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EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND 2007 - 2010

LEARNING & SKILLS COUNCIL - SOUTH EAST REGION

ESF CO-FINANCING PLAN (Version 4) 2007 - 2010

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This Co-Financing Plan has been prepared by the South East Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Plan covers ESF co-financed provision identified in the South East ESF Framework approved by the Regional Skills Productivity Alliance (RSPA) 10th August 2007. The Plan covers the period 20th August 2007 to 31st December 2010 and will support the employment and skills needs of the target groups living and/or working in the South East region. The region includes:

- Kent and Medway
- Sussex
- Surrey
- Hampshire and the Isle of Wight
- Berkshire
- Buckinghamshire
- Oxfordshire
- Milton Keynes

The LSC will align its ESF funds 2007-2011 to add value to its national and regional priorities and key actions as described in its national ESF 2007-2013 Commissioning Strategy and the South East Regional Commissioning Plan 2007/08. The Plan is informed by LSC national priorities published in 'Raising Our Game, Annual Statement of Priorities for 2007/08' and the economic, social and environmental challenges of the South East Region articulated in the Regional Economic Strategy 'A Framework for Sustainable Prosperity 2006-2016'.

The LSC Plan has been strategically developed in response to the South East ESF Framework to ensure alignment and integration with regional and local employment and skills priorities and targets consistent with the ESF Operational Programme. ESF will be used to add value to, enhance and fill gaps in mainstream skills and employment services by providing enhanced packages of support and extending eligibility. The Plan will reflect the guiding principles and recommendations of the regional Framework and will address key employment and skills issues identified in the Worcester research, commissioned by SEEDA on behalf of the RSPA, to help inform the development of the Framework. The Plan will target ESF resources and achieve maximum impact by combining a focus on particular groups, industrial sectors and specific geographic locations.

Activities proposed within the Plan have been developed in consultation with Jobcentre Plus and the South East Regional Development Agency (SEEDA).

Measure Level Applications will be submitted following the approval of the Plan.

PART 2: CONTRIBUTION OF THE PLAN TO THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME AND THE SOUTH EAST FRAMEWORK

The Plan will contribute to Priority 1 and Priority 2 of the Operational Programme and will:

- Increase employment and reduce unemployment and inactivity
- Tackle and prevent worklessness and improve social inclusion and social mobility
- Increase employment and reduce unemployment and inactivity and help young people make a successful transition to the world of work
- Contribute to the skills strategy, by helping unemployed and inactive people gain the skills they need for employability
- Develop a skilled and adaptable workforce by reducing the number of people without basic skills
- Increase the number of people qualified to levels 2 and 3

The Plan will contribute to the regional ESF Framework by providing specific and targeted interventions to support employment and skills needs of priority groups and contribute to the region's output and results targets in respect of:

Priority 1

1. Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), including young people at risk of becoming NEET.
2. Workless adults (unemployed and inactive)

Priority 2

Young people and adults aged 16 years and over who require relevant qualifications at an appropriate level to support their current and continuing and future employment needs:

- Basic Skills
- Qualifications at level 2
- Qualifications at level 3

This Plan requests the following ESF funding under the stated priorities:

2007-2010	Total Allocation to Region	LSC Allocation	LSC % of regional total
Priority 1			
Workless adults	£37,432,004	£11,229,601	30%
NEET & at Risk Neet	£12,299,087	£12,299,087	100%
Community Grants	£1,336,857	£1,336,857	100%
Self Employment & Enterprise Skills	£1,000,000	£0	0%
Balance	£1,406,344	£0	0%
Total P1	£53,474,292	£24,865,545	46.5%
Priority 2			
Basic Skills	£10,263,614	£10,263,614	100%
Level 2	£10,263,614	£10,263,614	100%
Level 3	£7,331,153	£4,398,692	60%
Level 4	£1,466,231	£0	0%
Total P2	£29,324,612	£24,925,920	85.0%
Total P1 & P2	£82,798,904	£49,791,465	60%

Key Participant Groups and Geographic Targeting

The Plan reflects the principles of the regional Framework by combining a focus on particular groups, industrial sectors and specific geographic locations in order to target ESF resources and achieve maximum impact in respect of activities in Priority 1 and Priority 2. These are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2

Participant Groups	Geographical Concentrations
Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) aged 16-19 Young People at risk of becoming NEET aged 14-16	LSC national research and methodology identify particular target groups of young people who are located across the region. There are also sub regional 'Hotspots' including Gosport, Portsmouth, Southampton, Test Valley, Reading, Folkestone, Swale, Thanet, Brighton and Hove, West Sussex Coastal strip and Hastings
People with Disabilities including learning disabilities and health conditions	Region-wide but with particular emphasis on eastern and coastal areas.
Lone Parents and Carers	Region-wide
Older People (aged 50+)	Urban, coastal and rural areas
Ethnic Minorities	Urban areas
Gender	Region-wide but with special attention on female inactivity in some coastal and urban areas
Offenders and Ex-Offenders	Region-wide
Workforce <u>Level 2</u> All priority groups <u>Level 3</u> Special focus on older people, ethnic minorities, women and people with disabilities (including learning difficulties)	Region wide <u>Level 2</u> Priority sectors with skills gaps and shortages identified in the Regional Economic Strategy and the LSC Regional Commissioning Plan <u>Level 3</u> SME workforce in priority sectors and technologies identified as of strategic importance to the region in the Regional Economic Strategy and the LSC Regional Commissioning Plan
Small and Medium sized organisations (SMEs)	The LSC is committed to supporting achievements towards the SME regional output indicators. The RSPA has established this indicator to capture the value of support for SMEs and a significant proportion of this will be achieved through brokerage and the alignment of the Priority 2 programme to Train to Gain.

Activities To Be Supported

The activities proposed in this Plan reflect the Guiding Principles of the region's Framework in order to increase access to and participation in learning and skills leading to sustainable employment and to raise skills levels of those in the workplace. Activities of the Plan feature:

- Specific and targeted interventions
- Flexible and tailored provision relevant to the needs of the priority groups
- Support towards sustainable outcomes and the Skills Escalator through progression into mainstream programmes and employment progression
- Additionality by supporting access to mainstream provision

The LSC will use its ESF allocations to add value to, enhance and fill gaps in its mainstream skills and employment services by providing enhanced packages of support and extending eligibility. There will be a strong emphasis on engaging 'hard to reach' groups, supporting skills development, progression into employment and job retention.

Provision in Priority 1 for workless adults will include initial engagement activities, work readiness programmes and support in the transition to employment and job retention with particular focus on recruitment in under-developed areas and communities and of individuals under-represented in the labour market. ESF activity will extend provision currently offered by the LSC Basic and Employability Programme and the Skills for Job Programme.

Tailored transition programmes for the NEET group and those at risk of becoming NEET will prepare vulnerable young people for working life, further learning and training and will complement and extend activity to support the NEET client group including FE, and Sixth Form provision and that offered by Apprenticeships, Entry to Employment, the School Engagement Programme and Young Apprenticeships.

Provision in Priority 2 will support the re-skilling and up-skilling of individuals to improve labour market mobility and reduce labour and skill constraints experienced by the region's priority sectors. Provision will extend the eligibility of mainstream employment programmes offered through Train to Gain by offering enhanced packages of support and will target employees of priority sectors who do not have a current or relevant qualification at level 2 and 3. Provision will address entry level Basic Skills issues in the workforce and will complement and extend existing offers through FE colleges, private training providers and others delivering mainstream programmes including Skills for Life entitlement, SEEDA Basic Skills in the Workplace programme and Train to Gain. Employers receiving support at level 3 will be expected to make a significant and increasing contribution to the overall costs of training.

