



**Department for
Education and Employment**

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To Chairs, Principals and Clerks of Further
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15 December 2000

Dear Colleague

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION SECTOR

On 21 November the Secretary of State announced plans for further education colleges to become regionally and nationally recognised vocational centres of excellence in their chosen specialist areas. He also announced the creation of three new sixth form colleges in London. These new colleges will be designed to serve as beacons of academic excellence, and will be set up in partnership with local groups, business and universities. Their governance arrangements will be modified to ensure the participation of all the partners involved.

The Government wishes to encourage these kinds of innovative new governance arrangements to meet particular local priorities, whether this is separately branded sixth form provision or Technical and Vocational Centres of Excellence. We hope that colleges will work with local partners to respond to this challenge to meet the needs of learners in the future, and where necessary will propose new governance arrangements in support of this. Attached is a paper designed to show how the standard instrument for governing bodies might be adjusted to meet particular local needs.

It is also important to get the detailed arrangements for governance right, both to support new initiatives in the future, and to engage all local partners in the process. The existing instruments and articles of government, first made in 1992, are in need of an overhaul. The many modifications made over the years have made the job of interpretation of these regulations more complex than it should be. Indeed when we last consulted you about changes to the instruments and articles in 1998 many of you asked why we could not replace them with one new document. Unfortunately at that time the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 did not provide a power to replace the instruments in their entirety and only a series of modifications could be made. The Learning and Skills Act has amended section 22 of the 1992 Act to allow the Secretary of State to replace the instruments and articles of government.

We now propose to use this power to replace all instruments and articles from 1 April 2001. It is necessary to amend them in any event to reflect the provisions in the Learning and Skills Act, and it will also provide an opportunity to deal with any areas of concern, to modernise the instrument where possible, and to address any areas where there has been a lack of clarity or difficulties in interpretation.

Attached to this letter is a draft of the new instrument and articles of government that we propose will replace your college's existing instrument and articles of government on 1 April 2001. We would welcome your comments by **9 March 2001**. A summary of the changes made



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

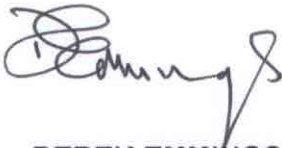
in the new instrument and articles is also attached.

The consultation process

As part of the consultation process we propose to hold a series of half-day conferences during February so that representatives from governing bodies can discuss the proposed changes with representatives from the Department, details will be issued separately. A copy of this letter and attachments is also on the Department's web site at www.dfes.gov.uk/furthereducation. Please send all responses and comments about the proposed changes to:

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Responses may also be emailed to Fegovern.resp@dfes.gov.uk.



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