

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009



Responding to the recession – regional and local responses

Seminar report

1. This was the second seminar in the current series that is looking at the role of FE and skills providers in supporting efforts to address the current recession and to prepare the workforce for the upturn. The series aims to support the FE and skills sector to respond effectively to the recession, weaving the initiatives and policies from across government into a strategic approach at the institutional level. The first seminar examined the policies of the key national government departments and discussed those in the light of the experience of the front-line¹.
2. The aims of the second seminar were to:
 - develop our understanding of how regional and local anti-recession strategies are shaped and implemented and how they take account of and relate to local, regional and national government policy and policy-making processes;
 - contribute to the latest thinking on the operational and functional design of the new Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to ensure that it will maximize the capacity of providers to address the learning and skills demands of the recession at local, regional and national level, and;
 - consider how FE and skills providers can engage appropriately within these structures and mechanisms to establish coherent strategies at the organizational level to make their full contribution to addressing the recession.
3. This report presents:
 - headline messages from the discussion, and;
 - a summary of the keynote presentations.

¹ A report of the first seminar can be found here
<http://www.lsis.org.uk/PolicyServices/Discussion/SeminarSeries/LSSandtheEconomicCrisis.aspx>

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

Headline messages

We need fewer initiatives, and more co-ordination

4. Currently the Government's anti-recession policies are delivered through various agencies at the local, regional and national level, resulting in multiple programmes which often appear to be competing at each level. The result can be confusion and wasted effort by providers, as programmes target the same groups of jobless or disadvantaged people. At the same time, some programmes that are designed and administered nationally or regionally are often not well-suited to local needs. For example, seven out of Greater Manchester's 10 local authorities compete with Jobcentre Plus and the LSC by offering their own unemployment programmes, because they don't feel the national-level programmes will solve local labour market problems.
5. The range of initiatives also creates a multiplicity of budgets, often devoted to a single, narrow purpose. When they have separate budget streams and accountability arrangements, it is very difficult for providers or local partnerships to aggregate funds and form coherent economic and social strategies for the community or sub-region. This makes it difficult to adequately fund any broadly-based project, and forces partnerships into time-consuming campaigns to gather the necessary funds from all the available spigots. This undercuts the efforts of local partnerships.
6. Coherence at the local level could be assisted by a more integrated strategy at national level across ministries, avoiding proliferation of initiatives and budgets. However, the 'stove-pipe' phenomenon that operates in the central government is unhelpful here. Ministers are held to account for 'their' departments, not for the Government as a whole² (except, perhaps, for the prime minister). This means that there is no coherent political strategy across Government. Equally, incentives for civil servants to develop and prioritise cross-departmental strategy are not strong.
7. The constraints of funding and accountability also make it difficult to take real advantage of ICT and the flexibilities and efficiencies that it can offer. Despite evidence from research about the benefits, it is more difficult to find appetite for risk-taking, experimentation and innovation. Yet the recession requires new approaches and the anticipated restraints on public funding will make them increasingly important.

² However it should be noted that a number of ministers have cross-departmental responsibilities in the recent reshuffle – for example, Rosie Winterton works to both CLG and DBIS; Kevin Brennan works to DBIS and DCSF.

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

Local strategies should be a stronger driving force

8. Many participants felt that local actors should come together to provide leadership and shape policy in their areas. Because the system is fragmented between national, regional and local programmes a coalition is needed locally to 'knit' these programmes and budgets together into a coherent economic and social strategy. Local partnerships should be more ambitious than simply aggregating resources: instead, they should *'progress to create local strategies that can be sold to government, rather than managing Government disorganisation locally'*.
9. Juggling multiple funding streams requires great effort for relatively little benefit, it was argued. In a related vein, one participant said that *'we need more scope for local initiatives that may contribute to national targets or other goals'*. Funding now is too constricted for this, and doesn't meet targets or learner needs.
10. Although participants felt that there was too much vertical accountability, from the centre, it looks different. It was noted that Tony Blair complained that the initiatives he launched *'turned to mush'* before they got to the front line - unless local areas take ownership and make sense of central initiatives they can lack coherence. Although ministers are (relatively) easily held accountable to Parliament, it is much more difficult for ministers to superintend hundreds of initiatives and hundreds of thousands of front-line workers and managers.

