Department for Education

Further Education estates management standards

Policies and processes required to manage the college estate effectively

July 2026

Contents

Foreword from the Minister for Skills, Rt Hon Baroness Smith of Malvern

Further education colleges are at the heart of the government's mission to ensure that all young people have access to high-quality education, training and employment opportunities and can follow a pathway that is right for them. This ambition cannot be realised without well-maintained and effectively managed learning environments.

Strong estates management delivered and supported by skilled professionals, governing bodies and college leadership is therefore essential to our mission of expanding opportunities to all young people across England.

Following on from the School Estate Management Standards published last year for schools and sixth form colleges, we have now developed the Further Education Estate Management Standards (FE EMS) for FE colleges. We have developed these in partnership with colleges and their representative bodies to offer clear, practical guidance and support for managing college estates. The standards are designed to help institutions understand where to begin with estates management, promote compliance with legal requirements and support continuous improvement to an advanced level.

These standards sit alongside the £1.7 billion we're providing to colleges until 2029 to 2030 to help improve and maintain their estates. This includes for the first time an annual condition allocation allowing colleges to plan ahead and take a more strategic approach to maintenance.

I remain deeply thankful for your ongoing efforts to create high-quality, inspiring college environments. These spaces are vital for widening opportunity, overcoming barriers and providing clear pathways that enable young people to progress through further education and into skilled employment.

Summary

Keeping FE college estates safe, well managed and operational is complex. Various factors contribute to this, including funding, building condition and effective estate management. These standards focus specifically on estate management.

You can find more information and advice concerning management of FE estates, including buildings and land at Further education estates planning - Guidance - GOV.UK[1]

There are four levels of estate management standards:

- Level 1 – Baseline
- Level 2 – Transitioning
- Level 3 – Fully effective
- Level 4 – Advanced

These FE estate management standards are designed to give colleges (including FE colleges, land-based colleges and designated institutions) clear, practical guidance to understand where to begin, how to improve and how to make best use of expert advice around estates management.

The standards also recognise the importance of creating inclusive and accessible environments, supporting colleges to consider the needs of all learners, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), within their estate planning and management.

The indicators contained within these standards are not a prescriptive or exhaustive checklist, but supportive guidance — colleges do not need to meet every indicator to demonstrate a level. All colleges should aim to establish Level 1 as a baseline and progress towards Level 3, with Level 4 as an option where it aligns with the college's wider strategic aims.

These standards will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and not before **September 2027**.

For questions or support, please contact us via the Manage your Education Estate, (MYEE) customer help portal[2].

[1] The FE Estates Planning Guidance was last updated in June 2025; while some content may now be slightly out of date, it remains broadly relevant.

[2] Manage your education estate - GOV.UK

Who is this publication for?

Those professionals involved in the strategic management, development, maintenance, safety and day to day operations of FE college estates. This includes individuals and teams responsible for overseeing, managing and operating estates/environments, property and infrastructure within Further Education (FE) colleges, land-based colleges and designated institutions. In this publication "colleges" refers to FE colleges, land-based colleges and designated institutions.

Sixth form colleges should refer to the School Estate Standards[3], as their operating model and academic provision are more closely aligned with those of schools.

Each college should determine which professional, leader, or governor is responsible for each area within the levels.

Who should read these standards:

- College Principals, Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and Executive Leadership Teams (ELT)
- Governing Bodies and Board Members of FE Corporations
- Chief Operating Officers and Directors of Estates / Facilities
- Estates, Facilities and Property Managers
- Health and Safety Managers and Compliance Leads
- Finance Directors and those involved in capital planning and asset management.
- Curriculum leaders whose delivery requirements affect estate use
- Local authorities and combined authorities, especially where they have oversight of skills funding or capital programmes
- Specialist bodies and partners such as:
    - Diocese or other faith-based organisations linked to faith affiliated FE colleges
    - Construction consultants, architects and technical advisers working with FE providers

[3] School estate management standards

FE Estate Management Standards Overview

The Education Estates Strategy[4] published in February 2026 sets out the Government's intention to support all responsible bodies to proactively and effectively manage their estates, backed by a 10 year plan of national renewal.

