



Skills, Employers and ESD

Judith Cohen

Programme Manager

Development Programme for Train to Gain

Why develop skills?

- **To maximise growth, productivity and social justice**
- **Poor levels of skills in the current workforce hinder this aim**
- **Challenges of the global economy**
- **Skills are seen as a key determinant of employment and economic security**

Policy context

- **Skills Strategy – *demand-led system***
- **Support for success – *Improving quality of supply***
- **Foster – *mission differentiation***
- **Leitch – *increasing adult skills***
- **Skills for Life – *increasing the baseline of basic skills***
- **Framework for excellence – *7 key performance areas, including responsiveness***
- **Standards for employer responsiveness – *accreditation for employer responsive provision***

The FE system is crucial to skills development

- **Heightened importance of FE system in skills development to support the economy**
- **Huge scale of change needed to meet government ambitions**
- **Responsive, demand led culture must move centre stage**
- **Employer focussed provision requires fundamental change – in provision, its delivery and management, image, culture and ethos**

Why engage employers?

- **A range of reasons:**
- **To secure their influence and interest in post 16 learning and workforce development**
- **To encourage individuals/employees to participate in learning**
- **To increase their 'buy-in' to learning and demand for skills**
- **To support their competitiveness and productivity**
- **To help them cope with changing needs**

What is on the skills agenda?

- Diplomas
- Apprenticeships
- Train to Gain – aka Demand led
- Skills accounts
- Skills pledge
- National skills academies
- Sector skills councils
- Skills advisors
- Pathways from JCP/unemployment
- Unionlearn

Embedding and maximising ESD



- Working with SSCs – important role in many aspects of the skills agenda. Develop our approach for priorities and methodologies
- Working with employers to *lead the demand* for SD skills
- Working with unionlearn – creating a demand within the workforce

Not just new vocational skills



- Our strategy will focus on vocational (or sector specific) AND the wider skills that include critical and analytic thinking, managing and responding to change, decision making, understanding the local and global contexts – exploiting joined up projects like sustainable growth parks and ‘cardboard to caviar’!
- Winning advocates amongst employers by demonstrating the impact on their bottom line



Local/regional context

- Sub national review
- Redirection of funding to LAs
- Regional Skills Partnerships
- Regeneration projects/social enterprise



Contact details

Judith Cohen
Programme Manager
Learning and Skills Network
19-25 Argyll St
London W1F 7LS
020 7297 9070
07867557837
jcohen@lsneducation.org.uk