We need horizontal **and** vertical accountability

11. To implement effective anti-recession strategies at the local level, we need *'horizontal accountability'*, through bodies that jointly can establish legitimacy and take broad responsibility for delivering locally agreed priorities, and with the freed-up headroom in national funding and accountability to do so. These could be based on devolved arrangements such as in London, Scotland and Wales, and could be based on programmes that can be *'sold'* to the central government, in similar mode to Local Area Agreements. This would allow responsiveness to the locality whilst retaining a means for central government departmental priorities to be addressed.
12. However, the proliferation of initiatives described above undercuts plans to extend local innovation and accountability. With programmes answering to so many masters at all levels of administration, there can be little *'horizontal accountability'*.
13. While there was agreement about the need for rationalising programmes and delivery mechanisms at the local level in some way, there was no clear consensus on what structures should be developed. If the central government does devolve power, to whom would it go? The necessary institutions are still under development. Some wondered if the resulting bodies would look like the Greater London Authority or the devolved administrations. Others said they would be *'statutory boards handling regional issues'*. One attendee expressed concern that devolution could theoretically cost more, by duplicating management tiers and bureaucracy rather than redistributing it.

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

14. This may reflect the diversity of local environments and the need to respect and work with local legacies and take account of existing relationships and traditions in order to be able to move forward with authority. Human relationships are pivotal to the success of local communities - elegant structural arrangements can only take us part of the way, and new centrally-imposed ones can in fact get in the way.
15. Thus while there was general dissatisfaction with the interplay of arrangements at local, regional and national levels, there were no easy solutions or detailed consensus about how arrangements should develop, nor about how existing tensions could be resolved in the short-term. However, it was generally agreed that for optimum effectiveness, both the objective and subjective conditions need to be in place – logical structures and funding and the right human commitment and engagement.

People *and* structures matter

16. While there was agreement on the need for more headroom to respond to the locality, there were different views about the extent to which this would only be achieved through formal structures and about the scale of change that could be achieved through professional action and in spite of the structures.
17. New structures that enable alignment and integration of national policy and local priorities in the locality do not appear to be an immediate option. The immediate solution lies primarily with the *'creative and agile knitters'* the professionals who make existing systems work through lateral steerage and leadership, establishing legitimacy for action through good relationships, consensus and shared vision within their localities, rather than through formal authority. *'Vibrancy in people and communities is not found in systems and structures... People will find the solution...'* it was argued.
18. Even where rational formal structures exist, we did not express total confidence in these on their own – the Employment and Skills Board (ESB) in London has formal powers but has become less influential as people and commitments have changed, it was argued. The human factor can make or break formal structures. Therefore our discussions raised substantial issues about how legitimacy for action is established. This may derive from some kind of formal democratic mandate but may also be based on a local consensus or proposition endorsed by key players in the locality, which binds and steers local energy and creates a sense of shared endeavour.

Subsidiarity

19. Some participants stressed the importance of doing things at the appropriate level of administration (a principle sometimes referred to, especially by the European Union, as *'subsidiarity'*, which can also mean doing things at the level of government nearest the people). Participants stressed in particular that regional authorities should only do those things best handled by a regional-level entity.

