

BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 SEPTEMBER 2013

MEDWAY ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING OFSTED – Update on Improvements

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Summary

This report sets out the improvements made to the Medway Adult and Community Learning Service as a response to the OFSTED Inspection in March 2013.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 This is a matter for review by this Committee.

2. Background

2.1 The Medway Adult and Community Learning Service (MACLS) was inspected by OFSTED week commencing 4 March 2013, and the report was published on 15 March 2013. The outcome of the inspection was Level 4 (inadequate) and consequently the Council has been working on an improvement plan since then to ensure that that the service improves significantly. The practice by OFSTED is that they will undertake a monitoring visit between inspections and this is due any time from 15 September 2013 onwards. This report updates the committee on improvements since the inspection.

2.2 The OFSTED concerns have been grouped into four key areas and a Performance Improvement Action Plan (PIAP) has been developed around these four areas, namely:

Leadership and Management

- To put in place leadership and management arrangements that provides clear direction and effective scrutiny of the service

Performance Management

- To develop and implement a challenging performance management and assessment process that enables the service to validate its strengths, identify areas requiring improvement and ensure that the necessary actions are carried out

Teaching and Learning

- To ensure consistent and robust monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment across the service that enables increasing success

The Learner Journey

- To ensure that all learners' needs are effectively assessed, intended outcomes identified, progress and achievements recorded and feedback provided, thus leading to enhanced success.
- 2.3 This improvement plan has been agreed with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and commended by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) and so we are confident that the actions we are taking are in the right direction and will provide sufficient evidence to show that the service is moving forward. Appendix 1 shows an update of actions taken against this performance plan. This plan is monitored regularly by an internal improvement board chaired by the portfolio holder and by the SFA at monthly meetings.
- 2.4 In addition to the general improvements outlined in the improvement plan a number of key actions have been taken. These include:
- The Improvement Board, Chaired by the Portfolio Holder, meets monthly. Five meetings have taken place and been attended by MACLS representatives, other Council representatives and learner representatives. Regular reports have been provided on actions against the SFA approved Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP); performance against a newly developed set of KPI's; the Service Plan and proposed targets for 2013/14; and new business opportunities being developed by the Service.
 - The previous Head of Service left and an experienced external Interim Head was appointed, Robert Raven. Robert initially worked 4 days per week (pw) and this has recently changed to 2/3 days pw. Recruitment of a permanent post holder will commence shortly with the intention of filling the vacancy in the coming months.
 - A Head of Standards and Performance was recruited and seconded from Thurrock Adult College, initially part-time and since July full-time for a period of up to 12 months.
 - A senior project officer, has been seconded to MACLS to both support improvements and assist in developing new business opportunities. A range of new work force and partnership initiatives have been developed.
 - The newly constituted senior team put in place a 'Quality Cycle' and shared this with staff. Monthly meetings attended by senior managers and individual curriculum managers were established from May to monitor performance against and determine appropriate action. The effect of this monitoring and agreed actions, which are reported to the Improvement Board, has been an improvement in a range of retention and success levels, additional provision which has reduced the projected budget claw back from SFA for 2012/13, and a greater consistency on the use of data by managers. The full impact of these actions will not be felt until the new academic year but early signs show that they will have the desired effect. Appendix 2 gives some examples of these performance indicators.
 - A quality handbook has been produced outlining all staff's contribution to learner success and copies are being provided to staff and will form the basis of a key strand of the work force development plan in 2013/14

