THE LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL

CONSULTANCY SERVICES FRAMEWORK
FOR MAJOR BUILDING PROJECTS

Guidelines and Working Practices
for Colleges and FE Providers

September 2008
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Introduction

This document explains the purpose, benefit and process to colleges and FE providers of using the LSC Consultancy Framework to deliver construction projects and programmes. It explains the objectives of the framework, how the framework is governed, and how the framework is operated.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has a large, ongoing capital expenditure programme covering over 400 further education providers in England. The aim of the programme is to enhance, renew or refurbish the whole FE estate by 2014 to produce world-class buildings for world-class teaching and learning. Between 2008-09 and 2010-11 the LSC expects to allocate over £1.5 billion in capital grants towards the costs of colleges’ and other FE providers capital projects.

In recent years FE capital projects have become larger and increasingly complex in nature and the successful delivery of the capital programme is underpinned by the need for providers to be advised by proficient and effective teams of professional consultants.

Historically the tendering and procurement process has been time and resource intensive with colleges and FE providers being required to advertise qualifying consultancy appointments in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) before consultants are appointed. This requirement has resulted in a time consuming process and it can take up to 4 months to appoint consultants.

To facilitate the more effective delivery of capital projects the LSC has established a panel of cost, design and project management consultants (“the framework consultants”) for colleges to employ when undertaking capital projects.

The framework consultants were procured through an OJEU compliant tender process; OJEU reference 2007/S 70-111058. Further OJEU tendering processes are therefore not required before colleges can engage these framework consultants. Professional consultants for projects may therefore be appointed on a much shorter, simpler ‘best fit’ basis saving considerable time, procurement resources and costs to all parties.

Assisted by Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE) formerly known as SECE, the LSC has undertaken a robust and rigorous assessment procedure resulting in the selection of the framework consultants. All selected consultants have demonstrated, amongst other things:

- competence in the relevant disciplines;
- ability to resource adequate consultancy services to meet college and FE provider requirements;
- the ability and willingness to work collaboratively with the college or FE provider as client, fellow consultants and contractors as part of the project team; and
- a willingness to share knowledge and best practice to help develop and improve the operation of the frameworks.

The framework consultants have agreed to enter into framework agreements (“the frameworks”). Through these frameworks they agree to provide colleges and other
FE providers with consultancy services in accordance with the framework specifications and guidelines and within an agreed fee range.

The framework is split into 3 geographic regions North, Central and South. For each region, the framework contains a list of project management, design and cost management consultants respectively. Colleges will be able to appoint consultants following a selection procedure which should be more time and resource efficient.

For those colleges undertaking capital projects estimated to cost £5 million or more and requiring capital grant support (including fee support) from the LSC, the use of the framework will be mandatory. The LSC anticipates that due to the benefits associated with the framework, many colleges undertaking capital projects of less than £5 million or not requiring LSC grant support will choose to adopt the framework voluntarily.

The framework is to run initially for four years commencing in April 2008, with an option to continue operation for a further two years.

The Guidelines and Working Practices were updated during September 2008 and will be periodically updated and refined as the LSC continues to operate and develop the framework.
Section 1 – About the Frameworks
What is the LSC Consultancy Framework?

The Framework Agreements comprise a commitment to the establishment and maintenance of a long term relationship between the LSC and a number of project management, design and cost management consultants. By entering into a framework agreement with the LSC, the consultants, together with their supply chain partners agree to provide colleges and FE providers with consultancy advice and services in accordance with defined working practices and guidelines and within an agreed fee range.

The use of the frameworks is mandatory for all FE colleges, specialist colleges and other qualifying external institutions, applying for capital grant support, where projects are likely to cost £5 million or more.

It is a condition of LSC grant support (including fee support) that colleges will procure consultancy advice for such projects in the framework disciplines in accordance with the framework guidelines (see section 3).

The frameworks are available for use by other FE providers, but utilisation of the frameworks are only mandatory where providers are already in receipt of or propose to apply for LSC capital grant funding.

As with existing practice individual colleges and FE providers are responsible for obtaining the necessary legal and procurement advice prior to procuring consultancy advice from the framework.

Consultancy contracts will be between the individual colleges or other FE providers as employer and the selected consultant.

