



# FE Week

FREE WITH ISSUE

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## THE GREAT ESCAPE

Sigh of relief across the sector - but devil will be in the detail, warn senior figures

### Budget announcements

- Core adult skills budget protected at £1.5bn
- Extension of FE loans to 19-23s
- New apprenticeship body and levy to raise £3bn
- 16-19 funding rate unchanged
- Sixth form colleges get academy VAT pass

### Budget questions

- £360m BIS savings for adult non-participation
- Restructuring and devolution
- Future of UKCES and SFA
- £160m DfE savings for 16-19 provision
- Are academy sixth form colleges exempt from area reviews?

Budget news and analysis on pages 2, 3, 6 & 13

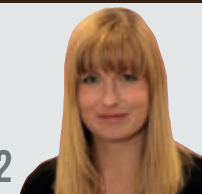
**'COMPLIANCE WORK' ON TOPSLICE DECLARATION BREACHES** PAGE 5



**CORBYN HITS OUT AT LOCAL COLLEGES' MERGER** PAGE 6



**FIRST ILP SHORT OFSTED INSPECTION LOWDOWN** PAGE 12



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## Reviews question over VAT move

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Sixth Form College (SFC) leaders were today in the dark about whether Chancellor George Osborne's announcement they could become academies to escape VAT would also allow them to escape post-16 area reviews.

Mr Osborne announced during his Budget speech that the government would allow SFCs to become academies "so they no longer have to pay VAT".

It was welcomed by the Sixth Form Colleges' Association (SFCA), which recently led a campaign backed by more than 18,000 people who signed a petition calling for an end to the anomaly of SFCs having to pay VAT, while schools and academies get a refund on the 20 per cent tax.

However, the Department for Education (DfE) declined to confirm to *FE Week* whether SFCs that gained academy status would be exempt from post-16 education and training area reviews.

A DfE spokesperson would only say that "further details will be clarified in due course".

James Kewin, deputy chief executive of the SFCA, said: "We understand the area review process will be the means by which applications for academy status will be considered."

He added this would introduce "a degree of urgency to the process, as some SFCs are already half-way through their area review. "Many SFCs are interested in academy

status and we welcome the decision," he added.

The first wave of area reviews launched since September for Sussex Coast, West Yorkshire, Tees Valley, Sheffield City, Solent, Birmingham and Solihull, and Greater Manchester, involve 33 SFCs and 50 general FE colleges — but no schools.

David Igoe, SFCA chief executive, who will be standing down early next year, said he did not think there would be a danger of SFCs losing their identities as part of academy chains.

"I think that in many cases SFCs will be the lead instigators with local schools, so they will, for example, keep their names."

He added: "If the Chancellor wanted to give us a Christmas present then he succeeded. These concessions were on my personal wish list to achieve before I hang up my boots at the end of March."

The DfE spokesperson said allowing SFCs to join existing or start new academy chains would "help drive up standards and improve efficiency of 16 to 19 education institutions".



Visit [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) to read an expert piece by Mr Igoe further reflecting on the VAT announcement

## Employer engagement hopes with £3bn levy

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Sector leaders have reacted positively after Chancellor George Osborne fleshed out how the new apprenticeship levy on large firms would raise £3bn a-year.

Mr Osborne confirmed that from April 2017 employers would have to pay 0.5 per cent of their pay roll costs towards the levy — offset by a £15,000 allowance meaning that most employers would not have to pay.

"I am setting the rate at 0.5 per cent of an employer's paybill. Every employer will receive a £15,000 allowance to offset against the levy — which means over 98 per cent of all employers — and all businesses with paybills of less than £3m, will pay no levy at all."

The levy, due to be introduced in April 2017, will fund £900m of apprenticeship spending and comes with a new employer-led Institute for Apprenticeships, which will set standards and quality and be fully operational in time for the levy launch, according to a Department for Business, Innovation and Skills spokesperson.

Stewart Segal, Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive, said "large employers will be encouraged to increase their apprenticeship programmes to make the most of their levy fee."

"The levy will also apply to more businesses than we expected," he added.

John Allan, national chairman for the



Federation of Small Businesses, said: "We support the decision to use payroll as a measure to determine which businesses pay the levy, as opposed to headcount."

"It recognises that not all businesses will be able to afford to pay."

Confederation of British Industry director general Carolyn Fairbairn said the levy would be a "significant extra payroll tax on business".

However, she added: "We welcome the creation of a levy board to give business a voice on how the money is spent."

The government response to its levy consultation came out the same day as the Budget and addressed the issue of existing levies operated by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB).

## FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

## Condition funding survey

Providers that failed to comply with the condition of funding rule have until the end of today (November 30) to tell the Education Funding Agency how they plan to be compliant.

Its survey of providers who failed to enrol 16 to 18-year-olds without at least a grade C in GCSE English and maths back onto the subjects is closing.

A link to the survey, which also asks for reasons behind the non-compliance in 2014-15, are available on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk).

## MPs support funding EDM

An early day motion from Conservative MP Sir Peter Bottomley calling for 16 to 18 education funding to be the same as for 14 to 16-year-olds has won cross-party support — from six MPs.

Four Labour MPs, along with one each from the Ulster Unionist Party and the Social Democratic and Labour Party, had signed up to the Worthing West MP's motion at the time of going to press.

It was submitted on November 20.

## Loan application figures

The number of FE loan applications for October was 6,400 — bringing the total for this academic year to 51,750.

The latest figures, published on Thursday (November 26), show most applications (4,270) in October were for level three diplomas, which also had the most applications from the start of 2015/16 at 25,190.

The lowest number for the month was 50 for A-levels, and the lowest for the year was 230 for level four certificates.



"We understand employers in sectors where a levy is already in place want clarity," it said.

"We are working with the relevant industry training boards to consult with their members ahead of the introduction of the levy on how existing arrangements will be affected and whether any changes are required."

Chris Claydon, ECITB chief executive, said: "There is still a great deal more detail our members require on how the sector will operate with two levies."

Steve Radley, director of policy at CITB, said his organisation had asked members "whether the existing levies are still needed and employers will be prepared to pay them" and "most answered yes on both counts".

Visit [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) for a Budget expert piece by Mr Radley

## NEWS

# Whitehall uncertainty over 19+ FE loans

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Chancellor George Osborne's extension of the FE loans system to 19 to 23-year-olds is a source of just as much uncertainty among his officials as his £360m savings plans are among sector leaders, government papers have revealed.

Mr Osborne made passing mention of the loans move in his Budget speech to MPs on Wednesday (November 25), with more details laid out in The Treasury's Spending Review and Autumn Statement Blue Book.

It explains that that "government will expand tuition fee loans to 19 to 23-year-olds at levels three and four, and 19+ year-olds at levels five and six" — but government policy costings reveal the "measure receives a 'very high' uncertainty rating".

"Given the lack of data on the demand for public funding for these courses — there is currently no public funding available for standalone level five and six qualifications — and difficulties in estimating the additionality in take-up due to the measure, the estimated cost of this measure is highly dependent on judgement-based assumptions."