- To address concerns over consistency of policies and their usage a range of audits have taken place. These include staff technology skills; compliance with safeguarding training; an external audit of the probity of the Service's data; a review of Service policies and consistency over documentation.
- Key policies that have been reviewed and new ones developed including Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment; Initial Assessment; Individual Learning Plans; and the Recording and Recognising of Achievement and Progress. These were all areas highlighted in the Inspection report.
- A support and training programme was provided by a LSIS Associate focussing on the 'Learner Journey' – from recruitment and initial assessment to achievement and progression. This training involved all managers and enabled them to both gain greater understanding of the policies requiring to be developed and contribute to their drafting.
- Contact has been established with a number of external peers e.g. Mid Kent College, Kent Adult Education, Thurrock Adult College and Southend Adult College. Staff have both visited these providers and sought their views and advice on improvements required in MACLS. A series of 'validation' meetings where external partners sit on panels verifying internal MACLS judgments has been established for the coming year.
- A key element of the Quality Cycle is the development of a robust and verifiable Self Assessment Report (SAR) – something highlighted as being required by OFSTED. Senior and Curriculum Managers drafted an initial SAR in July and the Service is on target to have an externally validated one by the time of the forthcoming OFSTED monitoring visit.
- As part of the review of MACLS purpose discussion took place with key stakeholders and partners including Medway Workforce Development, SFA and Mid Kent College and it has been decided to withdraw from direct provision of courses for 16-18 and offering apprenticeship training to Medway Council apprentices. The numbers involved were in both cases relatively small, the quality was patchy, progression opportunities limited and also it was not cost effective. However MACLS will still continue to offer information and advice for these learners but not be a direct provider.
- MACLS at the time of inspection had an extended curriculum management structure – 14 departments each with their own manager – and this led to significant issues with learners not having consistent experiences across the service. This was a major weakness highlighted by OFSTED. Following consultation, a major curriculum staff restructure commenced in June and was fully implemented on 1 September. The objectives of the restructure was to enhance consistency, by forming just 3 departments/faculties; to enhance teaching and management by creating a career path for teachers and increasing the proportion of established rather than sessional tutors; enhancing all learners experience by forming a single student services department rather than all sections following their own practice. A number of staff chose to take redundancy/retire and a number of new colleagues are joining MACLS from September

3. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Failure to make sufficient progress on improvements	Progress in the quality of teaching and learning is too slow Funding from the Skills funding Agency at risk	Robust management of tutors by the curriculum managers and thorough lesson observations Immediate training for curriculum managers Ensure that improvement plan is thorough and effective. Explore other avenues of funding
Poor PR as a result of inspection	Interest from the media, learner concerns, loss of confidence	Publicise good messages, profile learner successes, ensure that robust data tells the complete story
Reduced employee morale	Employees de-motivated, performance dips	Strong visible leadership backed by an improvement plan which individuals can understand and support. Good communications, training and face-to-face discussions

4. Financial and legal implications

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial or legal implications as the SFA funding follows the academic year. However it is clear that the service will not receive any growth in funding and should it fail to improve the financial implications are severe and could affect the viability of the service. The running costs of the service are some £2.7m, funded by grant (£2.1m) and other income (£0.6m).

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The committee is asked to note this report and support the actions so far in improving the service.

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Background papers

OFSTED Report – Medway Adult learning <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/53295>

Medway Council

Medway Adult and Community Learning Service

Post – Inspection Action Plan – Update on actions taken since June 10th

Key Objective A: - To put in place leadership and managements arrangements that provides clear direction and effective scrutiny of the Service

- Draft Service Plan and 2013/14 targets produced
- Curriculum Management re-structure due for completion by 26th July with any consequent vacancies being advertised.
- Quarterly Monitoring reports to CEO/Portfolio Holder submitted in timely fashion 1st July 2013
- Report to Corporate Management Team on agenda for Adult Education 4th September
- Regular meetings with Mid Kent College and Kent Adult Education Service to share and identify good practice, collaborative working, potential shared services and progression routes
- Formal agreement of withdrawal from 16-18 EFA provision confirmed
- SAR moderation agreement confirmed with external partners for 2013/14
- Cross-service calendar for 2013/14 agreed and being shared with staff, providing clear monitoring and accountability timelines
- Progress made on securing additional accommodation in existing Gillingham building to provide additional appropriate classroom, in particular for work skills provision. Presented to Property Board July 23rd
- Revised document control and availability of policies agreed with IT and being rolled out from September
- Partners meetings held 28th June to further develop Community Strategy 2013/14

All outcomes presently graded Green

Key Objective B:- To develop and implement a challenging performance management and assessment process that enables the Service to validate its strengths, identify areas requiring improvement and ensure that the necessary actions are carried out.