To support colleges in managing their estates proactively and effectively, helping them to maximise the value of their facilities, we are setting out clear estates management standards alongside guidance, tools and information to enable colleges to deliver this confidently and successfully. Our aim is to help ensure estates are inclusive and support the needs of all learners, including those with SEND and vulnerable learners. Where challenges arise, we will work with colleges to understand and address these constructively.

Developed in collaboration with colleges and sector representatives, these FE Estate Management Standards (FE EMS) provide a framework for effective estate planning and day-to-day management across further education. The FE EMS set out the core principles for effective estate management and sit alongside wider Department for Education (DfE) expectations, including:

- management of building contents and consumables
- procurement and leasing
- technical and compliance standards
- wider organisational policies and regulatory duties

The FE EMS will support colleges to deliver excellent education, maintain financial resilience and progress sustainability goals while adapting to future curriculum needs.

We recognise that further education estates vary widely in scale, complexity and purpose, as well as that colleges have differing levels of experience, capacity and available expertise in estates management. These estate management standards draw on established guidance and good practice from across government and the education sector and are designed to support every college, regardless of size or expertise, to meet statutory and compliance obligations and to ensure that buildings are safe, accessible, well maintained and fit for purpose.

This brings together key legal requirements with good practice guidance, and we encourage colleges to assess themselves against these standards and consider their strengths and areas for development in estates management. We will keep this approach under review.

Information on the capital funding available to support post 16 providers with estate condition, development and transformation is available via the FE capital funding webpage at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fe-capital-funding. You can also access information through the Manage your Education Estate (MYEE portal)[5] which is a service to help you manage your college buildings, land and facilities.

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[4] Education Estates Strategy: a decade of national renewal - GOV.UK

[5] Manage your education estate - GOV.UK

Maturity Levels

The FE Estate Management Standards describe a progressive scale for how effectively a college plans, maintains and develops its buildings and facilities to support high quality education, safety, inclusion and sustainability. They set out four levels of advancement, from meeting basic statutory requirements to demonstrating strategic leadership and innovation.

Progression through the levels reflects increasing capability, consistency, integration with estates strategies and the use of data and long-term planning. Colleges are not expected to reach all levels immediately; instead, the framework is designed to support improvement over time and help governing bodies understand where to prioritise investment and capacity building.

Level	Overview
Level 1 – Baseline	These are the fundamentals that all colleges should have in place to ensure buildings are safe and operational and begin their journey to becoming Fully effective (Level 3). Some of these are already set out in legislation, for example Building Safety Act 2022.
Level 2 – Transitioning	Builds on Level 1 – through applying consistent processes and planning to support reliable day to day estate management.
Level 3 – Fully effective	Proactively manages and optimises the estate using data, innovation and strategic leadership to support curriculum delivery, achieve sustainability and net zero goals and ensure long-term organisational resilience.
Level 4 – Advanced	Additional activities all colleges could undertake to become advanced practitioners in estate management.

Level 1 – Baseline

This covers the essentials that colleges should have in place as they begin their journey towards Fully effective and aspiration towards Advanced estate management.

Area	Baseline
Strategic estate management	Colleges are expected to have an estates strategy and asset register in place to support the safe, compliant and effective management of their estate, meeting all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements. The college ensures: • the estate supports a range of provision, including specialist, technical and land-based delivery (where appropriate) • provision of an inclusive environments for learners with SEND. Practical guidance has been published to help in adapting buildings for young people with SEND[6] • estate decisions are informed by appropriate, reliable data, proportionate to the size and complexity of the college The college has a clear approach to managing estate assets, including land, buildings and equipment, in line with statutory and financial responsibilities.[7] At this level, this includes: • having a basic asset management approach for acquiring, maintaining and disposing of assets, including maintaining an up-to-date asset register and understanding key estate assets maintaining oversight and control of the estate • reviewing asset management arrangements periodically as part of wider business planning • having arrangements in place to support the safe, compliant and effective use of the estate The college maintains an estates strategy that sets out planned investment and maintenance priorities over a 3 to 5 year period and is reviewed regularly, typically at least every three years.
Understanding the estate	The college understands the condition of its estate, to inform an up to date estates strategy (typically reviewed at least every 3 years) supported by accurate information on the condition, suitability and sufficiency of the estate. This should typically include: • Building condition surveys identifying required works, priorities and costs

[6] Inclusive education estates: supporting inclusive environments in mainstream settings

[7] Managing Public Money

Area	Baseline

	• A clear understanding of how space is used, including regular assessment of suitability, safety, capacity and accessibility, ensuring the estate supports:
	  ○ the full range of curriculum delivery, including specialist, technical and land-based provision (for example facilities required for practical delivery such as workshops, laboratories, or livestock management), where appropriate
	  ○ inclusive access for learners with SEND and additional needs, including the suitability and adaptability of spaces
	• Verified floor areas and up to date plans
	• Running cost data, including energy use and emissions
	
	Statutory Compliance
	
	The college maintains full statutory and operational compliance and can demonstrate this where required.
	