Diagram 1: The Relationship between the framework agreements and the underlying consultancy contracts
Objectives of the LSC Consultancy Framework

The objectives of the LSC consultancy frameworks are to:

- secure a consistently high standard of consultancy advice for colleges within the project management, design and cost management disciplines through the use of proven consultants chosen from a pre-tendered list who collectively have the skills and experience to meet any of the challenges faced across a wide range of further education projects;
- provide predictability of cost outcome and reduction in risk within capital projects;
- streamline processes avoiding duplication and waste and providing value for money; and
- reduce time spent by colleges and FE providers on pre-construction activities thereby helping colleges and FE providers to accelerate the delivery of capital projects.

The goals of the framework are to:

- add value to the whole life of a project by engaging all parties in joint ownership and collaboration;
- gain through aggregation, leverage and economy of scale, avoiding bespoke procurement thus significantly reducing hidden cost; and to
- Improve processes for design development, procurement and construction through the sharing of good practice and technical and market knowledge.

Benefits of the LSC Consultancy Framework

In the framework, all parties realise gains. These gains include reductions in cost and time and improved quality through:

- improved predictability of outcome and risk reduction within projects;
- standardised and streamlined processes with continuous feedback and performance improvement;
- efficient resource deployment;
- shared skills and knowledge;
- early supplier involvement and reduced aborted work;
- reduced burden, cost and time of OJEU compliant procurement; and
- meaningful and consistent engagement with the whole supply chain

The framework reduces demands on colleges and other FE providers and brings these benefits within their reach.
Range of services to be provided by the LSC Consultancy Framework

The framework covers 3 separate disciplines within the capital project procurement process:

- Project Management including:
  - Project Manager
  - Strategic Property Advisor
  - CDM Coordinator operating across the framework

- Cost Management including:
  - Quantity Surveyor
  - Supply Chain Manager

- Design Services including:
  - Architect (including landscape architect and interior designer)
  - Mechanical and Electrical Engineer
  - Civil and Structural Engineer
  - Acoustician, ICT and other specialists
  - Land and Building Surveyor
  - BREEM Assessor (operating across the framework)

The exact scope of consultancy services required by a college or FE provider will be determined by the specific project requirements. However, for guidance, roles typically adopted by the above disciplines are listed in appendix 1.

Scope of the LSC Consultancy Framework Arrangements

The framework consultancy arrangements cover the whole of England and are divided into three regions:

- Northern - including the North West, North East, and Yorkshire and Humberside
- Central - including East Midlands, West Midlands, and the Eastern Region
- Southern - including the South East, South West and London

Appendix 2 contains a list of the framework consultants eligible for selection by region and by discipline. Colleges will be expected to appoint consultants from within their region, unless otherwise agreed with the LSC.
SECTION 2 – ROLES, GOVERNANCE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE
The LSC’s Role

The LSC is responsible for the governance and leadership of the framework arrangements. Hampshire County Council (HCC) has provided resource to the LSC to fulfill the framework management role. It is the framework management role to manage the expressions of interest phase of appointments and to support providers where requested; to maintain records of appointments made through the framework and report on issues arising from the operation of the Frameworks in practice.

Through simple quality assurance processes, the LSC will ensure colleges are complying with the guidelines and working practices and will encourage framework consultants to work collaboratively with colleges and FE providers, the LSC and each other to develop and improve the Framework.

LSC’s role is to:

- provide leadership and guidance;
- champion the collaboration ethos over traditional professional responsibilities;
- champion culture change, new ways of working, new behavioural habits;
- champion openness;
- recognise challenges and openly address them with all participants;
- ensure continued development of the rules of governance and working practices; and
- facilitate data capture, learning and performance improvement

Governance

The LSC is responsible for governance, overall management and leadership of the framework.

Governance of the framework takes place through the LSC Finance and Funding Board, the steering group, the framework strategic forum, and through the RIBA learning and skills forum framework improvement group.

The steering group comprises a representative from the LSC Infrastructure and Property Services team, the Framework Manager, Regional Property Advisor representation, a member of the LSC Procurement Department and a member of the LSC Legal Department. The group meets monthly and any changes to the constitution will require prior approval through the Finance and Funding Board.

The strategic forum includes Framework Managers from the consultancy firms appointed to the framework. This provides the consultancy firms with the opportunity to influence the framework arrangements and to collaborate with other framework consultancies. The group meets quarterly within each region.

