

April 2007



East Northants Vocational Institute

East Northants 16-19 Competition Bid
BEDFORD COLLEGE

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Our Vision for East Northamptonshire

Bedford College has an unparalleled track record at delivering on its promises. We have achieved our funding and recruitment targets in each of the last ten years while maintaining and strengthening our grade A financial status. External agencies have praised our:

- “high and improving pass rates” (Ofsted 2005)
- “culture of success” (Investors in People 2005)
- “dynamism, energy and approach to partnership” (Heist research 2006)

We have a strategic interest in East Northants. As far back as 1998 we signalled that interest in our strategic plan. Our analysis identified the area was under-served by the FE system in comparison with other parts of Northamptonshire, and we believed our proximity to the area could be used to help address this. Since 1998 we have increased recruitment from the area and it now accounts for about 5% of our total enrolments. Starting with innovative work with Rushden & Diamonds Football Club and the Frontier Centre in Irthlingborough, we moved to the development of a community learning centre in Rushden that provides IT, Business and Care programmes to adults.

We wish to develop the East Northants Vocational Institute (ENVI) to provide expert and relevant vocational education and training that complements and adds to provision made by other schools and colleges in the area. ENVI will:

- widen the range of high quality education and training in the area
- extend work-based learning opportunities for young people
- ensure progression of students to employment through an agency
- significantly improve participation and success rates using the College’s established business model
- bring our 5 CoVEs into the county including our sustainable technology curriculum
- exploit the College’s strong links with employers through its CBI Council membership and Catalyst employer-engagement division
- generate excitement among 16-19 year olds in the area
- fully engage in collaborative and partnership activity with other providers and agencies
- be there for the long term

We hope you find our application helpful, and would like to take it further. We should also like to thank all those local agencies that advised us in developing the application.

Thank you for allowing us to participate in the competition. We look forward to your response.

Ian Pryce
Principal & Chief Executive



East Northants Vocational Institute

The Vocational Curriculum Offer for 2008

Rationale Summary

The issues

- East Northants is under-served by the FE system
- Limited vocational training opportunities for young people
- Participation, success and apprenticeship completion rates need to be improved
- Students want more easily accessible provision, with qualification-based courses leading to employment

The ENVI rationale

- to ensure flexible provision with FT and PT attendance modes for young people
- to ensure more apprenticeship routes
- to provide essential progression (including to higher education)
- to have in place strong curriculum planning, business excellence and financial control models to provide the broad base necessary to succeed

In line with the skills agenda, our bid is primarily focussed on vocational education and training. The planned curriculum is designed to engage and motivate young people by offering courses that are easily accessible, lead to qualifications and offer employment opportunities. The design of the curriculum offer reflects the limited vocational training opportunities presently available to young people in East Northants (See [Figure 0.3](#)).

Attendance patterns have been designed to encourage both full and part-time attendance along with work-based learning, for those who would prefer a job with training. Short taster courses will be offered for learners who are not yet sure what career path to follow or need to ease themselves back into learning. The latter two options are intended to appeal to the NEET group of potential learners. It is anticipated that ENVI will work closely with Connexions service.

In line with the LSC strategy for sustainable development, our provision will enable learners to acquire the knowledge, values and skills that will help them to contribute to decisions about the way things are done as individuals, employees and part of the wider community.

As an indication of the quality of our curriculum offer, ENVI will offer courses in three subject areas for which Bedford College holds CoVE status, (Construction, Health and Social Care and Supervisory and Management Skills) and in which Bedford College has substantial experience. These three CoVEs cover key areas of employment opportunity highlighted in Northamptonshire's 14-19 strategy, local LSC Annual Plan and the LSC Local Work-based Learning Strategy.

