

# SECTION 1

## 1 Introduction

1.1 LSC Essex's Strategic Area Review which concluded in Spring 2005 determined that current Further Education provision in South Essex was not meeting the needs of learners, local communities or employers. The 16-19 Competition is one of a number of co-ordinated responses from LSC Essex designed to tackle the low aspirations prevalent in the Thurrock area.

1.2 The competition will be led by LSC Essex, working in collaboration with the Thames Gateway Education and Skills Commissioning Board, Thurrock Council and Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation.

1.3 This information pack provides the core information that applicants will need to refer to when preparing a proposal for the Thurrock 16-19 Competition. In summary the pack contains:

Section 1: National policy context

Background to 16-19 Competitions

Section 2: Statement of Need

Section 3: The competition process (including selection criteria)

Section 4: Supporting information

1.4 Applicants will need to access a broader range of information than is contained in this pack. Section 4 contains details of additional resources available and applicants should regularly check the competition website for new information:

[http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/1619\\_essexcompetition.htm](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/1619_essexcompetition.htm)

## **2 Policy Context**

- 2.1 The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) published its *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners* in July 2004. The strategy summarised the Government's plans for early years, primary and secondary schools, 14-19 education and training, adult skills and higher education (HE).
- 2.2 The strategy sets out the Government's view that choice is best delivered by opening up the provider market and giving institutions greater autonomy in serving their communities so that successful provision can expand and local strengths be fully exploited. To help achieve this for 16-19 year olds, the strategy includes:
- measures to make it easier for leading 11-16 schools to open sixth forms
  - competitions, decided at local level, for new substantial 16-19 provision
  - a new 16-19 capital budget combining school and FE resources to support investment in new 16-19 provision.
- 2.3 The Government's White Paper: *Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances* (DfES March 2006) requires the LSC to:
- use its funding and powers to secure rapid and high quality implementation of the 16-19 entitlement in every area
  - ensure that young people benefit from five new specialist diplomas from September 2008 onward, with 14 Diplomas available nationwide by 2013.
  - The Government has in addition included an expectation that post-16 participation rates in England in total will rise to 90% by 2015.

## **3 16-19 Competitions**

- 3.1 Where a local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has identified a need to expand 16-19 provision by 200 or more places, it must invite bids from potential providers asking them to set out proposals to meet these needs. The local LSC does this by organising a competition as set out in the LSC

Guidance for 16-19 Competitions published in December 2005, available at:  
[http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/1619\\_essexcompetition.htm](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/1619_essexcompetition.htm)

3.2 LSC guidance states that a competition for new 16-19 provision will be held where:

- a need is identified for places for 200 or more new learners over two years
- there is a need to improve the quality of provision, and/or
- there is a need for a better balance of provision to meet the needs of young people.