

Suffolk training provider is highest national achiever for training excellence

Date of issue 5 November 2008

Publication number 289

Training provider West Suffolk College, based in Bury St Edmunds, has been recognised as the highest national achiever in terms of the official standards set for delivering high quality training to employers in Suffolk.

The *Training Quality Standard* (TQS) highlights West Suffolk College's excellent track record in responding to employer needs and its ability to offer high quality training at a time and place to suit employers in seven areas of training provision: Construction, Engineering, Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism, Management and Leadership, Health Care, Social Care and Children and Young People's Workforce Development.

Martyn Wagner, Vice Principal Business and Student Services, said: "We are delighted that West Suffolk College has gained the TQS standard in seven areas, all of which are priority sectors for the locality and wider region. Employer Engagement is central to the College's strategy and offer.

"The TQS provided us with an additional focus and we have used it to ensure that we have a consistent approach across all our employer provision. The TQS built on work we had done previously in ensuring we met other quality standards.

"TQS is the most challenging kitemark that we have worked towards. We have introduced a dedicated Charter for Employers which is effectively our promise to them. It sets out what we will do, what course delegates can expect and what to do if we fail to meet their expectations."

West Suffolk College principal Dr Ann Williams said: “No other organisation has achieved seven accreditations. This is a fantastic achievement for the College. I would like to thank all those staff involved in this for undertaking what was a challenging additional task last year, and congratulate Vice Principal Martyn Wagner and Head of Business Development Elizabeth Bray for their leadership.”

Martyn Wagner said: “This is a tremendous achievement which reflects the hard work and dedication shown by all the teams over a sustained period of time. We would like to thank all our employers and partners for their support. “

Judith Mobbs, Area Director for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Suffolk, said: “I would like to congratulate West Suffolk College for being recognised as the highest achieving training provider in the county. Obtaining not just one, but seven TQS accreditations is an impressive achievement. It demonstrates the consistent high quality support offered to employers and the excellent training provided by the College. I look forward to more providers in Suffolk working to achieve the accreditation.”

The *Training Quality Standard* was officially launched by Skills minister David Lammy on 8th May this year and has been developed to give employers a benchmark for choosing training provision and sets providers apart from the competition.

Employers have been involved every step of the way in the creation of the assessment and accreditation system for the Training Quality Standard. During the assessment process training providers are assessed against two key criteria; provider responsiveness to employer needs and provider excellence in a particular vocational area.

Training providers who have applied to receive this accreditation so far include colleges, universities, commercial and publicly funded training organisations and large employers. Including West Suffolk College, there are currently 60 training providers in the UK who have reached the new standard and a further 200 who are currently being assessed.

West Suffolk College is also taking part in Colleges Week from 10-16 November which is a celebration of the role colleges play across the country in unlocking talent in communities and transforming the lives of learners.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors

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.