Through Bedford College, ENVI is committed to responding effectively to the needs of individual learners in a way that reflects their particular needs and circumstances. The curriculum has been designed to address the three Northamptonshire LSC aims for young people:

AIM 1 Increase participation of young people in training and learning through the development of a more relevant curriculum offering the academic and the vocational and through actions to further reduce the NEET group

Research recently undertaken on behalf of the College indicates that young people falling into the NEET group often feel more adult than their counterparts living in less difficult circumstances, and therefore often felt uncomfortable in a school atmosphere. As a result, ENVI will bring the adult atmosphere and culture that is common to colleges of further education ensuring that no barriers exist to prevent NEET members entering into learning. As previously described, ENVI will offer short taster courses and work-based learning courses supported by an agency approach to the provision of employment for learners aimed in particular at the NEET group opening a pathway into education and employment. The relevance and breadth of this exciting curriculum offer, including the three CoVE areas, will be popular with local young people as presently nothing like it exists in the area and it creates genuine opportunities to employment.

AIM 2 Increasing the completion rates for Apprenticeships in the county

In line with the East Midlands Learning and Skills Council Work-based Learning Strategy, ENVI will focus on the sectors of Construction, Health and Social Care and Retail using the Programme Led Apprentices Strategy as a means to improve opportunities for young people in gaining experience. ENVI will act as an agency to ensure that work-based learners gain employment as part of their work-based learning programme so that learners are not excluded due to an inability to secure a sponsoring employer.

AIM 3 Increase the achievement and skills levels of 16-18 year olds across the county

The addition of such a broad curriculum being introduced into the East Northants area through the establishment of ENVI, with so many new and exciting opportunities and a projected 302 16-19 year olds enrolled at ENVI by 2011 (See [Figure 0.6](#)) is in line with the targets set out in the LSC '16-19 Competition in East Northamptonshire Statement of Need.' ENVI is projecting an increase in both participation rates and success rates in line with these LSC targets. Skills levels will be raised through a projected progression route that leads from level 1 to level 3 and ultimately the potential for entry into Higher Education. New and alternative routes into the following skills areas will be created which up until now have not been widely available to 16-19 learners in the East Northants area. (See [Figure 0.1](#))

Figure 0.1 New and alternative routes into skills

- **Travel & Tourism**
- **Care, Childcare, Health and Social Care** **CoVE**
- **Beauty Therapy**
- **Electrical Installation**
- **Construction (Painting and Decorating)** **CoVE**
- **Business and Retail** **CoVE**
- **Public Services**

Social inclusion

This is encouraged through the use of short "bite size" courses with start and finish times that fit in with the school day. These courses will be offered at the Bedford College Learning Shop in Rushden and on the Rushden ENVI campus. They are designed specifically to appeal to groups of learners who up to now feel excluded from education and learning.

Quality Assurance

ENVI course teams will conduct self assessment of the quality of their education and training provision twice a year. The course review documentation has been written to complement the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework and OFSTED inspection. All reviews generate action plans that dovetail into wider area operational plans.

ENVI will be pro-active in adopting the Programme Area MoT (which was commended by the HMI on his last visit to Bedford College). The MoT programme audits each delivery area against the Common Inspection Framework. Course reviews, graded lesson observations and Programme Area MoTs ultimately will form part of the ENVI Self Assessment Report which together with staff development will ensure continuous improvement.

ENVI will adopt the comprehensive compliments, suggestions and complaints (feedback) procedures already in place at Bedford College. All outcomes of ENVI processes will be reported in line with current practice to the Bedford College Executive and Corporation.

As a result of the above self assessment tools and strategies aligned with the Common Inspection Framework and OFSTED inspection, ENVI will deliver the same high number of excellent inspection and moderation outcomes enjoyed by Bedford College. Annual reviews will ensure that any changes needed to align ENVI with potential changes in national awarding body and government strategies will be made and communicated effectively.

Equality of opportunity

Bedford College presently has a student body which incorporates 105 different nationalities. We are committed to the promotion of equality and diversity for our students and staff. We aim to provide a learning and working environment which values individuals equally and does not disadvantage individuals by discriminating on any grounds, including age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religious belief or trade union membership. These values will be embedded into ENVI and we will audit the equality of opportunity through the analysis of staff and student surveys, Programme Area MoT reports, self-assessment reports and the comprehensive feedback system.