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

We need appropriate targets and a shared view of success

20. The current set of targets and indicators may not be suited to a fight against unemployment, or to a system based on demand. This really matters in a system which arguably has become *target-responsive* rather than *learner-responsive*. Some felt that targets derived from the existing Public Service Agreements (PSAs), which pre-date the recession, are too narrow, and that they might be re-oriented around broad outcomes – such as *'sustainable employment'* – rather than narrow and easily measured outcomes.
21. Currently it was argued that there is no common view across government about what constitutes success – is it job attainment or skills attainment for example? This *'schizophrenia is reflected down the system'* it was suggested. Another participant asked if there is a two-stage approach - *'jobs first, skills later'*. Jobcentre Plus seems to lean towards this policy, some said, despite the commitment to sustainable employment and progression. However, we do want both...
22. Others noted that we use qualifications as a proxy for skills. This is a shaky proposition at best – one delegate suggested that many of the people who obtain qualifications on Train to Gain already have the skills required, and are merely getting those skills formally accredited. Some said that the metrics measured what could *'be improved quickly'*, and not actual improvement in skills levels. One participant noted that learners' ideas of success often have little to do with attaining qualifications.

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The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

Keynote presentations

Mike Emmerich, Chief Executive, Commission for the New Economy

23. Mike began with a brief explanation of what his commission is and how it came to be. The Commission for the New Economy is a joint board established by the 10 local authorities of the Greater Manchester area³. It grew out of an earlier body called Manchester Enterprises. The commission is responsible for the area development strategy, the Greater Manchester Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) and negotiations with the central government on the area's city-region status.
24. The commission, Mike notes, is not a statutory body, though it may gain statutory footing under new legislation. At present, it is a wholly voluntary body created by the region's local authorities on their own initiative. As such, it is unique in England, the RDAs and London Development Agency (LDA) being established by law.
25. Mike then turned to Government anti-recession spending and policy. He said the Government has '*turned the taps on big time*', with large-scale interventions in monetary and fiscal policy (the latter a form of Keynesian economic theory). The response to this has been positive, and has had the effect of ameliorating the effects of the recession to some extent. '*But I'm not sanguine about the future*', Mike said, though he stressed this wasn't because he felt the Government's response was flawed. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Government's stimuli are having an effect.

Instead, Mike's pessimism stems from his doubts about the '*architecture*' of the national system, which he said was '*in deep, deep trouble*'.

26. Manchester, to a degree greater than other parts of the nation, benefitted from record economic growth between the end of the recession of the early 1990s and 2008. One-twentieth of money spent in the UK is spent in Greater Manchester. However, even after more than a decade of expansion, Greater Manchester still had 200,000 claiming out of work benefits and 400,000 who lacked basic skills⁴, despite being an economic success story. Nor did the city make any headway in closing the income gap between itself and the South East of England.

³ City of Manchester, Stockport, Tameside, Oldham, Rochdale, Bury, Bolton, Wigan, City of Salford, and Trafford

⁴ The population of Greater Manchester was 2,562,200 in 2007.

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

27. The commission's response to these structural faults in the labour market was to set up the Manchester Independent Economic Review⁵, at a cost of £1.25 million. The review, led by an independent board chaired by Sir Tom McKillop, mapped Manchester's economic future and its economic relations with surrounding areas. It concluded that the city-region was the key to driving growth in the North of England and in the UK too. But it also concluded that the region faced policy choices, perhaps being too focused on building new infrastructure, and not enough on early years education and skills (including high-level skills).
28. To maximise the economic opportunity, a number of policy and governance reforms need to be made, Mike said. The current system was characterised by duplication between local authorities, regional administration and the national government and a proliferation of budgets and targets across all three areas.
29. Mike called for a focus on *'place'*, how strategy at all levels can achieve sustainable growth. His place, of course, is a large metropolitan area, and he noted that large cities provide certain economies of scale, through *'agglomeration'* and the creation of a *'critical mass'*. Larger cities are more competitive, and as long as they can cope effectively with the consequences of urban growth, they can grow almost indefinitely. Funding models should take this phenomenon into account. Because the economics suggests that the way we allocate funds (outside London) spreads resource so evenly we don't exploit our potential growth nodes whilst we don't tackle deprivation as well as we need to.
30. In the same vein, Mike called for an end to strict per capita funding. Cities and metropolises are more likely to drive national economic growth whilst also containing the largest concentrations of need.
31. The national government does possess many organisational strengths. Despite the recent expenses scandal, British government is notably clean and uncorrupted, especially in comparison to other states. There is a clear focus on delivery by each department, and ministers are held strictly to account by Parliament for the workings of their specific department (though not for those of government as a whole).
32. Mike noted that no serious problem is *'mono-causal'* – instead, they all have many causes. To meet these problems, there must be more *'horizontal accountability'* within a local area – *'a devolved, accountable, legal body with overall responsibility for an area'*. There must be a rebalancing of responsibility between national and local. Devolution might take a shape similar to the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and London, which would receive block grants from central government and then devise their own budgets. What may be different is the need for accountability for outcomes to central government.

