

“From Here to Sustainability”

Supporting Document for the Learning and Skills Council’s Strategy for Sustainable Development

For consultation

Responses are requested by 31 March 2005

Summary

This supporting document gives the background and details of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) strategy on sustainable development (SD). It explains why SD is so important and discusses ways in which the LSC can contribute to SD through: the learning opportunities it delivers; its management of resources; and its engagement with communities. We wish to consult widely on the strategy and this supporting document. We will consider all responses to the consultation issues carefully.

December 2004

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Background

Our biggest challenge in this new century is to take an idea that seems abstract – sustainable development – and turn it into a reality for all the world's people.

Kofi Annan, UN Secretary

- 1 The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is committed to developing and producing a strategy for sustainable development (SD). We need to do this so that all our providers and partners know just what is meant by SD, appreciate why SD is so important and understand why today's learners need to acquire skills for sustainable development (SD skills).
- 2 We intend to produce a strategy that sets out our vision, principles and objectives in simple and understandable terms. It will also contain a set of recommended actions so that providers and partners can prioritise what they do.
- 3 The LSC's strategy for SD needs to be incorporated into our policies and practices in the same way as policies on equality and diversity and quality improvement have been. It needs to be integrated into the LSC's business cycle, making it clear how the post-16 education and training sector, and the LSC itself, will promote and embed SD skills and manage resources in ways that encourage sustainability.
- 4 A vast amount of good practice in SD already exists across the post-16 education and training sector – in further education (FE) colleges, sixth form colleges, training providers, companies and communities. The proposed SD strategy and this supporting document build on that good practice in the suggested principles, approaches and recommendations. It has been produced using the guidance of an external advisory group, and takes in comments from a series of focus group discussions.
- 5 We now wish to consult widely on the strategy and this supporting document. We will consider all responses to the consultation issues carefully. We hope to produce an agreed final SD strategy by Summer 2005.
- 6 The strategy has also been informed by, and seeks to complement, existing national and regional frameworks and strategies. All the regions have brought together their stakeholders to draw up regional SD frameworks and some business sectors are developing SD strategies. The Government is consulting on and revising its own strategy for SD. Further information on the regional frameworks and the Government's SD strategy and consultation can be found at the Government's SD website (www.sustainable-development.gov.uk).

Existing projects in sustainable development

- 7 The LSC inherited a project to disseminate good practice in SD from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). As a result, the LSC funded several college-based projects in 2001/02. In 2002, as part of the Learning to Last Initiative (LLI), the LSC funded exploratory projects in SD education.

A major outcome of the LLI is the Learning to Last Toolkit (accessible on www.lstda.org.uk/sustainable/toolkit). This helps practitioners to learn more about education for SD.

- 8 The LSC also has responsibility for specific tasks as part of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Sustainable Development Action Plan (the SD Plan at www.dfes.gov.uk/sd). Launched in November 2003, the SD Plan sets out a series of steps that the DfES will take, with its partners, to embrace SD across the education system as an integral part of skills development. The LSC's role in completing these tasks is an important part of the wider LSC strategy for SD.

Partnerships

- 9 Our proposed SD strategy addresses and relates to the whole of the learning and skills sector and covers all types of providers and their staff and of course the LSC itself. We recognize that the LSC cannot implement this strategy on its own – we need the support and involvement of a vast and diverse group of key organizations and stakeholders. The partner organizations we need to work with are described in this document. Following consultation on the proposals we will, as part of the finally agreed strategy, produce an implementation and delivery plan and give our partner organizations suggestions on how they can help to deliver the strategy.

What is Sustainable Development?

If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it.

President Lyndon Johnson

- 10 Sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, both now and for generations to come. A widely used international definition is:

development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* (The Brundtland Report), Oxford University Press, 1987, page 43

- 11 Although the idea is simple, the task is substantial. It means meeting the following four objectives at the same time, both in the UK and in the world as a whole.
 - Social progress which recognizes the needs of everyone.
 - Effective protection of the environment.
 - Prudent use of natural resources.
 - Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

- 12 There are criticisms of this definition and these objectives, not least because of the connotations of “development” and the reference to economic growth. We recognize, however, that a truly SD undertaken globally need not entail high levels of economic growth for all concerned but different and more equitable ways of undertaking economic activity.
- 13 It is important to recognize that these objectives should be met at the same time. The **simultaneous** progression of our economic, social and environmental goals is essential if development is to be truly sustainable.
- 14 Implementing SD, therefore, means making sure that decision-makers are aware of these issues and are given the intellectual and practical tools that make it possible to think about all the elements of SD together. Where decisions are made in this group context, rather than in isolation, they are more likely to contribute positively to SD.
- 15 The LSC and the post-16 education and training sector need to discover creative new ways of achieving SD. However, we need to focus less on telling colleagues what SD is and more on equipping everyone with the skills necessary to develop a shared understanding of SD for all.

Why Sustainable Development is so Important

We need to embrace sustainable development across the education system...as an integral part of the skills development of this country and its economy.

Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for Education 2003

A threatened world

- 16 Increasingly, people are recognizing that we are living in an unsustainable world. We are dealing now with the failure to address such issues as:
 - climate change
 - encouragement of the existence of a wide variety of plant and animal species (biodiversity)
 - depletion of fish stocks
 - loss of cropland
 - deforestation
 - the spread of infectious diseases.
- 17 The global picture is stark. Humanity consumes almost 40 per cent of the world’s biological resources. Just 20 per cent of the world’s people use 80 per cent of the world’s resources and have an average income of over 80 euros a day, while one quarter of the world’s people live on less than one euro a day. One fifth of people have little access to health care or clean water. Yet the world’s population will grow by half – another 3 billion people – by 2050, having grown from 2.5 billion in 1950 to 6.1 billion in 2000, almost all in the poor world. In the UK, total road traffic has more than doubled since 1970, 16 per cent of mammals and birds are assessed as

“threatened”, and 1 in 3 adults do not engage in any education or training after leaving school.

- 18 Lack of balance in how we use natural resources and share our future planet has a direct impact on people’s daily lives. Pollution and the waste of resources means spending more to clean up the mess. Inequality between the rich West and the poor majority increases conflict and migration. It is in our own interest, as well as being intrinsically worthwhile, to take account of environmental, social and global economic development issues in everything we do.
- 19 Although SD might be easy to sell as a long-term concept, it is much more difficult to sell in the short term because it is commonly seen as a cost and another task and responsibility, rather than as an opportunity. But experience shows there is a strong and powerful business case for SD. Businesses, companies, colleges and training providers that adopt environmental management systems can make significant financial savings. They can also enhance their reputations, gain access to new markets and better motivate their staff.

Progress in the private and public sectors

- 20 In many respects, the private sector has responded more actively to the challenges of SD than the public sector. Many firms have recognized the business benefits of SD. Since the 1980s, thousands of companies have developed environmental management systems, social responsibility and sustainability audits and codes of conduct. Socially responsible and ethical investment funds, product labelling (for example fair-trade, organic, green) and consumer demand have put pressure on businesses to become more sustainable. Although much more needs to be done, industry has reduced greenhouse gas emissions more than the domestic, transport and public sectors have. Employers and trade unions increasingly recognize the importance of environmental sustainability and social responsibility and the critical role they play in helping employees acquire SD skills. Colleges and providers are businesses in their own right and those that have not yet tackled the SD agenda may consider following the example set by many private sector companies.
- 21 The LSC has a key role in helping the post-16 education and training sector achieve the transition to sustainability. For example, colleges and providers have significant “buildings and estate” responsibilities that are relevant to SD. In addition, they can make sure that SD is part of the way that they deliver learning by making it a “curriculum” responsibility. And in their local areas, colleges and providers can act as catalysts for and promoters of SD among businesses and the wider community, so adopting a “community” responsibility. Later in this supporting document we recommend some actions that could be taken to address these three aspects.

Vision

Today’s problems cannot be solved if we still think the way we thought when we created them.

- 22 The LSC's vision is that the post-16 education and training sector will commit and contribute to SD through the learning opportunities it delivers, its management of resources and its engagement with communities.
- 23 In particular, the LSC's vision is that over the next 10 years:
- the culture of the sector will change so that all providers and learners will know about SD and expect it to be part of normal practice
 - strategies, policies and plans that integrate and implement SD will be in place, understood and acted on
 - the LSC itself will integrate SD into its policies and everyday practices at all levels
 - risks and barriers that prevent SD will be anticipated and managed
 - continuous improvement in the sector's performance in SD will be reported, communicated and recognized
 - good practice in learning, management and community interaction will be recognized, understood and monitored.

Milestones

- 24 To achieve this vision we have set out the following milestones.
- 25 By 2007, providers and the LSC will:
- be able to decide on how best they can contribute to SD through a structured programme of capacity-building
 - agree on the guiding principles and approaches they will adopt
 - use their experience of implementing SD to identify risks and opportunities
 - understand what improvement looks like for the sector and develop a reporting framework
 - launch pilot projects to develop good practice and contribute towards SD in the sector.
- 26 By 2010, providers and the LSC will:
- embed SD skills in education and training programmes so that all learners are able to acquire these skills
 - produce sector plans and policies that integrate the principles of SD
 - understand and manage the risks and opportunities of promoting SD
 - report on their contribution to SD
 - operate a sector-wide programme of activity to implement SD.
- 27 We recognize that we will only know whether we have achieved the vision and milestones when we are clear about the indicators that will measure them, hence our intention to develop a shared understanding of what sector improvement will look like, and to develop and test reporting frameworks.

We also acknowledge that the strategy, and therefore the milestones, will need to be revised and improved over time.

Consultation issue 1: vision

- 28 Please comment on the appropriateness of the proposed vision and how it can be best measured.**

How We Get There – Guiding Principles and Approaches

The Union shall work for sustainable development of Europe based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and with a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment. It shall promote scientific and technological advance.

Constitution for the European Union, June 2004, Article 1-3.3

- 29** In order to deliver the vision and associated milestones, we need to accept three clear strategic elements so that we can state with confidence that the strategy is contributing significantly to SD. We need:

- principles that guide our approach to sustainability
- a robust SD framework to analyse our strategy and guide the decision-making process
- a clear set of objectives.

These three elements will guide and appraise LSC strategies, policies and plans and, used together, will help reduce negative impact, maximize shared gains and avoid damaging trade-offs.

Principles that guide how we approach sustainability

- 30** Having described and agreed our vision, we need to develop an approach that will help us achieve it. In its 1999 SD strategy *A Better Quality of Life* (www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/uk_strategy/content.htm), the UK Government suggested a set of guiding principles for SD. Some were established legal principles; others were “approaches” to decision-making. The principles that support and most directly relate to our vision and milestones are:

- putting people at the centre
- taking a long-term perspective
- combating poverty and social exclusion
- respecting environmental limits
- using scientific knowledge
- transparency, information, participation and access to justice.