Student Progression

It is envisaged that students wishing to progress into higher level further education courses or onto higher education courses will be given priority when accessing ENVI and Bedford College courses (See [Figure 0.2](#)) and will be supported with UCAS applications to ensure that every learner studying at ENVI has the opportunity to reach their full potential. A common model experienced at the College would suggest that:

- 64% of learners progress to further education (including progression to year 2)
- 24% of learners progress to employment
- 12% of learners progress into higher education

Figure 0.2 The Bedford College current HE offer

• Psychology & Crime	• Sports & Sports Exercise Science
• Teacher Training	• Travel
• Access to University	• Public Services
• Accountancy	• Computing
• Business & Management	• Engineering
• Care, Childcare and Counselling	• Art, Design & Media, Music
• Hospitality	• Performing Arts

Proposed 16-19 Vocational Curriculum Provision in Year 1 (2008)

Figure 0.3

Subject Sector Area	Full-time course offer	Key/Basic skills support	Work-based offer	Key/Basic skills support	Planned offer	Key/Basic skills support	Short-course offer
Travel & Tourism	Level 1 Level 2	Level 1 Level 2					
Care	Level 1 Level 2	Level 1 Level 2	X	Level 1 Level 2		Level 1 Level 2	
Childcare Health and Social Care (CoVE)	Level 1 Level 2	Level 1 Level 2	X	Level 1 Level 2	X		X
Hairdressing	Level 1 Level 2	Level 1 Level 2	X	Level 1 Level 2	X	Level 1 Level 2	
Beauty Therapy	Level 2	Level 1 Level 2					X
Engineering/ Electrical instillation	Level 1 Level 2	Level 1 Level 2	X	Level 1 Level 2	X	Level 1 Level 2	X
Construction -Painting and Decorating (CoVE)	Level 1 Level 2	Level 1 Level 2	X	Level 1 Level 2	X	Level 1 Level 2	X
Business and Retail (CoVE)			X	Level 1 Level 2	X	Level 1 Level 2	
Public Services & Sports Programmes	Level 1 Level 2	Level 1 Level 2					X

Responding to industry needs for future employment

A market analysis of the main employment sectors in the region indicate a future demand for skilled workers in the following sectors:

- wholesale and retail
- public services and health and social work
- finance and business services
- manufacturing

with growing employment sectors in logistics and construction.

The curriculum offer has been designed to initially target as many of these employment sectors as is feasible given the target numbers of 200 to 240 potential students including up to 150 of the NEET group. The curriculum has the potential to grow to meet all of the identified sectors based on Bedford College's CoVEs, expertise and experience.

Learning for Life and Work

The curriculum offer is aimed mainly at young people wishing to follow a vocational training path, through providing a new and exciting curriculum to engage learners, offer a fresh start and provide the skills needed for the economic sustainability for East Northants. It is not intended that ENVI offers remedial education for GCSEs or A level provision (currently catered for by schools).

New Diplomas

Bedford College expects to offer the full range of Specialist Diplomas at its Cauldwell Street site and a number of Diplomas at the Rushden site that complement the curriculum in place in 2008 and 2009 (See [Figure 0.4](#)) The Diplomas will fit with the current 14-16 offer and enable growth in the areas of ICT and Business.

Figure 0.4 Diplomas to be made available from:	
2008	2009
ICT	Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy
Health	Business
Construction	Hospitality

Educational attainment (targets)

With the projected recruitment, retention and success figures shown in **Figure 0.6**, ENVI will become the single largest provider of 16-19 education in the East Northants area. This ensures that in the first year of operation, the staying on rate of 86% for the district will be achieved and in 2008 a projected 250 additional 16-19 year olds will be in learning in East Northants.

