

Cash boost to transform colleges across England

Sixty-two further education colleges are to benefit from a share of more than £400 million to upgrade buildings and transform campuses. The cash boost will make sure even more people are supported to get the skills they need to get a good job, levelling up opportunity across the country.

The colleges announced today will be the latest to benefit from the government's £1.5 billion Further Education Capital Transformation Fund. This significant investment is supporting the transformation of post-16 education and training by ensuring colleges are great places to learn and students have access to modern, fit-for-purpose facilities.

The funding will support colleges to undertake building or refurbishment projects that will dramatically improve learning environments, including the creation of dedicated teaching facilities for subjects, such as automotive, ICT, science and engineering. This will support more people to get the training they need to progress into rewarding jobs and plug skills gaps in local communities. Some colleges will also construct new teaching spaces to replace buildings in poor condition elsewhere in town centres or on campuses.

Minister for Skills Alex Burghart said:

Our priority is making sure that every student receives the high-quality training needed to secure a well-paid job, so that businesses in growth sectors such as construction, engineering and digital have a strong talent pipeline as we continue to level up opportunities across the country.

That is why we are investing to ensure colleges can create modern, fit-for-purpose spaces that meet the needs of students and the communities they serve – and most importantly continue to be fantastic places to learn.

The Further Education Capital Transformation fund was first launched in September 2020 by the Prime Minister.

The first phase of the fund saw an initial £200 million allocated to all colleges so they could carry out urgent remedial work to refurbish their buildings.

Following this, in April 2021, the government announced plans to work in partnership with sixteen colleges with some of the poorest condition sites in the country to upgrade their sites and ensure they are excellent places to learn. Construction is under way at one of these projects – Stafford College – and others will soon be ready to begin works.

Today's announcement is the outcome of a bidding round that was open to all colleges – for additional funding to help upgrade their campuses.

This significant investment forms part of the government's landmark reforms to further and technical education – as set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper.

The fund builds on the action already under way to transform post-16 education and training. This includes rolling out new high quality T Level qualifications, establishing a network of Institutes of Technology, and making sure everyone, no matter where they live or their background, can gain the skills they need to progress in work at any stage of their lives.