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Derby College Leads the Way in Standards of Excellence

Derby College is the first training provider in the East Midlands to achieve the new standard of excellence. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) held an event in London on 12th December to celebrate the achievements of 26 providers nationally in delivering high quality training to employers.

The new standard highlights excellence in the two areas that employers have told us are most important to them:

- provider responsiveness to employer needs and
- provider excellence in a particular vocational area

David Croll, Principal at Derby College enthused: "We are delighted that, Corporate College, Derby College's area that works in partnership with employers, has been recognised for its expertise in delivering a high quality response to client needs. From an initial training needs analysis through to the delivery of top quality bespoke training course, clients' needs are at the heart of Corporate College's ethos. To be the first training provider in the East Midlands to gain this status is testament to our outstanding commitment and flexible approach to delivering training solutions that ultimately improve the productivity of businesses both regionally and nationally."

Sue Peake, Regional Skills Development Director, LSC East Midlands said: "This really is excellent news for Derby and a fantastic achievement for the East Midlands region as a whole. The fact that training providers are proactively choosing to adopt the new

voluntary standard and improve their offer, demonstrates their commitment to meeting employer needs and the strong focus which is placed upon quality. Derby is leading the way for the East Midlands and hopefully it will inspire other training providers to follow suit.”

David Lammy MP, Skills Minister, said: “Training is essential to any successful enterprise and we are determined to make high quality skills training accessible for all. The new standard highlights excellence in provider responsiveness and will be a mark that employers can trust.”

A key development of the standard from previous accreditation schemes is that it is not attached to public funding or investment and will be open to both publicly and privately funded organisations providing higher and further education. In addition, accreditation is verified by employers, meaning that the criteria for achieving the standard reflects their needs.

The standard has been extremely well-received to date by the sector and a further seven training providers have recently received accreditation; taking the total to 26 having achieved the new standard. These are likely to be joined by further training providers over the coming months as more continue to apply and be assessed.

To date, more than 50 training providers having applied for the standard including colleges, universities, commercial and publicly funded training organisations, and several large employers. Feedback from training providers involved in the testing phase of the standard has also been very positive. Almost all reported that the process of going through the standard had sharpened their approach to working with employers and demonstrated to them where they need to make changes to better meet the needs of employers.

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Notes to editors:

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Recognised training providers who attended the event:

- Basingstoke College of Technology
- DC Training & Development Services Ltd
- Hadlow College
- Hospitality Training Partnership (HTP)
- London College of Beauty Therapy
- Newbury College
- Newham College
- Reaseheath College
- South Devon College
- Sutton Coldfield College
- Thatcham Training
- Uxbridge College
- Chichester College
- Cornwall College
- Happy Computers
- Leeds College of Building
- NETA Training Group
- Newcastle College
- City of Sunderland College

Further accredited training providers:

- Derby College
- Lewisham College
- Norwich City College
- Tameside College
- Wakefield College
- West Cheshire College
- West Suffolk College

CoVEs and the new standard:

CoVEs increase the provider's capacity to deliver vocational or sector based training. They often involve a partnership between LSC funded providers. The CoVE Programme will run until 2010.

The new standard however, is a voluntary quality mark available to any type of provider. It complements the Framework for Excellence (FFE), the LSC's new compulsory, annual, quality assessment, as it contains an assessment of employer responsiveness.

The new standard will feed into National Skills Academies as they will work with providers who have achieved the new standard as their delivery partners.

Learning and Skills Council:

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.

Skills campaign:

In July 2007, the LSC and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) launched the skills campaign. The campaign - Our future. It's in our hands - urges people to take control of their future by investing in skills. It is the most ambitious marketing and communications campaign of its kind, and over a three to five year period aims to bring about the cultural change needed to improve the attitudes and aspirations of employers and individuals to learning and skills across England.