

Leeds City Region  
**Skills Network**



**Aligning Skills for Growth**

**Annual Conference June 2015**

**LEP** LEEDS CITY REGION  
ENTERPRISE  
PARTNERSHIP

## Summary of feedback

We've captured a selection of highlights from the conference within this report to give you a flavour of keys messages and hope you find the information useful. In addition, you can access full presentations from each of our guest speakers online.

*Excellent event...the best yet!*

*Very well constructed and organised*

*Biggest and best conference so far!*

*Well done for yet another successful event*

*A very good event with good speakers and good discussion*



*Excellent presentations and content, very informative—thank you!*

*Congratulations on such a great event, found it interesting and useful*

*Really good to see momentum building on the topic of skills in public from respected figures*

*Excellent attendance, engagement and positivity despite the enormous challenges facing the sector*

**97%**

Rated the networking opportunities good or excellent

**98%**

Rated the venue good or excellent

**100%**

Welcomed the format of the event



**All speakers rated as good or excellent**

**Over 100 delegates in attendance**

**9.4k**

People viewed our Tweets

## Presentations & Headline Information

### Unlocking Potential, Accelerating Growth

#### Roger Marsh OBE, LEP Chair

**Roger Marsh OBE opened his presentation with an overview of the LEP's current position, highlighting the impact of the LEP so far.**

Roger called on skills providers to recognise the balance needed between what young people would like to study and the available career paths. He also spoke of aligning the supply side of skills training with funding in order to connect with businesses.

Roger emphasised the importance of excellent facilities needed to equip learners with essential skills needed to boost the economy. Roger acknowledged the role of education and skills as vital to delivery growth across the city region and urged skills providers to be forward thinking.

#### Key messages:

- Get joined up
- Seek closer alignment between FE and HE
- Be forward thinking



***“The role of education and skills is pivotal to delivering growth”***

## The Shape of Further Education – Future Priorities

Peter McCann, Chair of Leeds City Region Skills Network & Principal, Kirklees College

Peter provided the audience with his view on the future of further education, acknowledging existing constraints and challenges within the education sector.

Peter underlined the strength of collaboration in order to achieve the LEP's goal of transformational economic growth and echoed Roger's views on the vital role of education and skills.

“Our challenge is to ensure learners are equipped with current and future skills needed by employers in Leeds City Region,” said Peter, adding that colleges and others should capitalise on the value they provide to the wider economy.

Peter stated that encouraging employers to maximise their investment in skills through initiatives such as the LEP skills service remains a key element to growth.

### Key messages

- Strong need for qualifications to be relevant to the workplace
- To continue to address barriers for employers to invest in skills
- The value of colleges to local communities



*“Our unique partnership generates greater synergy to align the opportunities to develop a flexible and skilled workforce, delivering growth for the region.”*

## Leeds City Region Labour Market Highlights 2015

Felix Kumi-Ampofo & Joe McTigue, Regional Economic Intelligence Unit

Felix and Joe provided a detailed look at labour market trends for the city region drawing attention to predicted challenges for the year ahead.

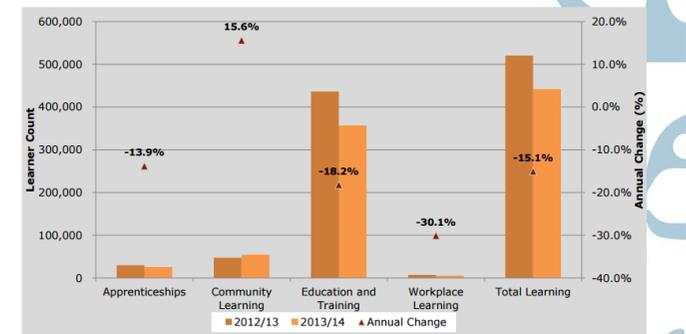
Positive reflections were made on the city region labour market, which has continued to see improvements in line with national growth and a reduction in unemployment, yet the challenge for employers to move their existing workforce up a level in terms of skills remains.

