

Further Education and Skills

March 2010

Becta leading
next generation
learning



Progress

through Harnessing Technology
A year in the FE and Skills sector



Without using technology really well, it's difficult for a college to be excellent.

**Steve Bell, ILT Development Manager,
Wakefield College**

Introduction

Becta's remit from Government for this year for the Further Education (FE) and Skills sector focuses on building the country's economic vitality and strengthening social inclusion.

This means that we will continue to support colleges and providers in their efforts to keep up to date with developments in technology and with the professional development of their staff so that our learners have expert support.

We will also continue our work on the quality of teaching and learning materials and management and delivery systems to enable learners to get what they need when and where they need it. And we will work to increase access to technology in the home and in the community so that the benefits of the digital age are available to all.



OUR PRIORITIES:

Develop an FE and Skills system that is fully confident in its use of technology.

Support equality and social cohesion through increasing digital participation.

Raise the quality of technology products and services and ensure that the delivery chain works properly.

Accelerate quality improvement and help colleges and other providers to increase their e-maturity.





OUR AREAS OF WORK

**Workforce
development**

**Content & digital
resources**

**Performance
management,
incentives
& data**

**Communications
& networking**

Our achievements in these areas are described in more detail in this document. Our plans and targets for next year, which will build on what we have already done, will be found in *Next Generation Learning: The implementation plan for 2010–2013*, which will be published during March 2010.



Technology is never an end in itself, it's about finding out how individuals learn and how technology can be used in those circumstances.

John Stone, Chief Executive, Learning and Skills Network



FIND OUT MORE

Over the next few pages you can learn more about our achievements in these areas of work...

No single agency could achieve all this alone. Over the years Becta has built up strong relationships with many organisations and agencies and we will continue to develop these.

The work of the FE and Skills sector is wide and varied, and we value opportunities to work with, for example,

- local government on maximising opportunities for 14–19 year olds
- Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) and Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) on workforce development
- Association of Colleges (AoC) on work with colleges
- NIACE and other organisations in informal adult learning
- JISC Regional Support Centres in supporting national initiatives at regional level

- the Association of Learning Providers (ALP) in work-based learning
- the National Union of Students and the National Learner Panel in articulating the expectations of learners in using technology for their learning

and with many other organisations, such as government departments, other public bodies, not-for-profit organisations and trade unions.



Workforce **development**

If learners are to get the best from modern technology, it is essential for their lecturers and trainers to have the most up-to-date skills and knowledge.

Our aim is that by 2012 the FE workforce will have reached the top quartile of international performance in deployment of technology.






Sector leaders have to see CPD not only as a headline, but to think about what is the CPD that will work on the ground, so that using IT becomes like driving; it's such an automatic part of your life that you don't even think about it.

Toni Fazaeli, Chief Executive, Institute for Learning



BECTA HAS WORKED WITH LLUK, LSIS AND OTHER PARTNERS TO:

- ensure that the national FE workforce strategy led by LLUK includes an e-confident FE workforce
- ensure that the effective use of technology is a requirement of qualified teacher status
- establish the first-ever national prospectus for technology-focused continuing professional development. Find out more at:

 www.thenationalprospectus.com
- develop leadership programmes for leaders and senior technical and support staff
- publish guidance and establish a working group to advise on e-safeguarding for learners in the FE sector
- help college governors to understand their role in the Harnessing Technology strategy through published guides and conferences
- work with European partners to carry out a benchmarking survey with up to four other countries on FE practitioners' use of ICT.
- help practitioners generate evidence for national awards and meet the continuous professional development (CPD) requirement from the Institute for Learning by establishing eCPD programmes