⁵ Read it at: <http://www.manchester-review.org.uk/download/?id=642>

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

33. However, devolution is not always possible or desirable in every area, as many localities lack the capacity to take on that level of self-governance. As Chris Humphries, chief executive of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES), suggested in his analysis, devolution should be adopted in phases across the country, and we should work to build capacity for self-government in those areas which currently lack it.
34. Although a uniform national policy makes sense in many policy areas (defence, industrial subsidies, monetary policy and so on), it is not helpful to draft skills and employment policy in this way. Regions may have similar skills and employment goals, but they start from different bases and require different interventions. There's no working national system that takes account of these disparities, while local innovation can add value and deal with these problems more effectively.
35. People often try to work to local and national mandates but when, as when recession hits, there are conflicting priorities (even just time priorities). In such cases, the most important will win - ie where accountability lies – usually national. This then creates the 'silo' effect so often noted by those in public policy. The central government is not designed to be joined up at the local level. Lots of positive joint working goes on, diligent public servants working at the margins of their briefs. But this isn't really an adequate response to a quite serious design issue.
36. In tackling recession, the existing regional architecture doesn't seem to play cities into the debate. The regional Joint Economic Councils, under the regional ministers, don't share minutes, let alone agendas. There are also regional skills and employment boards whose relationships with Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are unclear. Jobcentre Plus and the LSC also don't work well together – eg there are still real problems of cross referrals, and regional skills and employment pilots - though welcome - don't go far enough to meet local needs.
37. As a result of this, Councils continue to invest in skills and employment to compensate for perceived failures. Sometimes, more often than is desirable, this investment confuses an already complicated system.
38. At present, the local arms of national and regional institutions are not set up to promote horizontal accountability. No one is accountable for economic and social services at the local level. Despite the best efforts of dedicated public servants in every agency, the results are duplication and service gaps and such a system '*will not survive the coming fiscal contraction*'. So, where there is the capacity to do so – such as in Manchester - local institutions should be strengthened so that they can exercise this sort of oversight. The introduction of these new structures should be in phases, with areas being given more autonomy and authority when ready.

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

39. The recession risks forcing the Government to divert resources away from the long-term unemployed (those suffering '*worklessness*', according to the 2007 Freud Report) to the newly redundant. More support needs to be provided to long-term unemployed, and regional strategy should shift from backing infrastructure projects to investing in human capital. Mike is optimistic about the Future Jobs Fund, which provides jobs or job-like activities for young people who have been unemployed for a year or more
40. Mike said that Manchester's institutional history rendered the role of colleges rather '*problematic*'. The legacy of the old Manchester Enterprises seemed to be associated with a '*history of mutual suspicion*' damaging relations between them and the new Greater Manchester governance architecture. Sir Bill Moorcroft, principal of Trafford College is on the Commission Board, which is helping to establish new and effective local relationships, and create a coherent approach and strategy which includes the LSC.