- Data monitoring meetings have taken place since the 10th June - 6 curriculum managers were seen and updates on data performance evidenced.
- Two learning walks took place in June no actions needed. Good example of ILT being used within the classroom. Reported this to the relevant Curriculum Manager for future training for other tutors.
- LSIS training took place on the 11th June and the 2nd July 2013, curriculum managers and SMT members attended the training, some topics that were covered were OTLA and SAR.

- ILP focus group met on the 2nd July, from the pilot- tutor and learner feedback was shared. - For the ILP for accredited provision was approved and signed off. The new ILP will be ready to roll out from September 2013.
- Learner celebration event took place on 2nd July 2013- approximately 30 learners participated and some received their certificates on the day.
- Head of Performance and Standard, and Head of Curriculum and Partnerships from MACLS met with Kent Adult Education Service on 4th July to share good practise on various topics including OTLA, peer observation. A further meeting between the Head of Performance and Standards and the Head of Quality at Mid Kent College took place on the 11/07/13 where avenues of collaborative working were explored and an agreement reached on the validation of the self-assessment reports. Further areas of discussion include the progression of learners to higher-level courses and the sharing of management best practice at middle management level.
- A SAR moderation agreement has been also made with Suffolk Adult & Community Learning.
- An number of SMT met with Mid Kent College on the 8th July to look at how curriculum planning against local and national priorities could be looked at together. Also how progression routes and introduction tours for some of MACLS learners can be built into planning.
- On the 9th July meeting took place to look at the short ILP versions for non-accredited courses. Two samples were approved and signed off.
- New observation of teaching, learning and assessment policy process and paperwork has been agreed and signed off. The new process will be more rigorous in terms of performance management, and collects significantly more data than the previous system. A database has been developed that enables accurate filtering of information both at area and whole service level; supporting the development of a whole service development plan.
- All position statements produced by CM's on time and now awaiting final data for completion of SAR sections
- A new quality handbook has been developed, as well as a new monthly review process starting in September. The new process will take over from the already successful data monitoring meetings to include wider metrics such as the quality of ILP's, internal audit arrangements and compliance monitoring. A year's worth of agendas have been prepared that ensure consistency and the covering of essential factors at different point of the year.
- As part of the quality handbook an ongoing self-assessment process has been developed that enables the accurate assessment of each aspect of the curriculum offer at the key stages during the academic year, culminating in an end of year SAR. The SAR has been based on a good practice example from another institution and extensive training has been given to the managers on its completion.
- The production of a cross service-meeting calendar has been started. This will ensure that all relevant areas of leadership and management

are covered under the respective meetings and aid communication across the service.

- Initial discussions have been had between the Head of Performance and Standards, the Service IT team around the availability of policies, their currency and the ease of finding them. To this end a new document drive is being created that will be in place for September 2013.
- A document control format has been agreed with consistent branding and version control.
- Task and finish group established to review and revise recruitment and selection arrangements for all sessional staff to ensure consistency and ensure good practice across whole service. Member of staff designated to lead for implementation for 2013/14 academic year

All outcomes presently graded green

Key Objective C: - To ensure consistent and robust monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment across the service that enables increasing success.

- Data monitoring meetings have continued to take place since the 10th June
- Two learning walks took place in June with no specific actions needed. Good example of ILT being used within the classroom. Reported this to the relevant Curriculum Manager for sharing with other tutors.
- LSIS training completed, attended by curriculum managers and SMT members, topics covered included OTLA, SAR, ILP and initial assessment. Next steps agreed to inform CPD plan for 2013/14
- Head of Performance and Standards now monitoring all OTLA reports to inform Quality Improvement and CPD plans for 2013/14.
- ILP focus group met on the 2nd July, from the pilot- tutor and learner feedback was shared. - For the ILP for accredited provision was approved and signed off. The new ILP will be ready to roll out from September 2013.
- Learner celebration event took place on 2nd July 2013- approximately 30 learners participated
- On-going 121's by SMT with CM's to review progress and tutor monitoring including OTLA grades
- OTLA policy agreed and signed off, training on new arrangements now scheduled for all new managers following re-structure
- A new quality handbook has been agreed at SMT along with a new monthly review process starting in September. The new process will take over from the already successful data monitoring meetings to include wider metrics such as the quality of ILP's internal audit arrangements and compliance monitoring. A year's worth of agendas have been prepared that ensure consistency and the covering of essential factors at different points of the year

