

# Circular 02/08

For Action:  
Initial proposals to be received no later than 19 July 2002

## Centres of Vocational Excellence

### CoVE Extension Programme

#### Summary

This circular provides guidance on how the Learning and Skills Council intends to extend the Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) programme from further education colleges to include other providers funded by the Learning and Skills Council. The circular provides detailed information on how eligible providers<sup>1</sup> may make proposals to local Learning and Skills Councils to join the CoVE programme. Before considering making a proposal providers should refer to paragraph 38 of the circular.

This circular should be read in conjunction with Centres of Vocational Excellence in Further Education: The Way Ahead published jointly by the Learning and Skills Council and DfES in July 2001.

<sup>1</sup> Eligible providers are detailed in paragraph 10 of the circular.





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## **Further information**

For further information, please contact the appropriate local Learning and Skills Council office, or write to:

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The Learning and Skills Council  
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Website [www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)

## **Responses to this document**

Initial proposals to be received no later than 19 July 2002

# Executive Summary

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**Date:** June 2002

**Subject:** Describes the processes by which the Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) programme will be extended to providers funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), other than FE colleges. Describes the roles of the LSC, local Learning and Skills Councils and other key organisations. Summarises the objectives of the programme, its criteria and funding. Describes how an initial proposal to join the CoVE programme may be made.

**Intended recipients:** Heads of work-based learning providers, Heads of private and voluntary sector providers, Heads of institutions formerly known as external institutions, Heads of employer-based providers, Executive Directors of local Learning and Skills Councils, Principals of Colleges and Heads of other key organisations.

**Status:** For information and response.

The document is set out in a series of short sections, each one explaining a different aspect of the programme extension. It includes 5 annexes containing supplementary information.

**Date for response:** Initial proposals to be received no later than 19 July 2002.



# CoVE Extension Programme

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## Introduction

1 Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) are specialist areas of vocational provision. CoVEs will develop new, and enhance existing, excellent vocational provision that will be focused on meeting the skills needs of employers locally, regionally, nationally and sectorally. They will seek to give a greater number of individuals from all backgrounds access to the high quality vocational training that they need to succeed in a modern economy.

2 This circular describes the arrangements by which providers funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) (other than FE colleges) may prepare proposals to develop CoVEs, subject to the performance criteria (annex A). Providers who are eligible for inclusion in this phase of the programme are listed at paragraph 10.

## Summary

3 This circular provides information on:

- the background, policy and operational objectives of the CoVE programme;
- the role of the LSC;
- the role of the local Learning and Skills Councils (local LSCs);
- the role of the Learning and Skills Development Agency (the LSDA);
- funding arrangements;
- the CoVE moderation process;
- the evaluation of the CoVE programme; and
- national and local LSC contact details.

## Background

4 In the statement *Colleges for Excellence and Innovation*<sup>2</sup> published in November 2000, the then Secretary of State set out an ambitious agenda to 'rebuild the technical instruction that once symbolised the very best of our industrial training system'. The statement called for a 'modern further education sector' contributing fully to the nation's vocational skills and the drive to boost productivity levels through four main objectives:

- ensuring increased participation and achievement on broad and balanced programmes of study for 16-19 year olds and for adults;
- playing a leading role in providing the technical and vocational skills the economy needs at every level;
- widening participation in learning; and
- providing a ladder of opportunity to higher education with a key focus on foundation degrees.

5 The aims and objectives of the CoVE programme were subject to consultation in March 2001. The responses to the consultation informed the final aims and objectives of the programme. There was a considerable level of support in the response to the consultation process for extending CoVEs to other providers funded by the LSC. In April 2002, the then Minister for Adult Skills announced that the CoVE programme would be extended to other providers funded by the LSC.

<sup>2</sup> *Colleges for Excellence and Innovation, Statement by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment on the Future of Further Education in England, 21 November 2000.*

6 The objectives of the extension programme are to:

- establish up to 50 additional CoVEs by March 2004, which will form a strategic network of high quality centres complementing the FE colleges' CoVE network and taking account of local, regional, national and sectoral needs;
- encourage greater collaboration amongst providers and promote the concept of excellence in economically important vocational specialisms;
- help secure better vocational learning opportunities for all learners, with a focus on enhancing participation and career prospects, particularly for those from disadvantaged groups; and
- increase proactive employer/provider engagement to underpin, develop and strengthen innovative and flexible approaches to meeting the nation's current and future skills needs.

7 Each qualifying provider will normally be eligible for one CoVE. Partnerships between providers will be encouraged, particularly where a pooling of resources is needed to fully meet the CoVE criteria. The college and 'other providers' programme will complement each other locally, regionally, nationally and sectorally to provide a balance of provision for all learners.

8 It is hoped that there will be some collaborative proposals which involve non-college providers with each other and/or with colleges. All providers with CoVEs will be required to share good practice as part of the dissemination process. There is no intention to create competition between successful CoVEs or between providers with CoVEs and those without CoVEs.

