



Learning+Skills Council

South East Regional Compact on Learning and Skills

March 2004

Developed with the support of  SEEDA

South East Regional Compact on Learning and Skills

1 Introduction: purpose of the Compact

- 1.1 RAISE (the regional voluntary and community sector network) and the six Local Learning and Skills Councils in the South East intend to work more effectively together **to achieve more for learners, potential learners and communities.**
- 1.2 This Compact is an agreement intended to provide a framework for developing effective relationships between the Learning and Skills Councils and the voluntary and community sector (VCS), leading to more and better results on the ground. The accompanying Action Plan focuses on practical steps to tackle issues and seize opportunities, concentrating on steps that can be tackled most effectively *regionally*. Importantly, the Action Plan should also help build trust and understanding through joint working¹.
- 1.3 This Compact has been developed within the context of the national Compact between Government and the voluntary and community sector and the commitment by the Learning and Skills Council nationally to develop an overarching strategy for working with the sector.
- 1.4 It is also intended to provide guidance for LLSCs and the voluntary and community sector within individual LLSC areas, a context for learning and skills aspects of *Local Compacts*, and a basis for engaging other partners at regional level. Within each sub-region covered by LLSCs, it for the LLSC and its local partners to develop their own arrangements for working through the principles and undertakings.

2 Shared vision/ aims

What do we want to achieve together?

RAISE and the six LLSCs support each other in seeking to realise a learning society in the South East:

“a society in which everyone has the opportunity to go as far as their talents and efforts will take them, taking advantage of learning opportunities and participating fully.”

Aims

This requires pursuing together strategic aims, to:

widening participation

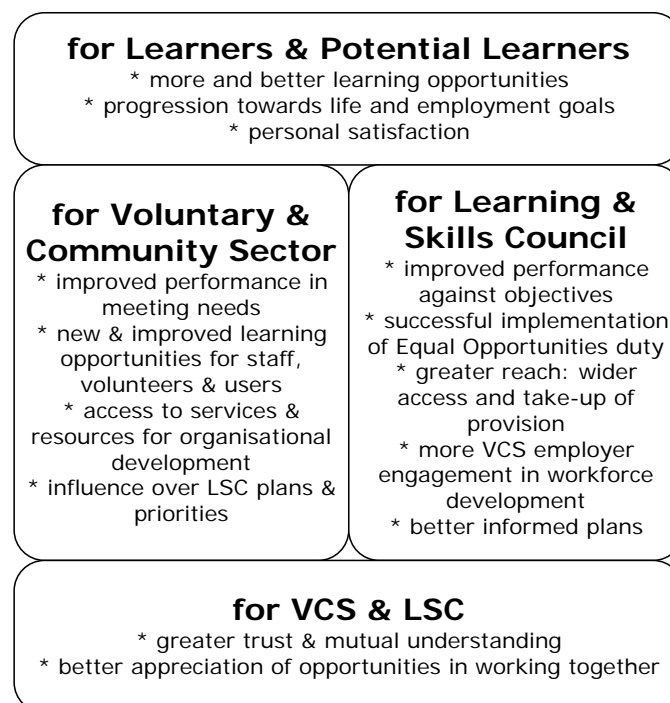
- 2.1 Raise demand and widen participation in learning *within communities* served by voluntary and community organisations (VCOs)

¹ There is also a Glossary which explains key terms in the Compact and the learning and skills field.

- 2.2 Make special efforts to engage and meet the needs of disengaged or under-represented learners and socially excluded groups, including those with literacy and numeracy needs
- 2.3 Extend learner aspirations, choice and opportunities for progression at all levels of education and training
- workforce development*
- 2.4 Raise demand for learning *within the VCS*, meeting the needs of individual staff, volunteers and trustees and VCOs as employers
- 2.5 Support the development of skills in VCOs needed in enhancing their organisational effectiveness, including as partners in public service delivery
- improving quality and responsiveness of provision*
- 2.6 Ensure that the provision of learning, skills and related information, advice and guidance meets current needs and future priorities for all learners, potential learners, VCOs as employers, and communities
- 2.7 Improve the quality of formal and informal learning opportunities, tailored to the needs of individual learners
- 2.8 Ensure equality and diversity are embedded throughout all strategies and provision

Figure 1 sets out the mutual advantage sought by VCOs and the LLSCs in pursuing this Compact. There are potential benefits to be gained across the breadth of the sector, with opportunities to engage for all VCOs interested in how learning and skills can benefit communities they serve.