Paul Holme, Economic Response Director, LSC

41. Paul began by explaining his own role in the LSC. In addition to his work on the economic crisis, Paul is also director for skills, including Train to Gain, the Sector Skills Councils and apprenticeships. He also works in the North West region of England, and has worked in Greater Merseyside and Cumbria. He has been with the LSC since it was first created in 2001.
42. He also told the seminar to keep young people in mind in their planning, though he said he would not go into detail on this point.
43. Paul said that the LSC was pursuing three strategies:
 - working with employers to keep them involved in training their staff;
 - dealing with the expanding numbers of newly unemployed and long-term unemployed, and;
 - expanding apprenticeships, especially for those aged 16 to 18.
44. Paul said there were '*important spatial issues*'. At the national level, policies, targets, management information and indicators must be fit for purpose. Regional partnerships should be formed to deal with matters (and only those matters) best dealt with at that level. The definition of '*place*', Paul noted, may vary depending on the issue being addressed.
45. Train to Gain is '*employer responsive*'. The programme has previously suffered from low take-up, but demand is increasing, and colleges have become more responsive. The increased flexibilities introduced into the funding requirements have also encouraged more employers to use the programme.

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

46. How do we prioritise public spending when the money gets tight? Should providers decide? National bodies? Regional bodies? Employment and Skills Boards? How and where do we integrate employment and skills? Increased unemployment will require strong regional and local responses, as unemployment rates and the demographic profile of the jobless varies across the country.
47. The LSC is pursuing a three-pronged strategy to counter unemployment, focusing on:
 - increased support for the newly unemployed;
 - programmes for those who have been out of work for six months, and;
 - programmes aimed at people aged 18 to 24 who have been unemployed for a year⁶.
48. The budgets available are small compared to the overall further education budget. We must also utilise the adult learner response budget to support progression back into work.
49. In future, the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) will as well as being a national body will be responsive to local needs and priorities.
50. Paul asked if funding and planning should be more '*nuanced*' in order to prioritise certain activities and meet future demand. The system must deliver '*sectoral and regional agendas*'.

Bobbie McClelland, Deputy Director, Skills Funding Agency transition directorate, DBIS

51. Bobbie's presentation focused on the role of the Skills Funding Agency in the new post-19 system, and was accompanied by a series of explanatory slides.
52. Bobbie stated that the Skills Funding Agency will be focused on employers and learners, and would be demand led, which she defined as '*responsive to the needs of learners and employers*'. It will '*fund, not plan*', and encourage providers to be responsive. Its core principle is about delivering '*coherence and choice for employers and learners*'
53. The Skills Funding Agency will house the National Apprenticeship Service and manage Train to Gain, the Adult Advancement and Careers Service and learner services delivered through colleges and providers. She added that in designing the Skills Funding Agency, the opportunity had been taken to ensure any overlaps or duplication were removed such as with the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) and LSIS.

⁶ This reflects the overall strategy adopted by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) – see David Shaw's presentation on this in the report of the first seminar here

http://www.lsis.org.uk/Libraries/Policy/DWP_LSSandtheEconomicCrisis.sflb

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

54. Sub-nationally, the Skills Funding Agency will work to support the demand side at the regional level and sub regional level to ensure demand is identified. To assist this, work is currently underway to agree protocols on how the Skills Funding Agency will work with the UKCES, RDAs, employment and skills boards and Jobcentre Plus. On the supply side, the Skills Funding Agency will have responsibility for ensuring that the system has the capacity to support development in areas of strategic importance to the economy; reflecting the drive on skills activism. In doing so, it will work with self organised skills networks of colleges and providers who come together collaboratively to respond to demand.
55. The Skills Funding Agency services will be underpinned by a national approach to managing relations with each college and provider, with a single account manager for each institution/provider. The Skills Funding Agency will also house a new Information Systems unit which will be responsible for delivering cross sector services, including for example the FE Data Service, which will streamline data collection from colleges and FE providers and organise appropriate exchange of data with local authorities.
56. The Skills Funding Agency will become operational in April 2010. The LSC is currently going through a matching process (in line with TUPE) to determine which of its staff will be transferred to the Skills Funding Agency, which to the pre-19 agency (the Young People's Learning Agency), and which to local authorities. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill establishing the Skills Funding Agency is currently before the House of Lords, and its final passage is expected in the autumn.
57. An investment strategy will be published in autumn 2009 which will deal with the funding system for 2010/11.