All outcomes presently graded green

Key Objective D:-To ensure all learners' needs are effectively assessed, intended outcomes identified, progress and achievements recorded and feedback provided, thus leading to enhance success.

- New curriculum structure being implemented from September provides additional specialist roles, with particular attention to supporting, improving and monitoring teaching and learning
- ILP focus groups held and monitoring on initial assessment and ILP's continues to be followed through
- Data Monitoring continue to be held and interventions agreed
- Learner celebration event held 2nd July
- New OTLA policy has been agreed and signed off. The new process will be more rigorous in terms of performance management, and collects significantly more data than the previous system. A database has been developed that enables accurate filtering of information both at area and whole service level; supporting the development of a whole service development plan.
- A new quality handbook has been agreed, with a new monthly review process starting in September. The new process will take over from the already successful data monitoring meetings to include wider metrics such as the quality of ILP's internal audit arrangements and compliance monitoring. A year's worth of agendas have been prepared that ensure consistency and the covering of essential factors at different point of the year.
- As part of the quality handbook an ongoing self-assessment process has been developed that enables the accurate assessment of each aspect of the curriculum offer at the key stages during the academic year, culminating in an end of year SAR. The SAR has been based on a good practice example from another institution and extensive training has been given to the managers on its completion. This will ensure that all relevant areas of leadership and management are covered under the respective meetings and aid communication across the service.

All outcomes presently graded green

Key Objective E: -To provide high quality and challenging teaching sessions that enables learners to maximise their success.

- New curriculum structure being implemented from September provides additional specialist roles, with particular attention to supporting, improving and monitoring teaching and learning
- Two learning walks took place in June no specific actions identified Good ILT practice identified for sharing with other tutors.
- ILP focus group met on the 2nd July, from the pilot- tutor and learner feedback was shared. - For the ILP for accredited provision was

approved and signed off. The new ILP will be ready to roll out from September 2013.

- New observation of teaching, learning and assessment policy process and paperwork has been agreed and signed off
- Negotiations have begun to determine future on-line provision at MACLs. Various content providers have been secured to cover a wide spectrum of subject areas, to include workplace learning, languages, ICT and social care. The technical process for access is now agreed. Next step to determine venue, resourcing and costings.
- Meeting held with Head of Organisational Change at Medway Council to discuss enhanced contribution to the corporate training programme. This has been agreed in principle, subject to quality standards agreed.
- Review of current provision at Medway College of Social Care has been undertaken and a strategy for expansion and development which will also provide additional resources to existing staff for CPD