A robust sustainable development framework

- 31 We recommend that the LSC adopts the Five Capital Model as a robust framework for exploring the full range of potential contributions providers and partners can make to SD.
- 32 Developed by Forum for the Future (www.forumforthefuture.org.uk) the Five Capital Model is used by the World Bank, the UK Department for International Development, Interface (a global carpet manufacturer) and Wessex Water among others, to help them analyse their strategies for world development, poverty relief and business excellence.
- 33 It is based on the premise that we are facing a sustainability crisis because we are consuming our stocks of natural, human, manufactured, social and financial capital faster than they are being produced. Unless we control the rate of consumption, we cannot sustain these vital stocks in the long term. By maintaining and trying to increase stocks of these capital assets, we can live off the income without reducing the capital itself. But for this to happen, we have to manage these capital assets in a sustainable way.
- 34 We derive the goods and services we need to improve the quality of our lives from five types of sustainable capital.
- **Natural capital** is any stock or flow of energy and material that produces goods and services. It includes:
 - i *resources* – renewable and non-renewable materials
 - ii *sinks* – that absorb, neutralize or recycle wastes
 - iii *processes* – climate regulation.

Natural capital is the basis not only of production but of life itself.

- **Human capital** consists of people's health, knowledge, skills and motivation. All these things are needed for productive work. Enhancing human capital through education and training is central to a flourishing economy.
- **Social capital** consists of the institutions that help us maintain and develop human capital in partnership with others, for example families, communities, businesses, trade unions, schools and voluntary organizations.
- **Manufactured capital** consists of material goods or fixed assets which contribute to the production process rather than being the output itself, for example tools, machines and buildings.
- **Financial capital** plays an important role in our economy, enabling the other types of capital to be owned and traded. But unlike the other types, it has no real value itself but is representative of natural, human, social or manufactured capital, for example shares, bonds or banknotes.

Sustainable development is the best way to manage these capital assets in the long term.

A set of clear objectives

- 35 We recommend that the post-16 education and training sector:
- adopts the proposed vision and guiding principles
 - provides learning that inspires and equips learners for lifelong learning
 - uses learning processes that help staff and learners to become better at relationships and social participation
 - provides access to varied and satisfying opportunities for work and personal creativity, and a safe and supportive working environment for staff, learners and the community
 - promotes and supports a high standard of health for staff, learners and the community
 - works with others to improve green space and encourage the existence of a wide variety of plant and animal species (biodiversity)
 - minimizes the natural resources it uses and the amount of waste it produces
 - operates accurate systems of finance and trusted systems of leadership, governance and management.
- 36 We recognize that we can only achieve these objectives if the LSC itself provides strong strategic management and leadership.

Consultation issue 2: guiding principles

- 37 **Are the proposed guiding principles, approaches and objectives appropriate and adequate?**

Skills for Sustainable Development

Why should [students] worry about the 90 million annual increase in the world's population...the 400 million unemployed in the South...ozone depletion, drought, famine and poverty? There is one very obvious reason. Anyone...over the age of 50, given reasonable good luck, can expect life to go on much as it is now until we achieve our generous life expectancy. Those...between 20 and 50 will need unusually good luck for that to happen and anyone under 20 has no chance at all. Something is going to have to change...

George Walker, Head of the International School, Geneva

- 38 Many of those who helped us develop this strategy told us that SD should be at the heart of all learning. They stressed the importance of education for SD (ESD) and the need for all learners to acquire SD skills – skills that will equip them to carry on the rest of their lives in a sustainable way and to influence others to do the same.

- 39 The Government's Sustainable Development Education Panel (the SDE Panel - full details at www.defra.gov.uk/environment/sustainable/educpanel/index.htm) has said that ESD should enable people to develop the knowledge, values and skills to take part in decisions about the way things are done, both individually and as part of a larger community. ESD will help people to see how we can all improve the quality of life now for ourselves (locally) and others (globally) without damaging the planet for future generations.
- 40 The SDE Panel argued that the most significant positive contribution schools can make towards shaping a more sustainable future is through building a commitment to it in their pupils, showing the relationship between the following key concepts.
- **Diversity:** respecting and valuing both human diversity – cultural, social and economic – and biodiversity.
 - **Needs and rights of future generations:** understanding our own basic needs and the implications for the needs of future generations of actions that we take today.
 - **Sustainable change:** understanding that resources are finite and that this has implications for people's lifestyles and for commerce and industry.
 - **Uncertainty and precaution:** acknowledging that there is a range of possible approaches to sustainability and that situations are constantly changing, indicating a need for flexibility and lifelong learning.
 - **Quality of life:** acknowledging that global equity and justice are essential elements of sustainability and that basic needs must be met universally.
 - **Interdependence:** understanding how people, the environment and the economy are inextricably linked at all levels from local to global.
 - **Citizenship and stewardship:** recognizing the importance of taking individual responsibility and action to ensure the world is a better place.
- 41 We believe these concepts identify the skills and knowledge that post-16 learners need in order to act and behave in a more sustainable way. We therefore recommend that all providers seek to introduce and embed these concepts in their education and training programmes. However, we also have to understand the priorities of existing providers and adjust them as necessary to meet our long-term vision of SD. This holistic approach has to be pragmatic and yet challenge existing behaviours that do not meet the guiding principles and approaches of the strategy.