	This includes:
	
	• maintaining a statutory compliance register
	• keeping key documents (for example asbestos register and management plan) up-to-date
	• ensuring inspections are carried out by competent persons and acted upon
	• completing remedial works in a timely way
	• holding appropriate insurance
	• animal welfare, licensing and biosecurity arrangements where applicable
	
	The college understands legal and operational constraints affecting its estate, including tenure, permissions and covenants.
	
	Further guidance
	
	There is a list of equipment (non-exhaustive) that requires compliance testing and further tools and templates at Further education estates planning[8]
	
	You can also find a checklist (non-exhaustive) of topics to consider and collect details relating to estates documentation and data at Estates documentation and data checklist

[8] The FE Estates Planning Guidance was last updated in June 2025; while some content may now be slightly out of date, it remains broadly relevant.

Area	Baseline
Maintaining the estate	The college estate is well maintained and provides a safe, weatherproof and appropriately heated environment for staff, students and visitors. The college takes a planned and proportionate approach to maintenance, recognising that older buildings may present additional challenges. Spaces remain adaptable to meet the needs of all users, including those with SEND. The estate is maintained in compliance with relevant statutory requirements, including health and safety and fire safety regulations. ***Further support*** about maintenance planning can be found in Further education estates planning - Making best use of the estate - Guidance - GOV.UK[9]
Governance and Leadership	Governors and college leaders are collectively responsible for ensuring the estate is safe, compliant, sustainable and effectively managed. The college has appropriate governance, compliance and risk management arrangements in place, including a competent person responsible for identifying and escalating estate-related risks where necessary. College leadership: • provides clear oversight of the estate • understands legal and compliance responsibilities • monitors estate condition, risks and statutory compliance • maintains effective estate management systems and up-to-date estate information Governors: • oversee asset management, maintenance and investment decisions • receive proportionate information on estate condition, risks and compliance • seek assurance that risks are being effectively managed • review estate plans where these inform strategic priorities and investment decisions

[9] The FE Estates Planning Guidance was last updated in June 2025; while some content may now be slightly out of date, it remains broadly relevant.

Area	Baseline
	College leaders and boards ensure that estate-related decisions and spending are controlled, transparent and aligned with Managing Public Money and wider government requirements. This includes transparent decision making, avoidance of conflicts of interest, clearly defined and appropriate tender thresholds and documented approval routes at both executive and governing body levels. All refurbishment, new build and significant estates works comply with statutory requirements and have regard to relevant DfE design and construction standards as set out in the School and Further Education College Design and Construction. At this level, application of these standards is typically project-specific and compliance-focused, however these design documents offer guidance on good design principles to support the healthy, safe and effective operation of college settings. Estates budgets and forecasts are evidence-based, informed by condition, compliance and risk information and aligned with the college's financial plan and approved by the governing body. ***Further details*** of the financial freedoms and limits that apply to colleges can be found in the College financial handbook - GOV.UK Further financial information: Bite-size guides to aid colleges in meeting new requirements following reclassification Further guidance and support: Getting help and support for local authorities delivering post-16 further education and Financial and estate management. Further information around asset management can be found in Understanding the estate
Key Compliance Areas	At Level 1, the college is aware of and working towards compliance across core statutory areas, including health and safety, fire safety, building regulations, statutory maintenance, accessibility, environmental requirements, governance and specialist provision. The key areas are set out below to support this; however, they are not exhaustive. The college familiarises itself with any other relevant statutory and regulatory requirements that apply to its estate, taking a proportionate and planned approach to meeting this over time. **Health and safety** The college has a clear understanding of how security risks affect the wellbeing and safety of students, staff and visitors and security is managed alongside legal responsibilities under the: Health and