The RIBA learning and skills forum, framework improvement group includes framework managers from the consultancies. The group is organised by region and by discipline and provides consultants with the opportunity to respond to issues of importance to the framework.
The governance of individual projects is the responsibility of the college concerned as the contracting authority.

The inter-relationships are shown in the diagram below:

**Diagram 2: The Inter-Relationships in the Governance of the Frameworks**

Support

The LSC ensures that support is available to providers wanting to check the results of submissions made by consultants in mini tenders against the fees on which the consultants were selected for inclusion in the Framework.

The framework manager records and collates all appointments in order to monitor and address any operational issues arising. Colleges seeking further guidance or support in using the frameworks should contact the framework manager at HCC.

**Terms of Reference**

The LSC’s terms of reference include:

- provision of leadership and decision making;
- stewardship of the framework process, ensuring transparency and probity;
- approval of refinements to the rules of governance;
- empowering the steering group and strategic forum;
- responding to input from the steering group and strategic forum; and,
- arranging meetings on a quarterly basis.
The steering group’s terms of reference are to:

- scrutinise and support in further developing governance arrangements;
- review proposals for framework development;
- make recommendations to the LSC; and
- promote the benefits of active participation in the framework across the three regions and the three disciplines.

The strategic forum’s terms of reference are to:

- review framework arrangements and make recommendations to the LSC;
- identify areas for improvement and make recommendations;
- influence design practices;
- lead and contribute to work groups to drive best practice; and
- lead on procurement policy.

The RIBA learning and skills forum framework improvement group’s terms of reference are to:

- Provide formal responses to the strategic forum and the RIBA learning and skills group on issues of importance to the framework;
- Provide a forum for the discussion of issues of interest to the RIBA learning and skills forum, which are relevant to the framework agreements other than procedural, administrative, or performance review related activities;
- To seek continual improvement of the LSC framework agreements.
SECTION 3 – WORKING PRACTICES
How and when is the Framework to be used?

The Framework should be used if a building project under consideration is likely to cost more than £5 million in total, and require LSC grant support. If the Framework is not used, there is still a requirement to adhere to any EU regulations that apply, together with any applicable institution financial regulations. This includes those under the Charities Act if the organisation receives charitable relief – and such funding conditions as may be imposed by other funders such as regional development agencies.

Step 1 - Strategy

- agree an educational/training strategy with the governing body and LSC Area Office;
- include agreement of a five-year forecast of student numbers for each of the Sector Subject Areas, split between HE, FE 14-16, 16-19 and apprenticeships;
- from this, develop and agree a broad Property Strategy with your Regional Property Advisor. (Guidance for this is in the Capital Handbook).

Step 2 - Capacity

- decide whether there is adequate in-house capacity at senior management team level, or whether there is a need for additional client-side property expertise to help organise the appointment of other consultants and develop feasibility studies;
- if it is concluded that help is needed, proceed to Step 3 – Selection Process to appoint a Strategic Property Adviser
- if it is concluded that there is adequate in-house expertise to brief a team direct, proceed to Step 3 – Selection Process to appoint the appropriate consultancy support.

Step 3 – Selection Process

At this stage a decision has to be taken on how far through the process the consultant is to be appointed. This may just be for the feasibility study stage only, or it may be to have the option to continue with that same team through to Approval in Principle (AiP) and, potentially, through to project completion.

a. Briefing

Depending on the decision, a clear brief of the services required will need to be developed, e.g. feasibility study or feasibility study plus project development and execution.

Guidance on what should be included will be given both by the Strategic Property Advisor or the in-house expertise and from the framework manager or the LSC’s Capital Handbook. The Professional Institutions of the main consultant bodies also
have standard terms of engagement which offer a useful reference for the scope of services that should be included. See RIBA, RICS, ACE. The Framework mini competition template document (appendix 9) also contains standard schedules of services which may be used as a basis to brief the required duties.

If listed buildings, trees or flooding are likely to be major factors affecting a project, then appropriate planning and environmental advice will also need to be procured. If mining subsidence or radon is a potential problem, then geotechnical services should be procured.

Although Land Surveying, Building Surveying, and ICT were originally included under the framework design services, it was difficult to determine a defined scope for these services, and hence the framework fees for these specific disciplines cannot readily be applied to any project. It is therefore recommended that the Provider defines a scope of services for these disciplines and invites a bid from the Framework Design Services Consultant.