9 CoVEs addressing the same vocational specialisms will not usually be in close geographical proximity. However, dependent

on local skills needs, a local LSC may endorse proposals in similar specialisms within its boundaries provided this will not create over-provision in that area. Where this occurs it will be a requirement for the separate CoVEs to collaborate with each other as well as supporting other local provision where appropriate.

## Eligibility

10 All providers considering a CoVE proposal must fulfill the criterion that they display sound financial management systems. The following types of provider funded by the LSC are eligible to make proposals as part of the extension programme:

- work-based learning providers;
- private and voluntary sector providers;
- institutions formerly known as external institutions;
- employer-based providers; and
- group training associations.

11 College-based training providers, eg college companies, are not eligible to make proposals in the non-college programme. Colleges are free to submit proposals under the main college programme if they so wish. They can also be involved in the extension programme as partners in proposals led by non-college providers.

## CoVE Objectives

12 Implementing the CoVE programme is central to contributing to the LSC's task of improving skills for employment and national competitiveness. CoVEs will support providers in responding to the national skills challenge, enabling them to strengthen and build on their existing relationships with employers, so that they can fulfill a central role in developing the workforce for the 21st century.



13 CoVEs will focus primarily on delivering skills at level 3<sup>3</sup>. They will help develop the skills of those already in work, and help enhance the employability of job-seekers and new entrants to the labour market, (including self employment). They will allow providers to develop, maintain and deliver high quality, specialist provision across a range of new and traditional occupations. They will be innovative in delivering learning that develops both specialist and general skills.

14 The national network of CoVEs will facilitate close links between providers, employers and other key organisations concerned with vocational provision. CoVEs will also enable providers to be more flexible and responsive, and to focus strongly on meeting the skills needs of employers at local, regional, national and sectoral levels. They will build up excellence and provide leadership for future development in top quality vocational education.

15 The identification of skills needs and priorities will be made by local LSCs in close partnership with employers and other key stakeholders such as regional development agencies (RDAs) and sector skills councils (SSCs) and will be influenced by discussions at local, regional and national and sectoral level.

16 CoVEs will work closely with business and industry. They will extend and strengthen established relationships with employers, which will support:

- a clear and mutual understanding of current and future skills needs and a joint commitment to investing in workforce development;
- creative approaches to tackling skills issues that embed a culture of innovation and technical excellence;
- high quality provision;
- learning opportunities that meet both learners' and employers' needs in terms of method, time and location of delivery and learning outcomes, with

the right balance between on-job and off-job training;

- opportunities for new entrants or returners to a specialist labour market to prepare for the world of work (including work experience) and for those already employed in that labour market to upgrade their skills;
- provision which is directly related to the current and future needs of work and fully up to date in terms of specialised content;
- strategies to promote access and participation of groups traditionally excluded from learning or disadvantaged in the labour market; and
- staff with up-to-date knowledge and skills.

17 Once their CoVE proposals have been approved, providers will join the CoVE programme pending development of their specialist CoVE. They will receive support from the LSC, in the form of funding and guidance, to develop this specialist area with the aim of obtaining formal CoVE status within twelve months.

## Local Learning and Skills Councils

18 Local LSCs will receive initial CoVE proposals and will be responsible for the first stage of their assessment and moderation. Both providers making CoVE proposals and local LSCs will be eligible for assistance from the LSDA in preparing proposals. In the case of CoVEs with a regional focus, proposals will require the support of all the local LSCs for which the provider undertakes training.

19 Local LSCs will need to ensure that the proposed CoVEs are consistent with the skills needs priorities identified by RDAs, SSCs and other key organisations.

<sup>3</sup> *Specific occupational skills needed in intermediate jobs ranging from craft to associate professional occupations (report of the National Skills Taskforce 2000).*

## Partnerships and Collaboration

20 CoVE proposals will need to demonstrate active support among key partners including FE colleges, employers, employer organisations, RDAs, SSCs, trade unions, local learning partnerships, the Connexions Service, local education authorities and group training associations.

21 Providers who are unable to meet all the CoVE criteria on their own may wish to prepare collaborative proposals with other providers, enabling a pooling of resources. For example, one of the performance criteria is that, normally, a CoVE will have 50 full time equivalent learners (FTEs)<sup>4</sup> at level 3 within the vocational specialism (annex A). Partnerships between non-college providers and colleges may also form part of the programme. In the case of a CoVE proposal made collaboratively or by a partnership of two or more providers, funding is only provided for a single centre.

## Duration of CoVE Status

22 CoVE status will normally be awarded for a three-year period after which re-recognition is likely to be required. Local LSCs will be responsible for monitoring CoVE performance. Arrangements for formal recognition of CoVE status and continued recognition will be announced in Autumn 2002.

