

LSC launch strategy for building greener colleges of the future

- Colleges must propose eco-friendly and efficient designs in order to gain funds.
- Government will commit a record £750 million annually by 2011

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The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), today reveal their strategy for building greener colleges of the future. Bill Rammell MP, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education launched the LSC prospectus today, which for the first time states that Colleges must include green proposals in their designs if they are to win funding.

The Government will make a record commitment to rebuilding the FE Estate, investing £750 million annually on capital projects by 2011. In addition, later this year, Work Based Learning providers as well as colleges will be able to bid for capital funding.

From now on, colleges and other qualifying providers will be strongly encouraged to embed principles of sustainability in the design of their buildings and building systems. This is part of the Government's commitment to making FE buildings more eco-friendly, efficient and cost-effective. Colleges will need to maximise the use of natural lighting and ventilation by, for example, using wind and solar power to generate light and heat and collect and re-use rainwater to reduce water usage. This builds on the LSC's strategy "From here to Sustainability" which was launched in 2005.

The aim is to improve the quality of the FE estate, allowing colleges and sixth forms to better meet the needs of learners, employers and communities. This will equip them with high-quality skills for productive, sustainable employment and personal fulfilment; and ensure that employers have the right skills for their business to succeed in a competitive global economy.

Mark Haysom, Chief Executive of the LSC said:

“One of our main priorities between now and 2010-11 is to maximise the scale of FE development, making world-class, 21st century facilities available to all learners. Our aim is to make England’s FE estate a world leader – so that learning is delivered in innovative, energy efficient and inspirational buildings.

“Students will be more responsive, attentive and enthusiastic in bright, airy and stimulating ‘state of the art’ learning environments. External research has shown that capital expenditure impacts positively on participation and attainment for both 16-19 year olds and adults. In 2003, the £300 million that we spent on capital investment was linked to a three per cent increase in participation and success rates.

“The positive effects of rebuilding a college can be staggering, both on the individual learner, but also on the wider community.”

Bill Rammell said:

“In 1996/97 the funds earmarked for capital expenditure for college buildings was nil and now it is £500 million. Our aim is to make the Further Education estate world leading, delivering learning in buildings that are environmentally friendly and sustainable and which are designed to fully meet the needs of individuals, employers, and our communities, both for the challenges we face today, as well as for those we will face in the future.

“This Government is fully committed to transforming the FE estate, and has repeatedly demonstrated this commitment through the unprecedented capital investment we have made in the past decade.”

Capital investment is a vital part of the Government’s efforts to implement the Leitch Review of Skills and the recommendations of the FE White Paper. The capital investment programme supports increased choice, particularly in 16-19 provision, increased

specialisation and enables the most effective schools and colleges to expand.

Bill Rammell added:

“The massive capital investment we are making will enable us to take forward the recommendations, and to create a world class training infrastructure, creating a more dynamic FE sector, providing a more diverse and specialised offer to employers, young people and adult learners. This is a very exciting time for FE – and a once in a generation opportunity to build the colleges of the future, now.”

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

LSC

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

‘Building for Skills: A prospectus for the Learning and Skills Council’s capital programme’

- this is available on the LSC website at: [INSERT LINK]

Sustainable Development Strategy

- The LSC’s Strategy for Sustainable Development “From Here to Sustainability” was published in September 2005 [INSERT LINK]
- In future, to qualify for LSC capital funds all proposals will need to address Sustainable Development by:
 - meeting and preferably exceeding, the requirements of Part L of Building Regulations
 - ensuring that the completed development meets the criteria to achieve excellent Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) ratings
 - maximising the use of natural lighting and ventilation by, for example, using wind and solar power to generate light and heat and by collecting rainwater to reduce water usage and

- embedding the principles of sustainability in the design of buildings and building systems
- the LSC will allow an additional 5% of building costs to be ring fenced and used for Sustainable Development

Capital Investment Funding

- In 1996-97, the earmarked Government expenditure on FE capital was nil.
- In 2007-08, planned Government expenditure will be just under £500 million. On top of this, the 2005 Budget announced additional capital funds of £100 million in 2008-09 and £250 million in 2009-10.
- The Chancellor – at the Pre-Budget Report at the end of last year – announced a further £250 million of capital funding in 2010-11. This will take the planned annual FE capital budget to just under £750 million.
- The LSC expects to invest about £500 million in FE and school 16-19 capital projects in 2007-08.
- Over the past five years, the LSC has approved grants of just under £1.8 billion to support 632 building projects in the learning and skills sector, at an estimated cost of nearly £4.6 billion
- More than half of the FE estate has already been renewed.

Excellence in Design

- The LSC sponsors RIBA awards to recognise excellence in architecture in the FE estate. To read about last year's winners go to:
<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/LSC/2006/externalrelations/press/nat-sixfecollegesnominatedforlscribaaward-pr-aug2006.pdf>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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