All outcomes presently graded green

23 June 2013

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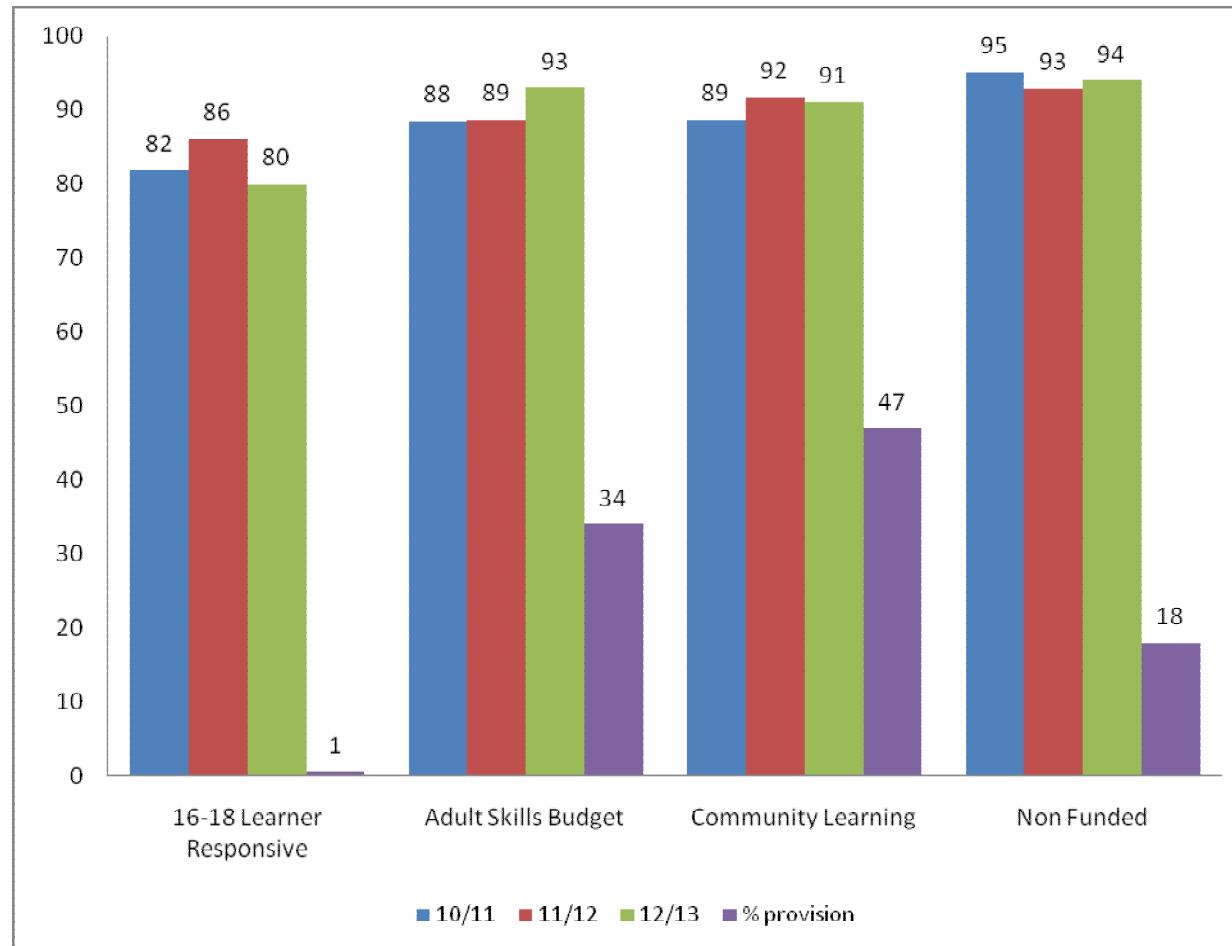
Progress against Targets

Medway Adult & Community Learning Service								
Category		Learner & Financial Actual 2011-2012		Learner & Financial Actual 2012-2013 As at 2.9.13				
		Learners	£	Allocation	Learners	£	Diff from 11-12	Achievement towards targets
1a	16-18 Learner Responsive	52	£40,686	£28,901	36	£21,916	-£18,770	76%
1b	16-18 Additional Learning Support	n/a	£3,260	£1,220	n/a	£1,679	-£1,580	138%
1c	16-18 Apprentices	1,557	£30,787	£45,952	1,727	£48,407	£17,620	105%
2a	Adult Skills Budget 19+		£723,056	£892,959		£848,408	£125,352	95%
2b	19+ Additional Learning Support	n/a	£53,845	£59,925	n/a	£70,897	£17,052	118%
3	Community Learning	2,425	£1,101,694	3,226	2,387	£1,101,694	-38	74%
4	Non Funded	1,094	n/a	n/a	892	n/a	-202	n/a

Targets have been achieved under 16-18 Apprenticeships (SFA have indicated we will be paid in full for this) and Additional Learning Support. Adult Skills Budget is at 95% of target, so we can expect clawback of approx. £45,000. The amount of funding generated under Adult Skills Budget has increased by £125,352 compared with 2011-12. We only achieved 74% of our Community Learning learner numbers, and this will be addressed in 2013/14 by moving 90% of our non funded provision into Community Learning. If this had happened in 2012/13 we would have achieved 99% of the learner numbers target.