## Suspension/withdrawal of CoVE Status

23 Each CoVE will be expected to achieve agreed targets laid down in a costed development plan (the development plan) initially covering the first twelve months of its operation. Where a CoVE fails to successfully achieve the targets set out in this plan the local LSC may decide to suspend formal recognition of CoVE status, pending work to raise standards. If it is felt that the required standards are unlikely to be attained within a reasonable period, CoVE status may be suspended permanently.

24 Formal CoVE status may also be withdrawn after completion of the development plan if the quality of provision subsequently falls below the required standard, or if other reasons for serious concern arise. It is expected that the suspension/withdrawal process will be managed by local LSCs, together with the LSC's national CoVE team.

## Funding

25 Each CoVE will be eligible to receive a maximum of £300,000 in the first year it becomes part of the CoVE programme, depending on the scale and scope of the CoVE's work. This money is intended to support the development of CoVE status and lead ultimately to formal CoVE recognition. Future funding will be confirmed with successful proposers during the first year of the CoVE programme.

26 Funding for each year will normally be subject to a 60/40 ratio between, respectively, revenue and capital. In exceptional cases the LSC may adjust this ratio to take into account the circumstances of particular providers. This split, which is different to the main programme allocation, is derived from the funding sources which have been made available for this part of the CoVE programme.

27 As part of the CoVE proposal process (the development plan) providers will be asked to provide a costed budget and expenditure profile which will include the following information:

- additional or new staffing costs related exclusively to developing or maintaining the CoVE;
- the exchange of good practice at local, regional, national and sectoral levels;
- quality improvement;
- research and networking with other CoVEs, including FE college and other pathfinder CoVEs;
- support for staff development and

<sup>4</sup> A learner who has started a work-based learning programme who has not left by the end of the last period end date.

training internally and for partner organisations;

- development or purchase of learning materials;
- related consultancy costs;
- market research related to development of the CoVE; and
- minor works capital expenditure on minor building works, premises modernisation, conversion and adaptation, equipment replacement and upgrades.

28 Once a provider is admitted to the CoVE programme the LSC will pay 50% of the agreed funding for each year in advance against the costed budget and expenditure profile. The remainder of the funding will be profiled and paid in three equal instalments. This will be done on the basis of an agreement drawn up between the local LSC and the provider.

29 When submitting CoVE proposals providers should ensure that the proposed activities are not already supported by any other LSC funding. For example, the same staff development activities should not be supported both by CoVE funding and the LSC's standards fund.

## Conditions of Capital Funding

30 Capital funding will be made available to providers who join the CoVE extension programme on condition that premises which are purchased, built, modernised, converted or adapted using CoVE funding are used to achieve the objectives of the CoVE programme. The same condition applies to equipment which is purchased or upgraded using CoVE capital or revenue funding.

31 Providers will be expected to provide regular statements of expenditure showing

that all funding paid to the provider under the CoVE programme is being used to achieve the objectives of the CoVE programme. Should this prove not to be the case, or if CoVE status for

whatever reason is withdrawn, the LSC reserves the right to seek redress by claiming back all or part of the CoVE funding paid to the provider, or to claim possession of those items obtained or improved with LSC funding, or to claim a portion of the income obtained from their use.

32 The provider will not be permitted to sell, lend or dispose of premises or equipment purchased or improved with funding provided by the LSC without the permission of the LSC. The provider will also be expected to arrange adequate insurance for these premises and/or equipment and to keep them in good repair. In the event of the provider being taken over, merging or going into liquidation all premises or equipment funded through the CoVE programme, or the equivalent portion of their value funded by the LSC, will become the property of the LSC.

## Funding Contract

33 The above conditions will be expressed in a legally binding contractual agreement drawn up between the LSC and each provider that joins the CoVE programme. The agreement will cover both capital and revenue funding streams. Providers' published audited year end accounts should identify the allocations of revenue and capital funding for the CoVE and confirm that they have been used for the purposes for which they have been allocated.

## Pathfinder CoVEs

34 The LSC has identified 5 CoVE extension pathfinders. They will have the same crucial role as the college pathfinders in the development of the main CoVE programme. The pathfinders will enable the LSC to:

- test out the criteria used to identify CoVEs and to establish the

characteristics of an effective CoVE;

- obtain a good understanding of the development and support providers will need in the development of CoVEs and thus create the right conditions for the main extension of the programme.

## CoVE Extension Pathfinders

35 The extension pathfinders are:

- N.G. Bailey & Co. Ltd (Leeds) – electrical and mechanical installation
- ITS Training (Felixstowe) – international trade and logistics
- BAE Systems (Preston) – aeronautical engineering
- South West Durham Training Ltd, (Newton Aycliffe) advanced engineering
- Avon Vale Training (Trowbridge) – management of work-based learning in engineering

36 Providers considering making a CoVE proposal will be introduced to the pathfinders' work through two regional conferences to be held in summer 2002. It is intended that these conferences will bring together interested providers, local LSCs, employers, RDAs, SSCs and other key organisations. The conferences will be organised for the LSC by the LSDA .

