

Investing in the skills of the future for an Ambitious and Learning Wales – £50m capital boost for FE and HE and £260m for apprenticeships

Ahead of the publication of the Welsh Government's departmental spending plans later today, the Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams, announced £50m of capital funding for Further Education and Higher Education sectors to improve facilities and learning environments for students.

Over the next two years, £10m will be allocated for FE institutions to invest in industry-standard training equipment and a further £10m for essential maintenance to ensure safe learning environments.

An additional £30m (£10m in each of the next three years) will be allocated to support higher education estate rationalisation. This will expand the successful 21st century schools and education programme to include a ring-fenced fund for higher education estates; reducing surplus capacity and creating a more energy-efficient estate across Wales.

The Minister for Skills and Science, Julie James, also confirmed today that £260m will be invested for apprenticeships over the next two years (£130m in each year) to support the Welsh Government's commitment of creating 100,000 all-age apprenticeships over the life of this Assembly term.

Education Secretary Kirsty Williams said:

"Our £50m capital investment for the FE and HE sector will enable them to provide state of the art facilities, improving learning environments for students and satisfying local employer needs. This investment is crucial both for our learners and for the wider economy.

Minister for Skills and Science, Julie James said:

"We are committed to raising skills standards across the board in Wales and through our draft budget are putting investments in place to do just that.

"Apprenticeships are the start of an exciting and rewarding career, giving people an opportunity to gain on the job experience while gaining all the skills and qualifications they need.

"We are already delivering one of the most successful apprenticeship programmes in Europe – the £260m we're investing over the next two years will build on this and enable us to deliver

our commitment of creating 100,000 all-age apprenticeships over the life of this Assembly term.”