

BIS | Department for Business
Innovation & Skills

**DEVELOPING A GUILD FOR
FURTHER EDUCATION**

Prospectus

JULY 2012

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Ministerial Foreword

Significant progress has been made over the past two years in fulfilling the Government's strategy for skills set out in Skills for Sustainable Growth and in implementing the framework in New Challenges, New Chances. Regulation has been removed and our commitment to free the Further Education and Skills system from central controls is now being implemented. The core theme of good teaching and learning, and supporting teachers, trainers, staff managers and governors through continuing professional development (CPD) is now coming to the fore. This goes to the heart of creating a culture and environment in which professionalism can flourish but it has also posed a fresh question: how professionalism is promoted in our sector.

This important issue, brought to the fore by disputes about the regulation of membership of the Institute for Learning, led me to commission the Review of Professionalism conducted by an expert sector panel under the independent chairmanship of Lord Lingfield. The Independent Review's Interim Report, published in March this year, concluded that the 2007 FE Teachers' Regulations were no longer fit for purpose. The panel therefore recommended that the regulations should be revoked, with largely discretionary advice to employers on appropriate qualifications and continuous professional development replacing compulsion.

The Department has now conducted a formal consultation on proposals to revoke the 2007 regulations. I have also taken time to speak to numerous people in the sector and those who use its services. I recognise that there are passionately held views and opinions differ in some areas. I have noted in particular the concerns for the reputation of the sector if government regulations requiring minimum qualifications are removed at this time, without first establishing a firmer basis on which the sector can regulate itself and promote ever-higher aspirations. I share these concerns and take them very seriously. Consequently, I am taking two actions.

First, when shortly we publish the Government response to the consultation on the 2007 regulations, that response will make clear that while all aspects of the regulations that require mandatory registration with the Institute for Learning will be revoked as originally proposed, the existing requirements for minimum qualifications will be retained for the time being.

Secondly, through issuing this prospectus, I am inviting sector employers with employees to take ownership and put in place – over the coming year – an alternative approach based on consensus and a shared aspiration to promote the highest standards.

Across industry, through inviting proposals to the Growth and Innovation Fund (GIF), we are encouraging employers to come together and take collective responsibility for their sector's training and development needs. In particular, this has included the idea of a modern Guild – an employer-led partnership, which brings together key sector interests including employee representatives.

My recent discussions with members of the FE and Skills Ministerial Advisory Panel have confirmed that there is an appetite for a modern guild type approach in the sector. I

envisage a Guild as providing the means for the sector to take forward outcomes from Lord Lingfield's final report, due to be published in September, as well as outcomes later in the year from the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) review of teaching qualifications and from the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning led by Frank McLoughlin.

There is much still to be worked through. It is crucial that the Guild is truly of the sector, by the sector and for the sector. The prospectus is intended in the first instance to galvanise outline proposals and bring together sector interests for the employer-led partnership needed to develop a full proposal. Although not formally part of the GIF, the process run by BIS will be very similar. We need to move ahead quickly, and therefore the prospectus seeks outline proposals by the 14 September 2012. This should enable the fuller proposal, taking on board the final report from the Lingfield Review, to be ready by November.

I am immensely excited by the prospect of the creation of this Guild. I look forward to seeing outline proposals submitted in response to this prospectus, and I know that the FE and Skills sector will rise to the challenge.

John Hayes MP
Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning

About Us

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has an important role at the heart of government as the 'department for growth'. BIS is leading work across government to develop a more balanced and sustainable model for growth. This means moving away from an economy reliant on debt to a sustainable one that is greener and more technologically advanced. And it means creating opportunities which are spread more across the regions, and through those sectors where the UK is strong and can add real value.

BIS has the ambition that the UK should have a world-class skills base that provides a consistent source of competitive advantage. To achieve this, BIS aims to enable businesses and individuals to transform the performance of the nation as a whole.

Section 1: Setting the Scene

Introduction

In 2010 the Government set out the vision for skills and how the FE and Skills system would need to reform. The vision brought together the necessity for businesses to continue to invest in training and skills of their workforce while recognising several key areas will continue to need government support. The Government will continue to financially support the programme of work required to take forward the reform of FE and skills system for adults aged 19 and over in England based on the principles set out in *Skills for Sustainable Growth* and within *New Challenges, New Chances*.

We recognise, however, that the FE sector is now moving into a new era, where there is a fundamentally different relationship with government. Our radical reform programme is freeing colleges from central government control and putting responsibility firmly on the shoulders of colleges themselves. This requires a change in thinking, where colleges will no longer look to central government for detailed steers or permissions. We now want to see the FE sector build on and increase its innovation, responsiveness and its high quality offer to students and employers.