Consultation issue 3: skills

- 42 **Please comment on the suggested critical importance of skills for sustainable development and how they can best be achieved.**

Working with Partners

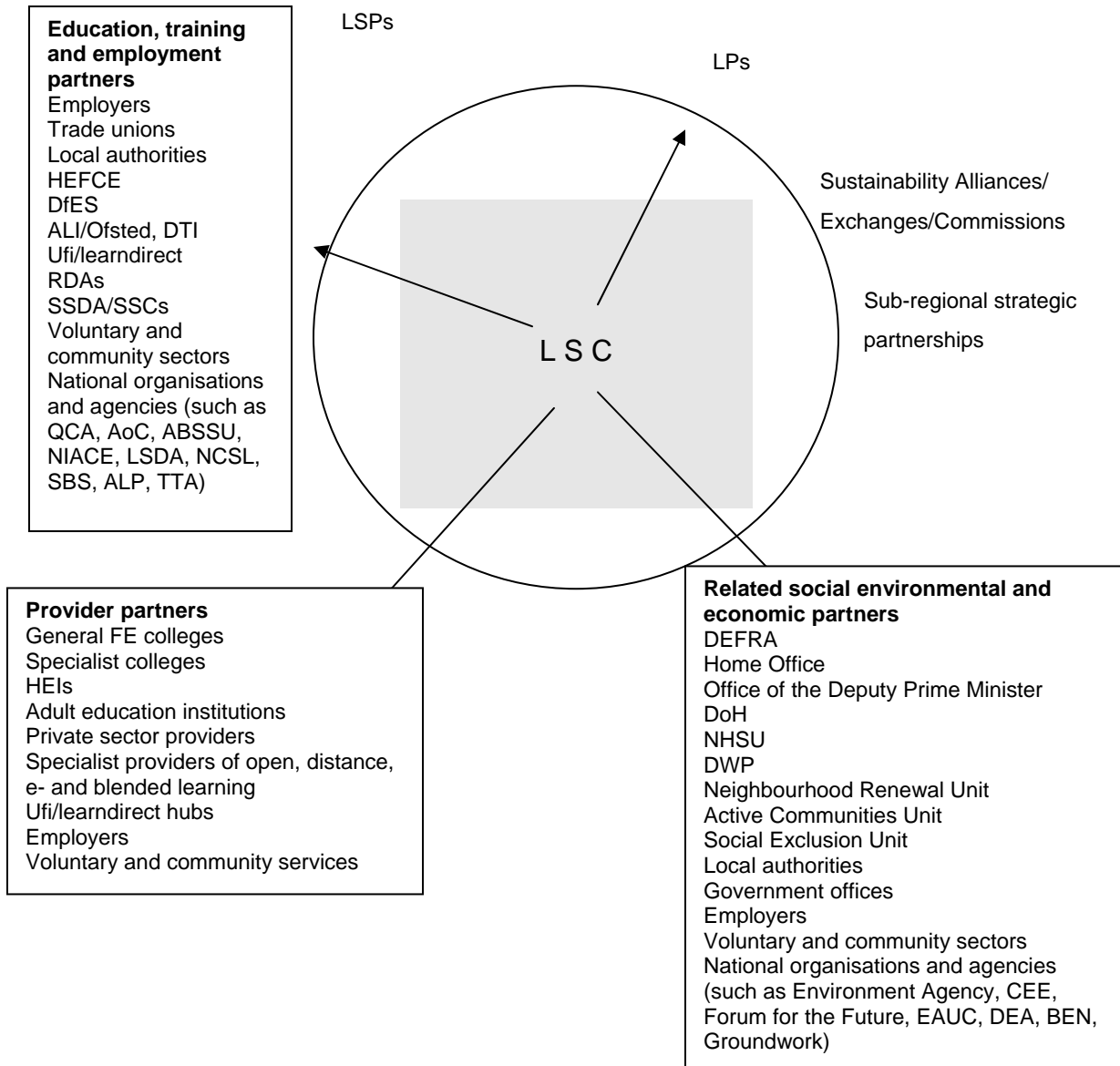
Take care of the things that take care of you.

Unattributable

- 43 The primary audience for the strategy and this supporting document is the whole range of LSC-funded providers and their staff, and staff within the LSC itself. These are the colleagues that must be convinced of the need for the strategy, and supported and empowered to deliver it. We recognize that for LSC-funded providers and the LSC to succeed in achieving this vision, we will have to work with and influence a vast and diverse range of partners. Some of these have far greater experience and knowledge of the SD agenda than we do at both a strategic and operational level.
- 44 It is essential therefore that we use and build on this experience and knowledge by developing SD partnerships at national, regional and local levels between:
- the LSC and other bodies involved in education, training and employment
 - the LSC and other bodies engaged in related social, environmental and economic policy
 - the LSC and providers.
- 45 We acknowledge that partnership working is a continuous process with significant resource implications for all partners. We also acknowledge that our strategy for SD needs to be understood and supported by our partners. Equally the LSC must itself understand the culture and working styles of other organizations so that collaboration can lead to mutually beneficial outcomes. We will learn from existing good practice and will ensure that we share information on practice which is proven to have led to SD.
- 46 Figure 1 conveys the wide, but necessary, partnerships that must be maintained and developed if our vision for SD is to be achieved. The lists of partners are not exhaustive. Several types of organizations appear in all three organizational categories. Some partnerships and networks such as local strategic partnerships and sustainability alliances are made up of organizations from all three categories and are therefore separately identified.