Government figures published last month show the total amount awarded for 24+ advanced learning loans in 2014/15 was £149m, which was 62 per cent less than the £397m allocated for the FE loans budget.

And with the failed apprentice FE loans system, widely regarded as to blame for a sharp fall in adult apprenticeship numbers under the Coalition, still fresh in FE minds, the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education (Niace) warned of expansion consequences.

David Hughes, Niace chief executive, said: "Extending eligibility of learning loans to younger learners and to higher level learning could easily exacerbate market failures in the 24+ advanced learning loan system."

There was further uncertainty as to where £360m of adults skills "efficiencies and savings" by 2019-20 sat with the Chancellor's pledge to protect

funding for the "core adult skills participation budgets in cash terms, at £1.5bn".

"We will not, as many predicted, cut core adult skills funding for FE colleges" Mr Osborne told MPs.

The news appeared even more positive with a Department for Business, Innovation and Skills telling *FE Week* that funding of the loans extension would not eat into the £1.5bn.

However, the government's spending review document makes it clear that not all areas of skills funding would be protected as "savings will be made from non-participation budgets".

Dr Sue Pember, director of policy and external relations at Holes, said: "We are very pleased the government has acknowledged the importance of adult education. Of course we would like to know the detail of the proposed cuts to the non-participation budgets."

Mr Hughes said: "It's unclear which budgets are included and which aren't. What are the implications for community learning and offender learning? What's happening to learner support and additional learning support? I need more detail."

Meanwhile, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) will be one source of adult skills saving with a Treasury spokesperson telling *FE Week* she "believed" it would "cease" from 2016/17, although a Department for Business, Innovation and Skills spokesperson was unable to confirm whether it would survive.

Martin Doel, Association of Colleges chief executive, said: "Following a massive 28 per cent cut to the adult skills budget earlier this year we had real concerns for the future of

this essential training that provides the nation's future workforce including nurses, social care workers and construction workers.

"It is a positive step in the right direction that Mr Osborne has chosen to spare the adult skills budget.

"Enabling 19-year-olds to access further



education loans will also provide additional support for this vital training."

Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal said the budget was "not as bad as some were predicting," but he too had questions.

"It appears that the overall budget of £1.5bn will be 'protected'. This may still mean that within the budget some provision will not be funded, for example, some of the co-funded vocational skills for those who are employed may be at risk," he said.

A spokesperson for the UKCES said that the Chancellor's announcement would "have a significant impact" on the organisation, but was unable to confirm what that impact would be.

The spokesperson said the UKCES was "awaiting further details" and would work with government to manage any changes.

"It would be inappropriate to comment further at this time," the spokesperson added.

See editor's comment on page 6

See page 13 for further Budget analysis by Sandra McNally, director of the Centre for Vocational Education Research at London School of Economics, and also fewweek.co.uk for a piece by Shadow Skills Minister Gordon Marsden

## Clarity needed over £160m savings from 16-19 funding

Sector leaders have called for clarity around funding for 16 to 19-year-old learners amid concerns over £160m of cuts outside the now-protected national base rate.

Funding for 16 and 17-year-olds at £4,000 per learner and £3,300 for 18-year-olds will be protected in cash terms over the course of the parliament, Chancellor George Osborne announced.

But details included in the full spending review document raised the threat of cuts outside of this national base rate.

A Treasury spokesperson told *FE Week* some savings would "equate to around £160m from 2019-20 across 16-19 participation and participation support budgets which include the gradual removal of Formula Protection Funding from 2016/17".

He added: "Some savings will naturally be made due to declining 16-19 budget demographics over this Parliament."

A Department for Education spokesperson declined to comment further.

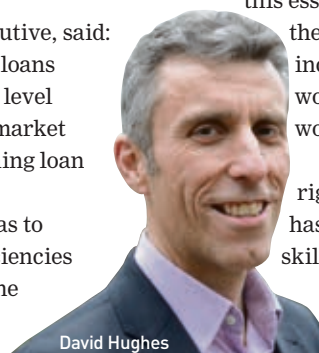
James Kewin, deputy chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges' Association, said colleges had already known that formula protection funding would end.

"If they have to find these additional targeted savings, what will they be?" he asked.

"We look forward to seeing the finer detail of this announcement and await confirmation that there will not be reductions in other areas of 16 to 19 education such as funding for disadvantaged students or 18-year-olds."

"Maintaining the funding base rate for 16 to 19-year-olds until 2020 will be welcomed, but with declining student numbers and funding being maintained only in cash terms this will lead to a significant reduction in income to all colleges over the next four years," said Mike Cheetham, a partner at audit firm RSM.

"Perhaps this is why sixth form colleges are being given the 'option of joining a multi academy trust'."



David Hughes



## MIKE FARMER

Education consultant, Farmer Research Associates

### Will 19+ learners buy in to Chancellor George Osborne's FE loans extension?

Based on the November Statistical First Release I calculate that there are 65,000 to 70,000 19 to 23s (other than apprentices) taking level three and four qualifications.

The evidence suggests that younger students are less loan-averse than older students, so a fairly high proportion of 19 to 23s are likely to take out loans.

There are bigger uncertainties around the proposed extension to higher levels. How many level five and six students

there will be is much more speculative, and depends on a number of factors, including the speed with which the new National Colleges and Institutes of Technology get off the ground, and the qualifications that they (or awarding bodies) can develop.

There are questions too about where these additional students will come from. Clearly there will be competition with universities and other conventional higher education providers.

That is probably the reason for introducing FE maintenance loans for students of higher level skills, and a planned increase in the FE loans budget.

A gradual integration of the FE and higher education loans schemes looks on the cards and this can only be for the best. The FE scheme has suffered from inadequate publicity, and having a single scheme will help in this respect.

Also needed is a relaxation of the iron grip that the SFA has on FE loans. For example, although this would not be popular, a lifting of fees cap which it currently sets. Since the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has to cut 17 per cent of its administration costs, there are questions about whether the SFA will have the capacity to exercise its current control, or even whether it will survive to do it.

What do we already know about FE loans? The key message is that the budget is currently grossly (62 per cent) underspent.

I calculate that the scheme could take 125,000 more students receiving loans (at £2,000 a time) without exceeding the £400m allocated to it.

The scheme is tightly controlled by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) which caps the fees for every single level three and four qualification. So plenty of scope to expand and modify the scheme without Chancellor George Osborne getting worried.

So where next? It's unsurprising that the Chancellor has brought 19 to 23-year-olds into scope. My guess is this will happen next academic year.

The funds are there and all the systems are in place. I'm also fairly optimistic about the impact on student participation.

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## NEWS

## Inspectors report marine college 'progress' with new subcontractor

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A new subcontractor has helped grade-four distance learning provider Marine Society College of the Sea (MSCS) win Ofsted approval while FE Commissioner Dr David Collins has drawn a line under his involvement.

Dr Collins visited Lambeth-based MSCS in December last year and called for a new subcontractor after education watchdog inspectors had branded it inadequate the previous month.