Area	Baseline
	Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) • Planning, budgeting and prioritisation of estates activity are informed by statutory compliance requirements, risk assessments and reliable condition and performance data. • Resources are allocated to address the most significant risks first, ensuring a safe, compliant and sustainable environment for all users. • The governing body maintains oversight and receives assurance that health and safety obligations are being effectively managed. • Arrangements are in place to identify, assess and manage compliance requirements relating to health and safety, equality, accessibility and welfare facilities across the estate • Effective measures are in place to keep external or rural areas of the estate safe and secure and where applicable, the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law)[10] is complied with, including having appropriate public protection procedures in place. This includes: • holding a valid Display Energy Certificate (DEC) and advisory report, prominently displayed and accessible to staff, students and visitors. Further information can be found in: A guide to display energy certificates and advisory reports for public buildings - GOV.UK • having clear security procedures and an incident response plan aligned with safeguarding, covering risks such as unauthorised access, serious violence and threats to safety. Further guidance is available in the government's School and college security - GOV.UK **Asbestos** The college has an up-to-date asbestos survey and management plan which has been carried out by a competent surveyor. The college: • reviews these documents annually • ensures all staff, where required, as specified in the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, have received asbestos awareness training in accordance with those regulations.

[10] The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 - GOV.UK

Area	Baseline
	has subscribe to the free asbestos updates via eBulletin from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or an equivalent service. For more ***detailed guidance*** see Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
	Legionella The college: - has a current legionella risk assessment that identifies and controls the risk of exposure for building occupants, including the measures in place to manage any identified risks. - ensures inspections are carried out regularly and properly recorded**.** For more ***detailed guidance*** see - Legionella Compliance for Educational Facilities: A 2025 Guide for Schools, Colleges and Universities and Legionella and Legionnaires' disease - HSE
	Fire Safety The college: - ensures all premises and facilities are maintained to an appropriate standard to protect the health, safety and welfare of learners and staff, so far as is reasonably practicable. - Ensures all new building work complies with Building Regulations 2010 (fire safety) and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. - Has an appropriate and up to date fire risk assessment for all premises. For ***further guidance***, see Fire safety risk assessment: educational premises - GOV.UK and Workplace health, safety and welfare. Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 See ***full guidance*** in maintaining your estate here Further education estates planning - Making best use of the estate - Guidance - GOV.UK **Security and Safeguarding** The college has appropriate and proportionate security and safeguarding arrangements in place across the estate, working

Area	Baseline
	towards a safe and secure environment for staff, students and visitors. The college takes a planned and proportionate approach, recognising that estates vary in size, complexity and risk, while ensuring that core measures are in place and regularly reviewed, supported by competent staff and appropriate systems. This includes: • measures to manage site access and security risks, including buildings, grounds and specialist environments • appropriate and proportionate cyber security arrangements for estate and operational systems, maintaining core protections and user awareness • clear incident response procedures, aligned with safeguarding policies, covering risks such as unauthorised access, serious incidents and threats to safety. Security arrangements are proportionate to the size, complexity and nature of the estate, including multi-site and specialist provision (for example workshops, laboratories or land-based facilities), with colleges taking reasonable steps to prioritise risks and continuously improve their approach.

Level 2 – Transitioning

This covers the next set of priorities incorporating structured processes and improving compliance, building on Level 1. The standards below are in addition to those listed in Level 1.

Area	Transitioning
Strategic estate management	At this level the college plans, manages and invests in their estate using clear governance arrangements, standardised processes and accurate, reliable data. The estate is proactively aligned to support educational delivery, skills development and long-term sustainability. Through strategic estate management, the college estate is effectively planned, prioritised and invested in, supporting: • high-quality education and skills delivery • long-term organisational sustainability • climate and environmental objectives • inclusive and accessible learning environments, including SEND provision. Estate data is reliable, accessible and actively used to inform decision-making, rather than held solely for compliance purposes. The college ensures that asset management processes are defined and consistently applied, with assets maintained and used to support current educational and operational needs. Estate decisions are evidence-based, clearly demonstrating how investment: • reduces safety and compliance risk • improves suitability, accessibility and efficiency • supports current and future educational needs • contributes to carbon reduction and environmental sustainability Leaders and governors use estate information to: • prioritise investment • manage risk • challenge proposals • make informed, evidence-based decisions about estate use and development The college has effective estate systems and governance arrangements in place to support this approach.

