part of an individual's programme, whether a vocationally related qualification or 'work preparation', it should include genuine work-based learning and placements. These should apply the same principles inherent to work-based learning, whereby literacy, language and numeracy can be embedded within sustainable employment programmes. This will build upon the Learning for Living materials which help contextualise Skills for Life for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Embedded approaches are an important part of the sector's work on promoting quality improvement in Skills for Life. As a result of improved employability skills, these individuals will be able to make an important contribution to the success of businesses.

101 These new programmes will also be embedded within and take full advantage of the reformed learning opportunities afforded by the development of the Foundation Learning Tier as part of an inclusive credit and qualifications framework. Thus providers will be able to agree and design, with learners and employers, programmes that are both flexible and challenging.

102 Central to this activity is that providers plan and support individuals' transition to employment, where appropriate, from the outset of their programmes. There must be clear endpoints for learners on work preparation programmes. We must also recognise that significant numbers of preparation for work and life programmes can be an area of underperformance for many providers, and also fail to meet learner need.

103 The LSC will now support the FE system to move away from programmes that do not have clear progression outcomes and intentions. This will occur over the next three years. As such, the LSC expects that work-preparation programmes will be re-focused to adopt a supported employment model that will deliver the skills and knowledge to assist people into part-time and full-time employment. Thus, by September 2010, the LSC will no longer fund providers to deliver work-preparation programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities that do not focus on learning in the work place and the supported employment model. For some individuals, supported employment may not be an option. However, individuals can still progress, and be empowered to be active citizens within our communities. For example, progression may be to volunteer work.

104 We do not expect that individual providers will need to change their own skills base to address this focus, but instead that they build on effective practice, and also develop partnerships with the wealth of supported employment agencies that have considerable knowledge and expertise in this area. As part of the increased collaboration between the Welfare to Work and FE systems, the LSC will be developing a joint approach for supported employment with DWP. We will work with Jobcentre Plus, DWP, DfES, Remploy, FE system provider representatives, the British Association of Supported Employment Providers (BASE) and other supported employment agencies to develop this approach. This approach will be further informed by the current evaluation of DWP's work programmes for people with disabilities.

105 The investment funds described above will be used to support providers to rescope their LSC-funded programmes and develop links with supported employment agencies, ensuring these programmes can, in the future, be funded from providers' core allocations. Future funding guidance will contain clearer and simpler guidelines to support and motivate providers to work in this way. It is envisaged that user-led organisations will also contribute to this agenda through peer support. During 2007/08, the LSC's National Employer Service will work with the regions to pilot this model with large employers.

Case study: LSC Greater Manchester has built stronger collaborative partnerships with its local authority areas. This work includes collaborative work among Salford Colleges with Phoenix Supported Employment to develop the vocational curriculum and enable students with learning difficulties to progress to work. This project supported the development of a lasting infrastructure and has now been mainstreamed within the colleges.

106 The LSC's ambition in this area is far-reaching and reflects the Government's wider intervention strategy to deliver 'the skills and access to in-work support needed to enhance disabled people's employability'. The LSC recognises and values the contribution of recreational learning to self-development, and learning that supports independent living. The Government aims to improve the labour market status of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In response, the FE system must deliver a step-change in provision so that, **as far as is appropriate for each individual**, specialist programmes for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities must involve an element of 'in work' support.

107 Key to this ambition is the need to raise awareness among, and work with, employers to raise the number of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities entering and being maintained in employment. The Government is undertaking this task as part of the delivery of the Able to Work agenda. To complement this work, the LSC will work with RDAs, Regional Skills Partnerships and Sector Skills Councils to raise awareness.

108 The LSC recognises that providers must be careful to ensure that learners progress in a considered and measured manner. In 2006, the LSC will commission an analysis of progress within, and progression from work preparation and independent living skills programmes. This will consider levels of support, time taken for learners to achieve and the effectiveness of the programmes. The analysis will be used to enhance the contribution of these programmes to individuals' ambition in learning for living and work.

109 It is recognised that due to individual need, there is not and will not be a standard time within which learners will achieve. However, we keen to ensure that there is an evidence base of effective practice that will enable providers and LSC partnership teams to be better informed in their planning dialogue and ensure that individuals are given sufficient time to acquire the necessary skills before progressing.

110 The LSC also recognises that individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities whose current skills level may be at Level 1 or below have an important contribution to make, not just in the community, but in the workplace. The Foundation Learning Tier will also have a vital role in enabling appropriate vocational progression routes.

111 This work will inform the personalised learning, discussed elsewhere, and also help the LSC and partners determine whether a specific programme of support should be developed to cover this and other areas of provision that have had repeatedly poor inspection outcomes. This could include teaching materials, staff training and promoting better practice. This work will also inform the developing funding methodology to provide a simpler and easily understood way to fund employment and independent living skills programmes.