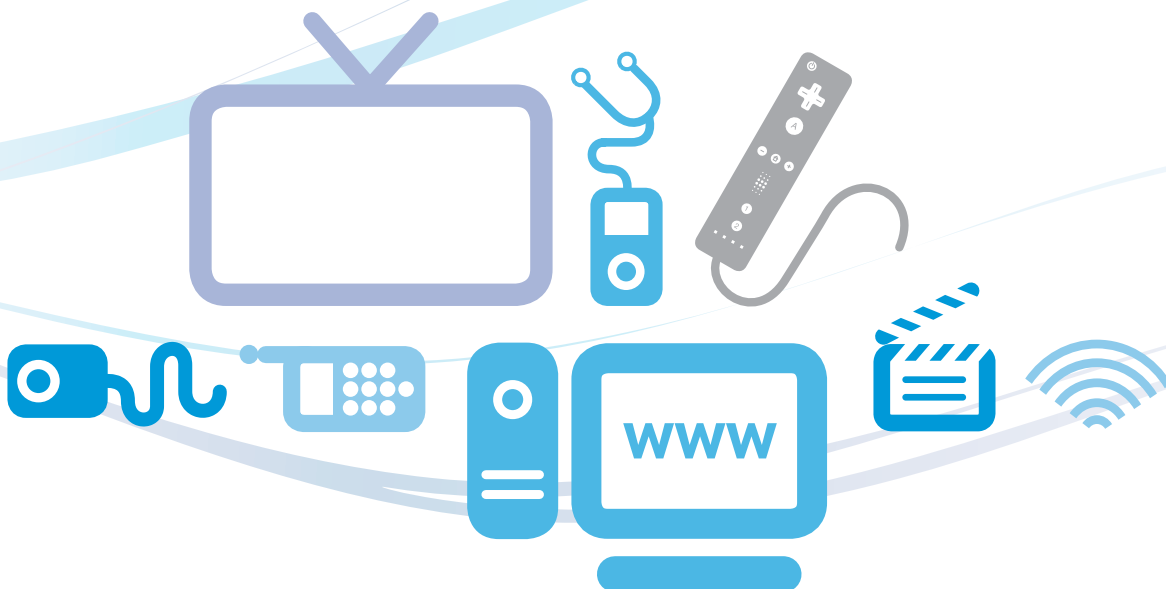
Content and digital resources

A wealth of digital material is available to tutors, trainers and learners, but it is of variable quality. They need help to find what is appropriate for their needs quickly and efficiently and on issues like copyright.

At an organisational level, there are many different systems and types of software on the market.

Becta can offer impartial advice to government and to technology users on resources and on procurement that increases efficiency and saves money.

New developments, such as digital TV, offer great opportunities for informal learning, if wisely used, and users of all kinds need advice and support here.





There's a wonderful level of communication that allows more equality of access across education systems because the best learning can be shared.

There are more sophisticated and more academic opportunities for adults, whether school-based or learning from the home or the office. There's a new level of acceptance, and that's wonderful.

Seàn M. Rowland, President of Hibernia College



BECTA AND ITS PARTNERS HAVE WORKED TO:

- put in place a framework for best-value procurement for institutional infrastructure, learning services and management information. This has already saved schools, colleges and local authorities £55 million this year
- advise government on the potential of digital TV for informal adult learning to support its White Paper: The Learning Revolution
- develop the School of Everything, a unique online service to help tutors and adult learners find activities, events, venues, resources and guidance. Our Teach us a Lesson competition brought some excellent ideas to complement this initiative and the School of Everything will be available via digital TV through the Looking Local project.
- develop Online basics, a quick, free online course to get new users started on computers and the internet
- define quality standards for digital resources
- produce professional development resources for informal adult learning tutors
- develop 'brain trainer' style interactive learning materials to support Skills for Life
- make e-books available to learners.



 www.jiscebooksproject.org

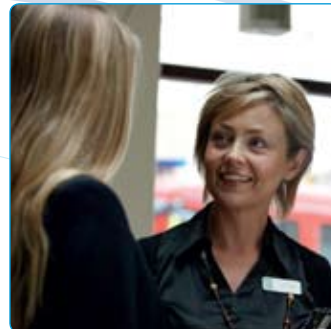
 www.theschoolofeverything.com

Performance **management**

The data handling capacity of modern technology means that, through benchmarking, leaders can be better informed about what is being achieved at every level of their organisation than ever before.

This in turn means that support can be tailored and targeted exactly where it is needed. Tracking and monitoring are particularly important when organisations work in collaboration and where their systems have to communicate safely and effectively with each other.

Becta is therefore supporting leaders, practitioners, governors and inspectors in understanding how e-collaboration and data handling can be used to support learners and inform strategic leadership decisions.





Knowing where to go for information and being able to assimilate it rapidly is important for good governance. We can see how issues of MIS, learner support, equality of access and accountability are all linked and dependent on the same data, which needs to be reliable.

