

Being the Best

Implementing The Vision for Young People's Education
and Skills in London



LONDON
COUNCILS

London Councils: Young People's Education and Skills

London Councils: Young People's Education & Skills (YPES) focuses on youth employment, education and skills.

Its Board, made up of key strategic partners in London and chaired by the executive member for children and young people, with vice-chairs from the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) and the business world (also represented on the London Enterprise Panel), is the lead strategic body for 14-19 education and training in the capital.

There are a number of key strategic partners in education and training in London:

- **Schools, academies, colleges and providers** (we use the term 'learning institutions' in this document) have more freedom and accountability in the light of recent government reforms. They are responsible for providing high quality teaching and for supporting young people in their programmes of education and skills.
- **Local authorities** are the champions of their residents and bear ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all young people have a suitable place in education – and this responsibility will extend to cover all young people up to the age of 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015.
- **The Mayor** has expressed strong support for young people in London in the current economic climate and his recent Education Inquiry makes a number of recommendations about his role in supporting London to be more ambitious for its young people.
- **Businesses** have the opportunity to express their needs and expectations of young people and to provide an input into the system to improve its quality and effectiveness.
- **Learners;** irrespective of how well young people are taught or how well the whole system of education and skills works in London, we will not succeed unless learners are engaged in and take responsibility for their learning and aim to achieve the best that they possibly can.

- **Parents, carers and families** play a vital role in providing young people with encouragement to continue their studies.
- **Government,** through the Department for Education (DfE) is committed to transforming England's education system so that all children, regardless of their background, thrive and prosper. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) champions education and training for young people. The Skills Funding Agency works similarly to meet the skills needs of adults in the labour market.

We all have a role in transforming education and skills in London

The strategic partners represented on the YPES Board and other stakeholders in the education and skills of young people have contributed to the development of a vision for the future. YPES has also consulted about realising the vision and developing a call for action around critical priorities for London and is grateful for the support and contributions we have received.

foreword

The YPES Board is delighted to present this vision, *Being the Best* - partners ensuring the success of young people, playing a part in successful businesses in a successful city.

The vision is based on a robust body of evidence as set out in the report: *Young people's participation, progression and transition to higher education and work: A London perspective*. It is informed by consultation and a thorough debate among our key strategic partners, who share and subscribe to its priorities. We are very pleased that a clear consensus has emerged between YPES, the London Enterprise Panel (LEP) and the Mayor/Greater London Authority (GLA) about the issues for young people in London and the priorities on which we will work together to implement the vision. The close alignment of all these partners creates a powerful force working for young people and provides great confidence in our determination to realise the vision.

There are many strengths in London's education and skills system, but young Londoners – whether they plan to find work or to get a place in Further and Higher Education – also face many significant challenges. We have set out these challenges and the priorities for action and we will build on them further in this year's Annual Statement of Priorities when it is published in the autumn and shows the milestones in realising the vision.

Above all, we remain absolutely focused on the needs of young people and ensuring that every young Londoner has a personal route to success. We will champion the interests of young people across London to support the introduction of full participation in education or training to the age of 17 next year and to prepare the way for full participation to 18 in 2015. But we have always maintained that participation is only a means to success and we will continue to ensure that young Londoners are supported to achieve their goals in learning, in work and in life.

On the foundation of strong partnership support, the YPES Board calls on everyone involved in education and skills in London to work together and focus on the success of young people so that they can be the best!



Cllr Steve Reed
Executive Member Children and Young People
London Councils



Mr Jack Morris OBE
Chairman Business Design Centre Group Ltd
London Enterprise Panel

↳ London – *being the best:* the vision for London

**“Our ambition
is to be
world-class”**

Michael Gove MP, Secretary
of State for Education
in *‘The Importance of
Teaching – The Schools
White Paper’*, DfE 2010



Successful Learners

We believe that all young Londoners should be able to get the best results from their education:

- the education and skills that they need to set themselves up for life;
- the opportunity to reach their potential; and
- the chance to shine in their chosen career-path.

We believe that London's learning system should enable all young people to succeed and the gaps that currently exist between the achievements of young people based on their background should be closed.

Successful, competitive businesses

We believe that young Londoners should stand out as the best when compared with other young people in Britain and abroad. We believe they should be able to contribute to their local community and for their skills, knowledge and talents to be valued.

As young Londoners achieve their best and contribute to the pool of talent in local communities and England as a whole, they will enable businesses to succeed in increasingly competitive national and global markets - and in this way we believe that education, economic growth and London's regeneration influence each other.

