Changing attitudes and behaviours through marketing and communications
For National Council

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Background and introduction

1 The LSC has developed a marketing and communications strategy to contribute to the achievement of corporate targets. In particular, the entitlement to funding for a first full level 2 – which is considered the minimum benchmark for employability – irrespective of age. Encouraging adults to take up this entitlement is crucial when we know that by 2020, 95% of jobs will require individuals of working age to have a Level 2 qualification as a minimum.

2 However, to achieve the level of change required to reach this goal, it means (in some cases) employers and learners investing their own time or money, so it is vital that individuals and employers understand the level of commitment and value that learning can bring to their lives and business.

3 The UK is currently 20th of 30 OECD countries in the proportions of adults with upper secondary education (L2 equivalent). There are around 12 million adults in England without Level 2 qualifications; of those, some 9 million are of working age and around 6.3 million are economically active.

4 The historical legacy and mantra “Job for Life” must be renewed and refreshed by an ideology of “learning for life”. Our industrial landscape is rapidly transforming with new technologies creating new sectors and new jobs and with work and family structures responding to change.

5 By 2014, two thirds of jobs will be filled by those at least at intermediate level skills; by 2020 more than 40% of jobs could be filled by graduates. Today, the UK has 9 million high skilled jobs; by 2020 we will need 14 million. And of the 3.4 million unskilled jobs today, we will need only 600,000 workers by 2020. Secretary for Education and Skills Alan Johnson’s address to the AoC Conference 21 November 2006.

6 To address these challenges, there is an urgent need to address an attitudinal and behavioural shift so that we can create a climate, environment and culture in the UK that is positive, and understands the benefits and investment towards learning and skills. It is likely that this challenge will be further articulated in the Leitch Review.
Achieving this level of change will require a sustained, long term effort through marketing and communications, and most importantly, to ensure that the effort we make is integrated so that we amplify and align existing messages and campaigns. The message needs to be differentiated enough to cut through the clutter.

**Purpose**

To update the National Council on progress towards an integrated marketing and communications campaign for learning and skills.

The Campaign addresses the need to:

Increase the appetite for participation in learning and training, which can only be achieved by changing attitudes and behaviours. We need to put learning and training on the agenda of the nation, businesses and individuals.

**Recommendation**

- The National Council is requested to directly and publicly support the notion of a broad campaign that benefits the entire learning and skills sector, asking the DfES and LSC to lead the development and overall approach.

**Key points**

We aim to build a communications message that would run both as an overarching campaign and, in parallel, would be incorporated into the communications messages of individual key campaigns. This campaign would therefore, be an addition, not a replacement for the current communication activities e.g. Train to Gain, EMA, Skills for Life etc (although there might be an opportunity to re-direct some parts of the budgets from individual activities).

This approach would aim to create a movement – an explicit ‘glue’ – that gives the message higher impact as it dramatises the issue and, on the back of the response to the Leitch report, galvanises stakeholders behind a national effort.

A recent example of such a “movement” is the campaign championed by Jamie Oliver to improve school dinners or perhaps more relevant, is the Breakthrough for Cancer campaign which combines integrated media with a strong iconic symbol – the pink ribbon. Other brands want to be a part of the campaign e.g. M&S and other charities have adopted the ribbon concept and adapted it for their own means.

We aim to achieve:

- **Alignment** – point the FE System in the same direction. This is important not only within the LSC and DfES but across our partners so that over time, we affect attitudes and behaviours towards training and to help and support the Further Education sector, learners, employers and Government in their efforts to respond to the learning and skills challenge and in doing so, to achieve value for money.

- **Amplification** – make more noise so that we raise awareness through an overarching and integrated campaign. This will mean amplifying and focusing existing campaigns, not replacing them. Alongside this, we aim to achieve a:
  
a  Message ‘shift’ in the value and level of investment/fees that individuals and employers personally make to pay towards learning and skills.
b Inspirational and positive messages (not negative or fear-based)
c Get across the concept and importance of ‘employability’
d Generate excitement amongst partners and therefore achieve more partner participation and advocacy

**Campaign Phase 1**

15 Because of the size of the challenge, the first phase of the campaign will concentrate on Adults and Level 2. There are around 12 million adults in England without Level 2 qualifications. Of those, some 9 million are of working age and around 6.3 million are economically active.

16 In 2005 DfES projections to 2010 indicated that the overall Level 2 PSA target could be missed by approximately 350,000 to 400,000.

17 In response, the DfES and LSC have developed a Level 2 action plan to meet this projected shortfall. The plan ensures the system is geared up to deliver massive and unprecedented: volume growth, quality improvement and outreach - targeting the lowest skilled and most disadvantaged.