Women into non-traditional occupations

Activity funded in the Priority 1 of the Plan will help women enter non-traditional occupations. Inactive and unemployed women will be supported to enter employment through sector based route ways and skills development opportunities, work placements, work trials and supported employment progression, in a range of sectors that include engineering, construction, horticulture, transport and logistics, with progression for further learning at work through Train to Gain and other work based programmes.

Young women in the NEET and At Risk category will be encouraged and supported to prepare for entry into employment in non-traditional occupations through specific tailored provision that includes a roll-on-roll-off vocational engagement programme, a summer transitions programme, and a supported employability programme with learning mentors and e-mentoring schemes.

Support for women's entry into non-traditional occupations will be included in post employment provision, further learning and progression into Apprenticeships and Train to Gain programmes.

Activity funded in Priority 2 of the Plan will help women already employed in non-traditional occupations by targeted recruitment in the work place for skills development and enhancement through NVQ levels 2 and 3 programmes. Specific occupations in the Plan where women are under-represented and/or in non –traditional occupations include Leadership and Management, Build Environment, Land Based Industries, ITQ for new technologies, Manufacturing, and Engineering

Indicative activities to be supported in Priority 1 and Priority 2 are summarised in Annex 3

Contribution to other regional targets

South East Regional Economic Strategy (RES)

The Plan supports two key challenges and objectives of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) 2006-2016 'A Framework for Sustainable Prosperity by contributing to:

- **Smart Growth – lifting under-performance**
 - maximising the number of people ready for employment at all levels and equipped to progress in the labour market
- **Sustainable Prosperity – supporting quality of life**
 - enabling more people to benefit from sustainable prosperity across the region and reducing polarisation between communities

The ESF programme specifically supports achievement of the transformational actions identified in the RES that will have the potential to have particular impact:

- **Skills Escalator**
 - ensuring that people at all skill levels are continually equipped to progress in the labour market
- **Raising economic activity rates**
 - addressing barriers to employment and increasing incentives to work
- **Making the most of 2012**
 - ensuring that the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games leave a positive and lasting legacy for the South East

In support of the above, the Plan will provide specific targeted interventions to:

- Develop the employment skills of workless young people and adults, people with disabilities and learning difficulties, women of all ages, minority ethnic groups, older people
- Raise skills levels of those in work who have no relevant qualifications or whose skills levels are out of date or inadequate for sustainable employment
- Improve ICT skills for workers in industries with rapidly changing technology
- Target disadvantaged young people and adults in deprived communities to access sustainable employment through locally provided tailored employment and skills training opportunities
- Develop the skills of people entering or currently employed in sectors that are key to the preparation and legacy of the London 2012 Games

European Regional Development Programme (ERDF)

The South East ERDF programme is focused on promoting sustainable production and consumption. This Plan will support ERDF activity by:

- Promoting resource efficiency

Inclusion of leadership and management training in priority sectors and SMEs in Priority 2 activities

- Encouraging Sustainable Consumption

Implementation of the Plan will take a developmental approach with providers to encourage good practice from previous ESF programmes, including, for example, workshops on sustainable development where they are helped to develop environmental policies. LSC National ESF Policy Group is currently examining appropriate strategies for pilot and development throughout the period of the Plan.

LSC Regional Priorities 2007/08

The Plan will contribute to LSC regional priorities identified in its Regional Commissioning Plan 2007/08, the strategic context of which was published by the LSC in 'Raising Our Game, our Annual Statement of Priorities 2007/08', which set out the key national priorities and targets and outlined how the LSC will invest its funding to meet them.

ESF Priority		LSC Regional Priority	LSC Regional Priority Relevance
1	NEET & at Risk Group	Regional Priority 1 Action for Young People PSA Target - Element 3 – reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment by 2% by 2010	ESF will be used to meet the personal and work-related needs of disadvantaged young people who are not yet ready to access Entry to Employment (E2E) or Level 1 provision
	Workless Adults	Regional Priority 4 Action for Communities PSA Target - Element 1 – Improving the basic skills levels of 2.25 million adults between the launch of the Skills for Life in 2001 and 2010.	ESF will be used to meet the needs of workless adults to help them gain and sustain employment with particular emphasis on those most disadvantaged in the labour market and those from deprived communities

ESF Priority		LSC Regional Priority	LSC Regional Priority Relevance
2	People with Basic Skills Needs	Regional Priority 2 Action for Skills	ESF will be used to increase provision for adult learners through programmes leading a relevant level 2 and 3 qualifications and other training in order raise skills and develop new skills, in order to sustain employment opportunities
	Level 2	PSA Target -	
	Level 3	Element 2: reduce by at least 40% the number of adults in the workforce who lack NVQ 2 or equivalent qualifications by 2010.	
<p>The LSC is a key stakeholder in the South East Skills and Employment for London 2012 Group (SESEL 2012) and is supporting the development of provision to maximise education, employment and engagement opportunities to deliver a lasting legacy for the region, for employers, young people and communities. ESF activity funded in ESF priorities 1 and 2 will contribute to the aims of the SESEL Action Plan by inspiring young people and developing the workforce in key sectors.</p>			
<p>The LSC is a key stakeholder supporting the Regional Strategy for Older Workforce and works with partners to promote learning and skills opportunities for older workers in order to re-engage them in work, and support their continued employment through up-skilling and retraining. ESF activity funded in priorities 1 and 2 will provide specific interventions for older people and contribute to the aims of the Older Workers Strategy by applying the older workers toolkit.</p>			

Complementarity with other CFO provision

The Plan has been developed in consultation with the South East Development Agency (SEEDA) and Jobcentre Plus (on behalf of the Department for Work and Pension as the co-financing organisation for workless adults). The collaborative planning of the programme elements will ensure there will be targeted activity across the region, with no duplication or competing provision. The specific activities of each CFO will complement those of others, providing maximum access leading to further learning, jobs and sustained employment. The overall programme and each CFO's contribution to it, has been endorsed by the RSPA ESF Group. The Learning and Skills Council contribution is within its legislative remit as stated within its Co-financing status application.

Development of activities for workless adults will continue to be managed by the LSC Regional Skills Manager in consultation with Jobcentre Plus. Support and activities for priority sectors and SMEs will be developed jointly by the LSC Skills Director in consultation with the Regional Development Agency, SEEDA.

Implementation of the Plan will adopt the principle of Business Support Simplification recommended in the Framework. Through the contract management process the LSC will ensure that ESF providers are linked in to wider business support activity and details of their provision passed to Skills South East and the region's Business Links for inclusion in their databases.

The Implementation, monitoring and review of the Plan will continue to be a collaborative process between CFOS working jointly through the region's newly established CFO Strategic Group reporting directly to the Regional Committee.

PART 3: FUNDING AND ADDED VALUE

Match Funding Budgets

Priority 1

Entry to Employment (E2E)

The E2E programme is an aspect of the generic Foundation Learning Tier and is aimed at those young people who are not yet ready to enter employment and require further short term support at entry and level 1. The current regional annual budget for E2E £1.7m.

Young Apprenticeship Programme

This programme is specifically for young people aged 14 -16 in full time education who wish to develop their vocational skills and interests in order to prepare for progression into further mainstream funded learning or employment with training. The regional allocations for 07/08 and 08/09 are £3,516,000 and £3,516,000 respectively.

Skills for Jobs (SfJ)

Currently Skills for Jobs is an umbrella term used to describe several stages of funded activity. Many of these may be ESF eligible and would therefore be a potential match source. One such current fund under the SfJ umbrella is the skills delivery for JC+ clients, representing a regional allocation £2m of eligible activity. An additional SfJ programme for delivery in 07/08 will provide a further annual regional funding strand of £2.88m.

