LSC and RIBA launch website to offer guidance on college building design

- Information and advice available to colleges and their contractors at http://designguidance.lsc.gov.uk

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The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), in association with the Royal Institute of British Architects’ (RIBA) learning and skills forum, has today launched a website to advise the Further Education sector on the design of its colleges and offer guidance to providers embarking on major capital projects. The website will contribute to the delivery of world class buildings for world class education and can be found at:
http://designguidance.lsc.gov.uk

Aimed primarily at college principals and at senior management teams, the web based guidance tool provides information on both the process and the design elements of a capital project and provides colleges with examples of best practice from within the sector. The website is also designed to guide the professional project teams that support colleges, such as architects, engineers and quantity surveyors.

Ultimately the website is designed to ensure that new college buildings are developed to the best possible standards in the interests of learners. Research from the LSC published in March 2007 showed a direct correlation between capital investment and increased participation levels at FE colleges.

The website was developed for the LSC by architects Nightingales and will be updated periodically to reflect development and innovation in building design and technology,
changes in process that might occur and to ensure that examples of best practice within the sector reflect that which is current. It will allow users to access information which is particular to their own needs. This will be based on the curriculum mix which they currently offer, or aim to offer post development. The website will also deliver information on areas of importance such as sustainability and ICT.

Mark Haysom, Chief Executive of the LSC said:

“It is our aim to ensure that colleges, who are receiving LSC capital grant funding, are achieving the best possible outcomes from their capital projects. The design guidance website is the first of a suite of programmes in response to the identified needs of senior college managers. The guidance offered by the website will help to ensure that learners are provided with world class buildings and facilities, based on successful projects that have already taken place in the sector and that those buildings are an inspiration to current and future learners.

In the increasingly competitive global economy it is vital that the FE system can equip individuals across society with the core skills that will allow them to develop their human capital and sustain their employability. The provision of high quality education buildings not only enables this but also provides a focus for community activity.”

Bill Rammell MP, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, said:

“College Principals and senior managers now have access to comprehensive, professional guidance for planning capital projects. The interactive design website will allow them tailor advice to their particular needs, enabling the creation of truly inspiring and world-leading facilities for our learners at a time when the Government is investing unprecedented amounts in the FE estate.”
The launch of the design guidance tool comes at a time of record government investment in the Further Education (FE) estate, rising to £750 million per annum. The investment and additional design guidance supports the 14-19 and skills reform agendas; ensuring learners are equipped with high-quality skills for productive, sustainable employment and personal fulfilment, and employers have the right skills for their business to succeed in a competitive global economy.

-ENDS-

Notes for Editors:

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.

About RIBA learning and skills forum
The RIBA learning and skills forum includes a membership of representatives from the LSC Infrastructure and property services team, college representatives and property professionals who are currently active in the sector.

About Capital Design Guidance
The LSC, the forum and the FE sector is in agreement that there is a definite need for guidance on college design aimed at helping colleges with the process of embarking on a major capital project, something which the majority of principals and senior management teams will not have experienced previously.

Nightingales associates firm of architects, along with AA projects and Arup were commissioned to develop the design guidance on the LSC’s behalf. Consultation with the sector has taken place to help to inform the website, as well as input from the RIBA learning and skills forum and BECTA.

The guidance will take the form of a website, which senior management teams and design teams will be able to access, there will be no charge for using the website and accessing any information contained therein. Principals and senior management teams will be able to select the areas of guidance which are relevant to their own individual projects, curriculum and college structures. The design guidance will cover all aspects of design and process and will frequently be updated in order to keep all information current.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

LSC Website: www.lsc.gov.uk

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