

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00HRS 30<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

## **Major challenges faced by Education and Training Workforce First steps to be taken with innovative new strategy**

Most jobs by 2020 will require new skills according to current estimates, yet seventy per cent of the 2020 workforce has already left school. Employers are faced with a potential training crisis and are increasingly looking to the Further Education (FE) Sector to solve the problem. FE as it stands does not have the capacity to deal with this demand.

Today Bill Rammell MP, Minister of State, Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education announced the first steps in solving the problem that colleges, work based training and community learning may face. Employers have been consulting with Lifelong Learning UK, the Sector Skills Council that acts as their voice, to lobby Government and the results look encouraging.

The FE Sector has endorsed an innovative strategy that will future-proof the FE workforce in England. This strategy is being launched this evening by Bill Rammell MP, at Hoare Memorial Hall in Church House, Westminster, London attended by leading FE Sector representatives.

The 'Further Education Sector Workforce Strategy' is the first of its kind. The aim is to ensure that all colleges and learning providers are able to deliver excellent provision for young people, adults and employers. It intends to aid social cohesion by ensuring equality and diversity is at the heart of strategy, policy, planning and training. All work will be underpinned by robust workforce data to understand the nature of the workforce.

The strategy will help ensure that the best people are recruited and retained to deliver this training. The strategy will support retaining and the professionalising the current workforce so that they are respected and held in esteem. It will make FE a 'career of choice' so that the best people are attracted and recruited to the sector.

David Hunter, Chief Executive of LLUK thinks that the strategy will support the country in its objective to become world class.

*"A high quality and responsive Further Education Sector in England, with a focus on skills, employability and social mobility, is essential if we are to realise our ambitions to strengthen the UK's economic performance and transform the life chances of millions of people. This Strategy sets out how we will attract, develop and nurture the workforce, so that it is a force for change. We hope that this strategy will pave the way in other nations."* he said.

The vision of the strategy will be implemented through a three year plan. It will build on existing workforce reforms and will capture the commitments made by partners and stakeholders to make this vision a reality. The plan – a companion document to the Strategy, will be published at the end of March 2008.

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Part of the Skills for Business network of 25 employer-led Sector Skills Council



### Notes for editors

1. Lifelong Learning UK is one of 25 sector skills councils that make up the Skills for Business Network, set up by employers to raise skills levels among the workforce as a whole through better training and development. See: [www.lluk.org](http://www.lluk.org)
2. The lifelong learning sector has more than a million employees across the UK working in community learning and development (including youth services and family education), further education, higher education, libraries, archives and information services and work-based learning.
3. LLUK aims to encourage teachers, trainers, librarians and other staff to gain new skills and qualifications so that they offer a better service to young people, adult learners, employers and the wider community.
4. LLUK also promotes lifelong learning as a career so that employers in the sector have less difficulty recruiting and retaining staff.
5. In addition to developing sector-wide occupational standards and qualifications frameworks, LLUK also produces labour market intelligence so that lifelong learning employers can identify skills gaps and shortages among their own workforce.