OLASS

The OLASS programme has a regional annual allocation £19,967,683 for 07/08, 08/09, 09/10 for offender learning.

Priority 2

Train to Gain

This programme is aimed at employed individuals who do not have a first level 2 qualification and will provide the required match funding for priority 2. The regional annual allocation is £53m.

Apprenticeships

This programme is intended for employed young people aged 16 – 19 working towards a full level 2 qualification and Key Skills while in the workplace. The regional annual allocation is £11.3m. There is a further apprenticeship programme for adults aged 25+ with an annual value of £2.9m

The above funds are annual budgets, subject to review and the LSC reserves the right to identify appropriate match programmes and utilise them as required.

Added value of ESF

The LSC will operate ESF via a new approach in the new programme. The LSC has an endorsed commissioning strategy, which has been cleared by ESFD. This strategy details how ESF should be targeted by the LSC to ensure complementarity and enhance the added value of ESF. An extract from the document is as below.

1. The purpose of the proposed commissioning strategy is to ensure that ESF truly adds value and enhances national strategies.
2. The key issues for the strategic direction of ESF in the new programme are that the LSC must ensure that ESF supports its main policy directions. These will include:
 - a) fee remission amounts (which can/will change annually);
 - b) Funding Policy decisions such as changes to ESOL provision regulations;
 - c) the support of Sector Skills Council approved qualifications;
 - d) the procurement of only high quality provision;
 - e) alignment with the demand led approach; and
 - f) full integration with the Business cycle including commissioning.
3. The Commissioning Strategy needs to ensure that:
 - g) sufficient regional flexibility is retained to meet regional skills needs
 - h) appropriate contract lengths are sought for ESF provision (including use of short contract periods where policy change is expected);
 - i) ESF can still achieve its full programme targets; and
 - j) ESF is actively used to inform mainstream development/approaches

Priority 1

Foundation Learning Tier (including Entry to Employment)

The Foundation Learning Tier is a programme of work to develop a more focussed and strategic approach to Entry Level and Level 1 in order to raise participation, achievement and progression at these levels.

The Foundation Learning Tier will incorporate a range of programmes that will consist of a coherent offer of units and qualifications drawn, in time, from the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). The units and qualifications will be combined into validated progression pathways that will propel learners towards Level 2 or other positive outcomes; they will be delivered through learning programmes which emphasise personalisation alongside access to accreditation. By 2010, the QCF will be populated and a full set of programmes with robust progression opportunities will be in place across Entry Level and Level 1 in the new framework; phased implementation of the Foundation Learning Tier will begin from September 2007 ESF should focus on supporting progression pathways in the following ways:

- Access – working with young people to encourage them to start on E2E, or appropriate pathway.
- Support activities – improve retention and success rate through extra support activities, for example, extra parenting support and long term mentoring
- Post activities – focusing on re-establishing contact with non successful candidates, extra support for positive destination beneficiaries i.e. employed / in education / employed with training ex-pathway candidates.

Schools Engagement Programme (Key Stage 4)

This programme works by identifying 14-16 year olds who are at risk of becoming Pre-NEET. The programme has a limited budget; ESF may be focussed on this to enhance the provision.

The Young Apprenticeship Programme 14-16

This programme is specifically aimed at 14 -16 year old young people in full time education who would benefit from early opportunities to develop their vocational skills in particular occupational sectors leading as a route into further learning or employment with training in mainstream programmes.

Skills for Jobs

Skills for Jobs (SfJ) is an emerging response to Leitch, to support the integration of skills and employment, targeting a range of workless and low skilled individuals, who are not New Deal for Skills eligible. Emerging strategic direction for this approach is that SfJ will focus on improved engagement of the client base and employers (via brokers and partners) and that delivery would rest with the foundation learning tiers (FLT) appropriate pathways. There are still funding issues for SfJ activities; however as the provision will rest with the foundation learning tier, ESF will focus on supporting FLT delivery. SfJ is relying on a substantial amount of support from ESF in order to deliver its aims. Regional approaches to SfJ are being developed now and if ESF is to be the majority of the new money included in these approaches then the activities supported by these proposals must be ESF eligible and help meet the ESF targets.

OLASS

The offender learning and skills service (OLASS) is responsible for the learning and skills for offenders in custody and serving their sentences in the community in England. It currently offers skills for life at Entry Level 1 all the way to higher education access level qualifications. Half of the clients have skills for life needs and recent research shows that a third have learning difficulties or disabilities (LLDD). This suggests a natural focus on these candidates in particular both in the community and in their last 2 years of custody. The OLASS budget is particularly under pressure for activities to support learners in the community. It is proposed that ESF is used to enhance activities with selected clients starting with initial assessment, careers advice; mentoring and job guarantee activities which align with skills for jobs will also be supported. There may be a focus on adapting appropriate provision to suit LLDD learners with specific needs. As with SfJ these activities should align with the foundation learning tier provision available and not replace mainstream funding where available.

At present significant ESF funding, from a variety of sources, is supporting a substantial range of activity with this target group involving a number of organisation. The South East ESF Framework has identified a continued need to support the above target groups who currently do not access this mainstream provision and for whom ESF will provide additional interventions to increase participation and access.

Priority 2

Train to Gain

Train to Gain is a national programme, which utilises brokers to facilitate access to training to support the needs of employers. ESF provides additionality by funding the gaps in the existing provision, i.e. funding additional basic and entry level qualifications leading to Level 1 qualifications, second level 2 qualifications where needed and level 3 and above where appropriate.

Apprenticeships 16-24 and 25+

The apprenticeship family delivers a range of programmes to both adults and young people. Focussing on NVQ delivery with supporting key skills and technical certificates these programmes target Level 2 and Level 3. There are limited pilots for adults at level 4 called professional apprenticeships. The majority of provision has sufficient funding available, so ESF should focus on the following priorities.

- **Additionality** – We will procure more adult provision where this better meets the needs of employers. At Level 4 (only to SME's) ensuring that the offer aligns with current pilots.
- **Enhancements** – Activities that support a higher success rate in delivery of mainstream programmes, or activities that promote progression, or enhancements that generate and support additional entry onto these programmes

- Gaps – For example, individuals needing a second Level 2 to secure/sustain employment or who need additional support to effectively progress to Level 2.

Planned Administrative Costs

Administration and management costs will be restricted to a maximum of 5% of the total costs of the Plan. The total management and administration costs for this Plan are based upon an assessment of the staffing requirements for the Plan and previous experience of implementing ESF within a regional structure from September 2006, as described in the LSC CFO status application 2008-2013.

The LSC has systems (TS2000) to record staff time against a particular dossier. Costs will be incorporated with the interim claims where expenditure has been incurred.

	2007 from 20th August	2008	2009	2010	2011 to 31st Mar	Total
Administration Cost	£80,000	£1,606,382	£1,606,382	£1,606,382	£80,000	£4,979,147
Administration & Management Functions	Regional management and implementation of Co-Financing Plan Management where ESF and match provision is managed in area and/or regional teams Procurement and contract preparation Provider contract management and monitoring Financial control, monitoring and profiling Preparation of interim claims Data collection, analysis and reporting Marketing and publicity Health and safety assessment of providers Financial risk assessment of providers Mid-term evaluation of the impact of ESF - contribution to regional model Support for new providers and Third Sector organisations (quality assurance, preparing for inspection and exit strategies) Annual and Closure Audit Communications – LSC national and regional strategic and operational forums Communications – External partners and stakeholders Project Closure					

PART 4: PROJECT SELECTION AND TENDERING ARRANGEMENTS

Procurement

The LSC is introducing competitive tendering to open up the learning and skills market by enabling the best colleges and providers to extend their range of provision and by attracting new providers into the system to increase diversity, improve quality and to stimulate innovation in the market.