Both Ofsted and the commissioner criticised the relationship the college — which has a current Skills Funding Agency (SFA) allocation of around £150k, but is otherwise learner-funded — with its distance learning subcontractor of 35 years, the National Extension College (NEC).

Dr Collins said MSCS, previously rated as good in 2009, had an “over-reliance” on NEC and had “not monitored subcontracted provision effectively”, while NEC had “not met the standards required in its provision”.

But Ofsted inspectors who carried out a fourth monitoring visit last month at MSCS, which offers courses including GCSEs and A-levels to professional seafarers, saw improvements since new provider Oxford Open Learning was introduced in September.



Mark Windsor

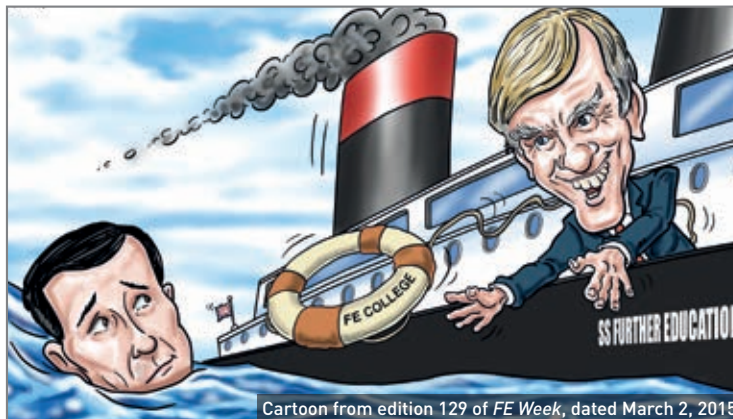
The monitoring visit focused on six areas, and identified “reasonable progress” in each and, according to the report, “those who have enrolled recently are making significant progress.”

Mark Windsor, MSSC director of lifelong learning, said: “We are delighted the Skills Minister has confirmed that the charity has made sufficient progress and therefore FE-Commissioner-led intervention is no longer needed.”

A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills said: “The college was removed from formal FE Commissioner intervention in October as both the FE Commissioner and officials were satisfied MSCS had made sufficient progress against Dr Collins’ recommendations since the initial assessment.”

The progress areas in the monitoring report included, increasing the number of learners who complete programmes, ensuring that all teaching, learning and assessment is good or better, and ensuring all learners make good progress in their studies.

However, learners enrolled before September have stayed with NEC, which came in for renewed



Cartoon from edition 129 of FE Week, dated March 2, 2015

criticism from inspectors.

“College managers have tried to work with the previous subcontractor’s managers to improve the support and help for those learners making slow progress, but actions taken have not been effective,” inspectors reported.

Ros Morpeth, NEC chief executive, said: “There needs to be more research to understand what a ‘good outcome’ means for students and especially for students who are studying independently at a distance and like the students who enrol through MSCS, working in very difficult circumstances with interrupted schedules.”

Mr Windsor said the MSSC was working with both providers “focusing on the best possible outcomes for our learners and remain mindful of the significant challenge of providing distance learning to seafarers serving at sea.”

Dr Nick Smith, Oxford Open Learning courses director, said: “We look forward to a long and successful relationship with MSCS.”

## Finances on the mend at NCN

The FE Commissioner has finished his work at New College Nottingham (NCN) after overseeing dramatic improvement with its financial position.

A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) told *FE Week* that “the intervention at NCN has ended”.

Commissioner Dr David Collins’ initial visit to the 20,000-learner college from February 9 to 13, was prompted by a Skills Funding Agency notice of concern over its finances.

His report published in July called for careful implementation of a “well thought out recovery plan,” to be overseen by Dr Collins as NCN worked towards merging with 20,000-learner Central College Nottingham (CCN).

Dawn Whitmore, NCN principal, told *FE Week* she was delighted the college’s progress had been recognised by Dr Collins.

She said: “We’re on track to achieve our planned £1m surplus in 2015/2016.”

Dr Collins launched an area review of FE provision for Nottingham in May, following grade three Ofsted inspection results for NCN and CCN, which prompted the merger announcement.

Both colleges confirmed that a project manager had been appointed to help oversee the merger process.

See [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) for an expert piece by Ms Whitmore on NCN improvements

## Funding threat hangs over providers who missed topslice deadline

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The Skills Funding Agency was today looking into whether it would suspend funding for lead providers who flouted a disclosure deadline as part of a topslicing clampdown.

It said it was “undertaking compliance work” to determine whether any providers had ignored a ruling that all their management fees be published online by Monday (November 23).

The SFA warned in September that funding could be suspended where declarations were missing after the deadline — and *FE Week* checks on the websites of a number of leads with numerous subcontractors found apparent offenders.

Among those to have missed the deadline was North Hertfordshire College, which uploaded its fees a day late, while City of Bristol College was two days over.

An SFA spokesperson told *FE Week* that it was “undertaking compliance work to ensure that every lead provider that has been ‘provision subcontracting’ has adhered to our supply-chain fees and charges funding rules”.

“If this work identifies that a lead provider has not adhered to these rules, we will take action,” she added.

“We will not be disclosing information on individual providers until our compliance work is complete, which will be by the end of the calendar year.”

The SFA wants information on management fees available on websites, and

to include current supply chain fees and charges policy.

It also wants the relevant weblinks provided on 2015 to 2016 subcontractor declaration forms.

It comes around nine months after an *FE Week* investigation found that providers were ignoring rules that they must publish what they charge subcontractors. And while there was compliance with rules on listing the range of fees, these were as high as 40 per cent in some instances.

But compliance with the website declaration rule has also brought its own shocks.

Figures published by the country’s biggest SFA contractor and former publicly-owned provider Learndirect, which hit the deadline, showed that it top-sliced almost £50m from deals with its subcontractors in the last two years.

The figures showed that the Sheffield-based provider retained 31 per cent (£24.3m) of total funding (£77.7m) for its 73 subcontractors in 2013/14.

But management fee details on its website showed that last academic year it retained an even higher proportion — 36 per cent of total funding (£68.1m) from 75 subcontractors.

Despite being allocated £9.5m less total funding last year than in 2013/14, it maintained a £24m topslice by increasing the average management fee from 31 per cent in 2013/14 to 36 per cent last year when it earned £24.2m in management fees.



Peter Lauener



The 36 per cent 2014/15 topslicing figure for Learndirect is uncomfortably close to the 40 per cent SFA chief executive Peter Lauener has said he would find unjustifiable.

Mr Lauener told *FE Week* editor Chris Henwood in an exclusive interview last year that he “would find it quite hard to see a set of arrangements that would justify a 40 per cent management fee, because it’s kind of obvious that what is taken as a management fee is not going to frontline education or training”.

The SFA rule requiring providers to specify how much they charge subcontractors in management fees was first introduced in August last year.

A notable offender was Learndirect — although the firm subsequently uploaded its 2013/14 figures before Christmas.