37 Each pathfinder will be eligible to receive up to £300,000 in their first year of activity, with up to £150,000 available in year 2 and £100,000 in year 3. It is expected that a significant proportion of funding will be used to support and share good practice with other providers interested in joining the CoVE extension programme.

## CoVE Proposals – the Planning Stage

38 Providers should ensure that proposals have been developed in liaison with their local LSC and, in the case of regional or wider

proposals, with all the local LSCs involved.

**Proposals developed without the support of local LSCs will not be considered by the LSC for admission to the programme.**

Before making their CoVE proposal to the local LSC, each provider will need to have:

- agreed in principle with the local LSC the priority skills needs which apply locally, regionally nationally and/or sectorally and the skills specialism which the proposed CoVE will address;
- obtained the agreement of the local LSC that it supports in principle a CoVE proposal in the proposed specialism;
- actively considered the possibility of joint proposals with local, regional or national partners by means of consortia or other forms of network;
- discussed their CoVE proposals with other providers, employers, employer organisations, RDAs, the Connexions service, SSCs, local learning partnerships and other key organisations; and
- quantified their capacity to disseminate good practice and help other providers drive up quality in vocational provision.

39 Proposals that are likely to be successful will demonstrate that the CoVEs meet the performance criteria (annex A) and also that providers have the capacity to:

- analyse and describe the characteristics of vocational excellence for their CoVEs and relevant curriculum areas;
- develop strategies for strengthening areas of vocational weakness and for further enhancing areas of comparative strength, including innovative approaches to meeting current and future skills needs, and establishing or developing relationships with employers and employer organisations such as SSCs;

- ensure that staff development and consultancy activities are made available to other CoVEs and providers who are considering developing a CoVE;
- ensure that there is a strategy which will enable the work of their CoVEs to be sustained once dedicated CoVE funding ends;
- maintain and/or enhance quality of provision;
- establish partnerships in order to disseminate to other providers lessons learnt from their CoVEs within the local, regional, national or occupational sector and to other local/regional providers offering only or mainly national vocational qualification (NVQ) levels 1 or 2;
- extend good practice internally from their CoVEs to other vocational specialisms and externally to vocational specialisms addressed by other providers;
- monitor progress of their CoVEs in conjunction with the local LSC and set detailed targets for learner retention and achievement by learners; and
- put in place a needs analysis process, which identifies potential learners not currently participating in education and training, looking at both the needs of new entrants to education and training as well as updating the skills of those in employment.

## Local Learning and Skills Council Support

40 Support from local LSCs is an essential element in the development and approval of CoVEs. Most local LSCs will have staff with dedicated responsibility for supporting the development of CoVE proposals. A list of local LSC contacts is attached (annex D).

41 The local LSC will support proposals from providers by:

- developing a framework for moderating CoVE proposals at local LSC level;
- ensuring that a broad curriculum base and a geographical spread are reflected in the network when it is fully established;
- facilitating links, where necessary, with other providers in its area which might enhance the success of a CoVE proposal including support for proposals for CoVE partnerships; and
- providing labour market and other demand-side information.

## National CoVEs

42 CoVEs which meet national skills needs are defined by the following characteristics:

- have low volume employment outlets in comparison with e.g. construction;
- draw their students' from across the country; and
- are collaborating across regional boundaries.

43 CoVEs which meet national skills needs will need the collective support of the local LSCs involved. The final approval of this type of proposal will normally rest with the CoVE National Policy and Selection Panel (the national selection panel).

## Role of the Learning and Skills Development Agency

44 The LSDA has been commissioned by the LSC to provide support and co-ordination for the implementation phase of the extension programme and to facilitate networking between pathfinders and local LSCs, and with potential CoVEs.

45 As with the college programme, the LSDA will help develop local LSCs' capacity to

administer, assess and manage CoVE proposals and ongoing CoVE operations in their areas.

46 The LSDA, if requested by local LSCs, will also be able to help providers to develop their formal CoVE proposals by providing consultancy support.

47 Further information on LSDA support for the CoVE programme can be obtained from its website [www.lsda.org.uk/curriculum/cove](http://www.lsda.org.uk/curriculum/cove).

## Moderation Rounds and the Proposal Process

48 There will be a two-stage proposal process, each of which will involve moderation at local, regional and national level. At the first stage, the provider will be required to make an indicative initial proposal using the proposal Form A (annex B). Proposals that meet the moderation threshold at local, regional and national level will be progressed to the second, formal proposal stage involving the development plan.

49 The proposal process will be informed by skills needs identified in the local LSC's strategic plan and by consultation with RDAs, SSCs and other key organisations. It will also be aided by discussions between providers and local LSCs during preparation of CoVE proposals and their later development. The Council reserves the right to defer proposals to later rounds if proposals require further development or lead to an oversupply of CoVEs in particular skills needs or in areas/regions, and to reject proposals that fail to meet the moderation threshold.