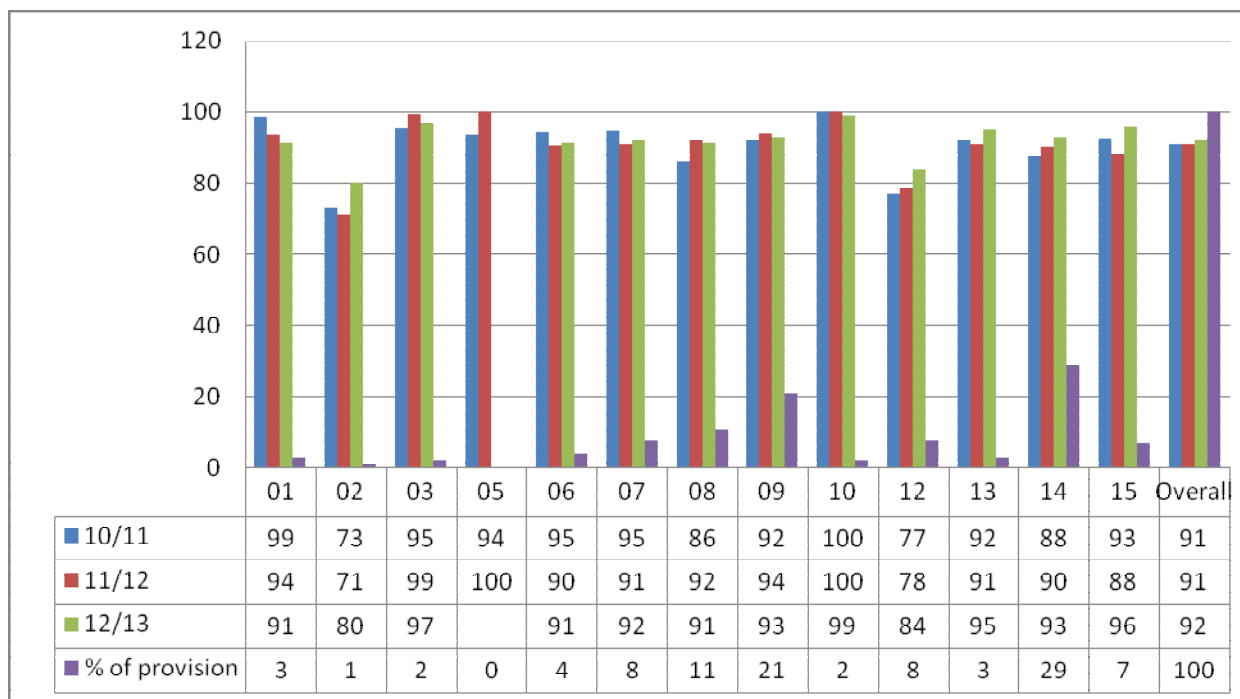
Retention

Overall Retention % by Funding Stream – as at 02/09/2013



Retention in Adult Skills Budget and Non Funded learning has risen compared with 2011/12. Adult Skills retention has increased by 4% and Non Funded by 1%. There was a slight fall (0.5%) in Community Learning. 16-18 Learner Responsive fell from 86% to 80%, but this provision counts for less than 1% of the provision, and we will not be offering this provision in 2013/14.