All LSC ESF provision, and that which will be used as match funding, will be procured through an open and competitive tendering process. ESF provision for the 2007/13 programme will align with the procurement timetable for LSC mainstream provision and regional commissioning plans. The LSC has moved to an E-procurement (OCT) process which will simplify the processes for applicants to one single standard approach for the whole LSC. In line with the LSC new procurement processes our intention is to use an electronic portal 'Bravo Solutions' which is approved by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC). This should also encourage ESF providers to access the additional delivery opportunities that procured mainstream funding can offer. The LSC intend to procure activity to start delivery early in 2008 to ensure that "N+2" can be met. In order to attain this, the procurement activity will need to be started as soon as possible in 2007

Organisations seeking to undertake activities funded by ESF (or match) will be required to successfully complete a two phase process. The Pre Qualification stage (PQQ) and the Invitation to Tender stage (ITT).

The use of the E-tendering system and the two stage process will ensure that both Governmental and European law is adhered to. The National Audit Office (NAO) also approves this product for the tendering of Government business.

Stage 1: Pre Qualification Questionnaire

Organisations seeking to deliver ESF (or match funded programmes) will be required to complete an on line Pre Qualification Questionnaire and successfully complete an assessment of their capacity and capability to deliver ESF and LSC funded programmes.

This first phase is an assessment of the providers Quality procedures, Health and Safety measures and Financial Health as well as the Providers capacity to deliver the proposed training needs.

Stage 2: Submission of Tenders

All successful organisations are then invited to tender for the provision they initially applied for. This bid (tender), once submitted electronically to the managed web host will be appraised using agreed criteria, once again using trained evaluators. Following assessment a moderation process will take place.

Publicising Invitations to Submit Tenders

To ensure that the LSC conducts an open, transparent and competitive tendering process, an extensive range of media will be utilised to advertise invitations to submit tenders. The range of media to be used is outlined below.

- The Learning and Skills Council website (www.lsc.gov.uk);
- Government Office website
- Press adverts
- Press releases to local and regional newspapers, trade publications, local BBC radio and local commercial radio stations;
- Direct mail.
- E-mail alerts to the regional LSC database
- E-mail alerts to network organisations for onward cascade

All of the proposed methods will be employed concurrently to ensure that as many organisations as possible are made aware simultaneously of the two stage process. The LSC will make a special effort to contact voluntary and community sector organisations; in particular we will be contacting organisations and groups that have previously bid to ESF.

Support and Advice

The LSC's will run briefing events open to all potential applicants. The LSC will be able to respond to questions via an E-portal and this may include compiling a frequently asked questions section. All support and advice offered will align with OCT guidelines.

Co-financing will continue to provide a much more level playing field for current and potential providers from all sectors as:

- applicants will have a clear statement of intent from the local LSC as to the type of interventions sought;
- co-financing will remove the problems encountered by many potential providers of sourcing match funding;
- co-financing will reduce the need to become expert in European bid writing; and
- the LSC will use a common application process.

In taking this approach the LSC will seek to ensure that new providers, from all sectors, can compete openly and effectively.

Timetable

The LSC plans to operate a single annual procurement process with two smaller mini competitions which will operate between March and August each year.

Provisional Timetable

Stage 1

PQQ Regional Guidance Event	23 August
Publish Invitation for Stage 1 PQQ	31 August
Deadline for submission of PQQ	28 September
Applicant organisations informed	9 November

Stage 2

Invitation to tender issued	12 November 2007
Deadline for submission of tenders	7 December 2007
Appraisal and review process completed	28 January 2008
Applicants notified of outcome	30 January 2008
Standstill period ends	9 February 2008
Projects start	Mid February 2008 onwards

Feedback Arrangements

The LSC will employ a fully transparent appraisal process with all applicants receiving an overview of the appraisal process. All organisations applying for ESF from the LSC will be notified of successful applications and the LSC will ensure that all proposals receive feedback on their

proposal. Where a proposal is unsuccessful, the applicant will be informed as to the reason. All feedback will be provided via the LSC E-Tendering portal.

In the interests of openness and transparency we will publish summary details of successful project applications; these will be posted on our website and that of the Government Office for the South East.

Arrangements for Dealing with Provider Complaints

In the event of a proposal for funding being unsuccessful, should the organisation, after receiving feedback, feel that they have cause for complaint the organisation may invoke the Learning and Skills Council's Complaints Policy. This policy will be posted on the LSC's national website:

www.lsc.gov.uk

Part 5: Provider funding and monitoring

Contract Costs

- Contract costs will be established through a joint agreement between the provider and the regional LSC. The National LSC ESF Team have defined a set of standard deliverables for the new ESF programme and each one will be given an associated cost suggestion that will form a basis for the unit cost used in the contract and the subsequent profile payments. The regional LSC will manage the unit cost per deliverable through a contract clarification process based on the provider's application and the monthly delivery. Agreements on unit costs will be contained within the agreed delivery profile which the LSC will monitor monthly.
- In some circumstances it may be necessary for the LSC to increase initial costs (for beneficiary starts) to assist in the start up costs for small providers or those in the voluntary and community sector and to assist in their cash flow in the early days of the project. Where delivery does not take place but payment has been made on profile, the LSC will reclaim this money from the provider. The sum of the unit cost and volumes of the deliverables will make up the full contract value.

Payment Arrangements for Providers

- Providers will be paid by the LSC based on agreed monthly payment profile which will form part of the contract between the LSC and providers. Payments will be generated through a Contract Management Application (CMA) which will feed into the LSCs payments system. Payments will be made to the provider via BACS on an agreed date in the month (based on the number of working days elapsed).
- Providers will be required to make monthly monitoring returns to the LSC to report on activity carried out in the previous month. The return will be based on both the Individual learner record (ILR) returns and returns for non ILR based delivery via a Statement of Delivery. These returns will feed into the LSCs CMA which will perform automatic reconciliation on a quarterly basis. This reconciliation will make adjustments to subsequent payments based on profile payments made against each activity that the provider has not carried out.

Actual Costs

The LSC does not intend to pay providers on an actual costs basis. All contracting will be open and competitive tendering and will be based on contract costs. (NB. The LSC reserves the right to pay providers by other eligible methods if required in exceptional circumstances)

Arrangements for Monitoring ESF providers

- Contracts are assigned a contract management member of staff and a relationship management member of staff at inception stage. Contract financial profiles are inextricably linked to delivery; therefore, monitoring of financial performance is centred on appropriate and suitably evidenced delivery.
- Contractors will return learner data electronically to the LSC along with a monthly or quarterly report of all deliverables within the contracts combined with additional narrative reports. The required evidence to support these deliverables is identified within the contract and the evidence is held by the provider and will be retained in line with ESF requirements.
- Performance monitoring of individual projects is undertaken in accordance with the frequency detailed in the contract. The monitoring process includes a pre-determined and reviewed, schedule of provider visits and evidence checks by LSC staff.

Contracts are monitored against:

- the objectives of the contract;
- the timely and accurate return of records and reports to the LSC;

- delivery of the agreed outputs, outcomes and results (as documented in the contract);
- the evidence of delivery (utilising a predetermined sample size);
- beneficiary eligibility (as documented in the contract); and
- where possible, learner records will be automatically monitored electronically using the ILR Dbase and the ensuing financial variance addressed.