18 The campaign will form a major contribution to the delivery of the action plan and the LSC and DfES are working closely in partnership, on implementation. In parallel, we are looking at how “descriptors” can be established for levels 1, 2, 3, 4 to be part of a family along with “degree” which are applied equally to all qualifications at a certain level, irrespective of the qualification achieved. This will help us to “describe” level 2.

19 We will also look at how we can build on the successful Skills for Life campaign, both in terms of the levels of investment over a sustained period of time, but also at how we can direct communications to retain those individuals who have made the first step back into learning.

**Clearance**

20 Rob Wye, David Way, Nicky Brunker, Paula Chapman, Cathy Robinson

**Legal implications**

- There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

**Financial implications**

21 The ongoing budget for the overarching element has yet to be finalised. Given the scale of the task, it is likely that this will initially be achieved through a combination of top slicing from existing campaigns from DfES and LSC.

22 Over time, this will include alignment of activity and budgets of our partners but it is considered unrealistic to expect this in such a short timescale and to achieve a successful campaign launch. This is because speed is considered particularly important given the priority the LSC is placing on achieving the adult Level 2 target and other related product and service targets.

23 Based on previous and similar multi-media campaigns (e.g. Gremlins, aimhigher) two summer campaigns with additional New Year activity will cost approx £20m over three years. However, this activity may need to increase (and further budget found)
if an even greater further emphasis on the scale of the task (and targets) is identified as a priority within the pre-budget report and/or the Leitch review of skills.

£3.5m in 2006-07
£8.5m in 2007-2008
£8m in 2008-09

24 Budgets listed exclude ongoing product and service campaign budgets which are additional to this. The overall communications calendar will identify the total expenditure by programme and ‘customer’ area e.g. employers, adults, young people.

25 A condensed planner indicating the ‘weight’ of the LSC respective marketing and communications campaigns is available. Other campaigns will be added to this planner over time.

Next Steps

December - Ministerial submission on Campaign plan for 2007/08
           Developing “master” brief”.
January - Briefing and short listing agencies
February - Field research. Ministerial submission.
March - Production
April - PR campaign starts
May - Multi media campaign starts

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Annex 1 Issues and Research

Issues - a number of important issues have become more evident:

**Issue one – in spite of efforts insufficient pace of progress**  
Taking into account the quantum leap required to meet the Government aims and despite major contributions from existing and successful new initiatives such as Train to Gain, the pace of progress made so far by the sum of our activities is simply not sufficient.

**Issue two – ever increasing portfolio of activities creates confusion**  
There are so many activities and programmes that for the target audiences, employers and learners, it is becoming increasingly difficult to see how they all fit together to combine to an 'offer' that is clear, makes sense and is easy to navigate.

**Issue three – coordination amongst partners**  
At present activities are largely planned and delivered separately. In spite of efforts to coordinate the messages of this vast portfolio of activities and programmes, coordination and focus could still be improved to create the greatest possible impact.

**Issue four – not enough focus on changing attitudes and behaviours**  
Most efforts so far focus on improving or introducing tangible products and services (i.e. training programmes/courses, advice services, financial funding). They are all directly aimed at delivering individual targets. It seems that the main issue we are facing is to change employers’ and learners’ attitude towards training and their behaviour which are the prerequisites for increasing the uptake of the training products and support. Only limited activities have so far been aimed at this.

How do we know?

Research undertaken by the LSC over recent months shows how these issues manifest themselves amongst the groups of learners and employers we aim to reach:

- The link between vocational qualifications, achievements and work (employability) is still not absolutely understood or valued amongst adults and young people (*Opinion Leader Research; October 06; Research on Describing Skills Achievements*):

- Around two in three adults agree that there is a need to simplify the way that qualifications are described. Those with a low level of qualification are most likely to think this, with three quarters of those with a Level 1 qualification agreeing that there is a need for change.

- Cynicism and doubt as to the real value of qualifications and what they are worth (often individuals do not see a reason to get qualifications unless their employer demands it of them) coupled with a fear of education engendered by school experiences. In particular, those with no or low levels of qualifications are less likely to see any benefits of gaining qualifications.

- Still confusion about the general universe of vocational education, courses and qualifications, in particular how qualifications compare. Their values are often seen as less stable and trustworthy (in comparison to academic qualifications).

- Academic qualifications and some vocational qualifications are well known (e.g. A’ Levels, NVQ, City and Guilds). People are not positive about introducing new names for qualifications to avoid confusion with all the current names with the majority feeling (47% and 34% respectively) thinking it would make no difference or less clear.