

# News story: National College for Nuclear opens its doors in Cumbria

The UK's National College for Nuclear was officially opened today in Cumbria.

The UK's National College for Nuclear (NCfN) – a £7.5m two-story college at Lakes College, Lillyhall – will bring a new way of teaching to students while bridging the gap between further education colleges and university, and the workplace.

Sellafield Ltd and EDF Energy are leading industry input into the college which is based at two sites – Lillyhall and Bridgwater & Taunton College, Somerset – helping to ensure its curriculum and qualifications are based on employer need.

The college is one of five government funded national colleges that will deliver high-tech technical training to thousands of learners across England.

Dame Sue Ion officially opened the college in Cumbria, and said:

This new training facility will provide access to world-class technology to individuals looking to start or further develop their career in the nuclear industry.

It is an exciting time for the industry, and it is encouraging to see investments by government, industry and academia into facilities like the NCfN. The nuclear sector is really taking an active role in training the workforce of tomorrow.

The college combines theoretical work with hands-on experience. There are virtual reality rooms to provide students with experience of working in a nuclear environment, an engineering workshop is equipped with the latest technology, laboratories and simulated 'restricted' areas give a detailed view of the work involved at a nuclear plant.

Colin Reed, NCfN Board Chair said:

I'm excited about the opportunities that this brand-new training facility will offer young people at Sellafield, in the supply chain and globally once they've completed their courses.

Sellafield Ltd and EDF Energy will work alongside Lakes College and Bridgwater, plus higher education providers University of Cumbria and University of Bristol, and aim to train 3,500 people by 2020.

Sellafield's mission is changing as we transition into a fully-

fledged environmental restoration project. This will require re-training and reskilling of our staff and a new pipeline of talented individuals with higher level skills across a range of disciplines.

NCfN northern site operations director, Les Agnew said: "The college has taken 12 months to build, and offers a range of qualifications, from post-16 access courses through to degrees. Subjects include robotics, systems and mechanical engineering.

"Lakes College, who will deliver the curriculum, have a new nuclear staff of five who have professional nuclear experience and academic qualifications.

"We have been able to invest in world-class technology thanks to initial investment from government, and sponsorship from companies in the North West. I can't wait to have a full college of 300 students, some full time and others on block release, meeting the needs of the industries in Cumbria."