The agreed variance for under/over performance of contracts is: +/-15% or +/-£50,000 for ESF only providers or +/-25% or +/-£250,000 for LSC mainstream providers. Where variances are greater than this a business case is required to be authorised at Director level.

Where indicated, underperforming contracts will have payments halted and/or claw backs enacted, re-profiling will occur based on actual delivery to date and a newly agreed future delivery profile.

The Regional LSC will keep an overview on expenditure and outputs to ensure that Co-financed activity is performing within acceptable parameters and in line with the funding profiles submitted to GO.

Project Delivery and Outcomes

The establishment of nine regional contracts teams has provided the opportunity to bring some consistency in how the LSC monitors/manages contract performance, drawing on existing best practice previously identified.

The nationally driven procurement process, alongside the use of the new Contract Management Application system, will ensure the consistent use of a range of robust outcomes – the contract schedules will be completed using this information and an agreed profile against each outcome will be agreed.

The contract/provider will be risk assessed to determine the frequency of monitoring needed e.g. a new provider delivering new provision would be classed as higher risk to start with, whilst a known provider with a good track record of delivery would be classed as lower risk.

The contracting team will look at the performance data submitted by the provider on a regular basis (in line with risk rating) and will identify any under or over performance in the delivery of the expected outcomes. Obvious causes of performance variance such as data issues will be investigated and eliminated in the first instance.

A performance report detailing the under/over performance, highlighting the key areas for concern, any trends, and any impact on key dependencies will be sent to the “partnership advisor” who is responsible for the relationship with that provider (at a local office). That advisor will then discuss the project and performance variance with the provider and submit a report back to the regional contracts team – that report may include an agreed variation to the profile. Other LSC staff may also have important roles in reviewing performance and strategic direction of funded delivery.

The contracting team will note any follow-up actions and will re-issue a variation to contract if necessary. Frequency of monitoring will be adjusted if appropriate as part of the process. Payments will be reconciled and adjusted as necessary and if warranted, payments will be placed on hold whilst the performance issues are addressed.

Quality Standards

All LSC providers are required to comply with rigorous quality standards, including minimum performance levels as set out in our Planning for Success framework which covers planning and quality. Providers are also subjected to inspection through OfSTED. This ensures that local communities have access to relevant and high quality learning opportunities; individuals of all ages

and backgrounds acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable them to realise their potential, improve their life chances, and contribute to economic growth, and so that employers are able to recruit and develop the skilled and qualified workforce they need for business success. Inspection will be within the scope of the Common Inspection Framework – and eventually the Framework for Success. We are intent on excellent provision for the benefit of employers and learners alike, as a route to excellence:

Financial Assurance

Regional Provider Financial Assurance (PFA) teams include ESF in their annual work plans. The teams endeavour to audit each contract at least once during the life of the contract. PFA will contact the relevant contract/relationship staff before the audit commences to obtain contract details, and will keep these staff members informed throughout the audit.

The audit approach places significance on the assessment of risk and the key controls providers can be expected to have in place for administering LSC contracts. Emphasis is given to advising providers on how their controls can be improved, and the sharing of good practice identified by PFA from previous ESF audits. Where control weaknesses are identified, recommendations for improvement will be based on diagnostic work that pin-points the reasons for errors occurring. This consultative approach should lead to a reduction in recurring errors and greater added value from the audit process.

The assurance approaches are tailored to reflect the differences in actual costs and beneficiary contracts.

Audit opinions are given on providers' use of funds and internal controls. The assurance report, including details of any funds at risk relating to the contract, will be discussed with the contracting and relationship staff involved.

Management Information

Management Information will be sourced from the LSC's ILR Management Information databases for learner information and from the ESF Contract management Application for financial reporting and some learner summary reporting.

Regional LSCs will have access to both a standard set of management information reports from the ESF MI as well as access to our regional planning and performance team who can produce a range of ad hoc reports.

Reporting performance to Regional ESF Committee and the RSPA

Summary level reporting based on performance will be made available to the Regional ESF Committee and the RSPA in line with mutually agreed requirements. These will be produced and made available on a periodic basis and will represent regional subsets of the data that is submitted to ESFD. Data supplied will meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

Audit

All sub-contracted provision will be subject to local audit processes within a national framework. Our Provider Financial Assurance (PFA) team will audit each project as a minimum once during its lifetime. The purpose of these audits will be ensure that payments to providers have been used in ways that are materially consistent with the purposes for which the payments were made and that the provider has materially complied with the conditions of their contract,

The Regional Director will be responsible for the production of produce a statement of internal control about the effectiveness of local internal controls and this opinion will be based, to a large extent, on the level of assurance provided by PFA function.

In addition, the LSC's internal processes and controls are reviewed on a regular basis by a national team of internal auditors based in Coventry. National processes and controls are similarly subject to review by the National Audit Office (NAO) and can include further reviews at local level.

Part 6: Cross Cutting Themes

Equality and diversity

Action to promote equality and diversity is an integral part of the LSC's business objectives. It can only realise its vision of creating a world-class workforce if it removes barriers, eliminates discrimination, addresses disadvantage, and raises the aspirations of both present and potential learners.

The LSC Single Equality Scheme shows how it will put this into practice. By incorporating its individual schemes for race, disability and gender equality into one overarching scheme, it creates a coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity within the LSC and across the learning and skills sector. Its objectives are aligned with its national priorities, so that it will operate strategically, in the mainstream of our work.

In addition to the above LSC national position, the Plan supports the Cross Cutting Theme 'Equality and Diversity' identified in the South East Regional Economic Strategy 2006-2016 'A Framework for Sustainable Prosperity'. The Programme contributes specifically to the following key actions:

- Skills

Ensure that all young people and adults of all ages in the region have access to effective vocational and work-based learning opportunities and that LSC funding reaches those most in need including economically inactive people who want to work

- Employment

Work with employers to provide vocational training and support a range of learning styles to allow employees at all levels to progress within their occupations

- Sustainable Prosperity

Reduce the proportions of young people not in education, employment or training.

The Plan supports the Equal Opportunities Cross Cutting theme described in the region's ESF Framework and will integrate equal opportunities in all aspects of programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The activities proposed in the Plan which specifically address equal opportunities issues include:

- Addressing high levels of economic inactivity amongst people with disabilities including people with learning difficulties
- Addressing the significant number of economically inactive older people excluded from the labour market
- Improving qualification levels of older people, in particular in relation to basic skills and Level 2
- Improving the skills and qualifications of people at work to sustain their current and future employment
- Helping disadvantaged ethnic minority groups gain access to employment.

LSC contractors will be required to maintain their duty to promote equal opportunities and projects will have to take account of the needs of people with disabilities and ensure all activity and information is accessible to all groups. Equal Opportunities issues are included in the LSC monthly contract monitoring process and forms a key part of the provider's self assessment process.

The Plan will contribute to the outputs and results targets related to:

- Participants with disabilities and health conditions
- Lone Parents
- Young People in the NEET and at risk group
- Participants aged 50 and over
- Participants from ethnic minorities
- Female Participants

- People without basic skills and a relevant qualification at levels 2 and 3

Sustainable development

Sustainable development is focused on providing a better quality of life for everyone now and for generations to come. This is achieved through considering and balancing the long-term effects of social, economic and environmental issues and impacts. (Securing the Future – UK Sustainable Development Strategy, 2005)

The European Commission has expressed concern that projects in the last ESF programme addressed mainly the social aspects of sustainable development. There is, therefore, a renewed focus on the environmental aspects of sustainability for 2007-13.