Legal services, site searches, valuation, property marketing and development advice are not included in the Frameworks so it will be necessary to procure whatever specialist advice is required, independently. The Strategic Property Advisor or in-house expert can assist in developing the brief and obtaining competitive quotations.

It is recommended that the Project Manager is the first appointment. The Project Manager should then assist the Provider in making the appointment of Design, and Cost Management Consultants. The three disciplines can be separate appointments run concurrently if the Provider has sufficient in-house expertise to manage the process. The roles and responsibilities of the appointed consultants should be made clear to the whole project team.

These roles and responsibilities are very important as they impact on the legal duties of care and the requirement for collateral warranties etc.

The option for novation of design consultants to a contractor, and the retention of the advice of others may need to be incorporated into the various consultant appointments.

Lead by the Project Manager, the whole project team needs to give careful consideration to the advantages of various construction procurement options and the effect on the time-quality-cost balance.

Regular discussions should also be held with the LSC’s Regional Property Advisor to agree the optimum procurement route for the project and deliver the required project outcome.

b Consultant Selection – (4 – 6 Weeks) –Refer to appendix 4

Expression of Interest

Through the framework manager, an expression of interest request will be issued to all consultancies on the relevant framework list. This self-scoring exercise enables the Framework Manager and the Provider to compile a short list for mini-competition.
A standard template is set out in appendix 10 for project descriptions to enable the Framework Manager to issue clear and accurate expression of interest documentation.

This process should take no more than a week and can be done electronically.

**Mini-competition**

At this stage at least three consultancies should be selected from whom a quality and fee bid will be invited. The bid should include:

- Proposed fee for the services required, based upon the tender fee rates. Under revised proposals, the core service fee will be provided by the Framework Manager.
- Confirmation that the resources are available to devote to the project
- Response to other local issue questions (stakeholder communication etc)

- A college may include specific consultancies in the mini competition that are on the framework and within their region, which are not included in the top three shortlisted firms. The college must however include all other consultancies who achieved equal or higher marks than the specific consultancy at expression of interest stage.

- Colleges must allow adequate timescales in which consultants can respond with a good quality bid. As a minimum consultants must be allowed 2 weeks to respond to the invitation to tender. If the project is more complex, or phased, a timescale of 3 – 4 weeks is recommended.

- Consultants are expected to include within their bid:
  - Proposed fee for the core services required based upon the tender fee rates, with any additional services clearly marked. Consultants are obliged to present rates for core services which are based upon the fee rates within their tender submission. Consultants cannot reduce their fees for individual projects. Under revised arrangements this information will now be provided by the Framework Manager.
  - Confirmation that the resources are available to devote to the project
  - Response to other local issue questions (stakeholder communication etc)

Following the assessment process colleges will be required to invite the consultants to take part in an interview. The college will complete a tender report, including all score sheets which have been used in the process, for the LSC Records, and will appoint the consultant. Feedback must be given to all unsuccessful firms.

- The LSC will monitor the volume of work being placed with Framework Consultants and act as an early warning on whether any of them might be at risk of becoming over-stretched.
Each bid and the interview will have to be scored and the score sheets retained as a formal record. Feedback is an important element of this process. Consultants should be given constructive feedback as to why they were not selected, in relation to the successful consultants. This should not be based on the fee bid. Your regional property advisor can offer guidance on providing effective feedback to consultants if required.

c. Appoint

Consultant appointments will be made using the GC Works 5 Form of consultancy appointment as a template, (see appendix 6) in accordance with the information issued in the ITT. The institution’s appointed solicitor will draw up the appointment document including any collateral warranties and performance bonds you will have stipulated as being required in the mini-tender brief.