John Brydon, Clerk, City College Norwich



BECTA OFFERS SUPPORT BY:

- Supplying Generator, the free diagnostic and improvement tool, which is now being used by over 80 per cent of colleges and providers to understand and improve their use of technology.
 - Working with Ofsted to raise awareness of what to look for in the use of technology – 97 per cent of FE and Skills inspectors have attended new framework training and 69 per cent participated in additional optional workshops. Ofsted and Becta are now working on a programme to embed technology inspection into the annual professional development of FE and Skills HMIs.
 - Supporting e-learning at work through the Next Generation Learning @ Work campaign and the Towards Maturity project, which supports those responsible for delivering effective learning in the workplace. Organisations that are mature in their use of technology have a greater business impact, according to the Towards Maturity Benchmark Review, which identifies ways of using learning technology to correlate with business success.
- www.generatorfeandskills.com
- Supporting collaboration between FE and skills providers and local authorities through
 - guidance on e-learning for Diploma delivery in 14–19 consortia,
 - guidance on safeguarding young learners
 - work with industry on the Systems Interoperability Framework and data standards
 - support for the Common Application Process and the National Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service
 - guidance on incorporating technology into new buildings in an environmentally sustainable way.
 - Continuing to carry out efficiencies research, developing approaches to systems and infrastructure to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness across education and training and providing clear advice to central and local government and to frontline leaders.

Communications and **networking**

Ground-breaking work is being done by pioneers in many areas of FE and Skills, whether in the classroom, the workplace or the community.

But for these benefits to gain momentum and be widely spread, the knowledge has to be shared.

Becta is therefore working to spread knowledge, understanding and good practice among policy makers, leaders, practitioners and learners.

We host a number of online communities through our website, as well as more traditional communications – conferences, publications, networking, training, awards and other events.





BECTA'S ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Technology Exemplar Network – expanding across the sector and now benefiting 2 million students and 50,000 teachers. This national network enables providers to work together to share effective practice and support through the exchange of ideas, experience, knowledge and practical know-how in harnessing the potential of technology.
- Adult Access to Technology for Learning – we have set up a trial to test the Home Access programme for adult learners, and are also exploring how Home Access might support family/adult learning.
- Next Generation Learning Awards for FE – culminating in an awards ceremony and a national conference to celebrate and raise awareness of excellent practice in the sector.
- Technology in Learner Voice programme – learners have influenced the use of technology for learning through our work with the National Union of Students and through consultations with the National Learner Panel.
- National conferences – e.g. The Learning and Technology World Forum which showcased internationally England's schools, FE and HE sectors, with NIACE on technology and informal learning and with LSIS on the strategic leadership of technology for college governors.



www.becta.org.uk/feandskills/exemplarnetwork

- Next Generation Learning @ Work community – established to develop understanding and take-up of technology-enabled learning by employers and trade unions. Research tells us that employers and their staff benefit from online approaches. Examples include BT's efficiency savings of over £8 million a year; the BBC saving up to £2 million of licence fee money and B&Q's stores which used e-learning most effectively got consistently above-average customer satisfaction scores.



Before the Technology Exemplar Network, we never seemed to communicate with people other than work-based learning providers, but there are hundreds of colleges out there we are able to benefit from. This is really excellent work by Becta and LSC.

Mick Gilroy Lincoln, Lincoln Academy T/A ISIS Training

- Collaboration with partner organisations – spreading the messages of the Next Generation Learning campaign, including a special edition of NIACE's *Chips with Everything* newsletter, which is distributed to over 10,000 practitioners and managers across the FE and Skills sector.
 - Leadership networks and channels – promoting the understanding of technology's role, e.g. through work with the AoC, the 157 Group and the ALP.
 - Contributions to policy development like our work on the 14–19 reforms, Digital Britain and informal adult learning.
- Opportunities for everyone to take part in the discussion on the impact digital media might have on education by 2020 at:

 altogethernow.ning.com

 collaboration.becta.org.uk

 thelearningrevolution.ning.com





Technology is like a golden thread that runs through the college. It impacts on everything we do, from teaching and learning, to how we operate as a business to liberate resources to invest back for the students, to how we communicate with everyone.

**Frank McLoughlin, CBE,
Principal of City and Islington College
and Chair of 157 Group**



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