Successful communities in a successful city

Education brings people together and historically proved to be a great vehicle for social mobility. Alongside young Londoners achieving their best, our vision is of society in London being resilient to challenge and coming together as never before.

We believe that London is a role model for other cities and regions, and should show the world how education and skills makes a difference in the recovery of the country's economic fortune.

Young people face an uncertain future. Participation in education and training, though important, is not enough on its own; the key is success – progression into jobs and further and higher education. The stark economic situation and its impact on employment, coupled with increased University fees, presents very different choices for young people as they progress to adulthood. For those young people looking for work, the labour market will see different types of jobs in the future and competition for them will be stronger than ever. Whatever their choices, education and skills will be crucial in providing London's young people with the best possible advantage in life.

As we move towards full participation in education of all young people up to the age of 18, young people will need new opportunities, options and choices to succeed.

London plays a leading role on the international stage so being better than average simply will not do. What is clear is that the main ambition for London and young Londoners is to **be the best**.

What does 'being the best' actually mean?

'Being the best' means **young Londoners getting the best out of their educational experience**, adding to the skills and knowledge base in London and contributing fully in society.

It means having **the best learning system** that inspires young people to make the best for themselves out of the opportunities available to them.

It requires everyone involved in education to refuse to settle for second-best and always strive to **do their best**.

We believe that **being the best** should be at the heart of the system, because this challenges all of us who are involved in education and skills in our city to put the needs of young people first.



➤ Priorities and challenges for London

Taking into account the needs of Londoners, our overarching objective remains to make sure that every young person has a personal route to success and the skills to secure a better future for themselves and their communities. We will make sure each young person has the right learning option and the right package of support.

We continue to champion the needs of young Londoners and promote excellence in:

- Participation rates;
- Achievement rates;
- Progression rates into further and higher education, apprenticeships and employment.

We are committed to meeting the needs of London's young people and to securing the future prosperity of the capital.

Background

Local authorities have three key duties:

- To secure sufficient suitable education and training opportunities to meet the reasonable needs of young people in their area
- To encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education and training
- To act as champions for young people in their area

Through the reforms introduced by the coalition government, learning institutions have been given additional freedom and responsibility to meet the needs of learners.

Learning institutions are accountable to their learners and to their local communities, represented by local authorities. Local authorities have the key role in identifying the needs of local communities; they want to see learning institutions reflect these needs in their local offer. Challenging how well learning institutions meet the needs of Londoners and London's businesses based on performance in participation, achievement and progression is an important aspect of local accountability.

The LEP was set up to advise the Mayor of London on action designed to provide strategic investment to support private growth and employment in London, promote enterprise and innovation and the acquisition of skills for sustained employment in London and protect and enhance London's competitiveness. The Skills and Employment Working Group is a sub-group of LEP and is specifically tasked with advising the Mayor on actions to promote the acquisition of skills for sustained employment in London. The Mayor's Education Inquiry that has recently reported outlines a number of recommendations which are complementary to our key priorities.

Additionally, partners have been taking responsibility for shaping education and training provision in their area, not merely to fulfil their statutory duties but to ensure that young people can progress and enjoy successful lives, in successful communities.

Working with local authorities and key partners we have developed a strong evidence base that highlights the key issues London needs to address to ensure that all young people succeed.

↳ London's challenges

London faces significant challenges¹:

- Unlike most other parts of England, local provision serves highly mobile young people across the whole of London and has to provide them with the education and skills fit for living, learning and working in one of the major international cities in the world.
- Young people in London are much more likely to cross local authority boundaries to access education and training at age 14-19. This presents challenges in ensuring that local provision fits together to provide young Londoners with a full menu of choices across the capital.
- Overall, participation in education or training by London residents aged 16 and 17 is very high. Although very near to full participation at 16, drop-out at 17 has been a long standing issue. This is the main challenge associated with raising the participation age in London.
- While London stands well against national averages, there is too much borough variability in attainment and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to achieve less and have fewer life chances at the age of 19 than those from better off families.
- Worklessness among young people is a major feature of society today.
 - There are still many young people aged 16-18 who are not in employment, education and training (NEET) and many more whose destination after leaving school at 16 is not known.
 - There is a high proportion of young people aged 16-24 who are unemployed and not in full-time education or training, while the number of people aged 18-24 who have been out of work and claiming benefits for more than six months is also of concern.
 - There is a body of reporting that shows a sharp reduction in the number of employment opportunities open to young people over the age of 16; despite increased demand for work experience and internship opportunities. Even though the take up of Apprenticeships has greatly improved in recent years, there is still great potential for more employers to understand the business benefit of Apprenticeships.