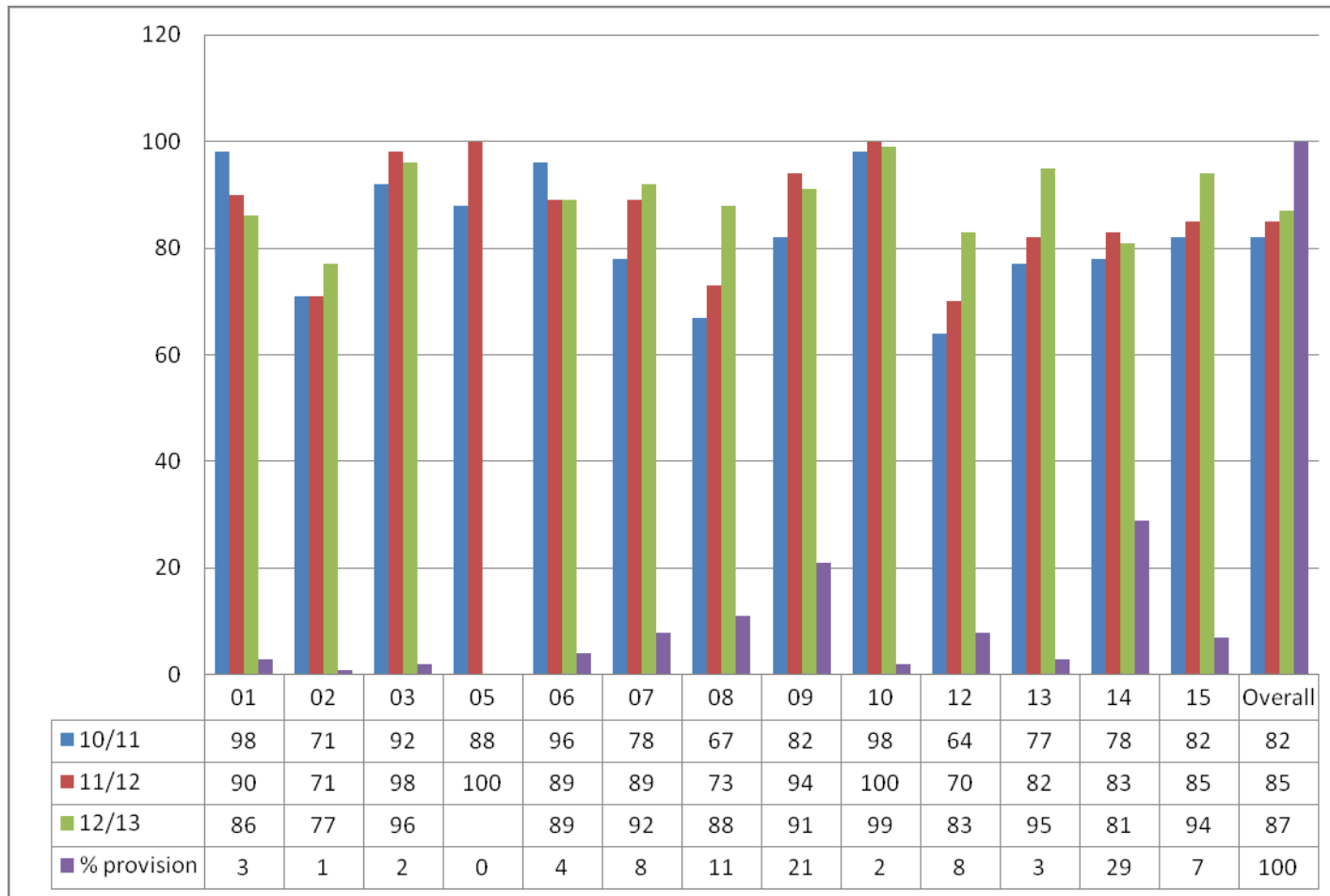
Overall Retention % by Subject Sector Area as at 02/09/2013



Overall retention has increased by 1% from 2011/12. Retention in SSA 14 (which accounts for 29% of the provision) has risen by 3% from 2011/12.

