

## **LEARNING AGREEMENT PILOT Essex, Southend and Thurrock**

The Learning Agreement Pilot is a major Government initiative between the Learning and Skills Council and Connexions in Essex, Southend and Thurrock, with the principal aim of increasing participation in learning by reducing the group of Young People (16-17 year olds) in jobs without training.

The pilot will run from April 2006 for 2 years.

### **Learning Advisers**

We plan to recruit a total of 60 Learning Advisers, and 2 Learning Adviser Managers (North and South) for the project. Candidates have been short-listed and interviews will take place over the following weeks, with the aim of getting the first phase of staff in post during June/July.

Staff will be accommodated in existing Connexions Centres and in developing one-stop shops. In addition a number will be home-based and allowance has been made to secure additional accommodation on a short-term basis. The strategy seeks to minimise disruption to existing services, allow some integration and synergy and ensure the Personal Adviser expertise and professional position is present in the project. This also affords the opportunity to support new and more flexible ways of working.

We have developed a bespoke training programme to include Connexions PA Induction and LSC sourced 'Broker' and 'Qualifications' training elements. This will equip Learning Advisers with the necessary skills to assess Young People's learning needs, and to negotiate effectively with Young People, employers and training providers. The aim is to develop Learning Advisers' competencies in the area of work based learning to a level beyond that of existing Connexions Personal Advisers.

### **Recruitment, Assessment and Support of Young People**

The Learning Adviser will identify and make initial contact with employers and young people in jobs without training to promote the offer to young employees and their employer, of incentives to undertake formal training from the National Qualifications Framework as part of the Learning Agreement Pilot.

Young people will benefit from assessment and motivational activities, advice, guidance and free work based training.

- The Learning Adviser will draw on APIR and other assessments such as Basic Skills Tests, to inform the Learning Agreement.
- Opportunities to develop self-confidence and self-motivation will be provided, to encourage the Young Person to embark on the route to qualifications training.

The learner's needs and ambitions, the employer's requirements and the LSC's strategic aims to develop the Skills Agenda and Training Provision are all included in the completion of the agreement.

Once agreement has been brokered, the Learning Adviser will continue to offer support to the Young Person to ensure successful completion of the agreement.

Learning Advisers will build up a caseload of no more than 50 Young people at any one time over 2 years and will support participants according to their needs.

Referral systems into the wider Connexions Service will ensure that issues arising relating to NEET, Employer Vacancies and Young People's issues will be effectively managed and responded to.

## Distribution

The following table illustrates the allocation of Learning Advisers, and anticipated Learning Agreement starts by district and unitary.

	Allocation of Learning Advisers		Learning Agreement Starts				Total Learning Agreement Starts	
			Year 1		Year 2			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Basildon	10	17	281	17	400	17	680	17
Colchester	7	11	182	11	259	11	440	11
Braintree	6	10	165	10	235	10	400	10
Southend	5	8	132	8	188	8	320	8
Thurrock	5	8	132	8	188	8	320	8
Chelmsford	5	8	132	8	188	8	320	8
Tendring	4	7	116	7	165	7	280	7
Harlow	4	6	99	6	141	6	240	6
Rochford	4	6	99	6	141	6	240	6
Castlepoint	3	5	83	5	118	5	200	5
Maldon	2	4	66	4	94	4	160	4
Brentwood	2	4	66	4	94	4	160	4
Epping	2	4	66	4	94	4	160	4
Uttlesford	1	2	33	2	47	2	80	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1650</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2350</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4000</b>	<b>100</b>

## Learning Provision

Learning Providers have been invited to submit proposals for learning to meet the diverse needs of Young People in jobs without training. Flexibility and responsiveness in terms of mode, range and level of learning as well as accessibility, delivery and assessment are essential.

Learning will be personalised to match the Young Person's circumstances, abilities and aspirations and, wherever possible, their employer's requirements.

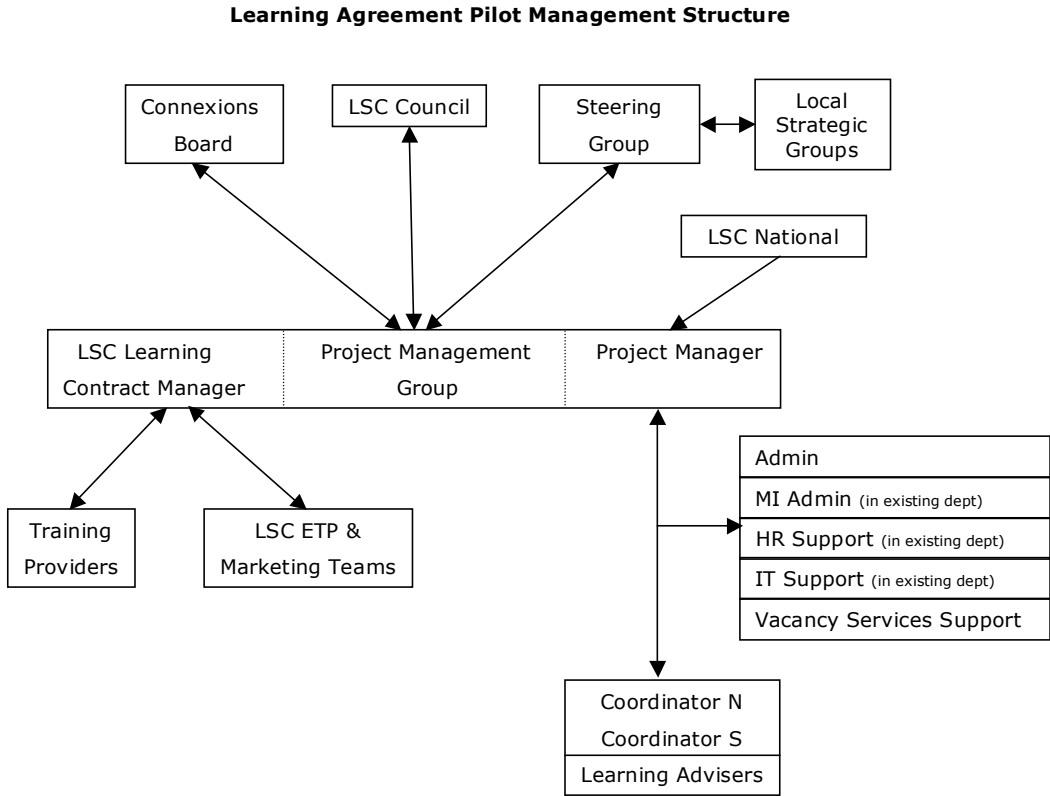
There will be four broad categories of learning on offer: -

