

Title of Action Plan being assessed	Proportion of population aged 19-54 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at least Level 2 or higher (NI163) Level 3 or higher (NI164) Level 4 or higher (NI165)
LAA indicator	NI163-165
Name of person completing this assessment	Louise Aitken
Contact Telephone Number	01245 435125
Date	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2010
Which Partners are involved?	National Apprenticeship Service, Skills Funding Agency, local providers, local colleges, local schools, East of England Development Agency (EEDA) (ECC – IYS Connexions, SCF, ACL)

### 1. What are the aims and objectives of this Action Plan?

- Increase skills levels in Essex
- Close the gap between Essex and the region / England skills levels
- Increase the number and range of apprenticeships on offer in Essex in both the public and private sector (also helping to reduce NEET numbers)
- Ensure that lower level skills needs are addressed through pre-apprenticeship and similar programmes at level 1
- Address the disparity in skills levels across different districts in Essex
- Address skills needs of unemployed and employed adults

### 2. What are the steps used to deliver the Action Plan?

- Work with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), employers and local providers to broaden the apprenticeship offer.
- Bring in additional funding (i.e. NAS, EEDA, ESF, PRG) to deliver proposed aims
- Work collaboratively with districts to address local needs

### 3a. Think carefully about each of the equality groups below in turn. Could the Action Plan have a negative or positive effect on people in the group? Tick any group that could be positively affected, and put a cross against any group that could be negatively affected. Some groups can have both a tick and a cross.

√	Race and Culture	√	Disability
x	Age	√	Gender
?	Sexual Orientation	?	Religion and Belief
√	Rural Isolation	√	Economic Deprivation

**3b. Describe any positive or negative issues that you think are relevant under each equality strand. If you identify an issue that substantially affects a particular group, and might stop them benefiting, state what changes you will make to the Action Plan.**

**Race & Culture**

**Issues:**

The external funding we have secured for many of our programmes (i.e. ESF funding for engineering apprenticeships, Economic Participation funding for pre-apprenticeship programmes such as Personal Best) requires us to ensure that we collect on the ethnicity of individuals participating. This enables us to monitor the participation rates of different ethnic groups and therefore look at where promotion needs to be increased to particular groups.

**Changes to Action Plan:**

The action plan might consider how to support Gypsies & Travellers to gain qualifications as they are the most deprived group in this area and our largest ethnic minority. It's a priority area for Essex that GO and the Audit Commission are focussing on

**Age**

**Issues:**

Most apprenticeships are only fully funded up to the age of 18 so it is not always possible to offer fully funded places to 19+ year olds. 19-25 year olds generally receive 50% funding but 25+ year olds usually have to gain 100% funding from an employer.

**Changes to Action Plan:** the age restrictions to apprenticeships outlined above are national so it will not be possible to change these. However in seeking additional funding for apprenticeships, we will look at adult apprenticeship funding / provision.

**Disability**

**Issues:**

As above, the funding streams we are accessing require us to collect information on disability with regard to individuals participating. This enables us to monitor the participation rates of people with disabilities and therefore look at where promotion needs to be increased.

**Changes to Action Plan:**

**Religion and Belief**

**Issues:** no information available to inform any issues that may arise

**Changes to Action Plan:**

**Gender**

**Issues:**

As above, the funding streams we are accessing require us to collect information on gender with regard to individuals participating. This enables us to monitor the participation rates of people in terms of their gender. Where males / females are under-represented we look at addressing this. We have found for example that females tend to be under-represented on our engineering apprenticeship programme so we would seek to address this.

**Changes to Action Plan:**

**Sexual Orientation**

**Issues:** no information available to inform any issues that may arise

**Changes to Action Plan:**

**Rural Isolation**

**Issues:**

**We are ensuring that our apprenticeship programmes are offered in many geographical areas across the county. For programmes such as marine apprenticeships, this includes rural areas. Additionally, with our pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programmes we have assisted learners with transport (i.e. taxis, bus passes) to ensure that accessibility is not a barrier and that learners can access programmes. Additionally many of our programmes are designed specifically for disadvantaged groups (i.e. care leavers, young offenders) and those likely to be isolated.**

**Changes to Action Plan:**

**Economic Deprivation**

**Issues:**

**In developing programmes, we have looked at geographies that have particular issues such as high NEET levels. These are often the same areas with high unemployment rates and economic deprivation. To this end, we have targeted some our support specifically at those areas. Such findings have led us to develop funding assistance to companies in taking on apprentices (from the NEET group) in Basildon, Tendring, Colchester and Braintree. Added to this is our support as described above to disadvantaged groups.**

**Changes to Action Plan:**

**4. What equality statistics or other evidence from public engagement do you need to help you test your initial conclusions in Section 1?**

**What statistics or reports already exist – nationally or locally?**

**What else do you need to know – what are the gaps?**

**How will you collect this evidence? If you feel that particular organisations or community/voluntary groups will be able to help you please list these too.**

**STATISTICS**

What evidence do you want?	Where is it available?	How will you use the evidence?
	<p>We are already able to access quite a lot of information in terms of skills and employment data by age, ethnicity, gender, disability. We have access to this and Louise Aitken is an 'information provider' to the Diversity and Equality team. Information is available on <a href="http://www.nomisweb.co.uk">www.nomisweb.co.uk</a></p>	<p>We will use this information to inform our knowledge about the cohorts we are helping through our various programmes.</p>

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

What do you want to know?	What questions will you ask?	Who are you going to ask?	Name of planned source (if known)	What will you do with the answer?

Please submit this form to [jan.plummer@essex.gov.uk](mailto:jan.plummer@essex.gov.uk)