Area	Transitioning
	For more detailed guidance on implementing a climate action plan as part of strategic estates management see: • Further education estates planning - Strategic estate planning, Further Education Sustainable Estates Guidance • Sustainability leadership and climate action plans in education
Understanding the estate	The college assesses all its land and buildings to understand how they are being used and whether they are being used effectively and efficiently, including that environments meet the needs of learners with SEND. • The college makes use of available information from condition surveys and the Condition Data Collection programme, where appropriate, to help inform asset management planning and prioritisation. It increasingly uses this data over time and supplements it with local knowledge and professional judgement. • The college commissions additional surveys, where proportionate and at its discretion, to provide further insight where gaps are identified or to support the development of estates plans and priorities. For more ***detailed guidance*** see Further education estates planning - Understanding the estate[11]
Maintaining the estate	At this level, the college balances planned preventative maintenance and reactive management. Using reliable and up to date condition information from asset management plans, internal assessments, or other appropriate sources, the college plans and prioritises maintenance activities across the estate. • Condition data is actively used, not just held, where appropriate • Maintenance planning becomes more structured and forward-looking The college has documented maintenance plans in place, which may be incorporated into its estate strategy and asset management plan, to support a preventative maintenance approach. Preventative maintenance includes:

[11] The FE Estates Planning Guidance was last updated in June 2025; while some content may now be slightly out of date, it remains broadly relevant.

Area	Transitioning
	• work to keep land, buildings and equipment in good condition and prevent deterioration or failure • activities required to meet statutory and legal compliance duties • routine and cyclical tasks carried out regardless of condition, such as servicing plant and equipment and clearing rainwater goods These arrangements go towards supporting a more proactive approach in managing risks and maintaining estate condition, rather than relying on reactive repairs. For more ***detailed guidance*** see Understanding the estate – in Further education estates planning. Further support for maintenance planning can be found in Further education estates planning - Making best use of the estate. Capital funding available to support the maintenance of the estate is outlined at Further education capital funding and (Manage your education estate - GOV.UK MYEE portal).
Governance and Leadership	The college's leaders actively manage the estate through the effective use of data, due diligence, structured procurement and continuity planning, ensuring decisions are informed, transparent and accountable. Governing bodies maintain effective oversight of the estate, demonstrating the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to provide appropriate challenge, scrutiny and influence over estate strategy and delivery. All estate assets are managed in accordance with an approved Asset Management Plan (AMP), which is reviewed annually and aligned with organisational objectives, risk appetite and capital planning requirements. The college has strong governance controls overseeing procurement activity, working towards transparent, fair and well-documented decision making. The college takes a proportionate and consistent approach, recognising that procurement arrangements, including tender thresholds, will typically be determined locally within the framework of procurement legislation and internal policies. The college has a detailed continuity plan in place to cover emergencies related to the estate, including relocation of learners to another site if needed. The continuity plan also covers other emergencies, including climate-related risks and cyber-security breaches affecting building management systems.

Area	Transitioning
	For more ***detailed guidance*** on how governors can effectively manage the estate see Further education estates planning. The college makes use of standardised design principles and supporting design guidance documentation, where appropriate, to support efficiency and consistency in project delivery, including spatial planning informed by DfE examples. The college takes a flexible and context-led approach, recognising that standard solutions may not be suitable for all estates, particularly where there are site constraints, specialist provision, or legacy buildings. Estate planning is proactive, drawing on available condition data and local knowledge to inform medium-term investment and refurbishment priorities. The college adapts design approaches as needed to ensure they are practical, inclusive and aligned to their specific estate requirements. For ***guidance*** on technical and design standards for colleges see: School and Further Education College Design and Construction

Level 3 - Fully effective

This covers all the things colleges should have in place to manage their estate efficiently and effectively. The standards below are in addition to the those listed in Levels 1 and 2.