As part of that process, the government has taken a three strand approach to helping colleges and training providers to run their businesses and better respond to the needs of learners, employers and communities:

Streamlining the landscape. We have abolished, merged, ceased funding or scaled back the number of government organisations in the FE landscape to ensure only the most focussed and relevant remain, so reducing the number of interactions providers have with government.

Simplifying systems and processes. The Skills Funding Agency is scaling back its bureaucracy to simplify processes, working jointly with the Education Funding Agency (EFA), so reducing the time spent on Agency related activity by providers.

Deregulation. The Education Act 2011 removed burdensome duties on colleges and confers more power on governing bodies, while the Skills Funding Agency is working jointly with the EFA to reduce bureaucracy for providers.

Excellence in teaching and learning and assessment is at the heart of the Government's concerns, and development of a Further Education Guild is intended to build on what has already been achieved. Importantly, it will provide the right environment for employers to support and improve their and their staff's capabilities and competence, taking forward the findings of the Lingfield Review and the Independent Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning. It will form an integral part of raising standards of professionalism and quality improvement throughout the FE and Skills sector.

What is the vision for the Further Education Guild?

The Further Education Guild will need to be an employer-led partnership and provide a focal point for all FE and Skills sector interests in taking forward the professionalism flowing from the Lingfield Review. It will also reflect and exemplify, where appropriate, the generic characteristics of a modern Guild applicable across industry more widely.

Key functions and features of the Guild are likely to include:

- acting as an overarching body with end to end responsibility for professionalism and vocational education across the sector, including to:
 - own professional standards and codes of behaviour for members;
 - develop appropriate qualifications for people working in the sector through which people can progress;
 - support individual, subject specific and corporate CPD;
 - working at a strategic level to help bring in expertise across the sector; and
 - support employer recognition of professionalism;
- offering institutional and individual membership, both of which would be on a voluntary basis:
 - corporate membership of the Guild, entailing commitment to standards of workforce professional development and qualifications.
 - for the individual there would a strong emphasis on support development and progression through high impact CPD fully recognised and linked to additional higher level qualifications at level 5 and 7;
- seeking to enhance the reputation and status of the sector as a whole through providing a single, collective focus for raising standards of professionalism and being a custodian of excellence. Again, this would be closely linked to individual colleges and providers being able to obtain “Chartered” status as a public stamp of recognition;
- an employer-led partnership drawing in employee representative organisations and sector bodies concerned with workforce development. Development proposals will need to consider the form of organisation needed for a future Guild and how this would be best constituted in FE, given the current landscape.

Section 2: Which applications can be supported?

Outline applications for the development of an FE Guild based on the vision as have set out in section 1 are invited by 14 September 2012. The successful application will be expected to deliver:

- **Employer/ Sectoral leadership** – Strong sectoral leadership and tangible support for the proposed approach
- **Co-investment and sustainability** – Government and employer investment to support new targeted initiatives, leading and sustaining this investment over the long-term.
- **Scale and impact** – The application supported will demonstrate an ability to lever significant scale and impact on improving teaching and learning, management and governance
- **Partnership** – between government and sector/employer bodies to implement change effectively and quickly to ensure that the benefits of the Guild are rapidly available to all.

Funding exists to support innovation and sustain other Government funded committed projects that is brought into the guild activity.

The successful proposal will deliver measurable impact and provide value for money for the public purse and this investment.

The financial support from government as part of this investment exists exclusively to deliver wider benefit to the student experience and to both to the sector as a whole, and to the broader community.

Applications must provide a clear and evidenced case to support the proposal and to demonstrate the link between the identified issue and the proposed solution.

Successful applications should drive greater equality and diversity by incorporating action to address barriers that prevent equal access to the fulfilment of opportunity and potential for all.

The following elements are **not eligible** for support as part of this funding:

- Investment in tangible fixed assets e.g. property;
- Investment to build up a profit or surplus, or make loan repayments;
- Investment for projects for which there are sufficient existing alternative public or private sources of funding.

In addition, in light of the public sector spending restrictions issued by the Cabinet Office, proposals may be challenged or rejected where they contain significant marketing, communication or consultancy costs.

Public funding will only be granted where it is held to be compatible with EU State aid regulations and applicants should be aware that their proposal will be scrutinised accordingly. Potential applicants may wish to take account of this when considering the development of proposals. Information on State aid is available on the BIS website at <http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/europe/state-aid/advice-on-state-aid>
<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/consumer-issues/docs/10-951-state-aid-beginnersguide.pdf>

Section 3: Making Your Application

Which organisations are eligible to apply?