Figure 1: Developing essential partnerships for sustainable development.

(See Annex B for key to abbreviations)



Consultation issue 4: working with partners

47 Please comment on our proposals for working with partners.

Key Areas and Recommended Actions

Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little.

Edmund Burke, Whig MP for Bristol 1774–80

- 48 The primary audience for the LSC's SD strategy is providers and LSC staff. They will need to come to a shared understanding of how their organization might achieve SD. There is no "one size fits all" approach to SD and there is a danger of the LSC being too prescriptive in recommending specific actions that we feel will help deliver the strategy's vision.
- 49 That said, many colleagues have suggested that we will make quicker progress if we focus on specific key areas and a menu of associated actions. We have responded by identifying areas that are consistent with our guiding principles and objectives, and that also relate to the LSC's responsibilities to the DfES SD Plan (see paragraph 8 above).
- 50 These key areas have also been identified through an LSC provider sustainability appraisal based on the Five Capital Model (see paragraphs 31 to 34) and on providers' responsibilities for "buildings and estate", "curriculum" and "community". Our strategy attempts to tackle the economic, social and environmental aspects at the same time across these three areas of responsibility.

Buildings and estate

Sustainable development: In terms of buildings, it implies resource efficiency, minimum energy use, flexibility and long life.

Richard Rogers, architect

- 51 Estate management is a significant part of this strategy. The quality of space and place for teaching and learning is fundamental to the education and training experience. It is essential, therefore, that providers are aware of a wide range of sustainability and environmental issues when they plan, design, build and manage their facilities.
- 52 The LSC expects providers to demonstrate good governance in sustainable estate management, and hopes to see them adopt a sound sustainability policy. Ideally a senior person should take responsibility for its implementation. As a starting point, it is recommended that providers undertake a review of the social, economic and environmental aspects of their organizations and identify areas for action. These could include:
- accessibility
 - human health
 - biodiversity
 - energy and water management
 - waste and recycling
 - purchasing
 - materials specification
 - carbon emissions.
- 53 LSC-funded providers' buildings should demonstrate a commitment to sustainable design. This will mean taking into account the impact and cost of decisions on energy, water, materials and resources and managing these

so that facilities meet the needs of the user in a sustainable way. Expected benefits from this approach include lower operating and maintenance costs and a high-quality learning environment. Buildings with low energy design minimize the risk of increasing energy prices and end-of-life deconstruction requirements. The LSC is committed to working with experts in the field of sustainable design to ensure that best practice is adopted across the sector.

- 54 The spending power of the post-16 education and training sector provides a real opportunity to buy in a sustainable way. Everything the sector buys has a social, environmental and economic impact – both positive and negative. The challenge is to minimize the negative effects and maximize the positive benefits of such spending power. Good purchasing practice considers these factors. The LSC expects providers to consider the full social and environmental costs, as well as the economic costs, of the products they buy, from computers to cars and from stationery to laboratory and workshop equipment. The same applies to services, such as waste management, water and energy.
- 55 Providers also use a vast range of resources and generate significant volumes of waste. The LSC expects providers to show their commitment to minimizing waste in line with the UK Waste Strategy (www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/strategy/cm4693/index.htm) first by reducing waste production, then by reusing, recycling and finally by disposing of waste in a responsible way.
- 56 Biological diversity, the variety of plant and animal life on the planet, is vital to human health and well-being. It provides us with natural resources, genetic material, knowledge and inspiration. Biodiversity enriches our lives in many vital, but often undervalued ways. The estates of many general FE colleges, agricultural colleges and training providers provide landscapes and associated biodiversity which are part of our natural capital and as such deserve protection. Managed well, these facilities can improve well-being, reduce stress, provide teaching and learning opportunities and stimulate a sense of pride. The LSC encourages its providers to find out how they can make the best use of their contribution to biodiversity.
- 57 The LSC is committed to widening participation and ensuring access to learning for all, particularly for those groups that are least likely to get involved in learning. At a local level, many providers are now expected to develop accessibility strategies and travel plans to comply with the disability discrimination legislation and with planning conditions on new developments. In addition, ensuring that all parts of the community have access to learning opportunities is simply good business. Attracting new learners and retaining existing ones is helped by making it easy, cost effective and sustainable for people to travel to their place of learning. All providers ought to put into place a travel plan that takes these factors into account.
- 58 We recommend that the learning and skills sector and the LSC itself start to develop actions in the following key areas:

- **Estate management and sustainability policy:** Demonstrate good governance of sustainable estate management by reviewing and identifying the key social, environmental and economic aspects of the organization and adopting a sound sustainability policy.
- **Design:** Demonstrate a commitment to sustainable building design, taking into account the impact and cost of decisions on energy, water, materials and resources.
- **Waste:** Demonstrate a commitment to minimizing waste by outlining ways in which this can be achieved.
- **Accounts:** Ensure accounts reflect social and environmental as well as economic costs.
- **Biodiversity:** Maximize the contribution to encouraging a wide variety of plant and animal species.
- **Travel:** Have a travel plan that tackles the issues of providing access for all as well as reducing the environmental impact of travel.