¹ These challenges are defined from a synthesis of a significant body of evidence, including “Young People in London: An Evidence Base” (YPES, 2012), “Young people’s participation, progression and transition to higher study and work: A London perspective”, (IoE, 2012) [both of these publications can be found here: <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/policylobbying/children/education14to19/keydocuments.htm>), the London Skills and Employment Observatory (<http://lseo.org.uk/>) and Statistical Data available from the DfE (<http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/statistics>) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) (<http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/further-education-skills/research-and-statistics>)

➤realising the vision – moving forward



As a result of our consultation and continuing dialogue within the sector, stakeholders have been given a very clear mandate to implement the vision through action on shared priorities. We are presenting the four most pressing priorities around which there is already considerable agreement:

London's education and learning institutions and the business community should work better together to enable more young people to succeed

WE KNOW THAT...

- The youth labour market has changed considerably over the past 10 years and remains both dynamic and volatile.
- Forging effective partnerships with business will be needed to ensure a comprehensive education and training offer for young people and a skills offer that meets the current and future needs of London employers.

WE CALL FOR...

Businesses to be supported so that they can play a fuller part in learning; for example by providing a wider range of high quality work experience, internships, apprenticeships, mentoring, careers information & advice to significantly more young Londoners; and a valuable input in the design and, where appropriate, delivery of a modern curriculum.

YPES will work with the London Enterprise Panel and other stakeholders to ensure that employer engagement in education becomes a prominent part of a coherent employer offer in London.

Young people should expect to exercise informed choices about their options, reach their potential and succeed

WE KNOW THAT...

- There is a clear consensus and strong support around an entitlement to high quality face-to-face careers guidance for all young people.
- Schools have gained a vital role in providing careers guidance and support to young people; local partners need to support their schools in providing young people with the very best careers information and guidance activities and ensure there is a sustained focus not just on attainment but on progression & destinations.

WE CALL FOR...

Every young person's aspirations and options to be informed by high quality and impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance delivered professionally and independently, with an entitlement to face-to-face careers guidance

YPES will work with the London Enterprise Panel and central government to define, fund and deliver a young person's entitlement to high quality careers information, advice and guidance.

Young people need to be better prepared, especially at 17 and 19, for progression to further and higher education, apprenticeships and employment

WE KNOW THAT...

- There are clear issues about participation, achievement and retention at 17; and transition and progression at 19 (and 25 for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities). There is still too much inequality in young people's attainment based on their background and progression has proved elusive for many young people.
- Individual study programmes will require learning providers to be ever more responsive to young people's needs to ensure sustained progression

outcomes, but also place a greater responsibility on young people for shaping their own education and skills journey.

WE CALL FOR...

Learning institutions, to work with other key partners locally and pan-London, so that young people can gain the skills and knowledge they need to compete successfully for places in further and higher education, or for apprenticeships and jobs to contribute to the competitiveness of London as a global city.

YPES will work with the London Enterprise Panel and the representatives of learning institutions to ensure that the needs and progression of young people remain paramount in the design, planning and delivery of learning provision in London.

Stakeholders should work collaboratively in the interests of young people

WE KNOW THAT...

- With increased freedom, it is more important than ever for institutions to work together in order to meet the needs of every young person.
- Vulnerable and disadvantaged young people in London in particular, will need us to deliver a coordinated approach to ensure they have an equal chance of success in an increasingly competitive world.

WE CALL FOR...

Key partners to work better together locally and London-wide in the interests of young people - for example through data sharing, identifying & disseminating effective practice and seeking opportunities for more effective links with regeneration/employment services/employers.

YPES will work with the London Enterprise Panel and other partners to facilitate the presentation of data that supports the accountability of learning institutions and will enable stakeholders to work together in the interests of young people, especially vulnerable young people.

There is broad agreement that the following priorities also need to be addressed. We call for stakeholders in young people's education and skills to work together to agree a programme of action in the following priority areas

Providing increased opportunities that help young people get on in life

Opportunities that give young people the learning, skills and confidence to achieve progress in a fast-paced world of economic challenge will need to include more than ever the skills for managing and adapting to change and coping with challenge - resilience, confidence and self-reliance - and should include volunteering, active citizenship and community action.