Figure 1 Mutual Advantage Sought

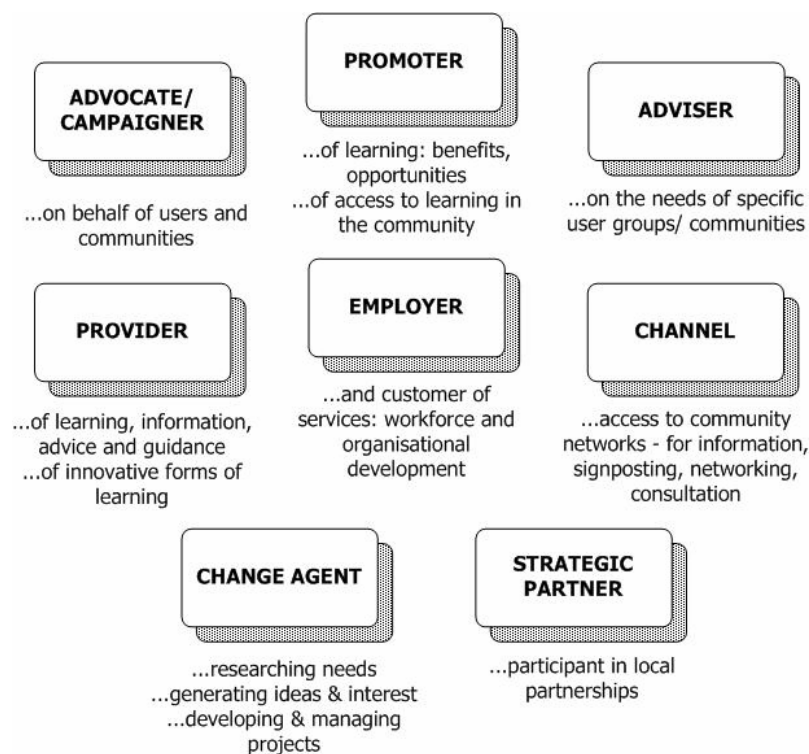


3 Respective roles and contributions

Voluntary and community sector

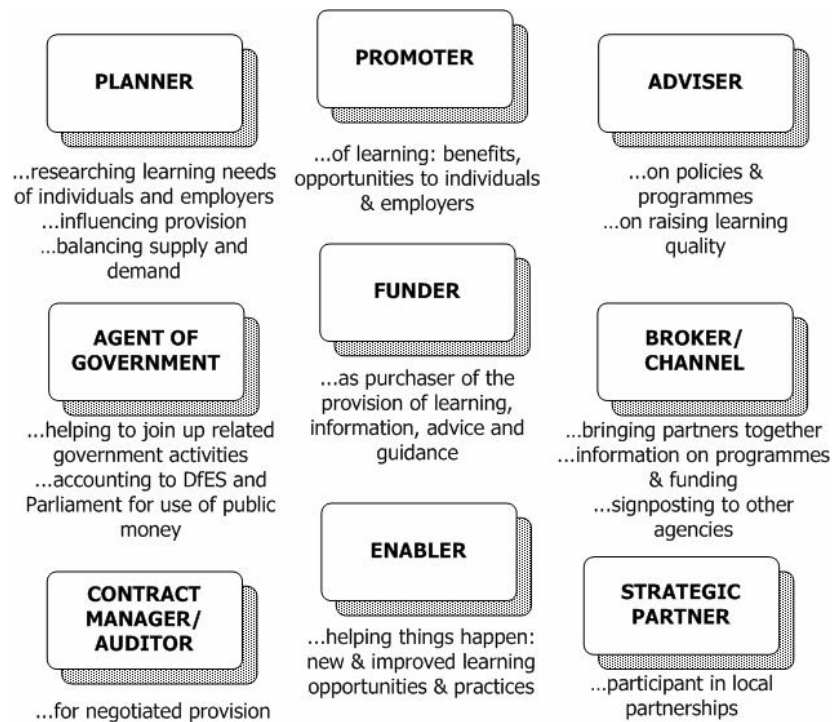
3.1 Figure 2 sets out roles played by the voluntary and community sector in widening participation and developing skills. VCOs make vital contributions in reaching disadvantaged and under-represented groups, reflecting their knowledge and expertise in meeting the needs of particular client groups, young and old, eg, people with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities; carers; and people facing discrimination in the jobs market and society. They act in a range of roles including provision of information, referrals, advice and guidance, direct supply of formal and informal learning opportunities, and are important employers in their own right. They constitute a diverse sector in terms of occupations offered and communities served. There are over 28,000 VCOs in the South East, employing an estimate of 110,000 staff and involving 600,000+ volunteers. They play vital roles in making a range of government policies *work* - including community cohesion, health improvement, neighbourhood renewal and rural revival - as well as lifelong learning.