Figure 0.6	2008	2009	2010	2011
Schools total yr 11	927	887	957	943
ENVI projected recruitment as% of yr 11	27%	29%	31%	32%
Target ENVI Recruitment numbers	250	257	297	302
Number @ 85% retention Yr 12-13	212	218	252	257
Number @ national benchmark success Yr 13 (@ 76% presently)	161	166	191	195

As outlined above and on page 12 (*Student Progression*), ENVI working with Bedford College to targets shown in **Figure 0.6**, will make a positive contribution to the East Northants targets outlined shown below:

- a participation rate in full-time education post 16 of at least 86% by 2011
- at least 69% of young people (aged 19) to have achieved a level 2 qualification by 2008
- an increase in the percentage of young people progressing to HE (target is 38% by 2010)

Meeting future needs

As **Figure 0.6** indicates, ENVI target enrolment figures are set to rise by 52 learners between 2008 and 2011. It is envisaged that this will be done by tailoring the curriculum to the needs of the prospective learners. It is planned to attract more of the NEET group through, for example, partnership with the local Connexions office and the use of short taster courses. The expansion of work-based learning courses and main stream learners will need to be catered for through an expanded curriculum offer given the projected rise in Year 11 cohort numbers from 889 in 2006 to 943 in 2011 (a rise of 54).

The expanded curriculum offer will from September 2008 comprise:

- level 3 qualifications
- qualifications for which there is a discernible demand but no supply
- qualifications where other suppliers cannot meet the quality that ENVI can offer
- qualifications which lead to new employment opportunities.

Collaboration

ENVI will benefit from a range of established collaboration opportunities through Bedford College which has a history of strong links with employers, for example, employer engagement activity targets for 2005/06 were established at College Centre level to produce an overall target of 800 activities. This figure is as agreed with the LLSC in the Bedford College Development Plan 2002 to 2006. Evaluation of data collected during the self assessment process showed that Bedford College exceeded the original target.

Actual employer engagement activities recorded during 2005/06 included the following:

- Student work experience placements
- BIAS activities
- Provision of 'Live' student projects
- Donation of materials and equipment
- Consultancy services
- Industry visits for student groups
- Action research
- Trade fair and exhibition visits
- Student prize sponsorship
- Guest speakers
- Training needs development service
- Employer liaison panels
- Industrial secondment for staff
- Liaison with SSCs
- Employer focused courses and provision

Planned Employer Engagement 2006 to 2010

In the Bedford College Development Plan to 2010, the impact of Train to Gain together with the increasing LSC focus on employer responsiveness is recognised. The College will bring this successful approach to ENVI and continue to grow its employer partnerships within the region. The College aims to be delivering close to £1m of Train to Gain activity each year by 2010 and is committed to achieve the emerging quality mark associated with employer responsiveness. The College will also continue to expand its employer engagement activities particularly in relation to the development of its CoVEs.

Connexions

We have already made contact with Connexions in the East Northants area and the College has been able to offer support through the use of its facilities in the Bedford College Learning Shop in Rushden.

Local Schools

As with Employers, the College has a strong track record of successful partnerships with local schools and is presently finalising a 14-16 Centre for Bedfordshire, based on the main College campus in Bedford to commence in September 2007. The present 14-16 offer is demonstrated in **Figure 0.3** and the College will bring this successful approach to ENVI and continue to grow its school partnerships within the region.

Figure 0.3 2007 14-16 Programme

- Care & Childcare
- Catering
- Construction
- Digital Animation
- Electrical Installation
- Energy and Sustainability
- Fine Art
- Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy
- Motor Vehicle and Motor Cycle Repair
- Music Technology
- Plumbing
- Public Services
- Sport

Impact on current provision

Experience of ensuring quality in growth

Sustainability and growth of student numbers will be assured through the quality of product offered to students supported by the quality of course delivery and resources. Bedford College has demonstrated a strong track record in all of these areas moving from a recruitment base of six thousand students in 2000 to our current intake of some three thousand full-time and twelve thousand part-time students in 2006.