The rules following a long campaign against excessive top slicing by *FE Week* that was launched in the paper’s pilot edition in June 2011.

An SFA spokesperson said at the time that “all colleges and other training organisations which subcontract must publish the actual funding paid and retained for each of their subcontractors in the [provider] funding years 2013 to 2014 and 2014 to 2015”.

A Learndirect spokesperson told *FE Week*: “The level of charges depends on the contract being delivered and the role of the supplier in question.”

“Partners have schedules outlining the fees payable to them for their role in the delivery of each contract, and these rates are published to them prior to contracting.”

## FE WEEK COMMENT

## Budget bonanza or blues?

On the morning of the Budget the Guardian front page memorably predicted significant cuts to FE funding.

Yet listening to the Chancellor that afternoon it would be easy to conclude the FE sector got an eleventh hour reprieve.

Adult funding allocations and the 16-19 funding rate is to be protected for the next four years and the 0.5 per cent apprenticeship levy by 2019-20 would be adding £900m to the annual pot.

Credit should be given to those who lobbied hard to save FE, although the surprise upturn in the macro-economic forecasts were also clearly a contributing factor.

But cash protection still means cuts in real terms, and not everything in FE is protected.

The DfE needs to secure £160m savings in 16-19 funding and BIS has £360m to find.

Also, loans are being extended, adults skills funding is being devolved and apprenticeship allocations are replaced by a voucher system.

So lots of unanswered questions, uncertainty for all FE providers and a long way from the 'stability' our sector deserves.

FE seems to have dodged a bullet, but it may turn out to be a boomerang.

**Chris Henwood**

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## Corbyn bid to keep London colleges apart

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Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has tried to warn City and Islington College governors against plans to merge with Westminster Kingsway College, branding the proposals "too accepting of the government's agenda". In a letter to the board, Islington North MP Mr Corbyn said he sympathised with views put forward by college unions, including the University and College Union (UCU), about the plans.

"The proposals are too accepting of the government's agenda of area-based reviews, most likely leading to 'fewer, more resilient colleges' and a loss of jobs and courses, particularly those providing for the most marginalised," he wrote.

"As suggested by the unions, the two colleges do perhaps need to consider the wider picture of educational provision across the capital and the diverse needs of local communities."

"My front bench team will do everything we can to resist

further attacks on the sector," he added.

City and Islington College, which was rated outstanding by Ofsted when it was last inspected in 2008, and Westminster Kingsway College, which was rated good overall by Ofsted when it was last inspected in 2011, announced plans to work more closely together in July.

A consultation on a possible merger closed on November 6. A spokesperson for City and Islington College said the result was expected following a meeting of its governing body on December 9.

Both colleges declined to comment on Mr Corbyn's letter.

Meanwhile, South Worcestershire College has revealed plans to become part of the Warwickshire College Group in the latest college merger proposal to be announced.

South Worcestershire College's planned merger with the six-college Warwickshire College Group, which interim principal David Ansell calls "very much a voluntary act", is designed to ensure the long-term future of

the college.

"We're a very small college, and given the way funding was going, it has become an increasing challenge to make a small college work as an independent institution," he said.

Angela Joyce, group principal of the Warwickshire College Group, which was rated as good in April, said: "We are delighted that South Worcestershire College has chosen us as their preferred partner for a merger.

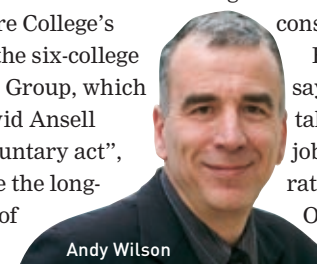
"The merger will enable a more extensive and coherent apprenticeship, further and higher education offer in Worcestershire, developed alongside employers and partners across the region."

Mr Ansell said he expected a detailed merger proposal to go to both boards of governors in February, before going out for consultation in the spring.

He said it was "simple too early to say" what shape the merger would take or whether there would be any job losses at the college, which was rated good overall at its most recent Ofsted inspection in November 2013.



Frank McLoughlin



Andy Wilson

## COMMENTS

## Where does your college sit in the FE Week 2015/16 adult apprenticeship allocations table?

It just shows you that there are not many truly commercial colleges out there pushing the apprenticeships business. It's no wonder the private training providers are cleaning up!

Bob Smith

Very misleading as you need to show sub contracts, success rates and 16-18 to get a true picture. Come on FE Week this is sloppy and complete the job as the info is out there.

Norman

Lots of lunch to be stolen, by the look of it!!

PaulB

## Staring into the funding abyss – Skills Minister Nick Boles paints stark picture of cuts to hit sector

Did anyone ask Boles how 37 per cent of the vote (just over 20 per cent of the electorate) can be called "a clear mandate" for further spending cuts?

Michael Woodgate

## SFA warns colleges of a future without sub-contracting

How will this new scheme be audited? How can you have tiny providers getting what amounts to direct funding? This could make the Individual Learning Accounts farrago look like a picnic. Any scheme like this needs incredibly close monitoring or there \*will\* be massive fraud.

Steve Hewitt

I was under the impression that this was

a QUESTION in the consultation and that consequently was under review. Has this been firmly decided upon now as a definite government policy?

Matt Garvey

## Further education and skills sector bodies welcome Chartered Status membership

Of course, while funding is being cut, colleges are being forced to go through the rigmarole of area reviews and FE is being cut off at the knees, what everyone really needs is this lot of old tosh. Talk about fiddling while Rome burns. I despair.

LRoding

Another example of funding not ending up where it should be — for learners.

LesleyE



## TOP #SPENDING REVIEW TWEETS


@FEInsights  
Chancellor's Autumn Budget & #SpendingReview: The Devil Is In The Detail - good news for #FE today but what's next?

@davidharbourne  
"Efficiencies and savings" will reduce adult skills budget by about 10% (cash). That's before inflation, NI, pensions etc. #spendingreview

@TheAPMG  
Looking at #spendingreview and #AutumnStatement document, Department for BIS takes 17% cut to budget, #DECC 16%

@PXEducation  
FE protection for adults+16-19 and tech ed loans a really unexpected plus. Good lobbying campaign from across sector+others #spendingreview

@elizabeth\_mezzo  
LOANS LOANS LOANS LOANS LOANS LOANS AND LOANS. #spendingreview

A young boy with a thoughtful expression is shown in profile, looking towards the right. He is wearing a dark t-shirt. The background is a vibrant blue with a pattern of binary code (0s and 1s) that appears to be floating or glowing. The overall aesthetic is futuristic and tech-oriented.

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## PROFILE



My priority was to enable people to try to develop their confidence — because lots of people can do things if their confidence is right



‘YOU CAN CALL ME AL

@REBECCAJONES932

REBECCA.JONES@FEWEEK.CO.UK

With retirement beckoning, it's a time of reflection for Tribal business development manager Al Coates.

But despite 41 colourful years in FE, the humble grandfather-of-two was a difficult subject to tie down for a profile interview.