112 Appropriate learning-focused independent living skills programmes that are valued by learners and support them to progress remain highly valued by the LSC, and, where appropriate, these programmes should also consider the supported employment approach, or volunteering as part of each learner's individual progression strategy.

113 There are substantial numbers of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (particularly mental health difficulties) claiming Incapacity Benefit. The DWP reform agenda aims to reduce the number of people claiming this benefit. The LSC expects that the expertise built and developed through the delivery of supported employment activity in the sector will contribute to this aim. The LSC's plan to work more closely with Jobcentre Plus, the FE system, local authorities and supported employment agencies will be more productive in developing the longevity of economic participation of this group of individuals. The Skills Coaching trials, which help Incapacity Benefits clients access relevant and appropriate training to gain sustainable employment, are an example of a successful model that the LSC wishes to build and expand on, to target this client group.

114 There must be further recognition that supporting people into, and maintaining them in, work should not simply focus on individuals at Entry Level or Level 1. The skills needs of the country are varied. London is one such region where there are higher skills needs, such as individuals who have attained a Level 4 qualification. The LSC's work will therefore determine how the LSC can best work with Jobcentre Plus and relevant agencies, such as the National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE), to support highly skilled individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into, and being maintained in, work. This may include highly skilled individuals with mental health difficulties who are claiming Incapacity Benefit who may require high-level training to change direction in their work. There are also significant numbers of people with physical and sensory impairments who could be supported into higher skilled occupations or higher education (HE).

115 We have recently published our proposals for improving services for learners with mental health difficulties. These were developed in collaboration with NIACE and NIMHE. This publication is available at www.lsc.gov.uk. Over the period of this strategy, these proposals will become an integral part of the LSC's overall consideration of its planning and funding of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across the FE system.

116 Alongside this, to contribute to increasing the proportion of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities accessing work, the LSC will work with DWP and Jobcentre Plus to improve the way claims are made for Access to Work funds by individuals entering employment programmes or wishing to progress to employment from learning. The LSC believes that this approach will support providers in linking disabled learners with businesses, and enable sustainable employment.

117 It is also important to underline the fact that the LSC will work with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to improve transition by learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to HE, for those sectors and occupations that require Level 4 qualifications or higher. Our two organisations will work more closely together to identify patterns and trends in transition from FE to HE. Any identified trends will be used to inform policies to improve transition by learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to HE. Aimhigher activities for 14–19 year olds with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will also support transition to HE.

118 Whether the focus is a young person's transition to post-16 learning or where adults with acquired disabilities are re-thinking their career path, Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services are essential in helping individuals make the best possible choices about learning and work. Significant changes are occurring in IAG. Responsibility for commissioning IAG, and the funding that goes with it, will, by 2006, be devolved from Connexions to local authorities working through Children's Trusts, schools and colleges. In addition, IAG for adults is undergoing a major DfES led review of IAG, which reports in January 2006. These changes represent reform of this provision to offer better services for individuals, and within these changes, the LSC shall continue to ensure IAG services can support individuals in choices that fulfil their potential.

Learner Progression – Key Actions and Outcomes

- In 2006, the LSC will commission an analysis of progress and progression in work preparation and independent living skills programmes. The analysis will be used to enhance their contribution to learning for living and work. It will also consider levels of support, time taken for learners to achieve, and effectiveness.
- During 2007/08, the LSC's National Employer Service will work with LSC regions to pilot the supported employment model with large employers.
- By September 2010, the LSC will no longer fund providers to deliver work preparation programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities which do not focus on learning in the workplace and the supported employment model.

Expectations of the Further Education System

120 The LSC envisages that in developing the capacity of the system to meet learner needs in a truly learner-centred way, providers will think and deliver innovatively. They will collaborate to bring together their specialisms and to operate in a way which meets learner need for programmes that are flexible, for example in duration, but which appropriately meet learners' goals and aspirations by enabling progression to, for example employment or further or higher education.

121 The LSC, therefore, outlines the following key challenges to each area of the FE system:

- providers of personal and community development learning must build on their effectiveness in participation and develop greater learner progression
- FE providers must re-examine their discrete programmes and consider how to improve learner progression
- school sixth forms and special schools must become better integrated into local provision and local provider networks
- specialist colleges must reconsider their traditional modes of delivery, and the duration of their programmes
- employers holding direct contracts with the LSC through the National Employer Service must demonstrate best practice in supported employment
- sixth form colleges and work-based learning providers must strengthen their ability to be able to deliver to those learners with more complex physical and learning support needs
- the voluntary and community sector must continue to work with the LSC to deliver targets and priorities, as well as finding ways of collaborating with others; both among themselves and with FE providers.