## The National Selection Panel

50 The LSC has a national selection panel which oversees the moderation process to ensure that skills needs are addressed effectively in terms of local, regional, national and sectoral priorities and to ensure geographical balance in the CoVE network. The national selection panel has set a number of skills priorities for this round of the CoVE

programme (annex C). Preference will be given to proposals that address these skills priorities, although if CoVE extension proposals address urgent skills priorities in other vocational specialisms, they will be considered in the extension programme.

51 Local LSCs, through local and regional moderation, will provide the national selection panel with details of all initial CoVE proposals received, enabling the panel to develop an overall picture of the range of potential CoVEs and any gaps in vocational provision.

52 The national selection panel may, following the national moderation process, defer or reject proposals supported by local LSCs. This may be because the proposal has not reached the national moderation threshold or because there is over-provision in particular skills areas. CoVE proposals will not be approved at any stage without the endorsement of the local LSC.

## Stage 1 – Initial Proposals on Form A

53 The first stage of the proposal process will see providers working with their local LSC to develop initial CoVE proposals. These must be completed on Form A (annex B, also available on the CoVE website: [www.lscdata.gov.uk/cove](http://www.lscdata.gov.uk/cove)). Proposals must show clearly how the CoVE addresses the programme criteria. Local LSCs will determine whether the initial proposal will:

- progress to regional moderation;
- be returned to the provider for further minor or major development for possible inclusion in later rounds; or
- be rejected as not meeting the criteria.

## Regional Moderation

54 After moderation by individual local LSCs has taken place, the local LSCs will meet in regional groups to moderate proposals on a regional basis. The regional groups will:

- determine whether initial proposals endorsed by local LSCs fit the region's skills priorities in a balanced way and should progress to national moderation in the current proposal round;
- prioritise the proposals that meet the skills priorities to inform the national moderation process;
- return to providers any proposals which do not meet current skills priorities but that have a potential in future rounds with further development; and
- reject any proposals which are not seen as meeting current or future regional skills priorities.

## National Selection

55 Outcomes from the regional moderation process will be conveyed to the national selection panel. The panel will:

- moderate all proposals from regional panels to ensure consistency and set a moderation threshold;
- take account of identified regional priorities when deciding which proposals should be approved;
- approve those CoVE proposals which meet national moderation criteria and priorities;
- return for further development any proposals which do not meet current skills priorities but which have potential;
- reject any proposals which are not seen as meeting current or future regional skills priorities, or would create a skills imbalance in the CoVE network;

56 The national selection panel will take a view on priorities, referring to the CoVE criteria shown in Annex A and the characteristics listed at paragraph 39 when there is an oversupply of proposals in relation to available funding. This

may lead to proposals being rejected or deferred to the next proposal round.

## Stage 2 – Formal Proposal Development Plan on Form B

57 The second stage will see successful initial proposals for CoVE status being developed on Form B (available on the CoVE website ([www.lscdata.gov.uk/cove](http://www.lscdata.gov.uk/cove))). LSDA consultancy will be available to support providers. Providers should send two copies of their Form B proposals to the local LSC and one copy each to the LSC's national CoVE team and to LSDA.

58 An integral part of the Form B proposal is a costed development plan. Local LSCs will consider each Form B proposal against the CoVE criteria (annex A), focusing particularly on its development plan. The LSDA will assist local LSCs in this assessment and evaluation of process. Local LSCs will then decide whether they wish to support the proposal.

## Formal Approval of Form B

59 In exceptional cases, where there are serious concerns at either local or national level with the development plan, a proposal may be deferred or rejected at this stage of the process.

60 Once the proposal has received formal approval, the provider will work with the relevant local LSC and, if necessary, the LSDA, to implement the development plan for the first year of the CoVE. The local LSC will keep the Council and LSDA informed about the progress of development plans.

## Key Dates

61 These are detailed at annex E.

## Monitoring of CoVEs

62 There will be no fixed date on which providers will automatically receive CoVE status, although it is expected that the development plan will be completed within a twelve-month period. Ideally providers and the local LSC will agree the timescale and funding support necessary to develop the CoVE. Local LSCs will continue to monitor the progress of approved CoVEs and they will be inspected as part of the regular arrangements for post-16 provision.

## Equal Opportunities

63 The LSC has a statutory duty (s14, *Learning and Skills Act 2000*) to promote equality of opportunity for men and women, people from different racial groups, people with disability and people without. The LSC has drawn up a national strategy on equality and diversity to enable it to meet those statutory obligations. In embedding equality and diversity into all its policies, programmes and actions, the LSC is committed to "work with providers and employers to help them adopt relevant standards, promote equality of opportunity and take systematic steps, including positive action, to participate in, and benefit from, LSC programmes and initiatives."

64 The *Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000* places duties on the LSC to promote race equality. The LSC will ensure that those in receipt of LSC funding are acting in a way which ensures that the LSC's duties are being met. For FE colleges this will mean compliance with the duties placed on them under the Act. For work based learning providers, the LSC will develop contracts which ensure that they contribute towards meeting the duties placed on the LSC.

