LSC ANNOUNCE COLLEGE FINANCE DIRECTOR
OF THE YEAR WINNER 2007/08

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The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has announced, Matthew Burgess, Vice Principal of Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology, as College Finance Director of the Year 2008.

Matthew joined Gloucestershire College in the late 1990’s. He quickly identified that the College was in severe financial difficulties. The College was placed on a recovery plan and Matthew took the lead role in turning around the College’s finances, whilst simultaneously embarking on an ambitious Estates strategy to offload the College’s existing campuses and build two new campuses. Although in a recovery plan, the College did not need or receive any support from the Funding Council.

The outcome of this outstanding financial management was that Gloscat opened a new £20m Gloscat campus, in Cheltenham, in September 2002 without incurring any debt and similarly opened a £35m campus, in Gloucester Docks, in September 2007, again without incurring any debts.

The award, presented to the winner at Gloucester College, is now in its third year and is designed to promote excellence and good practice in the Further Education sector. The award recognises and celebrates the achievements of individual College Finance Directors.

On receiving the award, Matthew said: “I am delighted to accept this award on behalf of the finance team at the college. It is particularly pleasing to be recognised for the work we have done in the overall life of the college as well as finance”
Matthew was nominated for the award by Helen Sexton, CEO and Principal of National Star College. Helen said: “Matthew has played a leading role in turning around Gloucestershire College which has recently also received a good Ofsted inspection. Matthew has always been extremely supportive of the work of the National Star College and he is a greatly valued colleague within the Federation of Gloucestershire Colleges”

Richard Healey, LSC Director of Finance, said: “I presented the award to Matthew at their senior management team away day. He had absolutely no idea he had been nominated let alone won!”

The judging panel were unanimous that Matthew’s combination of financial acumen and contribution to the corporate life of the college were outstanding. Although there was a strong field of entries this year his was the outstanding entry. The LSC values very highly the financial management skills in colleges and this reward is a way of recognising outstanding achievement.

Bill Rammell MP, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, said “Strong financial management skills are vital to the success of any college. Economic excellence for the FE sector as a whole depends on good managers. The workforce is being increasingly professionalised and colleges know that top class teaching and learning has to be matched with top class marketing and a rigorous business focus to meet employer’s needs.”

“This Government has put in a record amount of funding into FE, up 52 per cent in real terms since 1997. I have nothing but praise for the colleges that are helping to maximise the enormous impact this is having on young adults lives. Stephen played a strategic role in delivering a world-class campus to serve learners, employers and the local community.”

Julian Gravatt, Director of Funding and Development at the Association of Colleges (AoC), said: “This award recognises the important role that Matthew has played in the transformation of his college. The success of that project is contributing to the futures of students in Gloucestershire and to the regeneration of the regional economy.”
Notes to 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.

AoC Finance Directors’ Annual Conference:

Gloucester College:

Gloucestershire College is one of the largest Further Education colleges in the UK, offering a wide range of education and training programmes, including A Levels and GCSEs, vocational qualifications, work-based learning, basic skills courses, Higher Education, short courses for business, part-time day and evening courses and English for overseas students.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

LSC Website: www.lsc.gov.uk

Gloucester College: http://www.gloscat.ac.uk

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