59 Becoming involved in the above will help us to meet the buildings and estate responsibilities detailed in the DfES SD Plan:

- Objective 2.7: Meet targets set by the Department and match departmental policies and programmes.
- Objective 3.1: Fund a study on design standards in the FE sector to consider the impact on the learner experience, the proper balance between design standards and costs, the sustainability and green requirements for briefing and designing new builds, and the impact on building and running costs (and the Council's cost standards) on addressing these issues in line with Government policy.
- Objective 3.2: Commission an FE Estate Management Statistical Study that will allow tracking of running costs including energy costs across the FE sector year on year, and benchmark performance and identify good practice and exemplars.
- Objective 3.3: Encourage local education authorities (LEAs) to adopt a more joined-up approach in the contracting of local transport services within the FE sector, and the pooling of resources.

Current examples of good practice

Example 1: Colleges for the Future

The Colleges for the Future Ideas Competition was conceived by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) LSC Client Forum. This provides a framework in which the opinions and interests of those who commission FE buildings can be heard, debated and used by other clients and key building professionals.

The competition challenged architects and architectural students to create a new style of learning environment for the 21st century, emphasizing the LSC's commitment to world-class teaching in world-class buildings. Competition criteria included innovative use

of materials and space, environmental efficiency, support for use of information technology (IT) and the extent to which the buildings enhanced the learning experience. The competition attracted entrants from the UK and Europe, with the judges welcoming their energy, verve and commitment, and the diversity of approach to the challenge.

Example 2: Centre of vocational excellence for construction, crafts, professions and sustainability

The Genesis Project is a £2.5 million Sustainable Development Resource Centre at Somerset College of Arts and Technology, designed primarily to promote sustainable construction, but with the overall aim of promoting sustainability in all its forms. It will consist of several pavilions built from environmentally friendly materials such as straw, timber, earth and clay. It will also house a Perspex water pavilion to demonstrate how rainwater can be collected, used and conserved through recycling. The aim is to create a venue for teaching and learning new forms of sustainable construction, based on leading-edge developments from industry leaders such as Architype Ltd, James Nesbet and Partners and Robert Bray Associates. It will act as a one-stop centre for all aspects of sustainable construction, education and training so that students, the industry and the public can learn about innovative ways of building new structures, insulation, energy conservation, alternative energy sources, waste management, water use and conservation, sustainable drainage, composting and use of more sustainable building materials.

Curriculum

When my parents were growing up the world's population was under three billion. During my children's lifetime, it is likely to exceed nine billion. You don't need to be an expert to realize that sustainable development is going to become the greatest challenge we face this century.

Tony Blair, 2001

- 60 We concur with the views of the Government's SDE Panel when it stressed the critical importance of education for SD. We recommended that all post-16 learners should acquire skills for SD as these are key life-enhancing skills, and as important, many would argue, as numeracy and literacy.
- 61 Although integrating SD into the curriculum is arguably the most important contribution that providers can make to the sustainability agenda, it is probably the least developed.
- 62 Recent debate has centred on two contrasting approaches to curriculum reform. The first argues for the incorporation of SD and knowledge into existing curricula: the second promotes the idea of changing the concept and processes of education and learning as a whole. The curriculum response to sustainability might therefore be either primarily piecemeal,

affecting isolated parts of provider practices, or systemic, in which whole-system change becomes the agenda.

- 63 Success for All (www.successforall.gov.uk/index.cfm) signals a major drive to strengthen teaching and learning and the quality of provision in the learning and skills sector. A major way of achieving this objective is through the development by the DfES Standards Unit of new teaching and learning frameworks for major curriculum areas. The LSC welcomes this initiative. It offers a real opportunity to integrate SD into some nationally important curricular areas. It also offers the sector opportunities to explore a more holistic, participative and practical focus on learning rather than a narrower, instrumental view.
- 64 To help deliver the curriculum aspects of this SD strategy, the LSC will act appropriately on the recommendations made by the Government's SDE Panel and pursue the SD implications suggested and contained in Success for All.
- 65 Any curriculum reform that will improve the promotion and delivery of SD skills will need the support and involvement of all the bodies involved in curriculum design, accreditation and inspection. These include the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), various awarding bodies, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI). This observation reinforces the importance of the need to maintain and develop our partnership approach in relation to SD.
- 66 We recommend that the learning and skills sector and the LSC itself start to develop actions in the following key areas.
- **ESD:** Promote and encourage acceptance and delivery within learning programmes of the Sustainable Development Education Panel's key concepts of education for sustainable development.
 - **Learning materials:** Consider adopting and using currently available SD learning materials and develop appropriate SD programmes and modules.
 - **Whole-institution approach:** Implement a whole-institution approach to SD, taking account of both institution-based provision and virtual learning environments, and informal as well as formal learning approaches.
 - **Links and partnerships:** Develop links between providers and industry and between pre- and post-16 education and training providers (including higher education). Also consider European and international partnerships.
- 67 Becoming involved in the above will help us to meet the curriculum responsibilities detailed in the DfES SD Plan:
- Objective 1.1: Produce guidance on good practice and disseminate advice on green and SD issues to LSC-supported FE and adult and community learning estates.
 - Objective 1.5: Continue to support development of content on the QCA, ESD website.

