The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) today announces the launch of an historic initiative to improve the nation’s skills. The Skills Campaign focuses on the theme: ‘Our future. It's in our hands’ and has been created to inspire people and business to improve their skill levels. This will ultimately support the target set by Lord Leitch in his review of skills for the UK to become a world leader in all levels of skills by 2020. The campaign will be one of the biggest ever undertaken by the Government.

A fully integrated media and communications campaign has been created with input from a wide range of partners across the learning and skills sector. The campaign is based on work developed by Leo Burnett, Mindshare and Hill & Knowlton using at least £20m of the LSC’s existing marketing and communications budget over the next three years.

The advertising campaign, created by Leo Burnett London, builds on the insight that it is our skills that enable us to take control of our future and that it’s up to each and every one of us to take this opportunity to have control over our future lives.

‘Our future. It's in our hands’ is an inspiring and encouraging call to action, to remind everyone that we all have the innate ability to acquire new skills and that
we can do it together. The campaign uses hands literally to communicate this message – painting and shaping them like a 3-dimensional canvas to create amazing images.

The campaign consists of TV, posters, press, radio and online. The TV is directed by Carl Erik Rinsch at RSA Films and the print was shot by photographer Tif Hunter – both award-winning artists. Renowned body painters, Phyllis Cohen and Sarah Bee transformed human hands into mountains, tulips, swans and many other images. Scenes were animated and enriched by Digital Domain, the same animation company who created Lord of The Rings.

A three to five year communications strategy aims to help raise awareness and change attitudes to learning and signposts individuals and businesses to a range of skills programmes and training services managed by the LSC and many other partners.

Due to the importance of the campaign and the commitment in the Leitch review of skills to introduce a ‘culture change’ campaign, the LSC has leveraged existing marketing and communications budgets from across its portfolio of programmes and services such as Train to Gain, Education Maintenance Allowance, Adult Learning Grant, Apprenticeships and others to support the development and delivery of the skills campaign.

These will now carry the “Our Future. It’s in our hands.” strap line as well as introduce the painted hands imagery. Partners such as learndirect and others across Further Education will also start to reflect the strap line and imagery in their marketing and communications.

Chris Banks, chairman of the Learning and Skills Council said:
“We are committed to raising awareness about the need for skills and the benefits of training amongst learners and employers. This new campaign brings together our existing activities under the “Our future. It’s in our hands“ theme to make it easier for people to make informed decisions about their future and skills.”

Overseeing and directing the development of the campaign is the LSC’s Head of Marketing and Communications, Nicky Brunker said: “Our Future. It’s in our hands” gives the further education sector a voice and puts learning and skills on the boardroom agenda as well every person’s to do list. We have to inspire people to be as bold and as keen to learn as when they were children – nothing seems to phase my five year old – and this campaign taps into a very simple idea that we’re all born with the ability to learn.

“The creative use of hands in a metaphorical way makes it very distinctive. There isn’t anything on our screens or in our newspapers at the moment that looks like this. We hope that it will generate discussion around dinner tables, pubs and water coolers across the country. And then we want people to act and call the 0800 011 30 30 number or search online for “in our hands”.”

Bill Rammell, Minister of State, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills said: “This is a vital investment and it is hugely important we use this money effectively. It can really make a difference. It represents 0.3% of the adult budget that we will spend this year but will have a reach far beyond that. It has the power to change culture, change lives, change our country. This investment aims to encourage and empower people to take control of their lives and improve their skills. The alternative is economic decline and social immobility rather than realising our vision of being world class in skills able to compete with the best.”

-ENDS-
Notes to editors

Learning and Skills Council (LSC)

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.

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