There should be no material adjustments to the GC Works 5 standard form of contract (as amended) when used for the appointment of consultants from the framework.

d. Gateway Reviews

Appendix 5 provides guidance and an outline pro forma which should be used when undertaking gateway reviews. Gateway reviews provide quality assurance checks at key stages ensuring projects are fit to proceed prior to commencing to the next stage. It ensures that all parties sign up to the proposals and provide feedback on the framework arrangements. The mandatory gateway stages are:

- At the end of feasibility
- Submission of AiP
- Submission of AiD
- Project completion – On projects with a construction period of more than 2 years, there should be a further review at the mid point of construction

Each of these stages should correspond with points at which break clauses occur enabling a college to appoint a new consultant in the event of poor performance. Depending on project circumstances, interim gateways may be appropriate. These will be particularly valuable where performance remediation is required. When done in the spirit of performance improvement, it will engender the collaborative spirit, deter a blame culture and provide ‘early warning’ of performance shortfalls.

Additional criteria can be included within the gateway reviews depending on the requirements of individual projects and individual project teams. Colleges may want to discuss this further with their professional team and the RPA.

The outcome of the review should be fed back, and copies given to the LSC, and the Framework Manager to assist with overall monitoring of the Framework.

e. Performance Reviews

The teams are expected to conduct 360 degree performance reviews of the whole team and the client at gateway review stages as outlined above. Standard forms are attached at appendix 5.
Frequently Asked Questions

Q1 Can I employ a project sponsor/client advisor to assist the college with the project process?

All colleges undertaking a project need to understand the importance of a project sponsor/client advisor. Usually this will be a senior member of college staff who can devote adequate time to the project. Where this expertise is not available within a college it may be appropriate to appoint a project sponsor externally. It is important that this function does not duplicate the role of any of the consultants on the framework. Guidance on the role of the project sponsor is available at appendix 8.

Q2 What if I have already started the project process?

- Where colleges have already entered into contractual arrangements with consultants who are not on the Framework (following an appropriate procurement process), there will be no requirement to use the LSC Framework except where a college exercises a break clause at a key gateway or would otherwise be required to OJEU the consultancy appointment.

In this case, the college must ensure that appropriate provision is made in the appointment contract to break that appointment at key gateways, i.e. at the end of feasibility, and end of AiP. At these gateway reviews, and when the college submits an application for AiP or AiD approval (and/or when the college submits an application for project fee support) the college will need to provide evidence that it has been through a robust review of project team performance before continuing an appointment made outside the Framework.

This would be in accordance with the performance/gateway review process set out in the Framework guidelines for appointments within the Framework (using a Red, Amber, Green assessment). If Green, the college has established that it can continue with the consultant appointment. If either Amber or Red, the college will need to use the Framework. In these circumstances the existing consultant cannot be included (under OJEU regulations).

Therefore in either of the above cases, in the event that contractual arrangements cease to apply, i.e. if the colleges exercise a break clause at the end of feasibility or AiP, then the Framework must apply.

Q3 What if I like the Architect, but have concerns about the performance of their proposed sub-consultants – can I use one of the sub-consultants who are on the Framework but under another Architectural practice?

No. The matter will need to be addressed by the principal consultant with whom the College or Provider has a contractual relationship.

Q4 The College get on very well with the Project Managers who are on the Framework for a different region. Can we appoint them?
Rarely. This may happen in exceptional circumstances – for example, a complete lack of capacity in the subject region – when it might be permissible, but only with the express prior consent, of the LSC.

**Q5 Can I just appoint one consultant to do everything?**

During the development of the frameworks, consultants were required to tender on the basis of one or more of the following conditions of operation:

i) a multi-disciplinary consultancy

ii) a consortium - all members of the consortia shall be jointly and severally liable

iii) a lead consultant employing all required disciplines

Further information on the consultants appointed to the framework, can be found at appendix 2.

**Q6 Do I have to appoint all consultants at the feasibility stage?**

No. A Strategic Property Advisor can be appointed who from the framework, can procure the necessary expertise to establish the feasibility and viability of a proposal before committing to appointments of other consultants.
SECTION 4 – APPENDICES
Appendix 1 – Consultants’ role definitions
Appendix 2 – List of consultants appointed to the Framework
Appendix 3 – Expression of Interest Evaluation Form
Appendix 4 – LSC Consultant Selection Procedure
Appendix 5 – Gateway Review template forms
Appendix 6 – Example of GC works 5 Forms of Contract
Appendix 7 – Framework management contact details
Appendix 8 – The role of the Project Sponsor
Appendix 9 – Project Briefing Template
Appendix 10 – Mini Competition Template
Appendix 1

Range and scope of services subject to the LSC Consultancy Framework

- **Project Management:**
  - Project Manager
  - Strategic Property Advisor
  - CDM Coordinator operating across the framework