Current examples of good practice

Example 3: Preston College

In partnership with Lancashire Global Education Centre, Preston College developed a series of lesson plans and resource material to integrate the global dimension in pre-GCSE English. Over 50 students participated in the project. Whilst they developed their reading, writing and oral skills, the students were also being equipped to read, write and talk about the world in which they live. The students are reported to have concluded that “learning English by discussing global issues made it much more interesting”. Amongst other learning outcomes, the content and process helped the students to:

- improve their media literacy and ability to critically analyse information*
- gain a greater understanding of the interconnectedness of their lives and the lives of people in other parts of the world*
- increase their confidence and motivation to make informed and ethical choices in their everyday lives in the interest of sustainable development.*

Example 4: Pershore Group of Colleges

Pershore Group of Colleges has sustainable development as part of its mission statement. It strives to include sustainable development in all aspects of its work, including the curriculum, the community, the estates and through the promotion of health by, for example, encouraging healthy eating. As a land-based college the production and processing of food and drink is central to its work. Pershore Group of Colleges has a partnership with the Bulmer Foundation and together these organizations are developing a Centre for Sustainable Development at the Holme Lacy Campus near Hereford. The College’s farm is fully organic and is being developed as a demonstration farm of best practice in sustainable land use. The Centre plans to pioneer sustainable development skills across a wide range of areas, including land use, health and business management. A Masters programme in Sustainable Development Advocacy is based at the centre and facilities for public access, local food processing and information and advice on sustainability are also planned.

Community

Think Global, Act Local

Unattributable

- 68 Ensuring a better quality of life for everyone – now and for generations to come – means building strong vibrant communities – “sustainable communities”. Sir John Egan in the recently published *Skills for Sustainable Communities* (www.odpm.gov.uk/eganreview) offers a broad definition of such communities:

Sustainable communities meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children and other service users, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice. They achieve this in ways that make effective use of natural resources, enhance the environment, promote social cohesion and inclusion and strengthen economic prosperity.

- 69 Egan identifies a set of seven components that constitute a common goal – a clear understanding of the sort of communities we are all trying to achieve. These are:
- **housing and the built environment:** a high-quality built and natural environment
 - **services:** a full range of appropriate, accessible, public, private, community and voluntary services
 - **social and cultural:** vibrant, harmonious and inclusive communities
 - **governance:** effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership
 - **transport and connectivity:** good transport services and communications linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services
 - **economy:** a flourishing and diverse local economy
 - **environment:** providing places for people to live in an environmentally friendly way.
- 70 The Egan Review spells out the skills and knowledge required for effective implementation of these components for distinct groups of practitioners, stressing the need for common general skills alongside specific technical skills. This is consistent with the strong emphasis in our strategy and this supporting document on the need for everyone to develop SD skills.
- 71 The Egan Review also argues that local authorities, with their local knowledge, presence and accountability, are best placed to develop a vision for their area alongside regional bodies. This is consistent with this strategy's determination to forge strong SD partnerships.
- 72 To help deliver the community aspects of this SD strategy, the LSC will actively support the recommendations made in the Egan Review. We welcome the proposal for a National Centre for Sustainable Communities Skills and the proposed involvement of the newly created Centre for Excellence in Leadership, Sector Skills Councils, professional bodies, Regional Development Agencies and the Regional Centres for Excellence.
- 73 In researching and developing the strategy and this supporting document, we have been struck by the considerable progress that occurs in an organization's, or local community's understanding of, and commitment to SD if there is an "advocate" or "champion" for SD. We have encountered many cases where knowledgeable, committed SD champions have convinced and enthused colleagues about the crucial importance of SD. We

suggest therefore that, if one is not already in place, all providers and local LSCs train and appoint an SD champion.

- 74 We recommend that the LSC sector and the LSC itself begin to develop actions in the following key areas.
- **Community engagement:** Ensure there are good communications with the local community at all levels, including employers, and that this leads to greater community and employer involvement.
 - **Local and regional networks:** Maintain and develop partnerships with local authorities and Regional Development Agencies. Ensure that higher education and LSC-funded providers are linked in regional networks.
 - **Sustainable development champions:** Identify and train champions for SD so that every college, training provider and local LSC has at least one knowledgeable, committed champion who promotes SD.
 - **Local markets and ethical trade:** Support local markets, ethical, fair trade and socially responsible initiatives within the community.
 - **Share facilities:** If this is not already happening, consider sharing facilities with local community agencies and groups to make the best use of resources.
 - **Local economic strategies:** Be aware of, support and connect to the local economic strategies drawn up and developed by the local authorities and Regional Development Agencies.
- 75 Becoming involved in the above will help us to meet the community responsibilities detailed in the DfES SD Plan:
- Objective 1.5: Identify effective mechanisms to enable the establishment of a sustainable development partnership support framework at local and regional levels.
 - Objective 1.5: Identify sustainable development advisory and facilitative NGOs to consult, promote good practice and disseminate information to appropriate sectors.
 - Objective 4.1: Identify mechanisms that link education with other local forums and in particular use the opportunities created by local strategic partnerships and Local Agenda 21 to join up learning and local networks.

Current examples of good practice

Example 5: Wrens Nest, Dudley

Groundwork Black Country and Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) worked with a steering group made up of local residents on the Wrens Nest estate to deliver a range of environmental improvements. The “Wrens Nest Agenda for the 21st Century” included physical improvement projects, education and social initiatives, with funding coming through the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB).