Figure 2 Strategic and Operational Roles: Voluntary and Community Sector



3.2 Figure 3 sets out the roles of Local Learning and Skills Councils, which flow from the LSC's duties and responsibilities as a government agency responsible for all programme expenditure on learning by people aged 16+, other than in higher education.

Figure 3 Strategic and Operational Roles: Local Learning and Skills Councils



4 Shared values and principles

RAISE and the South East LLSCs agree to work together by the following principles:

- 4.1 Put the needs and interests of learners and potential learners first
- 4.2 Focus on what we are trying to achieve rather than the process
- 4.3 Foster openness, integrity, mutual respect, trust and understanding
- 4.4 Help each other achieve our respective and joint objectives
- 4.5 Respect the distinctive aspects of the VCS and the LLSCs, notably through:
 - ◆ recognition by LLSCs of the independence of VCOs and their role to advocate and challenge on behalf of communities served
 - ◆ recognition by VCOs of the LSC's statutory powers, obligations and duties
- 4.6 Be accountable to each other for the undertakings set out below and for the tasks included in the Action Plan
- 4.7 Take prompt action to deal with problems/ conflicts
- 4.8 Strive to learn from 'what works' and from each other, and embed this in more effective practice
- 4.9 Behave in ways which promote equality, diversity and social inclusion

5 Undertakings

RAISE and the South East LLSCs agree to the undertakings below which will help improve relationships and impact on the ground. (Actions in support of these undertakings can be found the current Action Plan, appended to this Compact document).

SE Learning and Skills Councils

Involvement

- 5.1 Promote opportunities for wider involvement of VCOs in the planning and provision of LSC-funded learning, including non-accredited provision and information, advice and guidance
- 5.2 Encourage LSC mainstream providers to adopt Compact principles
- 5.3 Include the VCS as a significant employment sector in workforce development planning and consultations on an equal footing with other sectors (noting the scale of the employed and volunteer workforce)
- 5.4 Ensure and support VCS involvement in Strategic Area Reviews (StARs), in shaping future learning and skills provision to meet needs in the VCOs and communities served
- 5.5 Seek consistency in planning and delivery arrangements, while enabling (a) diversity of provision appropriate to learner needs, and (b) each LLSC to address local priorities
- 5.6 Promote wider understanding within LLSCs of what VCOs can offer

Consultation and Communication

- 5.7 Improve communications with the VCS, including:
 - ◆ lead contacts within each LLSC for VCOs
 - ◆ greater clarity of communications and reduced use of jargon
 - ◆ better internal communications in relation to dealings with VCOs
- 5.8 Observe recommendations contained in the Compact Code of Practice on Consultation and Policy Appraisal, including:
 - ◆ giving advance warning of consultations and promote them widely
 - ◆ publishing clear and concise consultation documents
 - ◆ being honest about where input is required from respondents
 - ◆ providing adequate time for responses (a minimum of 8 and ideal of 12 weeks)
 - ◆ providing feedback on consultations
 - ◆ making paper as well as electronic copies of consultation documents available