The Project Manager performs the informed client role, and will work closely with the LSC’s project champion to ensure full stakeholder consultation takes place. The Project Manager will report to the College Management Group and may be required to report to the non-executives in some cases, and will:

  - Advise the client of the project process, programme and financial position. This should include advice on cost, funding and the possible effect on college cash flow.
  - Lead the process of option selection using appropriate tools and methodology
  - Select other consultants and contractors to the agreed process
  - Assemble the project team
  - Ensure team roles and responsibilities are assigned, understood and carried through
  - Provide client challenge throughout the design and construction process
  - Lead the gateway reviews of the other consultants. The gateway review for the project manager must be carried out by the college.
  - Act as client Project Manager during and after construction.

This role would also combine meaning? Procure? Provide? key specialists to provide strategic property advice on all property, buildings and estate matters. The role will also oversee and deliver the CDM Coordinator role.
Cost Management

- Quantity Surveyor
- Supply chain manager

The Cost Manager will be responsible for the financial management of any project procured through the arrangement, with specific responsibility for:

- Feasibility studies and option appraisals
- Development and management of the agreed cost plan in conjunction with the project team
- Preparing regular reports on the financial standing of the project to the Project Champion and Project Manager in accordance with the LSC’s procedures.
- Leading the procurement process in conjunction with the other team members and the contractor to achieve cost and contractual certainty as well as appropriate procurement means to achieve a high quality building on completion.
- Financial management of the construction stage including cost forecasts, change control, interim payments and final account
- Supply chain development and financial management.

Design Services:

- Architect (including landscape architect and interior designer)
- Mechanical and Electrical Engineer
- Civil and Structural Engineer
- Acoustician, ICT and other specialists
- Land and Building Surveyor
- BREEAM Assessor (operating across the framework)

The service provider will provide a full design service and will:

- Undertake Feasibility studies and option appraisals
- Contribute design inputs to a process led by the Project Manager. Masterplanning.
- Provide a fully integrated design service for any major college project in accordance with the LSC’s guidelines and standards.
- Provide and manage an integrated design programme including key deliverables and milestones for all design disciplines.
- Ensure the design meets the client functional need and provides value for money.
- Carry out regular value management and engineering reviews.
- Obtain all necessary planning and other approvals.
- Work collaboratively with the other project team members to ensure the success of the project.
- Administer the building contract where applicable.
### Appendix 2

**Learning and Skills Council Framework Agreements.**

**List of Lead Consultants – Contact Information**

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<th>Design</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>Contact Name</th>
<th>Contact E-mail</th>
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<tr>
<td>Atkins Ltd</td>
<td>Mr. John Mercer</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Capita Symonds</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSS Architecture</td>
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Appendix 4 – LSC Consultant Selection Procedure

Input

- Is the project of a value of £5m +?
  - YES
    - Shortlist Consultants
    - Mini Competition (Including Interview)
    - Appoint Consultants
  - NO
    - College Preference of Procurement method

Output

- College Preference
- Consultants: Capacity, Preference, Experience
- LSC KPI/Cost
- Consultants provide written responses to additional information. Transparent procedure. Public Contracts Regulations 2006. (see page 12 of guidance)
- Expression of interest to all consultants

Process

- Inform Unsuccessful Consultants
- Report on Selection Submitted with Application for fee/grant support
- Appoint Successful Consultants
Appendix 7 – Framework Manager contact details

If a college is in need of assistance with any aspect of procuring services from the LSC frameworks, please contact:

Mark Jaloszynski
01962 846335
Hampshire County Council
Appendix 8

The Role of the Project Sponsor

We use this term to distinguish the role from others within the project or management structure. It might equally be called ‘client co-ordinator’ or ‘internal project manager’, but these can also lead to confusion.

Whilst clearly the project sponsor must work alongside a range of colleagues, it is additional to the more conventional college management roles. It is therefore additional to the roles of governors, the Principal, the Finance Director, the Estates/Resources Director or leading curriculum posts.

It is also very distinct from the Project Manager or Lead Consultant within the external professional advisory team.

Typical Duties

Every college and every project is different, so the content of the project sponsor role varies from project to project. Moreover, the role may change according to the expertise and other management responsibilities of the individual concerns.

