

To all FE and 6th Form College Principals

Dear colleague,

Association for Learning Technology (ALT)

You may have noted the fact that last year LSC joined ALT. We did this in order to further the National Learning Network agenda. The BBC, DfES, HEFCE, Becta, LSDA, and NHSU have also become corporate members of ALT in the last few months. (A full list of ALT's corporate members can be found at <http://www.alt.ac.uk>.)

ALT's aims are to:

- promote good practice in the use of learning technologies in education and industry;
- represent its membership in areas of policy;
- facilitate collaboration between practitioners, researchers and policy-makers.

At present two thirds of ALT's 150 institutional members are Higher Education Institutions. LSC's decision to join ALT reflects our view that ALT has a great deal to offer the Post-16 Sector. I believe that FE and 6th Form Colleges individually will benefit from becoming institutional members through, for example:

- discounted access for staff to ALT's one-day staff-development workshops, which are held regularly throughout the year, and to ALT's annual conference, to be held this year, with LSC sponsorship, between 14 and 16 September in Exeter (the enclosed material illustrates the sort of events which ALT organises);
- fortnightly e-mailed copies of the ALT Digest, which aims to capture information about forthcoming events, funding and bidding opportunities, and publications, in the learning technology domain;
- multiple copies of a quarterly printed Newsletter, suitable for internal distribution to colleagues with an interest in learning technology (a sample copy is enclosed);
- attendance at ALT's Annual Policy Meeting, which on 8 July last year featured the Secretary of State for Education launching the Government's e-Learning Strategy Consultation exercise, as well as keynote contributions from HEFCE, LSC, Ufi, and the DfES.

Two additional benefits I would like to highlight specifically, and which I know will play an increasingly important part in ALT's work in the future are:

- the opportunities for cross-sectoral dialogue which ALT is well placed to provide, through the diversity of its institutional and corporate membership;

- the support which ALT provides to individual staff, including, currently, the development of a simple, economical, voluntary, peer-based UK-wide structure to accredit people as Learning Technologists (ALT has recently been grant-aided by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) to take forward this work, with a Steering Committee drawn from relevant organisations in HE and FE).

The £350 annual institutional membership fee for FE and 6th Form Colleges seems to me to represent good value. Should you decide that your college will join ALT (assuming of course that it is not already a member), an institutional membership form is attached to this letter.

If you require further information prior to reaching a decision see <http://www.alt.ac.uk/>, and/or contact Seb Schmoller (formerly at The Sheffield College), who joined ALT in 2003 as Executive Secretary (t: 0114 2586899; e: sschmoller@brookes.ac.uk).

Yours sincerely,

Keith Duckitt
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