Promoting a spirit of enterprise and entrepreneurship

Some young people will have the drive and passion for self-employment; therefore, in close consultation with the London Enterprise Panel, we need to ensure that the curriculum offer contains entrepreneurship skills and that there are business support opportunities.

Using public investment in the best interests of young people

Despite the country's difficult economic conditions, public bodies are spending considerable amounts on services directed towards young people. In London more progress needs to be made to ensure this expenditure is being used to best effect, particularly through fully integrated commissioning that aligns resources and priorities to support all young people to succeed.

Developing new and more appropriate forms of partnership

A number of boroughs in London have introduced new forms of partnership that recognise new relationships with learning institutions and employers and the challenge of current economic conditions. Many of these emerging structures cut across traditional operating boundaries and enable discussion and decisions that are truly focused on the needs of young people as they transition to adulthood.

There is a need to develop a shared knowledge base in the following priority areas so that stakeholders can agree a shared programme of action:

Shaping a curriculum for a 21st Century economy

London needs a curriculum that explicitly promotes the skills and knowledge required for the future and better meets learner and employer needs. There needs to be a thorough debate among all stakeholders about how we collectively inform and influence the nature of this curriculum and its effective distribution in London.

Strengthening vocational education in the capital

The drive towards full participation to age 18 (by 2015) is an important milestone in ensuring the success of all young Londoners, but it is learners' achievements and progression that are the benchmarks for judging the success of education and training in the capital. In the context of continuing reforms to the education system centrally, further work is needed to help us collectively to strengthen vocational education and improve progression.

Delivering learning that supports and enables all young people to succeed

There is growing evidence that many 'average' performing young people are at risk of losing support as attention is becoming increasingly focused on vulnerable young people. We need to work collectively to ensure that all young people benefit from our strategies.

Finally, the consultation confirmed that the following critical issues need to continue to be addressed by learning institutions and government:

- Ensuring excellent teaching that inspires and enables young people to succeed
- Creating a system that is committed to excellence and where leadership drives young peoples' success
- Investing in a learning environment that is fit for the 21st century and is resourced to enable young people to succeed

Our call to action!

Implementing the full scale of reforms in education and training, making them work in the interests of young people, reaching full participation and achieving better outcomes for London cannot be achieved by one organisation or type of organisation alone. These fundamental changes require everybody with a stake in the education and training system in the capital to work better and work together differently.

We propose that London should **'Be The Best'** and we are confident that this is a goal to which the sector in London does and should aspire.

This is an exciting time to be working in the education and skills of young people in London. New responsibilities, new relationships and new ways of working are becoming embedded. Whilst facing unprecedented economic challenges, London continues to offer tremendous opportunities to young people; such as the legacy of the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games, the significant number of regeneration projects such as Crossrail and the huge number of retail, housing and regeneration developments that are taking place across London.

Taking into account the challenges and opportunities the sector faces in London, we are calling for action to achieve the ambition to **be the best**.

We have set out the priorities for education and skills in London as we drive forward towards full participation and improved achievement and progression for young people. We want everyone involved in education to become engaged with these priorities so that we can work together and young Londoners can **be the best**.

London's immediate priorities are:

- London's education and learning institutions and the business community should work better together to enable more young people to succeed
- Young people should expect to exercise informed choices about their options, reach their potential and succeed
- Young people need to be better prepared, especially at 17 and 19, for progression to further and higher education, apprenticeships and employment
- Stakeholders should work collaboratively in the interests of young people



Next Steps

We shall be publishing the 2013/14 Annual Statement of Priorities for London in the autumn term of 2012. The priorities will be based on this document and the further work of our key strategic partners and our academic and research partners.

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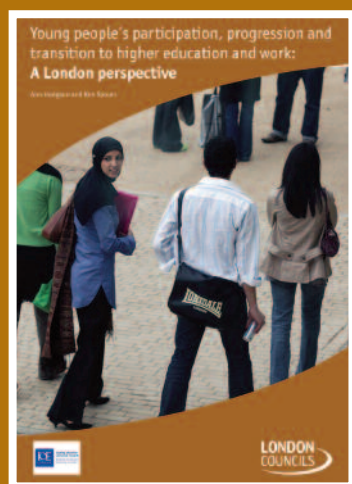
Twitter

<http://twitter.com/#1/londoncouncils>

(If you are 14-19 you can follow us on Twitter and have your say @learnervoice19 or follow the Learner Voice blog on <http://learnervoice19.org.uk>)

Find out more about our work on our webpage:

www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/policylobbying/children/education14to19



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