The duties set out below are therefore a guide to what is typical, rather than an exclusive list.

The duties will also depend on what management structure the college has adapted for the project. For these purposes, we have assumed that there is a separate governor sub-committee for the project, and some form of project executive group (PEG) for decision making at a senior level, chaired by the Principal.

The project sponsor duties do not remove the need from other colleagues to work alongside the sponsor when appropriate (eg. Principal, Director of Finance).
Typical Duties

1. Preparing briefing papers or reports for governors and attending governor meetings.
2. Preparing reports for Project Executive Group, attending and minuting PEG meetings.
3. Audits such as headcounts, furniture etc
4. Generally representing the college at all necessary meetings.
5. Generally consulting within the college as necessary to achieve a consensus on key issues and briefing the Principal.
6. Participating as college representative in meetings and interviews for the appointment of advisers, contractors, etc.
7. Being the single point of contact between the college and the Project Manager, and the wider professional advisory team. Providing information to the design team.
8. Being the single point of contact between the college and the contractor where direct communication is appropriate.
9. Liaising with end users and evolving a single college response to key issues.
10. Accompanying designers and end users in briefing meetings and assisting in evolving the design to meet college requirements, and resolving queries.
11. Being the college point of contact for change control.
12. Disseminating information about the project within the college, and assisting with internal PR and communications. Being the information contact is a major part of the role.
13. Assisting with external PR and stakeholder engagement.
14. Holding information and maintaining college records.
15. Assist in selecting and procuring furniture.
16. Assisting in liaison with LSC.
17. Generally ensuring the college acts as a coherent, integrated client.
18. Generally assisting in advancing the project and being the day to day decision maker.
19. Assist in managing the handover, migration and commissioning process.

**Who might be the Project Sponsor?**

This role does not sit exclusively in any one professional discipline and the role can be undertaken from a variety of professional backgrounds.

It is probably worth pointing out that

- The project sponsor should not be drawn from the governors.
• It is very unlikely that the Principal could spare the time to perform the role effectively.

• It is unlikely that a secondment from the college’s external project management company would be sufficiently objective.

**Characteristics**

Whatever background they come from, it will be advantageous for the project sponsor to be

• A good communicator

• Organised and disciplined in project work

• Well respected within the college and informed (or prepared to learn) about the college.

• Available for at least 3 days each week, and ideally 5 days.

• Supported by an effective college PA.

• Whilst previous project experience is desirable, it is more important to understand education and the college, than to have an in depth knowledge of the property industry.

**Internal Appointments**

These are often advantageous because the sponsor knows the college well, is respected within the college, and can speak with the authority of the senior management or PEG.
To be really effective, the role needs to be undertaken at Director level. This could be via a promotion, or more probably be assigning the role to a senior manager. Previously, the role has been successfully undertaken by

- Vice-Principals, often in charge of curriculum
- Directors of Estates or Resources.
- Directors of Finance.

Clearly if a senior manager is to undertake the role, many of their day to day duties will need to be picked up by other colleagues. Many colleges achieve this by appointing deputies to the more routine aspects of their present role.

**External Appointments**

Many colleges feel that they do not have appropriate candidates and prefer to make a new appointment, either as a permanent member of staff or as a consultant. This has worked effectively, particularly when the consultant has been prepared to work hard to get to know the college and key staff. A consultant may also have some prior knowledge of other projects or the construction industry. External appointments have included

- Former college managers now acting as consultants
- Senior management or design professionals seeking a change of career direction.
- Secondments from professional firms with experience of FE, not otherwise engaged in the project.
- People from professional institutes (eg RIBA Client Design Advisor).
A Panel of Project Sponsors?

The project sponsor role is becoming increasingly important as projects get larger. To assist colleges the RIBA LSS Forum is seeking to formulate a list of possible individuals or companies who could provide this role.

Any suggestions to be forwarded to John Bryan in the first instance who will compile the database. This will then be handed over to others for maintenance. Please forward any suggestions to bryan@bondbryan.co.uk

Training

This role is not commonplace and there are no formal qualifications to prepare someone for the role. That said, the RIBA LSC Forum has asked LSN to put on a 2 day residential course this October.

For details, please contact BGriffin@lsneducation.org.uk or visit the LSN website at www.lsneducation.org.uk