York-based Coates had been unsure whether his story was an interesting one, before others — not least his equally personable Tribal colleague Sandra Furby, director of learning and development, specialist learning solutions — persuaded him otherwise.

And, with the first hour of his interview passing in the blink of an eye as the anecdotes come thick and fast (and, unhelpfully, not in any particular chronological order), it's clear those colleagues were right as the hours then ticked by with 67-year-old Coates holding court.

'You can call me Al,' had been his earlier warm introduction, and something anyone

who has met Coates will most likely also have heard.

He was born in Leeds in 1948 and grew up in the dockland town of Goole in Yorkshire, where he left the local grammar school in 1966 with a handful of O-levels and two A-levels.

"Doing A-levels meant I avoided having to stay in Goole and do what everyone who went to the secondary modern school did, which was to work on the docks," recalls Coates.

"Which wasn't a bad thing to do, but it would have taken me in a very different direction in life than the one I went."

After finishing his studies, an 18-year-old Coates had to decide what career path to follow.

He laughs and says: "I think the school PE teacher was the careers adviser in his spare time to fill his timetable — so careers guidance was poor."

Coates chose to study business at Hatfield Polytechnic (now the University of Hertfordshire) and then as he says "drifted into accountancy for being good with numbers".

He then made the bold decision to walk out on accountancy as he thought he might be better off helping others learn.

Coates explains that some of his friends who went to the local secondary modern school struggled with their exams and he saw this as the motivation to get involved in teaching.

He smiles as he remembers how he "walked into Hertfordshire Education Authority in 1973 and asked to do some work for them".

"They said: 'You can't go into a secondary school because you're not qualified, but you can go into a junior school'," says Coates.

So he secured a job as a year six teacher at Wormley Junior School where he taught for several months.

"That's where I met Ray Davies of The Kinks, because his two kids went there — and it kind of became quite a nice story to tell people."

It was an enjoyable initiation into the world of delivering education, but the possibilities of FE were clear to Coates even then.

"I'd never been involved personally in

FE, but it was where I thought my idea of being able to contribute in terms of widening participation and opening up opportunities for people would be," he says.

Coates studied for his PGCE in his mid-twenties and went on to work in a secondary modern in York working with today's 'Neets' (young people not in education, employment or training).

"Getting into FE wasn't easy, and the way I had chosen to get into it was through teaching in a secondary school and for the city council," explains Coates.

Who then worked for York Council's Job Creation Scheme for young people out of work where he taught maths and English.

"My priority was to enable people to try to develop their confidence — because lots of people can do things if their confidence is right," he says.

"So I had that kind of liberalist approach to things, but I had a strong side to me as well as you've got to put your foot down occasionally."

And he winces with recollection of a time

## It's a personal thing

### What's your favourite book and why?

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, because it is about authority verses free spirit. I used to show it in my old liberal studies classes

### What do you do to switch off from work?

I like to spend time with my grandkids, Edie, aged three, and Mara who is just a year old. I also like to drink wine and watch sports — but not all at the same time

### What's your biggest pet hate?

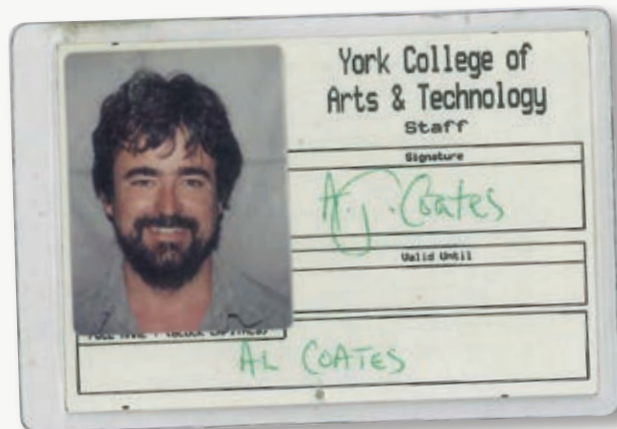
Unnecessary bureaucracy and political correctness to an excess

### If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be?

I would have a sports dinner with former English test cricketer Ian Botham, champion jockey Frankie Dettori and former Leeds United player Norman Hunter

### What did you want to be when you were growing up?

I wanted to be a footballer or a cricketer, but I had to revise that choice early on. I then became reliant on the PE teacher's careers advice



Coates's staff ID when he worked at York College of Arts and Technology

when his “strong side” didn't quite work out as he had hoped and 27 students walked out of his classroom in the middle of a lesson.

“So the second week when I turned up I thought: ‘I've got to change this behaviour’,” he says.

“I actually put my chair under the door and sat there, effectively locking them in — and I was silly enough to think that that gave me control.

“Probably less than 20 minutes later, about three students disappeared out of a window, down a drainpipe from the first floor.

“I rushed across to the window, so they threw the door open and the rest of them disappeared through the door.”

A funny anecdote from a bygone era it may be, but it also proved a tough lesson for Coates, whose next role was as a liberal and general studies teacher at York College in 1974.

“Liberal studies had a set national philosophy, which was to ‘broaden the horizons’ of young people who otherwise aren't getting any broadening in their

educational experience,” explains Coates.

“So I taught apprentices on day release and this is where probably some of the most challenging work of my working life came in.”

The challenge was getting the apprentices engaged with liberal studies when enthusiasm was in short supply.

“I had gone in with a reputation, and the boss decided that: ‘This guy from Goole can deal with the most difficult blokes’, and I'm afraid I got lumbered with the ‘ability’ to do that,” says Coates.

He taught day release apprentices general studies on a Friday of all days, from 7pm until 9pm of all times — which he says was not an easy task.

“The truth is, they didn't want to do it, and you really needed to try and be as imaginative and as responsive as you possibly could,” says Coates.

“We didn't always win, but we did win on occasions, and it was quite rewarding.”

He also taught some of the morning groups, and is open about going to the pub with them



Coates (back, third from left) with Goole Wanderers Football Club in 1966



Coates's grandchildren, Mara, aged one and Edie, three



Coates (centre) with friends in his “hippy phase” as a student in 1968



From left: Sandra Furby, Tribal director of learning and development, Coates and Lady Helena Kennedy, president of the Helena Kennedy Foundation which this month gave the Tribal duo Ambassador's Awards for special service to FE



Coates (centre with black tie) aged five in 1963

at lunch time if they showed progress.

“You wouldn't be able to do this now,” he says and even recalls a student climbing up a wall to join Coates's first floor classroom so he could have a general studies lesson and join the pub group.

Coates adds: “With nearly everything I've ever done, it has been in the main hands on.

“And I don't say that people should be like that but I am quite proud of that, and it worked for me.”

During his time at the college, he also taught general studies, GCSEs and A-levels to adults and became head of health and social care.

He says: “For about a year before I left York College, I'd set up distance learning in health and social care for the first time in the college, and it proved to be pretty popular.”

Coates left the college at the age of 53 having decided to work with an ex-colleague on distance learning courses as part of Tribal Learning and Publishing in 2002 where he became managing director of its publishing division.