Outline applications are invited from FE and Skills sector partners, employer, trade and professional bodies. Collaborative applications are welcomed from multiple sector organisations.

The same eligibility criteria will apply as for Growth and Innovation Fund (GIF) applications. For the purposes of the funding, a sector body, employer association or trade association is defined as an organisation with a published remit that specifically includes the role to represent employers in a specific industry who share similar interests or areas of trade. The organisation will have a formal governance structure led by an elected board and both board and structure should be representative of the sector or industry covered by the organisation.

Membership of the organisation should be open to all employers within the relevant sector or industry. The applicant or consortium organisation will need to be able to demonstrate as part of the application process that it has the confidence and support of employers in its sector.

What is the application process?

If an organisation or a consortium wishes to apply to develop the Guild it will need to:

- check it is eligible to apply;
- gain secure clear and verifiable commitment and support from the FE sector (in principle and/or financial) as appropriate;
- complete the application form available in line with the guidance provided in this prospectus;
- submit the application form to BIS by 14 September 2012.

The application form is intended to set out the overall strategic ambition for development of the Guild and should detail the key challenges and specific needs. It should set out the details of the solutions proposed ensuring this is supported by strong evidence. Employer support will need to be demonstrated.

Questions and enquiries regarding the application process should be directed in the first instance to:

Sue Ruck
FE Workforce Team
email: sue.ruck@bis.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 0114 207 5255

What makes a good application?

There are three critical stages to increase your prospect of success:

- **Research and quantify the problem:** look into the background of the sector and what its key challenges are – Are there gaps in capacity or quality of current provision or both? What is the strategic impact of these challenges? What is the future scenario if challenges aren't addressed – scenario planning?
- **Gather support:** as much as is possible in the time available, work with other partner associations, professional bodies and ensure your proposals can gain their support.
- **Evaluate the options:** conduct a candid assessment of the different solutions available to solve the challenges in the sector; by evaluating the options your preferred solution will stand up to scrutiny.

Section 4: Evaluating the Application and Next Steps

How will decisions be made?

Each outline application will be subject to assessment by a panel established by BIS. A preferred bidder will be invited to further develop and fully cost their plans, which we will want submitted by 31 October 2012.

Outline applications will initially be assessed against the criteria set out in the outline proposal application form. Fully developed proposals will be assessed using the criteria set out at Annex A.

Each applicant will receive formal written feedback within a month of the decision being made.

The decision will be final; there will be no right of appeal.

Annex A – Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria	Criteria Detail
Vision and Ambition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is based on a stretching and ambitious vision for improvement of the FE sector and demonstrates an appetite for ensuring that the sector become the best it can be. - Encapsulates genuine ambition and understanding on what the sector and the skills of its workforce would look like at its best. - Outlines a clear strategy for moving from the current position to the vision for the FE and Skills sector.
Business Case and Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is based on a solid understanding of the current performance of the sector. - Has a robust evidence base that sets out a compelling case on the opportunities and challenges the application is seeking to address. - Demonstrates an understanding of the barriers that need to be overcome to move from the current situation towards the vision for success.
Strategic Fit and Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has been designed to address the challenges and the causes of the challenges set out in the application. - Has potential to transform the sector and significantly improve standards. - Has relevant scale and impact. - Specifically addresses any barriers preventing equal access for all. - Includes plans to monitor and evaluate success and impact

Assessment Criteria	Criteria Detail
Business Model and Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifies specific solutions including relevant resources. - Defines the business model or implementation and delivery model being proposed. - Demonstrates that the model is deliverable and based on a sound analysis of the resources and capacity required. - Demonstrates that the partnership model is clearly established and roles and responsibilities required to deliver the activity are clearly articulated.
Commitment and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates that there is strong sector leadership and tangible involvement and commitment to provide the necessary investment to the project and this is sustainable for the timescale needed. - Demonstrates that there is commitment to sustain the necessary levels of investment in the proposal.
Leadership and Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates that there is proven experience to deliver the proposal effectively. - Describes how the development phase will operate and who will lead and provide pace and vision. - Demonstrates that there is proven experience of successful delivery of similar activities. - Demonstrates that there is the knowledge, vision and capability to successfully deliver the activity required. - Demonstrates that the applicant has the confidence and support of others in the sector/industry. - Demonstrates experience of working collaboratively with key partners where

Assessment Criteria	Criteria Detail
	<p>appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sets out the leading and co-ordinating responsibilities within this activity. Plans and resources are in place to fulfil the role.
Value for Money and Additionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates that the proposal offers value for money for employers and the public purse when compared with other funded or co-funded action within the sector. - Describes what else will be brought into the Guild

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