The message that all provision types except community learning recorded a fall in numbers compared with the previous year was conveyed, whilst indicators suggest employers will continue to place more demand on new recruits being equipped with qualifications at a high level.

### Forecasted projections

- Employers are likely to demand increasingly higher qualifications from new recruits
- Growth in professional services forecast in the next 10-15 years; low growth expected in construction
- An increase in part time work and self-employment

### Starts in FE and Training in LCR



*“Upskilling their existing workforce is a key priority for employers”*

# Post-election Skills Landscape

Tom Stannard, Deputy Chief Executive - NIACE

Tom delivered a topical key note speech highlighting the impact of devolution on the skills landscape and describing the ways in which NIACE are playing a central role for localism and personalisation by helping councils, LEPs, combined authorities and community learning providers.

Tom echoed earlier statements on the significance of skills to enable the closure of productivity gaps and improving competitiveness closing with a succinct seven point 'package for productivity' plan for Leeds City Region.



#### Develop a "package for productivity" for the Leeds City Region:

1. **Demonstrate adult skills demand:** create new routes into work (eg Traineeships), progression in work, and sector skills gaps - build provider, college and HE engagement in our Leeds City Region ESF work next year
2. Pilot the **Career Advancement Service** as part of the City Deal process
3. Improve **quality and quantity of Apprenticeships** - co-design the Apprentice Charter quality mark with us and LCR providers/employers
4. Consider a locality trial of the **"help to train ISA"** – an accounts device using Advanced Learning Loan budgets and employer contributions
5. A **better deal for ESA claimants** – locally commissioned employment support for ESA
6. **Future of ESIF** – inclusion in devolution deals for LAs to become accountable body
7. **Campaign with us** for a better employment and skills system for all

[www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk) | @NIACEhq | #ALW15 | #lovetolearn

**NIACE** The National Voice  
for Lifelong Learning

*"Pathways to skills and learning are as important as accredited learning"*

## Further information

For further information regarding and resources referenced during the conference can be found via the following links:

[www.leedscityregionskillsnetwork.co.uk](http://www.leedscityregionskillsnetwork.co.uk)

[www.leedscityregion.gov.uk](http://www.leedscityregion.gov.uk)

[www.westyorkshirecolleges.co.uk](http://www.westyorkshirecolleges.co.uk)

[www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk)

<http://www.the-lep.com/for-business/skills-and-training/lep-skills-service/>

Local Response Fund – Emerging Skills Needs <http://www.the-lep.com/research-and-publications/>

[www.bradfordcollege.ac.uk/business/conference-venue](http://www.bradfordcollege.ac.uk/business/conference-venue)



## Acknowledgements

Particular thanks should be noted to the chair of the event, Peter McCann, along with all of our guest speakers and panel members.

Leeds City Region also wish to thank West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges (WYCC) and Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership for supporting the event along with Bradford College for providing conference facilities.

Thank you also to colleagues from the Local Response Fund and LEP skills service who were on hand to showcase both initiatives.

### About Us

Leeds City Region Skills Network brings together all further education colleges, higher education institutions and private training providers from across the city region. Alongside Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership, we share the ambition of fulfilling the skills needs of the city region and are committed to supporting employers and businesses to access the skills needed to achieve growth.

We have continued to lead collaborative working to ensure employers can develop and grow their business by investing in skills since the Network was established in 2011. Since then we have achieved a number of successes from the formation of a formal partnership agreement; the largest Skills Capital settlement in the country (£74 million) awarded and endorsed by government on the strength of the partnership and national recognition as a model of best practice for collaboration.

Each year leaders from member organisations and key figures from Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership gather at our annual conference to outline their strategic vision for the skills agenda. Past events have been instrumental in shaping progress for the year ahead and, at a time when the impact of devolution is extremely topical, this year's conference was no exception - described by many as the best yet and vastly over-subscribed with over 100 delegates in attendance.

For more general information about us and our work, visit [www.leedscityregionsskillsnetwork.co.uk](http://www.leedscityregionsskillsnetwork.co.uk) or follow us on twitter @LCRSkillsNetwk