He remembers “one or two organisations doing distance learning in popular areas” like health and safety, but he wanted to do health and social care courses as well.

And during his time at Tribal, the number of distance learning courses has grown from just two to 60, covering a range of subjects from business and admin to hair and beauty.

But at some, as yet undecided, point in the new year Coates will be retiring to, he says, spend more time with his grandchildren, watching Yorkshire play cricket and visiting other sporting venues.

“In the last 14 years with Tribal I have had the great pleasure and privilege to have worked with over 150 colleges, numerous training providers, awarding bodies and other partners in the sector and have always been welcomed,” he says.

“Tribal has given me the opportunity to work with an amazing team at York and to create a very successful business — I will always be grateful to Tribal for supporting me.”

## EXPERTS



## THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

Graham Taylor is principal and chief executive at New College Swindon. He has more than 25 years' experience in further and higher education across six colleges and writes exclusively for *FE Week* on the last Monday of every month.

## English and maths challenge

The national 16 to 18 A\*-C pass rates in 14/15 were 35.8 per cent (38.9 per cent) for GCSE maths and 35.1 per cent (37.9 per cent) for English — a drop of 3.1pp and 2.8pp respectively on 13/14. Success rates are published soon and they'll be down too. That's because these GCSEs (and Functional Skills if entry grade is below D) are now mandatory for youngsters without the C grade.

Are pass rates around 35 per cent good enough given that after 11 years of schooling many learners didn't get the C grade and, for some, that's after several attempts?

Learner numbers rocketed across FE and schools — maths GCSE up 30 per cent to 130,979 on 13/14, English up 23 per cent to 97,163.

**We have 819 learners taking GCSE English and 839 in maths — it's big business for most FE colleges and 45 per cent up for us on two years ago**

English and maths are vital and underpin most things we do. I've no problem with them being mandatory for everyone who hasn't reached the C grade.

So why the new tolerance rule? The retrospective tolerance rule is perverse.

We'll now lose half the funding for learners under the tolerance threshold. Rumour has it that the sector (all post-16 provision — school sixth forms too) would have lost £100m last year on the 100 per cent rule. Most colleges gave learners the opportunity to progress and would not sacrifice funding in such difficult financial times. Did some providers run away from the challenge just to preserve success rates?

This year we have 819 learners taking GCSE English and 839 in maths — it's big

business for most FE colleges and 45 per cent up for us on two years ago.

When you factor in mandatory Functional Skills — 700 young learners taking English and the same number taking maths at level two or below and the high numbers of adults taking (free) English and maths then this reduced our overall college success rate by 1.6pp.

Fortunately we improved the rest of our work but we still ended up on 86.1 per cent — 0.8pp below last year. And 100 per cent of our learners who needed to be were on programme, but some simply refused to engage. Most colleges who played by the rules will report a fall.

By the way, I wish we could charge adults — 'skin in the game' improves retention, but we'll always waive fees for the needy.

I'm a fan of giving learners different routes to stardom. For example, the pilot core maths syllabus is a good 'applied' alternative to the standard maths A-level.

What's wrong with having an applied/ employer-approved alternative level two maths syllabus, keeping the same standard and rigour as the GCSE? The Functional Skills level two should be a level two and not a grade D.

The FE sector excels in second chance and provision that is different to school. Don't assume that school leavers have plateaued in their learning. We can add value. Or are we just looking to duck a challenge?

Others say yes, we can motivate disenchanted learners if we try new and different ways of teaching and show that the content and learning is relevant — essential life skills — then we're in with a chance.

We have to change learner (and staff) mindsets from 'have to' to 'want to'.

Make sure every teacher knows the English and maths syllabi so that they can include and reference in their own subjects. Do lots of staff CPD and use on-line learning materials to complement (not replace) the teacher — there's some great stuff out there.

Get your inspirational teachers to run sessions to multiple groups — their enthusiasm will rub off on more learners.

And make the subjects fun — reduce the fear factor. Work with schools to offer struggling 14-year-olds a three-year GCSE programme with the final year at college.

Schools need to recognise that FE can help learner progress. If you have any bright ideas to raise achievements to Shanghai levels let me know. We've got to get this right. We owe it to our learners and their career prospects.



## JOHANNA RUDD

Managing director, Hull Business Training Centre (HBTC)

## Leading the ILP way on new short inspections

**Hull Business Training Centre this month because the first FE and skills independent learning provider to undergo Ofsted's new short inspection. Johanna Rudd describes the experience.**

Our last inspection was in January 2010 so we thought we might get the call before the new inspection methodologies and common inspection framework (Cif) came in.

It was mixed emotions for us when we passed September 1. There was obvious delight at the prospect of a short inspection, but also fear that this may result in two inspections — one short and one full — in the space of 15 working days.

Two inspections in that short time frame could be detrimental to a small business, not to mention the mental strain it could put our staff under. The new Cif was also a concern as we had no past reports to read to obtain a better understanding.

As we approached the end of the contract year, we did start to self-assess against the new Cif and the first draft of the self-assessment report (SAR) was produced.

In August, the two owners of HBTC simulated an inspection to test the validity of the new SAR. It was also good experience for our staff that hadn't been part of an inspection before, as it reduced some of the fear associated with inspection.

The initial call with the lead took on a very similar format to previous inspections. The only real difference was that the lead inspector informed us of their key lines of enquiry, which were based upon our last inspection (both areas for improvement and strengths), areas identified from our most recently uploaded SAR and other areas such as Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) requirements.

This was our first short notice inspection so there seemed a lot to do in a very small timeframe — we had to collate all of the required information such as timetables, documentation etc. We also had to plan who from our organisation would be best to speak to the inspectors about each line of enquiry, which was difficult for us. As we are a small provider, this mainly involved two people which across only a two-day window was very difficult to fit in. This was made worse as the lead was keen for the inspectors to have the majority of these discussions on the first day so that they

could start to formulate their thoughts and explore further the next day, plus anything else that might be emerging.

We prepared some notes that could be used for reference during these discussions — which after jumping from one line of enquiry straight to another through the day, proved invaluable.

I think the biggest surprise was how much the inspectors actually achieved in the two days. They visited a number of workplaces, spoke to a good number of learners and employers, held focus groups with a range of our staff and learners, observed a range of lessons and work-based activity, reviewed a variety of documentation and evidence — and that was on top of the in-depth discussions on the lines of enquiry with key staff.

It definitely felt that they didn't really gain any less evidence within the two days, than they would've done in four days. This did take its toll on our staff, including myself, and I would imagine that it also took its toll on the inspectors too.

**The biggest surprise was how much the inspectors actually achieved in two days**

Despite this, as the interruption was contained to just two days it was easier for everyone to mentally deal with, and for the business to recover from the disruption afterwards. Also because it was so thorough, we did feel confident that they got to learn enough about us to make informed judgements.

However, after feeling very fortunate to have had a short inspection, this did turn into a vague sense of surprising disappointment. The inspectors identified some excellent practice during the inspection, and we are left wondering what a full report might have looked like for us against the new Cif, as opposed to the letter you get after a short inspection.

