The LSC is at the forefront of addressing equality and diversity, is perceived as a good role model in the learning and skills sector and has had significant impact and influence on equality and diversity, suggests new research carried out by ECOTEC on behalf of the LSC.

The research, which reviewed and evaluated the LSC’s Single Equality Scheme, found that:

- employees consider the LSC to be a good employer, and treats staff fairly and with respect
- there has been strong and robust evidence of progress on actions contained in the Scheme’s Action Plan
- staff at all levels are empowered to take action on equality
- the ability of staff to interpret national strategy flexibly has enabled them to meet local priorities effectively.
- provider networks developed and supported by the LSC have stimulated provider change through peer learning and shared information exchange; providers have become more responsive to the needs of different groups.

**Chris Banks, LSC Chair says:**

“I am very encouraged by ECOTEC’s assessment that the LSC is at the forefront of addressing equality and diversity. It is clear from the report that leadership and challenge from our National Council and Equality and Diversity Committee combined with the commitment and expertise of our staff up and down the country have been instrumental in
“But even with this positive assessment of progress, we know we have more to do. The recession will be felt by everyone, of course. But some effects are disproportionately felt by older and younger people, ethnic minorities, women, disabled people and young working class men. I believe they all need the support of the further education sector, which we are part of. Up and down the country, there is some outstanding work being done with the people who need the help most. Our shared aim has to be to get even better at engaging with those who have multiple disadvantages, so they can be part of the workforce that will be involved in the upturn when it comes.

“Moreover, we need to ensure that our momentum is sustained and built on throughout and beyond Machinery of Government changes. The LSC’s next steps will be to develop an action plan which prioritises the action the LSC can take in its final year, and makes suggestions to the new agencies which will replace the LSC in 2010.”

-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.

Young People’s Learning Agency

From April 2010, responsibility for securing sufficient education and training provision for all young people, including those aged 16-19, and 19-25 year olds being assessed. The Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) will be established as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDBP) to support local authorities and to ensure funding and budgetary control within the system.

Skills Funding Agency

Learning and Skills Council
Cheylesmore House Quinton Road Coventry CV1 2WT
T: 0845 019 4170  F 024 7682 3675 www.lsc.gov.uk
Skills Funding Agency’s main function will be to route funding swiftly, efficiently and securely to FE colleges and other providers, primarily in response to customer (employer and learner) choice on programmes such as Train to Gain. It will operate through customer focused services: National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), Employer Skills Services, Adult Advancement and Careers Service, Learner Skills Services. As the single contractor for all publicly funded post-19 education and training the commissioning and funding arrangements will be simpler and employers will find it easier to access the training and trainees they need.

Single Equality Scheme

The LSC’s Single Equality Scheme describes in a single document how the LSC fulfils its statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity and avoid discrimination, demonstrating its commitment to placing the promotion of equality and diversity at the centre of every aspect of its work. It is intended to meet the requirements for race equality, disability equality and gender equality schemes, and to implement these in an inclusive way which takes account of religion and/or belief, sexual orientation and age.

Equality and Diversity Committee

The LSC’s National Council is supported by an expert Equality and Diversity Committee, which is responsible for ensuring that equality and diversity is a thread running through all of the LSC’s work. The Committee is chaired by Dame Mary Marsh, the Director of the Clore Social Leadership Foundation, and former Chief Executive of the NSPCC, while other members include a college Principal and the Director of the Black Training and Enterprise Group.

Research

The research carried out by Ecotec included an audit of 163 documents, such as equality monitoring data, progress reports and evaluations, interviews and focus groups with LSC staff, stakeholders, providers and learners.

ECOTEC

ECOTEC specialises in economic and social development. They work with major organisations to understand the facts and help meet their challenges. They are an international provider of research, consulting and management services and aim to deliver real benefit to society through the work that they do. For more than twenty years they have worked with clients in the public, private and not for profit sectors including the LSC.

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