Funding

- 5.9 Promote fair access to project and contract funding
- 5.10 Make provision for sector-friendly funding (subject to national LSC and Treasury policy), eg, by:
 - ◆ opening up access to mainstream LSC funding blocks for more and different VCOs, including those which have not historically been supported by the LSC or its predecessors

- ◆ providing project funding for innovative, cutting edge development ahead of mainstream provision
 - ◆ supporting outreach through VCOs to recruit learners from marginalised groups
 - ◆ agreeing profile payments (where payments are made against an agreed profile of expenditure relating to activities and outputs) and end-year flexibility
 - ◆ building full-cost 'recovery' or 'overheads' into contracts for service provision
- 5.11 Ensure that prospective bidders and tenderers are well informed about requirements and processes involved in securing LSC funding
- 5.12 Ensure that administrative, assessment and contracting procedures are carried out transparently, objectively and in proportion to the sums of money involved
- 5.13 Help build the capacity of VCOs who are active in, or wish to become more active in providing or widening access to learning and skills - in ways which support sustainable activities, acting independently or in collaboration
- 5.14 Seek opportunities to ensure greater coherence across related funding programmes of other funding bodies
- 5.15 Provide development funding, where appropriate, to facilitate voluntary sector engagement, where this will lead to achievement of LSC objectives
- 5.16 Make information readily available about funding for learning and skills

RAISE (on behalf of its members)

- 5.17 Develop sector networking and influence to facilitate engagement with the LSC and partners on learning and skills matters, in particular through the RAISE Learning and Development Network
- 5.18 Provide information channels for informing VCOs and improving awareness of the LSC (its objectives, priorities, funding arrangements and relevant processes)
- 5.19 Increase the ability and confidence of the VCS to engage productively with the LSC and other partners on learning and skills
- 5.20 Assist with region-wide consultations and responses
- 5.21 Contribute to regional planning forums for learning and skills (Workforce Skills Programme; ESF Co-financing arrangements; FRESA/ Regional Skills Partnership)
- 5.22 Promote contribution of learning and skills across the sector - including to the many VCOs who do not see widening participation and workforce development as relevant or a priority
- 5.23 Promote commitment within the VCS to national Compact undertakings, including:
- ◆ clear and effective employment, equality and diversity policies
 - ◆ high standards of governance and conduct
 - ◆ systems for quality assurance and accountability to service users
 - ◆ effective consultation of users, volunteers, members, supporters
- 5.24 Promote collaboration within the sector, to:
- ◆ research and articulate needs of learners
 - ◆ inform plans for learning and skills provision

- ◆ improve the quality and range of learning opportunities
- ◆ promote what the VCS can offer

Together

- 5.25 Take positive steps to address the specific needs, interests and contributions of different groups
- 5.26 Assemble further evidence of the added value that VCOs bring to the learning and skills agenda
- 5.27 Build capacity of voluntary and community providers to manage and share ‘what works’ and roll out successful projects in partnership - and the capacity of LLSCs to work effectively with the VCS
- 5.28 Promote the Compact, mutual understanding and the gains to be made

6 Monitoring and review

- 6.1 RAISE and the South East LLSCs will review progress in implementing the Compact after the first six months and annually thereafter. A brief report will be produced each year, setting out progress and updating the Action Plan.
- 6.2 A Compact Development and Evaluation Group drawn from RAISE members/staff and the SE LLSCs will meet periodically (initially quarterly) to monitor progress on the Action Plan. They will take responsibility for gathering portfolios of evidence to enable review of the difference the Compact is making against agreed success indicators. This group will be accountable to the RAISE Board via the RAISE Director and to the SE LLSC Executive Directors Group.
- 6.3 Success indicators will include:
 - successful implementation of Action Plan tasks
 - evidence of greater trust and improved mutual awareness and understanding (*throughout* the VCS and LLSCs)
 - greater participation by VCOs in shaping learning and skills provision and raising demand for learning in communities and in VCOs themselves (through local partnerships, Strategic Area Reviews, RAISE activities, etc)
 - successful implementation of joint initiatives at LLSC level
 - LLSCs signing up to and supporting Local Compacts
- 6.4 We shall also seek evidence of the *impact* of improved relationships and partnerships, assessed against the Compact aims (see section 2), eg:

Widening participation

- increased take-up of learning opportunities by disengaged learners and socially excluded groups and their progression to further learning

Workforce development

- increased take-up by VCOs of LSC-funded workforce development services

Improving quality and responsiveness of provision

- increased involvement by VCOs in the provision of learning, information, advice and guidance opportunities (as individual providers, in consortia or in partnership with other colleges, LEAs and work-based learning providers)

Initial Action Plan

This list of actions sets out early steps in putting the Compact into practice. The Compact Development and Evaluation Group (CDEG) will develop these as SMART actions (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound).