## EXPERTS

Sandra McNally considers the possible impact of Chancellor George Osborne's November 25 Budget.

The Spending Review has brought good news to FE (at least relative to expectations).

Highlights include a commitment to protect the budget for 16 to 19-year-olds in cash terms; an apprenticeship levy on large employers, with a commitment to spend £2.5bn in England by 2020; increased availability of loans for individuals who want to pursue higher levels of vocational education.

FE leaders must be breathing a sigh of relief. However, what matters to the economy is not how particular institutions fare but what all this means for potential learners. Let's look at funding for 16 to 19-year-olds and apprenticeships.

Research tells us that the level of expenditure matters for outcomes (other things equal). Therefore a cut of expenditure in real terms has potential negative consequences for learner outcomes (although much depends on how this is managed).

Furthermore, there is not a level playing field for post-16 provision.

For the same course offerings (for example A-levels), students are probably better resourced in schools than in FE colleges because schools can cross-subsidise their sixth form students from their overall budget (much of which is protected in real terms).

Also, arguably FE colleges have a tougher task with regard to post-16 provision because an increasing amount of this is remedial,



# SANDRA MCNALLY

Director of the Centre for Vocational Education Research, London School of Economics

## Good news in Budget — but what does it mean for learners?

given that learners have to achieve minimum standards in English and maths.

Those who have struggled up to the age of 16 with these subjects are not necessarily easy to teach. The extent to which actual resources per student differs across institutions also matters for the social mobility agenda: a higher share of post-16 learners pursuing non A-level options come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The increased availability of apprenticeships will benefit young learners provided they are in a position to access them and provided they are of high quality (and seen to be such by whole groups of employers).

In the last few years, we have seen a dramatic increase in apprenticeship numbers, but many of them have been older workers (and a very low percentage have been under 18 years of age).

Presumably, employers are not

incentivised to recruit young people that are not in some sense 'work ready', finding it easier to train more experienced workers. If apprenticeships are to become a more central part of the gateway to employment for young people, then the pre-apprenticeship phase of education cannot be underestimated. Part of this involves clearer progression pathways for young people.

While the availability of extra funding for apprenticeships is laudable, the efficacy depends on how this is used. The Chancellor has acknowledged concerns about quality and another announcement refers to a new employer-led body which will have an important role in the administration of the new system.

In addition to quality, a major issue is the extent to which additional funds stimulates additional investment in training (as opposed to a shift in training budgets). If we want to stimulate additional investment by

employers, we need to understand better why some employers choose not to employ apprentices (or indeed choose not to invest in much formal training at all) — and why others do.

For example, large employers might be very confident that they will re-coup training costs because of high staff retention post-training. They might also have the facilities for high-level on-site mentoring.

**What matters to the economy is not how particular institutions fare but what all this means for potential learners**

The obstacles might be greater for small employers or those in highly competitive labour markets (where poaching of trained staff is a real issue). Thus, the nature and level of government support might need to differ across types of employers.

The success of the policy will depend on getting the detail right. It should be judged by its effect on workers and productivity — and not by whether or not a numerical target is achieved.

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## CAMPUS ROUND-UP

## Queen's prizes handed out to four colleges

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ROUND-UP

Four FE colleges, handpicked on the advice of Prime Minister David Cameron, have shared the honour of winning Queen's Anniversary Prizes, writes Rebecca Jones.

Four FE colleges were among 21 educational organisations to be awarded Queen's Anniversary Prizes for higher and further education excellence in the 2014-16 round.

The prize-winning colleges were announced at St James' Palace on Thursday, November 19, and included, Abingdon and Witney College, Blackpool and The Fylde College, Westminster Kingsway College and Bridgwater College.

A glittering ceremony will be held at Buckingham Palace in February for the winners to receive a golden medallion and certificate signed by the Queen.

The awards, now in their eleventh round, recognised the four colleges and 17 universities for a wide range of innovative work across a spectrum of courses.

Since they were launched in 1994, a total of 211 prizes have been given to 71 universities and 40 FE colleges.

Abingdon and Witney College was



Bridgwater College performing engineering operations learners holding the Queen's Anniversary Prize plaque

recognised this year for its unique training programme for the equine industry combined with commercial breeding of thoroughbreds.

Principal Teresa Kelly said: "We are absolutely delighted to be awarded a prestigious Queen's Anniversary Prize.

"It is such an honour to be recognised in this way and truly represents the hard work, dedication and innovation of all our staff, students and employer partners in the equine industry."

Blackpool and The Fylde College earned the prize for project management in engineering to build capacity in local industries.

Principal Bev Robinson said: "We are both privileged and delighted that our partnership work with industry in the field of project management has been recognised so

prestigiously."

She added that the "dedication shown by all teams in ensuring that the discipline of project management, which is essential to the success of very many businesses, has become increasingly valuable".

Westminster Kingsway College was honoured for delivering practical excellence in culinary and hospitality skills.

Principal Andy Wilson said: "The award of the prize to Westminster Kingsway College is one of the greatest moments in the college's long history."

He said the prize was "recognition of many staff, students and employers who have been involved with the college over the years".

"I would like to congratulate and thank them all for their contributions in creating something of which we can be so proud," he added.

Bridgwater College received its prize for skills training for regional business and new energy investment.

Principal Mike Robbins said the prize was "the ultimate accolade in the education sector".

"The prize also recognises the commitment

and resolve of our industry and community partners, who have entrusted us with their most valuable resource — their current and future

workforce," he added.

The Queen's Anniversary Prizes are given out every two years to universities and colleges who submit work judged to show excellence in their course, which are chosen on the advice of the Prime Minister.



From left: Abingdon and Witney College students Level three horse management students Naomi Flint, 17, and Alicia Plaistow, 16, holding a thoroughbred foal



Project management staff and learners from Blackpool and The Fylde College

## DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CAMPUS ROUND-UP?

Send your stories with pictures to campus@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course details of students where applicable



From left: Nigel Cooke, director of One Nottingham which organises the Young Creative Awards, with Soniya Ahmed and Mandi Chandler, curriculum manager for art & Design at Central College Nottingham

## Young artist's icons on show

A young artist's painting of Nottingham's best-known icons will be put on show at Nottingham City Council.

Internationally-renowned designer Paul Smith and literary greats DH Lawrence, Lord Byron and Alan Sillitoe all feature in 18-year-old Soniya Ahmed's striking portrait, as well as Albert Ball, the First World War fighter pilot.

Soniya is studying a BTEC extended diploma in art & design at Central College Nottingham.

