

SKILLS MINISTER VISITS SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE TO TALK ABOUT WORKING WITH LOCAL EMPLOYERS

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Skills Minister Phil Hope has today visited South Leicestershire College in Wigston to discuss how the College, and Market Driven Solutions (MDS), a private training company – both Train to Gain providers – are working with local employers.

The Minister discussed the Train to Gain service, employer engagement and skills in a forum of representatives from the College, the LSC, and employers. The visit was also an opportunity for the Minister to meet some of the local employers South Leicestershire College is working with and to present certificates to Institute of Leadership and Management learners. The forum took place in the College's Centre for Vocational Excellence: the Martin Johnson Centre for Leadership and Management.

Skills Minister Phil Hope said, "I'm delighted to hear first hand the difference Train to Gain is making in the East Midlands, We want people to benefit from education throughout their lives, whether it is academic, trade, basic or vocational. That is why we have made record investments in education and training and have committed £1billion to our national employer training scheme, Train to Gain. We want to see 50,000 employers and 350,000 employees every year get the skills they need to boost productivity and competitiveness through the service and improve their own life chances."

Karen Woodward, Skills Director, LSC East Midlands said, "Train to Gain puts employers at the heart of the drive to close skills gaps and boost productivity. In the East Midlands we have appointed 39 training providers, who will ensure that top quality training is adapted to the needs of employers and their staff and is delivered in a targeted and flexible way within the workplace."

Lowell Williams, Principal South Leicestershire College said, "We have developed Skillspoint, a specialist team that will deliver the Train to Gain service and acts as a single link to employers, to make it easier for them to do business with this college. Skillspoint has extensive experience of working with the LSC to help companies to achieve their business objectives."

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Notes to editors

For further information, please contact Linda Penrice on 0116 228 1849.

South Leicestershire College

South Leicestershire College is a general college of further education which opened in 1970. The college draws learners from throughout Leicestershire. Especially serving the south of Leicester City and south Leicestershire.

The College maintains close links with local employers and in 2003/04 it launched ***Skillspoint***, a service dedicated to working with employers to improve the skills of their employees.

Key facts about the College:

- More than 300 employees
- £9 million annual budget
- 8,000 learners studying 13,400 qualifications
- More than 2,000 learners are sponsored by their employer

Learning and Skills Council

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational 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 by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

Train to Gain

Train to Gain is a new service from the LSC to help businesses get the training they need to succeed. It offers the services of a specialist skills broker who will research and prepare a proposal offering a training solution to source training solutions, source funding and training provision.

For more information on Train to Gain, please call 0845 057 1817, text TRAIN to 64446, register online at www.iwanttotrain.com or visit www.traintogain.gov.uk