OBJECTIVES & TASKS	BY WHOM	BY WHEN	Compact Ref
1) Making the Compact work			
A.1 Draft and agree terms of reference for Compact and Evaluation Development Group, membership and Compact performance measures	CDEG	by end March 2004	6.2
A.2 Establish 2004 baseline for LLSC and voluntary and community sector engagement (to strengthen the review process and evaluation evidence)	Individual LLSCs/ RAISE	by end July 2004	6.3, 6.4
A.3 Provide induction for LLSC leads on the Learning and Skills Compact, the National Compact and codes of practice, and on change management issues	CDEG	by end July 2004	5
A.4 Seek endorsement of regional partners and partnerships, exploring opportunities to build on the Compact to mutual benefit (SEEDA, SEERA, Jobcentre Plus, SBS, Social Inclusion Partnership SE, etc), and facilitating VCS involvement in the Regional Skills Partnership	CDEG	by end of September 2004	5.14, 5.17, 5.20, 5.21
A.5 Nominate and publicise lead contacts for the VCS within individual LLSCs and vice versa	LLSCs/ RAISE	by end April 2004	5.7
A.6 Strengthen networking within the VCS in support of effective involvement in relevant partnerships (Learning Partnerships, IAG, Basic Skills, etc) and consultation responses	RAISE	Continuing	5.17, 5.18, 5.20
A.7 Review <i>local</i> LSC approaches to engaging the VCS (including workforce development and involvement in Local Compacts), agree and implement local action plans	Individual LLSCs/ local VCS	by end July	5.1
A.8 Promote wide awareness of the Compact within individual LLSCs and VCS and the mutual advantage to be gained	CDEG	Plan by end April 2004	5.28
A.9 Review progress in implementing the Compact	CDEG	October 2004 & March 2005	6.1
2) Widening participation			
A.10 Develop equitable arrangements for the involvement of VCOs with other providers, and promote Compact principles in these relationships (including specific follow-up with AoSEC and ACL Managers)	LSC with CDEG input	<i>to be planned in conjunction with work on LSC national strategy</i>	5.2, 5.9, 5.13
A.11 Identify and pursue opportunities for synergy/ greater coherence amongst SE LLSCs and with other funders (eg, through SE Voluntary Sector Funding Forum; jointly planned initiatives with SEEDA and the LSC Widening Adult Participation Action Fund) - to improve access to resources for the VCS	CDEG	Continuing	5.5, 5.9
A.12 Make available information on funding opportunities for learning and skills in the VCS in conjunction with other funders	CDEG	by end September	5.11, 5.16

OBJECTIVES & TASKS	BY WHOM	BY WHEN	Compact Ref
		2004	
3) Workforce development			
A.13 Review and promote opportunities arising from developments in national and regional policies (eg, Skills Strategy; SE Workforce Skills Programme; Cross-Cutting Review of the Role of the Voluntary Sector in the Delivery of Public Services - including <i>Futurebuilders</i> and the Infrastructure Strategy) to support organisational development and quality standards in the VCS	CDEG	Initial review by end of May 2004	5.1, 5.3, 5.17, 5.20, 5.21
4) Improving quality and responsiveness of provision			
A.14 Identify and disseminate 'what works' in building capacity in the VCS relating to provision of learning, information, advice and guidance	CDEG	by end Nov 2004	5.13, 5.24, 5.27
A.15 Contribute to the development of relevant national LSC policies (notably, the framework for engaging with the voluntary and community sector)	CDEG	Consultation response: March 2004	5.9, 5.10, 5.13, 5.12
A.16 Ensure active involvement of the VCS in Strategic Area Reviews (eg, on StAR stakeholder groups)	LSC/ local VCS	Continuing	5.4