65 All providers should be aware of, and responsive to, the duties placed on them by the Disability Discrimination Act.

## Contacts

### LSC national office contact details:

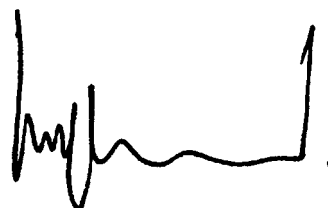
Website: ([www.lscdata.gov.uk/cove](http://www.lscdata.gov.uk/cove))

Debbie du Piesanie CoVE Administrator  
(tel: 024 7670 3256  
[debbie.dupiesanie@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.dupiesanie@lsc.gov.uk))

### LSDA contact details:

LSDA  
(website: [www.lsda.org.uk/curriculum/cove](http://www.lsda.org.uk/curriculum/cove))

Judith Greenwood CoVE Administrator  
(tel: 020 7297 9069  
[jgreenwood@lsda.org.uk](mailto:jgreenwood@lsda.org.uk))



*John Harwood, Chief Executive*



# Annex A: The CoVE Performance Criteria

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Performance Criteria	Process	Outcome
<p><b>Meeting Skills Needs</b></p>	<p><b>1.1</b> Actively promote participation by employers in the development and delivery of the specialist curriculum.</p> <p><b>1.2</b> Concentrate on the needs of learners, including those from disadvantaged groups, with a key focus on employability and career progression.</p>	<p><b>1.3</b> Be meeting local, regional and/or national skills needs identified by the Learning and Skills Council, National Training Organisations, Sector Skills Councils, Regional Development Agencies.</p> <p><b>1.4</b> Reflect employer/ industry needs in the design and delivery of the curriculum.</p> <p><b>1.5</b> Have a good reputation among employers, nationally, locally or in the specialist sector.</p>
<p><b>Providing High Quality Learning</b></p>	<p><b>2.1</b> Be designing courses on the basis of dialogue with employers and National Training Organisations, Sector Skills Councils, and on the basis of skills forecasts and labour market information.</p> <p><b>2.2</b> Be providing specialist areas of work alongside breadth of study.</p> <p><b>2.3</b> Give good support to learners.</p>	<p><b>2.4</b> Demonstrate consistently strong levels of recruitment to the specialist area of work.</p> <p><b>2.5</b> Be producing consistently high retention and achievement rates.</p> <p><b>2.6</b> Demonstrate consistently good or excellent quality teaching.</p> <p><b>2.7</b> Produce evidence of high progression into employment from Level 3 provision as well as supporting upskilling and promotion within employment and the opportunity to progress to Higher Education.</p> <p><b>2.8</b> Have an appropriate range of courses and qualifications in the specialist area.</p> <p><b>2.9</b> Normally have a minimum volume of 50 learner enrolments at Level 3 in the particular vocational specialism.</p>

Performance Criteria	Process	Outcome
<p><b>Resources for Learning</b></p>	<p><b>3.1</b> Have well-qualified staff and a staff profile which includes experts in the specialist area.</p> <p><b>3.2</b> Have industry standard resources and equipment which may be owned by the provider or accessed through other means.</p> <p><b>3.3</b> Have effective, and adequately funded, staff development programmes to update systematically the pedagogical and subject specialist skills of teaching staff.</p>	<p><b>3.4</b> Have staff who maintain a close working relationship with the industry concerned.</p>
<p><b>Progression Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>4.1</b> Demonstrate a commitment to collaborative and partnership working, with schools, other providers, employers, National Training Organisations, Sector Skills Councils, colleges, guidance agencies and Higher Education.</p>	<p><b>4.2</b> Demonstrate high progression rates for students into level 3 and to level 4, Further and/or Higher Education, employment, or promotion within employment.</p>
<p><b>Mission and Management</b></p>	<p><b>5.1</b> Be committed to equality of opportunity and support for non-traditional entrants to the vocational areas of work.</p> <p><b>5.2</b> Demonstrate a commitment by management and staff to vocational excellence.</p> <p><b>5.3</b> Display sound financial management of the college and the specialist area.</p> <p><b>5.4</b> Be prepared and have plans to develop further capacity in the specialist area.</p>	<p><b>5.5</b> Have a focused mission and strategy which addresses the current and future needs of the economy.</p> <p><b>5.6</b> Have the capacity and be committed to share their experiences across their own organisation and with other providers, locally, regionally or nationally as appropriate, and with other agencies (e.g. Learning and Skills Council, National Training Organisations, Sector Skills Councils and employers).</p>

# Annex B: Proposal Form A Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) Proposal Form Stage 1-Initial proposals

The Learning and  
Skills Council  
101, Lockhurst Lane  
Foleshill  
Coventry CV6 5SF

www.lsc.gov.uk  
debbie.dupiesanie@lsc.gov.uk

(Reference Circular 02/08)

## 1. Format of initial CoVE Proposals

Providers are advised that proposals be presented using the format and headings set out in CoVE Proposal Form A. No other supplementary documentation should be included at this stage and proposals should not normally exceed sixteen sides A4. Font size 11 or above should be used.