The LSC will encourage specific environmentally focussed projects where these clearly link to regional skills priorities (e.g. renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste management etc.) and at the same time begin mainstreaming the environmental aspects of sustainable development through working with providers. The LSC will develop strategies to spread good practice from previous ESF programmes and will examine appropriate methods to disseminate environmental practice with providers.

The Plan will promote recommendations of the South East Framework and integrate sustainable development issues as far as possible across all aspects of programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Specifically the Plan will seek to develop provision that:

- Minimises travel and maximises access to provision through innovative delivery methods and the use of ICT.
- Supports skills and jobs identified in LANTRA's Sector Skills Agreement (Environmental Conservation Industry)
- Identifies skills needs in key sectors driving economic growth in the region which are likely to have a positive impact on the environment

Part 7: Implementation 07/08

Key Milestones Tendering and Contracting

2007	August	Provider Support Events re E-Tendering (23rd) Match programmes start (31st)
	September	Launch of ESF programme (11th) Pre Qualifying Questionnaire (PQQs) opened (31st August) PQQ closed (28th)
	October	Evaluation and moderation of PQQs PQQ results communicated to applicants
	November	Invitation to Tenders issued (ITT) (12th)
	December	ITTs returned (7th) ITTs evaluated (17th)
2008	January	ITTs moderated Contract approvals by LSC Regional Commissioning Board ITT results communicated to applicants
	February	Contract negotiations with providers Contracts prepared and issued ESF programme delivery begins
	March	Contract Management Application and ILR training for new providers

Planned Participants 2008

	Oct – Dec 2007	Jan – Mar 2008	Apr – Jun 2008	July – Sep 2008	Oct – Dec 2008
ESF	0	0	1,248	1,926	1,926
Match	0	1,854	1,854	1,854	1,854
Total	0	1,854	3,138	3,780	3,780

Planned Results 2008

	Oct – Dec 2007	Jan – Mar 2008	Apr – Jun 2008	July – Sep 2008	Oct – Dec 2008
ESF	0	0	592	888	888
Match	0	579	579	579	579
Total	0	579	1171	1466	1466

Annex 1

Region	South East
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CFO and Plan Details

Learning & Skills Council

Financial allocation

Priority 1			
Year	ESF (£)	Public Match (£)	ESF + Match (£)
2007	6,032,972	40,000	6,073,023
2008	6,153,631	4,989,738	11,143,369
2009	6,276,704	9,879,475	16,156,179
2010	6,402,238	9,956,332	16,358,570
Total	24,865,545	24,865,545	49,731,090

Priority 2			
Year	ESF (£)	Public Match (£)	ESF + Match (£)
2007	6,047,619	40,000	6,087,619
2008	6,168,572	4,974,753	11,143,325
2009	6,291,945	9,949,505	16,241,450
2010	6,417,783	9,961,662	10,609,445
Total	24,925,920	24,925,920	49,851,840

Annex 2

Region	South East
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CFO and Plan Details

Learning & Skills Council

Output and results targets**Priority 1**

Target	Quantification
Outputs	
Total number of participants	18,647
1.2 Number and % of participants who are unemployed (a) Number (b) Percentage	5,040 27%
1.3 Number and % of participants who are inactive (a) Number (b) Percentage	4,251 23%
1.4 Number and % of participants age 14 to 19 who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET (a) Number (b) Percentage	8,000 43%
1.5 % of participants with disabilities or health conditions	22%
1.6 % of participants who are lone parents	12%
1.7 % of participants aged 50 or over	18%
1.8 % of participants from ethnic minorities	11%
1.9 % of female participants	51%
Results	
1.10 Number and % of participants in work on leaving (a) Number (b) Percentage	3,630 19%
1.11 Number and % of participants in work six months after leaving	4,372 23%
1.12 Number and % of economically inactive participants engaged in jobsearch activity or further learning (a) Number (b) Percentage	1,851 44%
1.13 Number and % of 14 to 19 year old NEETS or at risk in education, employment or training on leaving (a) Number (b) Percentage	3,600 45%

Priority 2

Target	Quantification
Outputs	
2.1 Total number of participants	31,717
2.2 Number and % of participants with basic skills needs (a) (b)	15,200 48%
2.3 Number and % of participants without level 2 qualifications (a) Number (b) Percentage	15,257 48%
2.4 Number and % of participants without level 3 qualifications (a) Number (b) Percentage	2,743 9%
2.5 % of participants with disabilities or health conditions	15%
2.6 % of participants aged 50 or over	20%
2.7 % of participants from ethnic minorities	9%
2.8 % of female participants	50%
Results	
2.9 Number and percentage of participants gaining basic skills (a) Number (b) Percentage	6,857 45%
2.10 Number and % of participants gaining level 2 qualifications (a) Number (b) Percentage	6,114 40%
2.11 Number and % of participants gaining level 3 qualifications (a) Number (b) Percentage	823 30%

ANNEX 3

Priority 1: Indicative Activities: Extending Employment Opportunities

Workless Adults

Skills for jobs - Sector based route ways to work

Support for hard to reach economically inactive adults, through the development of a routeway to employment working with employers in key sectors, including the retail sector. Provision to include: engagement, advice and guidance, assessment and screening, skills coaching, the provision of soft skills, embedded skills for life and vocational skills, as appropriate to the learner, to equip them with the necessary skills to return to work. It will also deliver vocational skills as agreed with employers and the provision of work placements or work trials. Providers should work with employers to establish Guaranteed Job programmes and a routeway to work. Sectors to include: childrens workforce, health and social care, engineering, construction, transport and logistics, retail and others where there is a proven demand. Post employment support must be offered and this may take the form of a job mentor or coach. Progression into learning at work through Train to Gain or other work based provision is essential.

Participant Groups: Unemployed and inactive people, the homeless and Offenders

Delivery Areas: Urban and rural unemployment areas

Translation and interpreting in multiple ethnic languages.

Provision of ESOL to speakers of multiple other languages, so that they can offer translation and interpreting services to employers. May also include provision of counselling qualifications. Working with internationally competitive companies to arrange employment opportunities

Participant Groups: Ethnic Minorities.

Delivery Areas: Areas of high BME population

Retraining and up-skilling older workers.

Improved IAG support for individuals and encouragement for employers to recruit older workers. Retraining and up-skilling for older workers in soft skills and/or at Level 2 and Level 3 in such sectors as social care, customer service, horticulture and retail. Development of routeway brokers to work with employers to support older workers into employment in relevant sectors.

Participant Groups: Older people aged 50+

Delivery Areas: Unemployment areas plus areas where there is no Learner Account provision

Improving health and well-being through learning.

Working with strategic health authorities, through local GP surgeries to embed basic skills in leisure learning. Leading to further learning in the community and support for individuals to sustain their return to learning.

Participant Groups: Inactive and unemployed people including those on incapacity benefit

Delivery Areas: Kent

Recruitment opportunities for offenders.

Encourage employers to recruit offenders, including the development of sheltered employment opportunities, volunteering etc. Also to include support for individuals whilst in employment (eg mentoring). Working with key sectors such as construction, horticulture, and engineering, transport and logistics

Participant Groups: Offenders

Delivery Areas: Urban and rural unemployment areas

Recruitment opportunities for those with learning difficulties and disabilities (LLDD)

Encourage employers to recruit people with LLDD, including the development of sheltered employment opportunities, volunteering etc. Link to key sectors.

Participant Groups: Individuals with learning difficulties and disabilities

Delivery Areas: South East Region

Volunteering as a stepping stone to employment.

Piloting the national pre-volunteer programme and enhancing it to include basic skills screening and referral to appropriate provision.