Learning and Skills Glossary

TERM	EXPLANATION
ACL	Adult and community learning (The term may be used specifically to relate to LSC contracts which are held with local education authorities.)
Accreditation	Formal recognition of the educational standards of one provider by an external body
Accredited learning	The application of a recognised standard to a course which ensures that any certificate obtained by the learner can lead on to further qualifications at the same or other educational institution.
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate, responsible for quality audits of learning providers
AoSEC	Association of South East Colleges - representative body for further education colleges
Basic Skills	The ability to read, write, and speak in English, and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and in society in general” (Basic Skills Agency)
Benchmarks	Standards letting you seek good practice by comparing your performance against others.
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
Capacity building	Activities to ensure that VCOs and local communities have the skills, knowledge, structures and resources to realise their full potential. It concerns removing barriers to involvement; and investing to maximise their distinctive contribution to achieving community well-being. Aspects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organisational capacity (about the ability <i>within VCOs</i> to achieve their goals) ▪ Technical capacity to deliver specific services (eg, in social services or learning) ▪ Infrastructure capacity (relating to the ability of support or representative organisations for the VCS) ▪ Community capacity (about skills and leadership <i>within communities</i> to achieve their goals) <i>(Definition based on that used in the Cross-Cutting Review of the Voluntary Sector)</i>
Certification	Provision of a formal document to learners who have successfully completed a course of study
Co-financing	Method of channeling ESF monies into a single pot with funds from LSC and other government bodies to provide a single funding stream
Communities of interest	Groups of people whose members have common needs or characteristics (such as ethnic origin, disability, gender, sexual orientation or interest) as opposed to communities defined geographically
Communities of place	People living (or working) in specific localities who share common needs relating to this location
Community Champions	The purpose of this government fund, worth £9 million over three years, is to support individuals who have already shown leadership in stimulating community activity, or who have ideas for encouraging greater community activity.
Community cohesion	Term relating to communities where there is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities ▪ the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued ▪ those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities ▪ strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods (Source: Home Office)
Community development	A process of building active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect. It is about changing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives -

	(strategic framework for Community Development Standing Conference for Community Development 2001).
Common Inspection Framework	The Common Inspection Framework lays out the details of how the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) should inspect and evaluate non-higher education for the over 16s in schools and colleges. Its aim is to keep the Secretary of State for Education up to date about the quality of education and training and of the standards achieved by students. The Framework also assesses whether the taxpayer is getting value for money from the organisations providing the education and training. It came into force in 2001.
Community sector	Informal groups or networks formed run by people to pursue common interests or tackle joint problems
Compact	An agreement intended to provide a framework for developing effective relationships between the voluntary and community sector and public agencies. The National Compact is focused on relationships with central government and its agencies, while Local Compacts concern those with local authorities and other public agencies such as Primary Care Trusts and Local Learning and Skills Councils.
Connexions	National advice service for 13-19-year-olds covering a range of issues including careers, health, relationships, housing, education and money.
Continuing professional development	Combination of formal off-the-job training and work-based learning which provides the range of learning opportunities for an individual to update and improve their occupational/ professional competence over time
Cross-Cutting Review	Short hand term for the HM Treasury Cross-Cutting Review of the Role of the Voluntary Sector in the Delivery of Public Services.
DfES	Department for Education and Skills: the Government body responsible for education and work based learning in England and Wales It replaced the Department for Education and Employment in June 2001. Its aim is to build a competitive economy and inclusive society by creating opportunities for people to learn whatever their previous skills and experience. The Department works with many other branches of Government, outside agencies, employers, education providers, and academics to try and maximise the value of skills and learning.
Employability	In simple terms, employability is about being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work. More comprehensively, employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment. For the individual, employability depends on the knowledge, skills and attitudes they possess, the way they use those assets and present them to employers and the context (eg. personal circumstances and labour market environment) within which they seek work. (Institute of Employment Studies for DfES)
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
E2E	Entry to Employment: flexible LSC programme aimed at 16-19 year olds who are not yet ready or able to enter Modern Apprenticeships.
ESF	European Social Fund
Formal education	Structured education provision such as that provided by primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities.
Formula funding	Fixed-price contracting whereby an agreed price is determined for a specific unit of output (the formula being set by the purchasing body such as the LSC or Jobcentre Plus)
FRESA	Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action: partnership-based plan to address skills and employment needs of employers and individuals within the region. (In the SE, partners include LSC, SEEDA, Jobcentre Plus, TUC, CBI and sub-regional economic partnerships)

