The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), in association with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), last night announced Matthew Boulton College, Birmingham and Usworth Sixth Form College, Sunderland, as the joint winners of the prestigious Further Education Design Excellence Awards 2008.

The awards celebrate design excellence in the Further Education (FE) sector and entries were judged on their innovation, excellence, sustainability, adaptability and ‘feel good factor.’ The winning architects, Bond Bryan Architects for Matthew Boulton College and Dewjo’c Architects for Usworth Sixth Form College, were presented with a cheque for £5000 each by John Taylor, LSC National Council Member and Jack Pringle, former President of RIBA at an awards ceremony in London last night.

The judges praised Matthew Boulton College for creating an inspiring learning environment with excellent use of space. Usworth Sixth Form College was singled out for its bold design and its focus on sustainability that had created a welcoming place to learn.

This year saw an exceptionally high standard of entries, all of which were built in the last two years. The Kilburn Centre, College of North West London, claimed second place and was praised for creating a stimulating place to learn. The following were highly commended by the judges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Architect</th>
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<tr>
<td>Arcadia Fashion Retail Academy, London</td>
<td>Nightingale Associates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darlington College</td>
<td>Ellis Williams Architects</td>
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<td>Gloucester College</td>
<td>AWW</td>
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The awards ceremony took place at the RIBA & LSC Innovation by Design Conference. The event provided those leading capital projects with the opportunity to consider how the current investment will ensure high quality colleges for the future and speakers included Bill Rammell MP, Minister of State, Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education who delivered the keynote address.

Chris Banks, Chairman of the LSC, said: “I am hugely impressed by the innovation shown by the winning colleges, they have created state of the art, inspiring places that enable world-class learning and teaching. High quality facilities like these will increase participation, attainment and raise standards across the FE sector.”

Andy Wilson, Principal of Westminster Kingsway College and Chair of the RIBA LSC Forum, said: “The winning colleges are excellent examples of innovation in design. The provision of such intelligently designed facilities will enable students to enjoy a high quality of learning, and leave an excellent legacy for generations to come.”

Last month, John Denham, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills announced a £2.3 billion strategy, Building Colleges for the Future, to continue to renew and modernise the FE Estate and ensure world-class education and facilities for all. Over 150 colleges throughout England are set to benefit from the investment.

-ENDS-

For further information and images of the shortlisted buildings please contact:

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Notes to editors

Further Education Design Awards 2008 Judging Panel:

Ian Caldwell  Chair and Director of Estates and Facilities, King’s College London
Philip Head  Director of Infrastructure & Property Services, LSC
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.

RIBA

The Royal Institute of British Architects, one of the most influential architectural institutions in the world, has been promoting architecture and architects since being awarded its Royal Charter in 1837. Then the RIBA’s remit was ‘the general advancement of architecture’. Today’s mission statement continues to embody these sentiments.

The RIBA is a member organisation, with 40,000 members, headed by President Sunand Prasad, and with an executive of 170 staff at the HQ in central London and in a dozen regional offices.

The RIBA is a registered charity (number 210 566).