Participant Groups: Unemployed and inactive people including those with LDD and those on incapacity benefit, ex offenders and offenders in the community

Delivery Areas: South East Region

Becoming a coach.

To encourage economically inactive people to embark on a L2 or 3 coaching qualification and to promote sport as a means to well-being and health. To support individuals in finding work as a coach or in the sport/leisure sector

Participant Group: Unemployed and inactive people including those on incapacity benefit

Delivery Areas: Urban and rural unemployment areas

Whole family approach to Learning

Programmes to focus on vulnerable families, including some research into impact of family learning on adults. Provision to include an introduction to occupational areas of interest such as child related work for jobless parents. Also promoting unitised qualifications (eg in ICT). Working with childrens' centres and other agencies. Supporting unemployed parents in finding employment with focus on children's workforce.

Participant Groups: Workless adults including lone parents

Delivery Areas: Urban and rural unemployment areas

Returning to Work

A range of innovative, tailored and flexible provision to encourage returners of all ages to the labour market. To be aimed especially at women returners by offering short programmes to develop appropriate work ready skills and competences. Also offering personal development in a variety of vocational areas to support their transition to employment.

Participant Groups: Inactive individuals

Delivery Areas : Urban and rural unemployment areas

Unemployment Priority Areas

Sussex Coastal West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, Hastings, Wealden, Gatwick Diamond

Kent & Medway Ashford, Gravesham, Canterbury, Dartford, Swale, Medway Towns, Maidstone, Dover, Sevenoaks, Shepway, Thanet

Thames Valley Bracknell Forest, Milton Keynes, Oxford, Slough, Reading

Hants/IOW Southampton, Portsmouth, Rushmore, Isle of Wight, Havant, Gosport, Basingstoke, New Forest

Surrey Spelthorne, Woking, Gatwick Diamond

NEET Young People and At Risk Group

Work Ready Award – Construction

Promote the development and rollout of a credible employer-sponsored 'Work Ready Award' or certificated reference that can be issued by a school, college or training provider for learners undertaking construction programmes across the region. This should be sponsored by sub-regional employer champion networks interested in raising the calibre of new entrants and promoting the range of career opportunities available in construction and who are prepared to offer curriculum support, site visits, work placements or apprenticeships. Promotes basic 'employability skills' to young people so that they have realistic expectations of the sector and encourages employers to engage in providing curriculum support, work placements or apprenticeships.

Participant Groups. NEET Group 16 -19 and at risk group aged 14 -16

Delivery Areas: South East Region in an area with particular needs for skills in the construction industry

NEET Engagement Programmes

Roll-on roll-off engagement programmes to include mentoring, personal development, vocational experience, sporting and creative activities and taster sessions leading to progression into mainstream provision. Programmes should seek to build on the enthusiasm generated by the 2012 Olympics. Learning mentors and coordinators would be established within consortia of schools, colleges and work based learning providers to work with those most at risk of becoming NEET. A training programme and network would be established for learning mentors with links to e-mentoring schemes and production of SE-wide guidance and protocols for learning mentors. Provision should include improved mechanisms and progression routes and provide additional support to 14-16 year olds at risk of becoming NEET to progress from full time education to continued learning or employment with training.

Participant Groups: NEET at risk group aged 14 -16

Delivery Areas: NEET priority areas

Tailor-Made Training for Hard to Reach Groups

Projects to improve access to and retention within mainstream vocational learning provision and family learning programmes through employment of vocational/educational support workers to work with target groups. Focus areas could include: Foster carers for looked-after children to receive training in facilitating educational progression and achievement; Roll-on roll-off training for Learners with LDD. The training could include: essential skills, personal and vocational development, vocational profiling, job sampling, time bound progression pathways, job support, innovative engagement of local employers and job matching for beneficiaries, in order to develop the skills to sustain employment; adapt and pilot relevant vocational qualifications to meet the specific needs of travellers and looked-after children, to be certificated and linked to potential opportunities that will become available through Olympics 2012.

Participant Groups: Teenage mothers/carers, young offenders, LLDD, travellers, Looked After Children aged 16-19.

Delivery Areas: South East Region to meet needs identified in Local Area Agreements and Children and Young People's Plans

Summer Transitions Programmes

Provision of work-related summer programmes of activities that assist young people with transition into post-16 provision, focusing on those who have been highlighted by Connexions or schools as potential NEET. The project would link with existing E2E and FE summer courses and would also work within the September Guarantee and transitional team advisors.

Provision to include imaginative methods of engagement outside of the normal academic year offering a bridge for young people at risk of disengagement. This programme would support the delivery of the September Guarantee ensuring that all participating young people had the offer of a place in learning following the programme.

Participant Groups: NEET at risk group aged 14 -16

Delivery Areas: NEET priority groups (target or geographical)

Supported Employment and Training for Young People

Supporting vulnerable young people into and in employment with training support packages linked to mainstream programmes to assist with transitions and ongoing learning within employment.

The proposal will provide an employment brokerage service supported by an employability programme, mentoring and support for young people in order to identify, support and place vulnerable young people into appropriate employment opportunities and encourage them to continue with some form of learning. It will also provide additional support for employers who are prepared to engage the hardest to reach.

Activities will address gender stereotyping and will facilitate a more supported route to employment for both the young person and the employer.

Participant Groups NEET at risk group aged 14 -17

Delivery Areas: NEET priority groups with a particular focus on looked after children, young carers, teenage mothers and young offenders.

Priority 2: Indicative Activities; Developing a Skilled and Adaptable Workforce

Tackling the Basics at Work

1. Support to accredited ESOL provision for employees within the social care sector
Innovative models of provision to both identify/assess and train individuals. This can include working closely with employers to help identify staff needs through the common induction standards. This project will be available to those learners who are ineligible for ESOL training under Train to Gain.
2. Basic Skills for those in the workforce with very low levels of literacy and numeracy
 - a) Programmes to deliver literacy and numeracy for those in the workforce with the lowest levels of skill.
 - b) Increased capacity for delivery of literacy and numeracy at pre-entry and Entry 1 and 2 levels
 - c) New capacity to deliver the new employer funded "ESOL in the workplace" qualifications

Participant Groups: Ethnic Minorities, people aged 50+, people with disabilities including learning difficulties, people with low levels of literacy and numeracy, speakers of other languages

Delivery Areas: South East Region

Men in Early Years/Childcare

Training and supporting men to enter, or return to work in the early years and children's residential care workforce at NVQ level 3. Provision to include mentoring, self assessment and support for training providers in recruiting and retaining men in existing training opportunities, disseminating and learning from best practice. Potential workforce to be reached through enhanced recruitment activity by Early Years/Childcare training providers.

Participant Groups: Men aged 16+ with particular emphasis on older workers and those seeking a career change

Delivery Areas: South East Region

Leadership Training

Improve the leadership and managements skills of workers.

Participants to achieve a second qualification in Team Leadership at NVQ Level 2 or Leadership and Management at NVQ Level 3.

Provision to include other accredited leadership training that could later contribute towards a qualification.

Delivery to offer flexible delivery models appropriate to the workplace and employer needs. This is likely to be particularly significant for SMEs, where extended time for learning off-site is difficult and may include blended / distance / e-learning models. Delivery to include coaching and mentoring to ensure effective transfer of skills to the workplace

Participant Groups: Employed adults with particular emphasis on those requiring up-skilling and re-training, and those who have poor training records

Delivery Areas: South East Region

Professional Cookery

Accredited training in Professional Cookery at NVQ Level 2 and 3. Introduce the use of the Skills Passports by participating individuals and provide advice to employers with the aim of establishing accurate records for skills achievements.