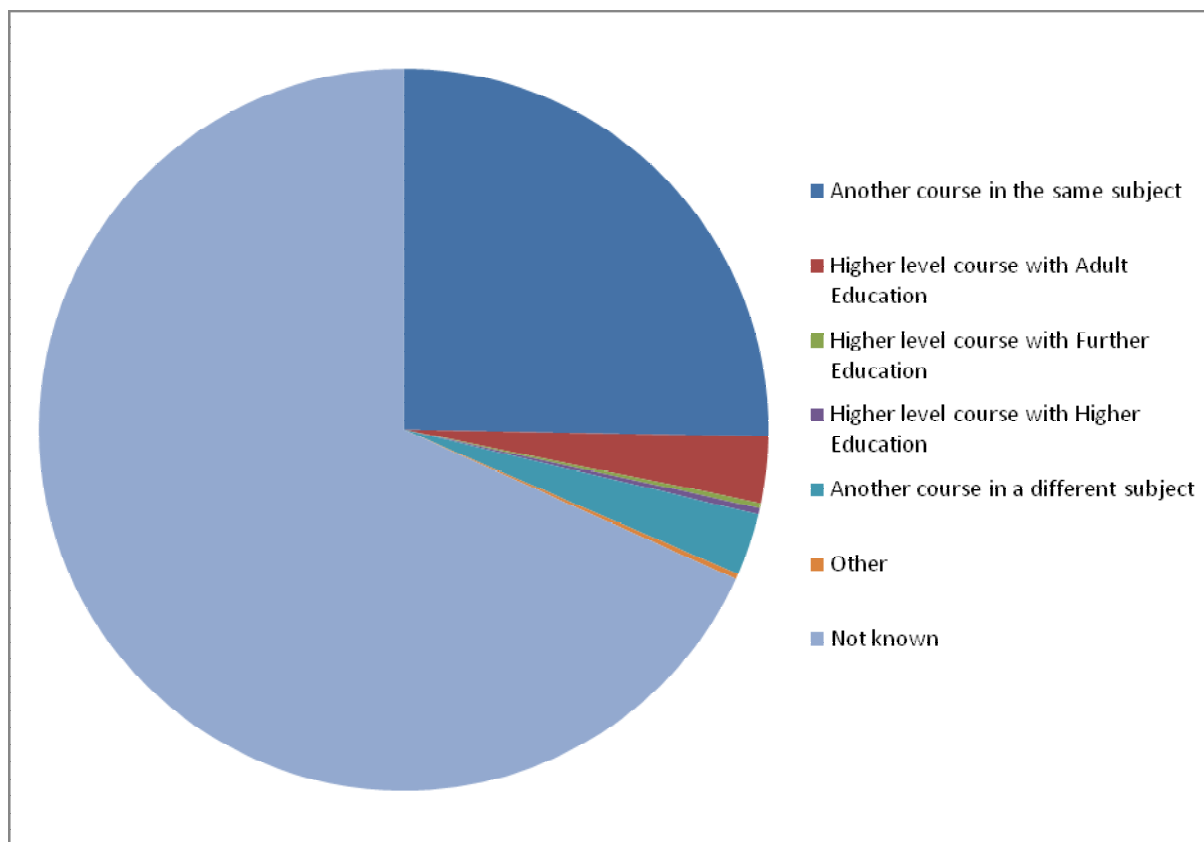
SSA	SSA Description	SSA	SSA Description
01	Health, Public Services & Care	09	Arts, Media & Publishing
02	Science & Mathematics	10	History, Philosophy & Theology
03	Agriculture, Horticulture & Animal Care	12	Languages, Literature & Culture
05	Construction, Planning & the Build Environ	13	Education & Training
06	ICT	14	Preparation for Life & Work
07	Retail & Commercial Enterprises	15	Business, Administration & Law
08	Leisure, Travel & Tourism		

Overall Success Rates by SSA for Enrolments with a Known Outcome – as at 09/07/2013



This chart shows success for courses which have finished – however we are still waiting for a number of examination results, so this figure will rise. Overall this is now at 87%, compared to the 82% at the end of 2010/11 and 85% at the end of 2012/13.

Enrolments by Intended Destination 2012-2013 – as at 02/09/2013



2012/13 is the first year we have started to collect destination data for our learners. The service will be looking to collect destination data for all learners in 2013/14. For the whole year, 68% of enrolments did not have an intended destination recorded. When looking only at those courses which have finished since 1 June this year, 54% did not have an intended destination recorded.