Christina Conroy OBE, Principal, Richmond Adult Community College

58. Christina began by saying she had spent most of her career in Outer London and the Home Counties, and has been in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames for about nine years.
59. Richmond is home to about 180,000 people. The public sector is poorly funded relative to other Local Authorities, and thus the state support is very limited. This lack of resources also hinders other public bodies like the NHS trust and the housing authority. Richmond's economic development policy called *Vibrant and Prosperous* has effectively been pre-empted by the recession.
60. Partnership is vital in Richmond, because no one actor can do much on its own. The local authorities lack funding, and colleges are tied into restrictive budgets. Thus, pooling resources is imperative. There is a '*real job for colleges*' in developing a horizontal leadership strategy.

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

61. An economic analysis of Richmond found that 60 percent of local jobs were in '*high-risk industries*', such as finance. Unemployment has tripled. There are now only 300 job vacancies in the borough, while 500 graduates are set to return. The increase in short-term unemployed is overwhelming the system. The Government's job advice for graduates is rather unimpressive, Christina added.
62. Richmond has an '*architecture for prosperity, not recession*'. Jobcentre Plus is trained to deal with the long-term unemployed, often people without skills or with serious health problems. It is not set up to handle highly-skilled professionals who have been recently made redundant, and does not always provide such people proper support. There also needs to be more provision to support enterprise.
63. The economy and the public sector will look very different in the next few years. Employment rates do not improve as quickly as the economy as a whole – after the recession of the early 1980s, employment rates did not return to their pre-recession level before the next recession in the early '90s – indeed, a full recovery in employment did not occur until 1997.
64. The public sector, too, will be very different. A large portion of its functions will be delivered by the third sector, and the public sector must learn to manage third-sector providers. There will also be an increased emphasis on place and localism, focused on a '*quality of life agenda*', and the public sector will have to learn to support this.
65. A major problem facing local partners in Richmond is the multiplicity of initiatives. Richmond partners mapped the funding streams in the borough, finding 10 different types of initiative, which often '*trip over each other*'. It requires enormous effort to link together funding streams. We should '*capacity-build local areas*' to manage joint projects and aggregate funding so it can be used effectively.
66. A key priority for Richmond is promoting entrepreneurship. So for example, teachers of cake decorating are helping learners to become self-employed or start an enterprise. They are acting with a clear sense of their purpose in the community. They must have the flexibility to respond effectively to the changing local demands and act in pursuit of broad policy outcomes such as sustainable employment. Such flexibility and clarity of purpose at the front-line is especially vital during recession.

Alison Kaye, Director, Work Based Learning Alliance

67. Alison represents a regional network of work-based learning providers, including colleges, private companies and third-sector providers. It works with the LSC, Jobcentre Plus, London Councils (the umbrella body for the 32 London boroughs), the individual London boroughs and other partners.
68. How do we align demand and supply in an integrated service, in a model now running on an austerity basis? At the moment, many aspects of this system remain undeveloped, or do not operate in an effective way.