Further education	Part-time or full-time, academic or vocational education and training which takes place post-compulsory school age.
Futurebuilders	Government programme providing mainly capital funding to help VCOs play a fuller role in the delivery of public services
Generic skills	Transferable skills required across a large number of different occupations. (Note distinction between vocational skills, generic skills and personal attributes)
GOSE	Government Office for the South East
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICT	Information and Communications Technology: basic computer and keyboard skills are now essential to a great proportion of low skill jobs, and as such are considered to be one of the 'basic skills', alongside those of numeracy and literacy. Equally, ICT is recognised as one way to encourage and enable people to improve their numeracy and literacy skills.
Informal education	Learning which takes place outside the formal system (and which happens in an informal way) such as that provided by family, friends, work, leisure, libraries, museums, mass media, etc (NIACE)
iP	Investors in People: national standard setting a level of good practice for training and development of people to achieve business goals. It provides a national framework for improving business performance and competitiveness, through a planned approach to setting and communicating business objectives and developing people to meet these objectives. The result is that what people can do, and are motivated to do, matches what the organisation needs them to do.
Jobcentre Plus	Government agency charged with helping people into work, employers fill vacancies and ensure that people of working age obtain their entitlements to benefits and support
Key Skills	Those generic skills that individuals need in order to be effective members of a flexible, adaptable and competitive workforce and for lifelong learning. There are six: Communication; Application of number; Information technology; Working with others; Improving own learning and performance; and Problem solving. Each Key Skill is described in a unit to make it clear what the learner needs to know to be able to meet the standard required.
LMI	Labour market intelligence
Learners	Individuals undertaking formal or informal learning activities
LLDD	Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities
Learning	“Learning is a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve an increase in skills, knowledge, understanding, values and the capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and a desire to learn more.” (Campaign for Learning)
Learning providers	Organisations providing opportunities for individuals to gain skills, knowledge and qualifications. In relation to LSC funded-provision, these include FE and sixth form colleges, work-based learning providers, adult and community education services of LEAs, specialist providers and some VCOs.
Learning and Skills Council (LSC)	National planning and funding body for all post-16 education and training, operating through 47 Local Learning and Skills Councils.
Learning Partnerships	Learning Partnerships bring together learning providers, employers and the voluntary and community sector. They are expected to work with LLSCs to enable local communities to have a genuine say in shaping post-16 learning provision by representing the views and needs of local people and businesses to the LSC. Their core roles are to promote provider collaboration in support of lifelong learning and maximise the contribution of learning to local regeneration.
LEAs	Local Education Authorities (Education departments of local authorities)
Lifelong learning	“The continuous development of skills, knowledge and understanding that are