Area	Fully effective
Strategic estate management	The college: • conducts regular strategic reviews of its estates strategy to ensure it remains current, effective and aligned with organisational priorities. The college actively identifies, plans and delivers change, ensuring the estate is optimised to support education delivery and long-term sustainability. • uses robust financial management and monitoring, including management accounts, to track capital performance and ensure investment delivers value for money. Estate decisions are: • supported by clear financial and option appraisal information • prioritised based on need, impact and affordability • demonstrably contributing to improvements in estate performance and educational outcomes • applied to improve access, inclusion and outcomes for learners with SEND These arrangements ensure a well-managed, evidence-based approach to capital investment, with clear oversight of costs, benefits and delivery. For more ***detailed guidance*** see Further education estates planning - Strategic estate planning[12]
Understanding the estate	The college uses up-to-date and accurate information and analysis to support effective estate management. This could be systems such as digital Building Information Modelling (BIM) (where available).
Maintaining he estate	The college uses consistent, robust condition data to inform a planned, preventative maintenance approach, aligned to its estates strategy and long-term investment planning. • Condition information is regularly reviewed, updated and integrated into decision-making • Maintenance is prioritised strategically, based on risk, condition and organisational priorities

[12] The FE Estates Planning Guidance was last updated in June 2025; while some content may now be slightly out of date, it remains broadly relevant.

Area	Fully effective
	• There is a clear understanding of future need and backlogs, supporting medium to long-term planning The college ensures that condition surveys identify potential structural defects and health and safety risks. Including: • consideration of known issues associated with older buildings, including asbestos, Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and similar materials. These surveys support a robust understanding of estate risks and inform maintenance planning and investment decisions.
Governance and Leadership	The college has a governing body which includes a board member with responsibility for overseeing estate management, ensuring alignment with the college's long-term strategy. Governors engage regularly with estate performance, risks and compliance, demonstrating an informed and proactive approach. Leaders work in partnership with local authorities and planning bodies to ensure estate developments are well considered, aligned with local needs and strategically coordinated. Leaders use evidence from the asset management plan and a high-level building condition survey to challenge budget proposals, investment decisions and risk assessments, in line with DfE guidance on understanding the estate and using accurate data to support planning. The board monitors estate performance, condition, compliance and utilisation to provide assurance that the estate remains safe, suitable, sustainable and sufficiently sized, delivers value for money and supports educational priorities. Consistent application of DfE employer requirements and design guidance helps ensure high-performing, inclusive, sustainable and future-proof environments. ***Further detailed guidance*** is set out in the School and Further Education College Design and Construction document, which provides guidance on college design and construction principles, as well as helping to ensure relevant standards and expectations are considered when developing the estate strategy.
Sustainability	The college maintains an up-to-date estates strategy that sets out a long-term, phased approach to developing a sustainable estate, aligned to its strategic objectives and evolving curriculum, learner and community needs. The college takes a well-developed, evidence-based approach to sustainability, understanding its estate and its environmental

Area	Fully effective
	impact and embedding climate mitigation and adaptation into planning and decision-making; colleges are encouraged to have a climate strategy in place, working towards reducing environmental impact over time and applying sustainable design principles where appropriate. Estate planning is adaptable and user-centred, ensuring the needs of learners, staff and communities inform decisions, supported by the use of condition data, performance information and stakeholder feedback to prioritise investment, improve efficiency and make best use of space. The college identifies clear responsibility for sustainability, for example through a named lead and may draw on sector guidance such as the Further Education Sustainable Estates Guidance which sets out sustainable design principles, carbon reduction expectations and planning considerations. The college is actively planning for, and working towards, principles of net zero carbon in operation, including a roadmap to net zero by 2050.
Digital technology	Digital technology and infrastructure requirements are considered as part of effective estate management and curriculum needs. For more ***detailed guidance*** see digital technology in your estate: Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges
Health and Safety	As part of a planned preventative maintenance regime, a competent person carries out regular visual inspections of the buildings to monitor structural condition and identify defects. These are supplemented by assessments every 3 to 5 years by a suitably qualified structural engineer. All findings are assessed and addressed using a risk-based and proportionate approach. The college has effective arrangements in place for monitoring, auditing and reviewing estate condition, health and safety and statutory compliance, ensuring the estate provides a safe and healthy environment for all users and supports continuous improvement For more ***detailed guidance*** see Health and Safety at Work Act

Level 4 – Advanced

This level offers colleges the opportunity to become sector leaders in estate management. Level 4 organisations are strategic, innovative and outward-facing, with strong governance, advanced data use, future-proof planning and leadership in sustainability. They go beyond effective estate management to drive innovation and shape sector-wide practice. This builds on the standards in Levels 1 to 3.