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

69. Alison gave the example of a programme aimed at getting the newly unemployed back into, or at least *'close to'*, the labour market. Providers are judged according to how many people they get back into work. However, the job must be tied to a Level 2 NVQ. This is a *'real stumbling block'* – the provider simply doesn't get paid for an outcome where a person gets into a job, but lacks this qualification. In another case, the LSC commissions a programme, but Jobcentre Plus determines who is eligible, meaning providers have to persuade Jobcentre Plus assessors to send applicants onto an external programme.
70. How do policy funding guidelines drive programmes? What programmes do we actually need? What is the role of the Mayor of London and the London Skills and Employment Board? There is a need for these regional bodies in London to play a key strategic role informed by knowledge of skills needs and gaps including up to date labour market intelligence, and the demand for skills and the supply of labour. We need awareness of skills, employment, social needs, and labour markets. We need to know what skills and apprentices are needed where, and how London's *'global mission'* creates jobs.
71. Alison stressed that providers need to develop *'evidence-based policy'*, for central and regional govt to base policy on evidence, and to work more closely with providers in developing policy. This is a practice they had once been adept at but which has since declined.
72. *'Funding is driving the current raft of programmes'*, rather than individuals' needs or skills needs. Regionally the LSC, Jobcentre Plus and London Development Agency are now working more closely together but continuity is lost between the regionally strategic commissioning and the actual operational delivery. Because there are so many programmes and initiatives, there *'is a high risk of double funding'*. Stringent rules keep many benefits recipients out of training.
73. The demand-led approach poses problems when dealing with the unemployed. If providers only respond to employer needs, then they run the risk of not meeting the requirements of the jobless. Practically speaking, there is little learner choice in the system, and provision is very fragmented. Providers who can offer a route into employment can offer more choices, and better meet individual needs. Alison added that providers should prepare to receive more unemployed high-skilled professionals, and that many of these people might be re-trained to take jobs in the FE and skills sector itself (as assessors, for example). However, we need more information about the new unemployed. The unemployed group is now broader than the long-term unemployed – a more heterogeneous group – and this needs to inform practice (for example to avoid the outcome of a job with a level 2 NVQ qualification attached referred to above).
74. Finally, Alison asked how providers can assess returns on investment and measure outcomes. By sector? By region? We need more models of partnership and collaboration between institutions, and we should study our existing networks and the relationships between work-based learning providers and Jobcentre Plus. She noted that larger contractors on Jobcentre Plus projects will need the local expertise of smaller providers/subcontractors.

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

Seminar participants

Seminar chair:

Simon Jack, business news presenter, BBC

Keynote speakers:

Mike Emmerich, Chief Executive, Commission for the New Economy

Paul Holme, Economic Response Director, LSC

Bobbie McClelland, Deputy Director, Skills Funding Agency transition directorate, DIUS

Christina Conroy OBE, Principal, Richmond Adult Community College, and member, LSIS Council

Alison Kaye, Director, Work Based Learning Alliance

Participant	Job title	Organisation
Liz Aitken	Programme Director	LSIS
Ian Ashman	Principal	Hackney Community College
Jon Bennett		Department for Communities and Local Government
Julia Bennett	Policy Manager	Improvement and Development Agency
Keith Brooker	Board Member	LSIS
Nadine Cartner	Head of Policy	Association of College Managers
Richard Chambers	Principal	Lambeth College
Garth Clucas HMI	Assistant Divisional Manager	Ofsted
Peter Davies	Principal	City Lit
Michael Davis	Director of Strategy and Performance	UK Commission for Employment and Skills

The learning and skills sector and the economic crisis – stepping up to the mark

Seminar two – 2 June 2009

Toni Fazaeli	Chief Executive	Institute for Learning
Kevin Ford	Chief Executive	FPM Training
Peter Grigg	Head of Policy and Research	Make Your Mark
Karen Grist	Deputy Principal	NYCPE
Chris Hughes CBE	Chair	Learning and Skills Network
Chris Jeffery	Managing Director	Academy of Training
Caroline Mager	Executive Director, Policy and Strategic Intelligence	LSIS
Beth Maloney	Director of Policy, Research and Strategy	Oaklands College
Ben Margulies	Policy Research Officer	LSIS
Stella Mbubaegbu CBE	Principal	Highbury College
Anna Nsubuga	Policy Advisor, Business and Skills Directorate	DIUS
Aidan Relf	Communications Advisor	Association of Learning Providers
Ann Robinson OBE	Board Member	LSIS
Brenda Sheils	Principal	Solihull College
Jonathan Todd	Consultant	Europe Economics
Alan Tuckett	Chief Executive	NIACE
Christine Tyler	College Specialist	Association of School and College Leaders
Jane Williams	Executive Director for FE, Skills and Regeneration	Becta
Andy Wilson	Principal	Westminster Kingsway College
Paul Wright-Anderson	Audit Manager	National Audit Office