Official statistics released today by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) show a marked increase in participation rates for both young people and adults in Further Education and Work Based Learning. These are courses that equip individuals with skills for employment and further learning such as Skills for Life, full Level 2 and 3 qualifications and Apprenticeships.

**Headline figures:**

- The number of young people in FE funded learning by the LSC is higher than ever before at approximately 753,000
- A 3.3 per cent increase in the number of young people participating in full level 3 programmes (367,000) and a 1.9 per cent increase in the number of young people participating on full Level 2 programmes (314,000 learners)
- An increase of 41.6 per cent in the number of adults undertaking full Level 2 programmes
- 350,900 adults enrolled on Skills for Life programmes during 2007/06, an increase of 15 per cent
- An extra 10,000 Apprenticeship starts during 2006/07
- Approximately 220,000 learners enrolled on Train to Gain
The statistics reflect the LSC’s commitment to create demand for learning and skills, to transform the FE system to meet demand, and to deliver better skills, better lives and better jobs by increasing funding in key Government priority areas.

The figures also show that the total number of LSC-funded adult learners has decreased by 18.5 per cent, resulting from an increased focus on longer courses. This is in line with our funding strategy as set out in Priorities for Success in October 2005. The LSC’s focus remains on Apprenticeships, Train to Gain, Skills for Life, Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications, and these are the areas where we have seen significant growth.

As outlined in the recently published LSC Grant Letter for 2008-09, the LSC will continue to increase funding in these priority areas for adults, spending approximately £2 billion of our £3.2 billion adult participation budget on full Level 2, full Level 3 and Skills for Life in 2008/09 and £6.4 billion on young people’s learning.

The increase in the number of young people participating in LSC-funded activity of all types (e.g. schools, FE and Work-based Learning) to 1,404,700 also reflects a key target for the LSC to raise the educational achievement of all young people by narrowing the gap in achievement between young people from low income families and their peers.

Mark Haysom, Chief Executive of the LSC said:

“I am pleased with the figures, they show that more young people are engaging in learning than ever before. It is vital that every young person entering the workforce is equipped with the skills they need to fulfil their potential in work and life and this is why the LSC is targeting vulnerable socially excluded learners.”

“As part of our service to employers, the introduction of Train to Gain in April 2006 has continued to drive up skills in the workplace and by July 2007 approximately 220,000 learners had enrolled on a Train to Gain programme. These figures support the Government’s decision to invest £1 billion in the service by 2010/11.”
ENDS

For more information

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Notes to Editors

This press notice applies to England only.

The total spend on adult learning in priority areas is £1.96 billion, relating to funding in the following three areas: Skills for Life £620 million, Level 2 £884 million, Level 3 £456 million.

Learning and Skills Council:
The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. It is responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. It has a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Its vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. It works nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.