- Skills for Life and Work** – literacy, numeracy, IT, key skills, world of work and career planning
- General education** – top up GCSEs, AS/A2
- Vocational learning** – BTEC/C&G/OCR Certificates
- Job Skills** – NVQ1, apprenticeships

**Project Organisation**

A Delivery Partnership between the Learning and Skills Council and Connexions will manage the Project. The responsibility for the delivery of the project rests with the Project Management Group, and the project will answer for its local strategic success within the Children and Young Peoples Plans to a specifically constructed Project Steering Group.

The following chart shows the management structure for the Pilot:



**Steering Group**

Members of the Steering Group will include Local Authorities, Young People and Unions, Training Providers, Chambers of Commerce and Employers, and the Project Management Group. The remit of this group is to bring expertise, influence and knowledge into the project and to ensure that a range of issues relevant to members are properly addressed. The first meeting of the group is scheduled on 18<sup>th</sup> May 06.

The Pilot Steering Group will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the Learning Agreement Pilot and will

- Review the pilot delivery plan and recommend actions to remedy failures

- Produce a quarterly written progress report
- Commission an independent formal review at the end of the first 12 months and evaluation at the end of the pilot
- Review transitional arrangements

### **Performance Monitoring and Review**

Performance against key objectives and progress against targets will be monitored using existing MI systems to collect and analyse data.

Performance against objectives will be monitored according to the table below:

Objective	Notes	Report
Achieve 4,000 Learning Agreements	Learning agreements will be signed. The initial distribution of starts is detailed in Appendix 2. Any changes will be negotiated via project management	Monthly
Appropriate Geographic Distribution	Will be reviewed through LSC Reporting	Monthly
Recruitment of PAs	In line with plans	Monthly
50% of Learning Agreements Completed	Learning agreements will be time bound at inception and completions and drop outs recorded using CCIS and ILR records	Monthly
50% reduction in JWT Group	Using CCIS data. A comprehensive report will be produced showing the complexity of leavers and joiners to and from the group, and their destination and longitudinal track	Quarterly
Balance of Provision	The objectives of the project include an indicative distribution of types of courses within each Learning Agreement. This will be monitored and recommendations from Steering Group taken to refocus if necessary	Quarterly
Develop a Service to Young People in JWT	Service definitions and design, with sustainability review	Quarterly
Develop a service to Employers	Service definitions and design, with sustainability review	Quarterly
Develop flexibility of provision	Report on Prospectus with Learning Adviser Survey.	Quarterly
Change attitudes towards education and training	Initial Assessment and subsequent Surveys of the various groups form part of final evaluation	Quarterly

On a monthly basis the Project Management Group will review progress and action plan remedial measures.

On a quarterly basis, a comprehensive assessment will be conducted to cover all aspects of Pilot activity, including review of take up and retention rates of young people, and delivery of learning provision.

The assessment schedule will ensure a review against key objectives and targets is undertaken. The review will identify strengths and areas for improvement. Remedial measures will be agreed and action plans developed.

The results of assessments will be included in regular progress reports.

### **Learning Adviser Performance**

The work and performance of Learning Advisers will be subject to individual monitoring through existing Supervision and Quality Systems.

### **Training Provider Performance**

Training Providers will be managed and monitored using existing contract management systems via the LSC. A memorandum of understanding is now in place governing arrangements under Consortia for monitoring quality and performance.

The LSC will provide a monthly report on the quality and availability of provision.

In addition, the suitability and success of provision will be monitored through a continuous survey of learners and employers, including those who are not taking part, conducted by the Learning Advisers.

### **Local evaluation**

Feedback and issues relating to the provision of service will be analysed to inform future development of The Pilot, and to ensure the service is responsive in terms of meeting Young People's needs.

Exit interview information will be collated and analysed.

Evaluation of employers and Young People not participating in a Learning Agreement will be carried out, to inform methods of approach and strategic development

### **Marketing and Communications**

A Marketing and Communications Strategy has been developed which covers all intra and extra partnership communications, PR and Media relations, and of course, the methods used to engage Young People and employers, but also parents, unions, education providers, representatives of sectors and the wider public.

Marketing activity including branding, will seek to raise awareness of the Pilot and the issues it seeks to address to a high level across the whole area, using a variety of methods and technologies. However, it is recognised that the persuasiveness of the person-to-person contact is likely to be the most effective tool in engagement.

Employers will be approached via a number of routes. The LSC will use a call centre approach to targeting employers. Further employers will be approached via intermediaries, such as Training Providers, Business Link brokers and Chambers of Commerce.

### **Contacts**

Any questions about the Learning Agreement Pilot should be directed to

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Any questions relating to the LSC's invitation to tender document that has been distributed to learning providers, should be directed to

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