Providers are advised that particular importance is given to the sections of Form A that cover the following aspects:

- the work the provider has done for employers and the extent to which employers are involved in, and use, the provision
- the focus of the proposal is on an identified vocational specialism, not a programme area
- evidence that the proposal is meeting an identified priority skills need.

## 2. Deadlines

A total of four copies of Proposal Form A should be returned to the following to arrive no later than 12.00 on Friday 19 July 2002.

Copies should be sent electronically to all contacts, but at least one hard copy of the proposal, signed by the principal, is required by local LSCs.

Copies should be distributed as follows:

**Local Learning and Skills Council** - Two copies: One electronic copy plus a signed hard copy to your local LSC contact.

**National Office Learning and Skills Council** - One electronic copy to Debbie Dupiesanie , National Learning and Skills Council, 101 Lockhurst Lane, Foleshill, Coventry CV6 5SF [debbie.dupiesanie@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.dupiesanie@lsc.gov.uk)

**The Learning and Skills Development Agency** – One electronic copy to Judith Greenwood, The Learning and Skills Development Agency, Regent Arcade House, 19-25 Argyll Street, London W1F 7LS. ([jgreenwood@lsda.org.uk](mailto:jgreenwood@lsda.org.uk))



**Learning+Skills Council**

## 1 Provider Contact Details

Provider name <i>(please print)</i>	
Postal address	
Contact name	
Phone	
Fax	
Email	

Title of proposed Centre of Vocational Excellence

Does this proposal meet national skills needs? *(please tick)*

Yes  No

## 1 (a) Collaborative Proposals

Please provide details of key partners involved in the delivery of CoVE provision

<b>Comments</b> <hr/>         <hr/>
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## 2 Local LSC Contact Details

Local LSC name <i>(please print)</i>
Postal address
Contact name
Phone
Fax
Email

## 3 Title and Brief Description of Proposed Centre of Vocational Excellence

Title should clearly describe the occupation/vocational specialism
<input type="text"/>
<b>Comments</b> <hr/>   <hr/>

## 4 Evidence of Need

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Recent and relevant local, regional, national and/or sectoral needs analyses | CoVE performance criteria<br>1.3, 1.4, 1.1 |
| • Volume of need   |  |
| • Target group – learners/employers  |  |

### Comments

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## 5 Relationship to Other Provision in the Provider and in Other Local Providers

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Indicate potential for:  | CoVE performance criteria |
| • Partnerships           | 4.1, 4.2,                 |
| • Progression agreements | 2.7,                      |
| • Joint staffing         | 3.1, 3.3, 3.4             |

### Comments

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## 6 Background and Rationale for the Development CoVE Performance Criteria

Indicate the provider's current work in this or related areas with reference to strategic plans

CoVE performance criteria  
5.5, 5.4, 5.2, 5.3, 1.1, 1.5, 2.1

### Comments

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## 7 Brief Outline of Current Capacity in the Specialist Area and Match to CoVE Criteria is as Footnote<sup>1</sup>

Statement should be based on the headings below:

CoVE performance criteria

- Volume and range of provision in the specialist area 2.9, 2.1, 1.4
- Profile of teaching staff 3.1, 3.3, 3.4
- Resources and accommodation 3.2, 3.3
- Employer links 1.1, 1.5
- Learner support in relation to the specialist provision 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 5.1
- Link to provider strategic/corporate plans 5.2, 5.4, 5.5
- Progression opportunities 4.1, 4.2
- Partnerships 1.1, 2.1, 5.6
- Sustainability 2.4, 2.6, 2.9

### Comments

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## 8 Development Needed to Fully Meet Criteria

This could be adaptation/enhancement of premises and equipment, staff or curriculum development, developing employer links

### Comments

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## 9 Indicative Timescale and Development Costs

Eligible costs include:

- additional or new staffing costs related exclusively to developing or maintaining the CoVE
- marketing expenditure related to development of the CoVE
- minor works capital expenditure on premises modernisation, conversion and adaptation; equipment replacement and upgrades
- development or purchase of learning materials
- general research and networking with other CoVE providers, including pathfinder CoVEs (which might include participation in activities that exchange good practice at local, regional and national level)
- quality improvement
- related consultancy costs support for staff development and training internally and for partner organisations.

### Comments

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## 10 Provider Submission made by

Contact name <i>(please print)</i>
Designation
Date     /     /

**Comments**

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# Annex C: Skills Priorities

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The National Policy and Selection Panel has set a number of skills priorities for this round of the CoVE programme. Preference will be given to proposals that address these skills priorities although if CoVE extension proposals address urgent skill priorities in other vocational specialisms, they will be considered in this round of the extension programme.