119 It is expected that all parts of the FE system will play an important role in developing the capacity and capability of the system to build on its ability to meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Each area of the FE system has its strengths:

- providers of personal and community development learning: their ability to engage people in learning
- general FE and sixth form colleges: their diverse range of programmes and flexible modes of study
- independent specialist colleges and schools and special school sixth forms: their specialist support and teaching of learners with complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- employers holding contracts with the LSC through the LSC's National Employer Service: their ownership of diversity in the workplace
- school sixth forms: their expertise on more traditional post-16 provision
- voluntary and community sector: their innovative approaches and close links to people
- work-based learning: their powerful employer links.

122 The entire FE system must concentrate on improving the learning experience for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who learn alongside their peers without learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The LSC aspires to parity of experience, and the sector must therefore deliver parity of experience wherever learners are located.

123 Learning changes lives, at all levels, at all ages and for all kinds of abilities. Enabling learners to improve their lives, skills and futures is the aim of this strategy. The systemic and sustainable improvements to deliver this strategy cannot be imposed upon the FE system; it must be embraced through choice, so that they become truly transformative. It is vital that the principles of *Through Inclusion to Excellence* and the aims of the Learning for Living and Work Strategy are fundamental to all provider strategies and operational activity, as they are to our own activities. We must be ambitious in supporting the goals of learners and ambitious for the communities we serve and for employers. We must work to deliver opportunities to enable everyone to succeed.

Annex: Timetable of Actions and Outcomes

| Headline actions | Owner and partners |
|--|--|
| In 2006, the LSC will commission an analysis of progress and progression in work preparation and independent living skills programmes. This will consider levels of support, time taken for learners to achieve and effectiveness. | LSC, provider representatives, providers |
| During 2006/07, the LSC will collect and analyse information from local authorities about the costs associated with supporting learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. | LSC, local authorities, DfES |
| During early 2007, the LSC will commission an independent longitudinal evaluation study focused on the progress and effectiveness with which the LSC has implemented the Learning for Living and Work Strategy. | LSC |
| In early 2007, the National Learners with Disabilities Panel will be launched. It will have a clear relationship to the National Learners' Panel and the LSC governance structure. | LSC |
| By autumn 2007, the LSC will, in partnership with DfES and provider representatives, have developed more sophisticated, robust, appropriate and transparent representatives, measures with regard to this cohort. | LSC, DfES, provider representatives, providers |
| By autumn 2007, the LSC will have detailed needs analyses for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across England. | LSC |
| In autumn/winter 2007, the LSC will publish details of how 'investment to change' funds will be used to achieve systemic transformation and increased supply of high-quality, local provision. This will include national targets and attainments, discussed earlier, to support the realisation of the Learning for Living and Work Strategy. | LSC |
| In 2007/08, the LSC and partners will publish a proposed programme of activities to support the development of a fully qualified workforce in the FE system. | LSC, QIA, Ofsted, DfES, LLUK, CEL |
| During 2007, the LSC with QIA and the Inspectorate will commission an analysis of the benefits to the learner and financial benefits associated with provider co-location. | LSC, QIA, Ofsted |
| During 2007, DfES and other government departments will have agreed and published a set of national protocols for shared funding responsibilities and partnership working. | DfES, DoH, DWP, DCLG, LSC |
| During 2007/08, the LSC's National Employer Service will work with LSC regions to pilot the supported employment model with large employers. | LSC, employers |

| Headline actions | Owner and partners |
|--|--|
| By September 2008, the LSC will cease commissioning inadequate provision. This includes provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. | LSC |
| By December 2008, the first provider will be awarded Centre of Excellence status for its provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Ofsted, CEL | LSC, QIA, DfES, |
| In 2008/09, the new funding approaches will be implemented across FE and work based learning. | LSC |
| By January 2009, the LSC intends to have worked with DfES to broker a partnership whereby the work undertaken from 2010 to 2015 to improve provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will be driven by a single strategy owned by the national partner organisations that plan, fund, inspect and support the FE system. | LSC, DfES |
| In early 2009, the LSC will commission a consultation with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to inform the evaluation of this strategy. Learners with Disabilities Panel | LSC, National |
| During 2009/10, new activities and milestones for work up to 2015 will be identified and agreed. | LSC, FE system |
| By 2009/10, the new funding approaches will be fully implemented across the entire FE system. | LSC, FE system |
| New definitions of learning difficulties and/or disabilities to be used within the ILR system will be introduced in 2009/10 academic year. | LSC |
| By September 2010, the LSC will no longer fund providers to deliver work preparation programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which do not focus on learning in the workplace and the supported employment model. | LSC, providers |
| By 2010, there will be a fully qualified workforce in the FE system, including those working with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. | Providers, LSC, QIA, Ofsted, LLUK, CEL |
| By 2015, England will be an international exemplar in providing high-quality post-16 learning provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. | FE system |

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