<table>
<tr><th>Area</th><th>Advanced</th></tr>
<tr><td>Strategic estate management</td><td>The asset management plan and estate vision align with the budget management cycle.

For more detailed guidance see Strategic estate planning.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Governance and Leadership</td><td>At this level, the college has an Asset Management Plan (AMP) in place which:
translates the Estate Strategy into a prioritised programme of maintenance and investment
is informed by up-to-date information on buildings, condition, compliance and ownership
is developed in collaboration with college leadership and relevant external partners, including Strategic and local authorities, to ensure alignment with local skills needs and strategic priorities
The college has a named senior leader who has accountability for the estates strategy and provides high-quality, data-rich reporting to the board.

The estate is managed through strong, integrated, continuously updated datasets covering condition, lifecycle costs, utilisation, risk and compliance; with knowledge of the full cost of occupying the estate.

Investment decisions follow a formal estate investment policy as determined by the college, ensuring decisions demonstrate sound financial judgement, strategic alignment and public value. Governance ensures all proposals consider lifecycle costs and long-term sustainability.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sustainability</td><td>Sustainability and net zero are strategic board priorities and governors and leaders proactively steer progress toward estate decarbonisation and climate resilience.

The college has a climate action plan that is embedded into the estate vision and strategy. There is a robust plan in place to decarbonise the estate by the national target of 2050.</td></tr>
</table>

Area	Advanced
	Sustainability is embedded into organisational culture, student experience and operational decision making.
Asbestos	The college has updated the asbestos register with photographs and material assessment scores and any new actions resulting from reinspection. It has carried out an emergency response exercise to test procedures in the event of accidental disturbance once staff have been trained and provided with relevant site-specific information. For more ***detailed guidance*** see Managing Asbestos in your school or college.
Health and Safety	The college leadership and governance have a robust estate maintenance, building and re-building programme embedded in their Estate Development Strategy. This encompasses estate condition, health and safety, sustainability aspirations and estate resilience. Advanced and proactive use of digital estate management tools and BIM modelling, (where available) is effectively used to identify and plan all aspects of estate management.

Further reading

Legislation

Colleges must follow all the relevant regulation pertaining to their estate. The main legislation covering this is the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and its regulations. Other pieces of guidance and legislation responsible bodies should be aware of include:

The law on workplace safety (HSE) - The law on workplace safety - HSE

Equality Act 2010: advice for HEI and colleges

Managing health and safety in construction (HSE) - Construction (Design and

Management) Regulations 2015

The Building Safety Act - GOV.UK

The Management of Health and Safety at Work

Regulations 1999

Further and Higher Education Act 1992

FE and sixth-form college corporations: governance guide - GOV.UK

Every child achieving and thriving - GOV.UK

This is not an exhaustive list, and Colleges will need to consider issues specific to them and their geographical location.

Links to more information and guidance

Help and support for colleges - GOV.UK – Information about the range of help and support available from the FE Commissioner, DfE and delivery partners.

National Leaders of Governance for further education: current national leaders - GOV.UK – Mentoring and improvement support to governance boards.

Managing asbestos in your school or college - GOV.UK – Guidance for managing asbestos in schools and colleges.

School and Further Education College Design and Construction - GOV.UK – for the design and construction of school and FE education college buildings and grounds.

Inclusive education estates: supporting inclusive environments in mainstream settings – non-statutory guidance.

College requirements regarding asset disposals – DfE guidance on the procedures that must be followed when a college intends to dispose of a fixed asset.

Estate management competency framework – Advice to help manage buildings and land (for schools but still useful for FE).

Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK – for how colleges can use the right digital infrastructure and technology.

Jisc – a not-for-profit membership organisation who deliver digital infrastructure and shared services for FE Colleges.

Further education sustainable estates guidance - GOV.UK – advice for how to define a sustainable FE estate and deliver sustainable capital investment.

The Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges – an educational charity to help FE and HE institutions improve their environmental and sustainability performance.

Sustainability and climate change strategy – for education and children's services systems (DfE).

Sustainability Support for Education - Your sustainability support hub

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting for college corporations – non-statutory guidance and supplements for environmental reporting.

Department for Education

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