- business and management;
- care, with a focus on residential care for the elderly and health related proposals;
- catering and hospitality;
- chemical, pharmaceutical and biotechnology;
- construction
- food technology;
- gas installation;
- ICT
- logistics/transportation;
- specialist engineering and manufacturing; and
- tourism, where the local/regional economy has a strong dependency on tourism.

# Annex D: Local Learning and Skills Council CoVE Contacts

LSC	CoVE Contact	Telephone
Bedfordshire and Luton	Graham Moores	01234 420085
Berkshire	James Douglas	0118 9082169
Birmingham and Solihull	Iris Flaum	0121 3454562
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole	Sarah Hughes Vikki Maher	01202 652607 01202 652638
Cambridgeshire	Lesley Burgess Tom Cunningham	01733 895255 01733 895270
Cheshire and Warrington	Ian Ruff	01606 320067
County Durham	Julian Chambers	01325 372332
Coventry and Warwickshire	Sheila Fleming	02476 446033
Cumbria	Jacqui Raw	01900 733374
Derbyshire	Edwina Donelan Karen McGee	01332 868340 01332 868322*
Devon and Cornwall	Keith Appleby	01752 754064
Essex	Lorraine Heywood James Ayling	01245 550056 01245 550131
Gloucestershire	Kevin Byrne	01452 450035
Greater Manchester	Sue Bain	0161 2610408
Greater Merseyside	Elaine Bowker	0151 6723521
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Rod Haveland-Smith	01329 228646
Hereford and Worcestershire	Craig Robinson	01905 721405
Hertfordshire	Chris Hatten	01727 733534
Humberside	Robert Flockton Ross Palmer	01482 383433 01482 383468
Kent and Medway	Michele Bodkin	01732 876820
Lancashire	Ann Knight Jane Wagstaff	01772 443114 01772 443130
Leicestershire	Colin Chinnock Marie Cart	0116 228 1820/27
Lincolnshire and Rutland	Brian Mitchell John Peart	01522 561591 01522 572441

## Annex D: Local Learning and Skills Council CoVE Contacts

<b>LSC</b>	<b>CoVE Contact</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
London Central	Stephen Bagley Steve Crow	<b>0207 9040761</b> <b>0207 9040640</b>
London East	David Smale	<b>0208 929 3884</b>
London North	Lindsay Boereboom	<b>0845 019 4158</b>
London South	Paz Paramjothy Judith Unler	<b>02089294724</b> <b>020 8929 4750</b>
London West	Priya Gossain Alison Waylen	<b>020 89298495</b> <b>020 89298547</b>
Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire	Christine Doubleday Sarah Cullimore	<b>01235 556207</b> <b>01235 556151</b>
Norfolk	Andrew Stoddart Barrie Wicklen	<b>01603 21 8813</b> <b>01603 21 8817</b>
North Yorkshire	Paul Shorter	<b>01904 385519</b>
Northamptonshire	Janet Swainger	<b>01604 533004</b>
Northumberland	Nicola Anderson Neville Hall	<b>01670 706244</b> <b>0845 0194185</b>
Nottinghamshire	Joanne Simpson	<b>0115 9413313 ext 250</b>
Shropshire	Nigel Bath/Martin Sadler	<b>01952 235513/4</b>
Somerset	David Roxburgh	<b>0845 019 4161</b>
South Yorkshire	Paul Raybould Paul Williamson	<b>0114 2675149</b> <b>0114 2675036</b>
Staffordshire	Richard Higgs John Whitehurst	<b>01782 463008</b> <b>01782 463018</b>
Suffolk	Mike Dean	<b>01473 883045</b>
Surrey	Anne Pearson	<b>01483 803230</b>
Sussex	Sue Dare	<b>01273 783545</b>
Tees Valley	Angela Wilxon	<b>01642 743112</b>
The Black Country	Sharon Thompson Angela Baker	<b>0121 345 4758</b> <b>0121 345 4750</b>
Tyne and Wear	Dorothy Smith	<b>0191 492 6430</b>
West of England	Laurence Leader	<b>0117 3726404</b>
West Yorkshire	Jill Weatherill Janet Holman	<b>01274 44 4048</b> <b>01274 44 4049</b>
Wiltshire & Swindon	Brian Gibbs	<b>01793 608021</b>

# Annex E: Key Dates

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<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
Circular published (on website)	Friday 31 May 2002
Conference 1 (Bristol)	Monday 24 June
Conference 2 (York)	Tuesday 2 July
Forms A to local LSCs	Friday 19 July 2002
Local and regional moderation completed by	Wednesday 31 July
National moderation of Form As	Tuesday/Wednesday 6/7 August
Policy and Selection Panel meeting	Mid August
Decisions to local LSCs by	Wednesday 28 August
Form B consultancy	Monday 2 September – Thursday 17 October
Forms B to local LSCs	Friday 18 October
LLSC moderation of Forms B by	Friday 25 October
National moderation of Forms B	Wednesday/Thursday 30/31 October
Final decisions to providers from local LSCs by	Wednesday 6 November
Extension Programme begins	Monday 11 November

# Notes

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