Marketing

At Bedford College marketing is not just advertising but combines all of the professional functions involved with providing the appropriate product or service to the target customer at the correct price, place and time while employing effective methods of promotion. ENVI will benefit from this positive track record. To make the message that we deliver more accessible to 16-19 learners, we initiated a Student Ambassador scheme providing students with the opportunity to gain valuable work experience – and get paid for it – by acting as an ambassador for the College to help with tours at Open Days, the Achievement Ceremony and other fairs and events. The scheme is open to all students and it is expected that ENVI will have at least two Student Ambassadors. Along with the College website at www.bedford.ac.uk, we run a number of microsites linked to College website offering specific details of individual College Centres. ENVI will of course feature as a unique microsite to emphasise its range of provision.

Buildings

Bedford College is presently undertaking a rebuilding programme in excess of 24 million pounds and therefore the timing of ENVI fits well into our present organisational structure and skills set. Having already completed phase 2, of the programme we have current working experience and knowledge of successful management of these major building projects and have established a number of partnerships with leading construction companies, architects and building and design related companies to ensure successful completion to a high standard.

Support for Students

Careers Education and Guidance

At ENVI, careers advisors will be supported by staff from the local Connexions Service. The advisors will offer impartial guidance and support and help individuals or groups of students to

- explore the range of opportunities open to them in education, training and employment
- make realistic decisions about their next steps
- develop a plan of action
- research higher education courses and work through the application process

Finance and Welfare

Through Bedford College guidance will be provided on all matters relating to the financial implications of being a student, these include:

- student support fund
- benefits
- educational trusts and charities
- debt

Other Services

Advisors have a good network of contacts with local statutory and voluntary agencies and are able to make referrals for more specialist advice where necessary. Advice is also offered for students requiring accommodation.

Additional Support

This is provided by the Foundation and Community Education programme area. We work hard to ensure that each individual's additional support needs are identified and met. The range of student support available includes:

- one-to-one classroom support
- group or individual out-of-classroom support
- specialist equipment and aids
- specialist assessments
- advice on access and mobility
- specialist consideration in examinations

Student Services

Student Personal Advisors support tutors to monitor attendance and identify students giving cause for concern. They can offer a range of guidance and support to help students stay on track.

Student Services staff are involved in a range of other activities, for example, they provide a contact point for students wishing to raise a grievance or to report incidents of harassment or bullying. In such cases Student Services maintain an independent role and will liaise with the appropriate managers in order to resolve the situation satisfactorily. They are also responsible for monitoring equality of opportunity for students.

Resourcing

The estimated costs shown below would involve the College in a discussion and agreement with the Northamptonshire LSC and subsequently moving forward in partnership with the sponsoring LLSC to access the Capital Fund. This will enable us to provide facilities of an excellent standard to learners.

The Options are:

- New Build
- Leasing/Refurbishment in Rushden town centre
- Bussing (an alternative but not preferred option)

ENVI – The Estimated Costs

Option A – build

Capital costs of build	2000m2 @ £2500	£5,000,000
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Revenue Income:

240 students minimum (210 FTE @ £4.4k p.a.)	£924,000
rising to 350 FTE students by year 3	£1,540,000

Revenue Expenditure:

Teaching costs (staff and materials) based on College model	£462,000
Rising to costs at year 3	£770,000

Premises costs @ £30/m2	£60,000
Central costs @ £100 per FTE (year 1)	£21,000
As above for year 3	£35,000

Net annual income years 1 and 2	£381,000
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Net annual income years 3 on	£675,000
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Payback in 8.3 years

Option B – Leasing/Refurbish

For lease option the lease costs are assumed at £100/m2	£200,000
Refurbishment costs are assumed @ £600/m2	£1,200,000

Net annual income years 1 and 2	£181,000
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Net annual income years 3 on	£475,000
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Payback in 3.8 years (but lease costs will increase)

Option C – transport

Student transport costs @ option B = £185,280 + vat =	£217,704
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