Residents on the estate decided that their derelict back gardens, often rubbish strewn and infested with rats, were a major problem and a chief priority. With the help of Groundwork, a scheme was launched to join together derelict areas and transform them into a communal resource. Allotments and an orchard were created with the work carried out by local trainees on the Community Refurbishment Scheme – the training arm of Dudley MBC – who were able to use the exercise to gain NVQ qualifications.

Example 6: Further Education Partnership for Sustainability

The Further Education Partnership for Sustainability (FEPS) is a collaboration of East Midlands FE colleges developing and promoting skills for sustainable development. FEPS does this by:

- supporting learning and skills for sustainable development practices and initiatives*
- producing regional information on colleges' contributions to sustainable development*
- supporting colleges in undertaking initial sustainability reviews*
- providing a best practice information portal or resource for the sector.*

Consultation issue 5: key areas and recommended actions

76 Do you consider the key areas and recommended actions relating to buildings and estates, curriculum and community appropriate and adequate? Please suggest any further areas for action.

Consultation issue 6: other comments

77 Do you have any other comments?

The consultation issues are grouped together in the strategy document. Please post, fax or email responses to:

Corinne Spencer

Learning Group

Learning and Skills Council

Cheylesmore House

Quinton Road

Coventry

CV1 2WT

Fax: 024 7682 3250

Email: sdconsultation@lsc.gov.uk

Annex A: Advisory and Focus Groups

1 The consultation strategy and this supporting document has been produced as a result of the views expressed, and advice given by the LSC's Sustainable Development Advisory Group. Membership of the group between November 2003 and November 2004 was:

Association of Colleges	Judith Norrington Martin Pritchett
Black Environment Network	James Friel Judy Ling Wong
CITB – Construction Skills	Annie Hall
Council for Environmental Education	Nick Jones Tom Ryan
Department for Education and Skills	Rema Laver
Development Education Association	Phyllis Thompson
Environment Agency	Liz Thompson
Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges	Joy Dent Sheri-Leigh Miles Andy Nolan Iain Patton
Forum for the Future	Andy Johnston Liz White
Groundwork UK	Richard Sharland Chris Southwood
Higher Education Funding Council for England	Will Naylor Andrew Smith
Learning and Skills Development Agency	Judith Cohen
Learning and Skills Council	Mike Barrett Gill Howland Mary Kelly Caroline Neville Vivienne Quayle Joanne Tanner
Long Road Sixth Form College	Andrew Thomson

NIACE	James Luger
Pershore Group of Colleges	Heather Barrett-Mold
Sector Skills Development Agency	Paul Litchfield
South West of England Regional Development Agency	James Harris
Trade Union Sustainable Development Advisory Committee	Sue Ferns

2 The consultation strategy has also been informed by, and seeks to take account of, the advice offered at focus group discussions and through exchanges with a wide variety of colleagues eager to support the LSC in its strategy development. Many written comments, when these reflected a consensus view, have been reproduced verbatim in the text. These groups and colleagues included:

Titus Alexander

Article 13

Association for Environment Conscious Building

John Blewitt, University of Exeter

Jimmy Brannigan, ESD Consulting Ltd

British Telecommunications plc

CEE Conference Workshop Group

Civil Engineering Contractors Association

Clark Field, Sustainability 4U

Construction Federation Environmental Forum

Development Education Association Focus Group

DfES and TUSDAC Working Group

EAUC Conference Workshop Group

ESD Forum, Yorkshire and the Humber

Federation of Master Builders

Finance and Education Services Ltd

Forum for the Future Conference Workshop Group

Healthy College Standard

Peter Hayward, University of Sheffield

Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement Project

Ian Jones, Cornwall Business School

Institute of Civil Engineers

Landrover Technical Academy

Learning South West
London Sustainability Exchange Workshop Group
Steve Martin
Major Contractors Group
Martin Mayfield, ARUP
National Federation of Builders
John Parry, Sussex University
Place Group Ltd
Professional Partnerships for SD Projects
Sona Peskin
Alan Reid
Mark Rickinson
Bill Scott
Hetan Shah, New Economics Foundation
Sustainability South West
TUC and TUSDAC Workshop Group
Martin Yarnit
Yorkshire and the Humber FE Curriculum Managers' Focus Group

Annex B: Abbreviations

ABSSU	Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit
ACL	adult and community learning
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate
ALP	Association of Learning Providers
AoC	Association of Colleges
BEN	Black Environment Network
CEE	Council for Environmental Education
DEA	Development Education Association
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DoH	Department of Health
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
EAUC	Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges
ESD	education for sustainable development
FE	further education
FEPS	Further Education Partnership for Sustainability
HE	higher education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
IT	information technology
LLI	Learning to Last Initiative
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LSDA	Learning and Skills Development Agency
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
LP	Learning Partnership
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NIACE	National Institution for Adult and Continuing Education
NGO	non-governmental organization
NHSU	NHS University
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

RDA	Regional Development Agency
SBS	Small Business Service
SD	sustainable development
SD Plan	the DfES Sustainable Development Action Plan
SDE Panel	the DfES Sustainable Development Education Panel
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
SSC	Sector Skills Council
SSDA	Sector Skills Development Agency
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
Ufi	formerly the University for Industry, now known as Ufi

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This publication is available in electronic form on the Learning and Skills Council website: www.lsc.gov.uk

Publication enquiries: 0870 900 6800

Ref: LSC/AA000/1254/04