Participant Groups: Employed adults who requiring up-skilling and re-training, and those who have poor training records including part-time workers and older workers

Delivery Areas: South East Region but with special focus on recruitment and delivery in the Windsor and Eton areas which is a venue for the Olympic 2012 Games

Upskill and qualify existing workers in the built environment sector

Provision of Level 2 and 3 NVQs not accessible through Train to Gain to enable individuals in priority sectors with an ageing workforce to gain relevant vocational skills and qualifications, including shortage specialist skills.

Participant Groups: Existing workers without qualifications relevant to the industry to engage in vocational learning, including specialist skill areas, in order to develop and maintain competent workers in the sector as per the Sector Skills Agreement. Emphasis on those requiring up-skilling and re-training, those who have poor training records including part-time workers and older workers

Delivery Areas: South East Region

Specialist training for land-based workers.

Analyse and deliver demand-led specialist training for land-based workers. Carry out individual competency assessments to identify job-specific training requirements and work with regional land-based providers to provide relevant solutions. 70% of learners to achieve a second level 2 or level 3 qualification and the remaining 30% to receive other accredited training that could contribute to a qualification. Increase referrals to Train to Gain and HE learning opportunities, as well as upskilling workers to Level 3 as increasingly required by employers in this sector, which will support the 'green skills' workforce to contribute to 2012.

Participant Groups: Targeted at experienced workers who may be in land-based 'green skills' industries with a lack of vocationally-recognised qualifications and who need access to CPD.

Delivery Areas: South East Region

Engaging SME retail employees in training.

Target local retail centres to offer a 'mystery shopping' exercise in order to identify employer's skill needs and provide accredited short courses, including skills for life and/ or units of retail-specific training for individuals not usually able to access training. Work with local Town Centre Managers and Skills SE to increase SME engagement and referrals to Train to Gain. A Project Manager will be required for promotion and co-ordination. Providers to use Skillsmart's recommended 'location model' and "bite-sized training" to engage retailers. Delivery will be flexible to meet employers needs, ranging from 1:1 coaching to e-learning

Participant Groups: Existing workers without qualifications relevant to the industry to engage in vocational learning, including specialist skill areas, in order to develop and maintain competent workers in the sector as per the Sector Skills Agreement. Emphasis on those requiring up-skilling and re-training, those who have poor training records including part- time workers and older workers

Delivery Areas: South East Region, targeting major retail centres

Upskilling Workers in Public Sectors

Delivery of NVQ Level 2/3 qualifications to those individuals in the social care and public sectors already with qualifications at level 2/3 but that are not relevant or are outdated for their current occupation. This will include workers requiring the opportunity to maximise their contribution to the sector and the economy. Provision should be targeted at individuals not covered by mainstream funding or eligible for other programmes including Train to Gain, Learner Accounts, and Adult Apprenticeships. For Public Sector employers this funding should be used to contribute to a wider workforce development plan which includes other LSC core programmes. It should also encourage employer take-up of the Pledge and investment in other skills development similar to the joint investment framework agreed with the Health Sector.

Embedded Skills for Life to be provided for learners assessed as having a need for additional support which will enhance their chances of achieving their NVQ qualification. This provision should move learners up one level from Entry Level/Level 1 to Level 1/Level 2, using where available Care Skills Passport to design the delivery of contextualized, modular learning programmes within the workplace.

Participant Group; Public sector workers with a special focus on those in Health and Social Care. Recruitment to target ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and older workers

Delivery: South East Region

Upskilling through ITQ

Provision of skills training to workers in areas of advancing technology to improve their employability skills. ITQ delivery must take into account the employer's systems and technology. Skills needs must be identified through use of e-passport. Recruitment specifically targeted at workers who are having to use new technology (not necessarily computers) and may not have a great deal of experience of using technology.

Participant Group: workers where the individual has an existing qualification disqualifying them from access to ITQ via Train to Gain, and work in sectors with rapidly changing technologies with a particular emphasis on older workers

Delivery Areas South East Region

Further Development of the Manufacturing Workforce

Building on relevant Manufacturing Sector Skills Agreements – SEMTA; Proskills; Cogent; Improve & Skillfast, develop and implement workforce development skills in line with the National Skills Academy – Manufacturing BIT programme.

1. Deliver NVQs throughout the SE Region, specifically to those employers / employees outside Train to Gain funding to increase the percentage of the working age population with level 2 qualifications
2. Support the greater take up of the National Skills Academy Manufacturing Business Improvements Techniques NVQ (BIT) at levels 2 and 3.

Provision to utilise skills passports currently being developed by the SSCs to design and deliver NVQs in 'bite sized' modules to accommodate the requirements of SME's in the sector. Raise awareness of Skills for Life amongst employers for the need to provide help for literacy and numeracy within the workforce

Participant Group: Workers in key sectors where lack of skills act as a barrier to progression including older workers, ethnic minorities, women, people with disabilities

Delivery Areas: South East Region

All Active Leisure Sector

Common-Core CPD Training and employer-driven training programmes at NVQ Level 2 or 3 (Customer Service and Relationships, Teamwork, Planning and Preparation, Evaluation, Security, Self Management and Self-Development, Environment and Resources, Information, Service Delivery and Development, Leading and Developing Others)

Provision to be based on outcomes of Training Needs Analysis and Organizational Needs Analysis being conducting annually across active leisure. The breakdown of Level 2 and 3 may need to be amended early next year, in light of the new online TNA tool for active leisure which will establish the total numbers at each level. All learners to be provided with an Active Passport as developed by SkillsActive and employers.

Participants: Paid employees in small to large enterprises (public, private and not-for-profit). Particular emphasis on older workers, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, part-time workers

Delivery Areas South East Region

Industry approved instructor and tutor training in Outdoor Recreation and Education

Sports Leaders NVQ Level 2 Award in Basic Expedition Leadership & NVQ Level 3 in Mountain Leadership. The NVQ Level 3 in Mountain Leadership will be available at the beginning of 2008. All learners to be provided with an Active Passport as developed by SkillsActive and employers.

Participant Groups: Employed workers not able to access Train to Gain and wishing to increase their work-based or leisure based skills and interests.

Delivery Areas: South East Region but with a special recruitment emphasis on Surrey, Sussex, and Hampshire & the Isle of Wight

U.K. Coaching Certificate (UKCC)

Level 2 and 3 (including endorsed National Governing Body coaching awards), and Community Sports Leader Award. All learners to be provided with an Active Passport as developed by SkillsActive and employers.

Participant Group: Sports employees, coaches or leaders and employees of any sector who also have a leisure or additional role volunteer or a similar paid role

Delivery Areas: South East Region linked to county delivery partnerships and networks

Increasing Assessor Capacity

Increase the capacity and flexibility of providers and/or employers to deliver skills development at levels 2 and 3 in line with the New Standard Part B. This can include staff capacity building within large/public sector employer organizations, possibly in partnership with local providers for the delivery of NVQs in the workplace to support the 'Pledge'. Activities can include

- Increasing the number of assessors and tutors where there is a demonstrable shortfall to meet employer demand/in-house capacity
- Developing provider capacity to carry out initial assessments using skills passports and to then provide appropriate responsive training
- Developing modular approaches to provision to meet learner needs identified through passports.
- Testing of flexible innovative delivery models to provide workplace learning for employees in previously challenging environments to receive training and assessment. This could include the use of innovative technology to deliver e-assessments.

Participants: Employees in priority sectors of Health and Social Care, and other Public Service Sectors, Logistics, Retail, Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism, and Manufacturing

Delivery Areas: South East Region