	essential for employability and fulfillment” (Green Paper, <i>The Learning Age</i> ,1998)
LSPs	Local Strategic Partnerships: strategic alliances bringing together local partners (public, private, voluntary & community) to promote community well-being
Match funding	A requirement by funding agencies that any contributions they make towards programme or project costs should be matched by other funders or by the applicants from their own resources. Some programmes allow match funding to take the form of in-kind contributions (notably the value of people’s time) as well as financial contributions.
MA	Modern Apprenticeship: LSC programme enabling young people aged from 16 to 24 to learn a career while being employed. Like traditional apprenticeships, they enable participants to learn on the job while building up skills and gaining qualifications. MAs are open to both new and existing employees, with employers receiving financial assistance towards the cost of the training and assessment from the LSC. Apprenticeships normally last between a minimum of one and three years. There are two levels: Foundation (FMA) and Advanced (AMA).
NCVO	National Council for Voluntary Organisation
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification: nationally recognised and accredited qualification, reflecting the skills and standards needed to carry out an occupation, trade or profession. There are five NVQ levels, ranging from Level 1 NVQ (the most basic level, equivalent to a national level 1 qualification) through to Level 5 NVQ (the highest level, equating to a national level 5 qualification).
Organisational development	Processes involved in developing the effectiveness of organisations - and the people within them - to meet organisational goals
Outputs	The products of a project, narrowly defined in terms of what the project delivers.
Outcomes	The intended results and benefits for project beneficiaries. Outcomes may be <i>soft</i> (acquisition of key skills, eg, team working, problem solving; increased confidence and motivation) or <i>hard</i> (qualifications, jobs).
Pathways	Routes involving learning and learning-related activities (personal assessment, guidance, etc) which allow individuals to move on to further learning and employment opportunities, as a result of certified or non-certified learning.
Personal attributes	The characteristics employers say they most often look for when recruiting or promoting staff. (Note distinction between vocational skills, generic skills and personal attributes)
Progression routes	Pathways which allow individuals to move on to further learning and employment opportunities, as a result of accredited or non-accredited learning.
RAISE	Regional Action and Involvement South East - regional voluntary sector network. Aims to enable VCOs to influence regional policy wherever it is made or implemented for the benefit of the people they serve.
Regeneration	Uplifting geographical areas and/or communities of interest experiencing economic disadvantage and social exclusion, to levels of economic activity and social cohesion which are, as a minimum, average for the region.
SSDA	Sector Skills Development Agency: national agency leading on the strategies for meeting sector skill needs
SBS	Small Business Service: government agency which champions the interest of small businesses, promotes enterprise in disadvantaged areas and groups, and contracts with Business Links for the local delivery of business support services.
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise: business defined formally by the EU as having under 250 employees and turnover not exceeding EUR 40 million or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 27 million. SMEs must also be independent businesses, where not more than 25% of the capital or voting rights is owned by an enterprise which is not itself an SME.
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency: regional development agency for the

	South East
SEERA	South East England Regional Assembly: regional assembly for the South East
SEREN	South East Racial Equality Network: the BME network for the South East which seeks to provide support to BME communities, address racism and exclusion, and work with regional agencies and networks to address issues
Skill	The ability to perform a task to a pre-defined standard of competence, acquired through formal and/or informal learning and through practice. (DfES Skillsbase)
Social capital	Trust, networks, common resources and the other things that help communities get things done.
Social enterprise	An organisation that trades for social as well as commercial aims
Social exclusion	An inability (of individuals) to participate in economic, social and political and cultural life, alienation and distance from mainstream society; not the same as poverty, although often associated with being poor. The process through which individuals and groups are excluded from participation in the society in which they live.
StARs	Strategic Area Reviews: a requirement of LLSCs to review the demand and supply of learning within their area and identify action to improve the match between the two
VCOs	Voluntary and community organisations
VCS	Voluntary and community sector
Vocational skills	Occupational or technical skills needed to work and progress within an occupation or occupational group. (Note distinction between vocational skills, generic skills and personal attributes)
Voluntary sector	Organisations meeting the following criteria (<i>NCVO</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ formal - organisations with a recognisable structure with a constitution or formal set of rules ▪ independent of government and self-governing ▪ non-profit distributing ▪ voluntarism to a meaningful degree in terms of contributions of time or money ▪ public benefit - beyond that of the organisation's own membership
VSNTO	Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation
WBL	Work-Based Learning: one of the main strands of LSC programme funding which supports the accredited training of people in employment
Widening participation	A process where education and training providers successfully adapt their programmes and ways of working to meet the learning needs and aspirations of individuals and groups whose experiences or circumstances inhibit participation. It involves: attracting and engaging learners; identifying appropriate programmes; appropriate support for learners during their programmes; and securing achievement. (Source: <i>LSC Widening Participation Strategy</i>)
Workforce development	Activities which increase the capacity of individuals to participate effectively in the workforce, thereby improving their productivity and employability. (Source: <i>In Demand: Adult Skills for the 21st Century</i> , Cabinet Office, 2001)
WoSP	Workforce Skills Programme: LSC/SEEDA joint programme to promote workforce development in the South East. One of a number of regional pilots.