Her painting was commended in the visual

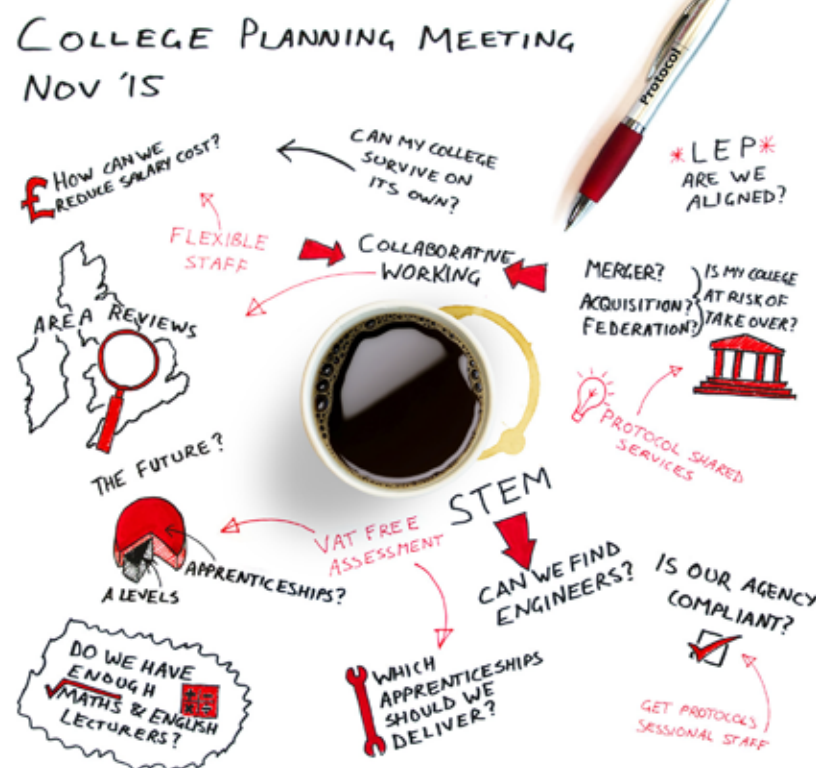
arts category of the Young Creative Awards earlier this year, and that is when her work was spotted by the council.

Soniya said: "I entered the awards as part of a college project and wanted to use some famous subjects, but also bring back to life those that maybe not everyone knows about.

"My previous college bought a piece of my artwork, but this is the first time that I've sold a piece of my artwork outside of college, so I'm really excited.

"It feels like I'm getting closer to my dream of becoming a famous artist."

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# & MOVERS SHAKERS

Your weekly guide  
to who's new and  
who's leaving

**B**arnsley College governors have seen big changes among their senior memberships and staff.

Simon Perryman takes the position of chair from Josie Thirkell, who steps down after three-and-a-half years in the role.

Paul Jagger MBE and Ben Mansford also join the board, with Mr Jagger taking up the position of vice chair.

New chair Mr Perryman runs Perryman, Yeandle and Associates, a skills and industrial

strategy business, and is a member of the Sheffield City Region Skills board.

He was previously executive director of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills and director of performance at the Sector Skills Development Agency.

Mr Perryman said: "I am delighted to have been appointed as chair of governors and have been hugely impressed by everything I have seen at the college. The fact that the college is rated outstanding is down to everyone who

studies, teaches, manages and supports its excellent work.

"I am confident that with strong leadership and governance the college is very well placed to manage any challenges that lie ahead. I am determined we will continue to do our very best for the people of Barnsley and the surrounding area."

Ms Thirkell leaves the college board after eight years, in which she also served as vice chair.

"Throughout all of my time as a governor, vice chair and chair of Barnsley College, it has been my privilege to work alongside a very dedicated and highly skilled staff team and a dynamic and professional group of governors," she said.

"The college has brought a visible difference to Barnsley town centre during this time."

New vice chair Mr Jagger is chair of

Ucas, recently became a member of the Association of Colleges' regional board and is president of Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce.

He said: "Having worked around the further and higher education sectors for many years, I am pleased to have become vice chair of the college's board of governors.

"The college is a key player in delivering high quality education within Barnsley and I look forward to being part of that process."

Mr Mansford is chief executive of Barnsley Football Club and has a varied legal background.

He said he would bring "energy and enthusiasm to the board along with my personal experiences of FE and higher education".

"The success of younger people and everyone seeking to learn new skills is paramount to the growth of Barnsley and the surrounding areas," he said.

"I will seek to do all I can to drive the college forward over the coming years."

Barnsley College principal Chris Webb, who himself took up post in September, as previously reported by *FE Week*, said: "Their backgrounds and skill sets complement those of our existing board members who are all fully committed to supporting the senior management team and taking the college forward to the next level."



Simon Perryman



Josie Thirkell



Paul Jagger



Ben Mansford

If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your college, training provider or awarding organisation please let us know by emailing [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk)

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## Vice Principal (Learning and Achievement)

Salary: Circa £70,000 per annum

We are looking forward to the future with confidence and with high ambitions for students, apprentices and our local community.

With a new Principal, a good Ofsted Inspection report, sound finances and a total commitment towards raising student achievement, we are now seeking to appoint a Vice Principal who will be responsible for driving forward the quality of teaching and learning in the heart of Calderdale.

### We are...

- Creating an innovative and responsive curriculum aligned to the skills needs of the local and regional economy.
- Remodelling our estate to support growth in key curriculum areas.
- Building partnerships with local and national employers.

All of which will allow our students to succeed in life and in work.

### You will:

- Be an ambassador for the College and be able to influence in a range of partnerships settings.

- Be the driving force behind our Quality and Curriculum agendas.
- Have an outstanding track record as a leader.
- Have considerable drive and be positive about change and innovation.
- Demonstrate a passion for education, and for working with students and staff to achieve their maximum potential.

If you like what you see and want to have a major role in the College's journey to become outstanding, further information is available on the College website: [www.calderdale.ac.uk](http://www.calderdale.ac.uk)

For an initial confidential discussion please contact John Rees, Principal & Chief Executive, on 01422 359303 or email [johnr@calderdale.ac.uk](mailto:johnr@calderdale.ac.uk)

**Closing Date** - 6th December 2015  
Interviews will take place in January 2016



## Lancaster & Morecambe College Quality Standards Manager

Salary £35,429 per annum

37 hours per week

Job Ref: MS 860

You will lead the operational management of the College's quality improvement processes in order to continuously improve standards and achieve excellence in all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment.

Interviews will take place on Wednesday, 16th December.

**Closing Date: Thursday, 3rd December**

For more information and to apply (various formats available), please visit: [www.lmc.ac.uk](http://www.lmc.ac.uk). In line with our commitment to sustainability, we prefer to email job packs, however if you require a job pack by post, please phone 01524 521507/email [jobs@lmc.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@lmc.ac.uk). All posts are subject to a DBS Disclosure in line with our policy of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners.



## LECTURER IN AGRICULTURE

Unqualified: £24,775 pa, pro rata

Qualified: £28,695 pa, pro rata

1x Part-time, 29.6 hours per week (0.8 FTE)

1x Full-time, 37 hours per week (1.0 FTE)

Both roles are fixed-term initially until 31 August 2016

**For more information on these roles, other opportunities**

**and Writtle College, please visit our website: [www.writtle.ac.uk](http://www.writtle.ac.uk)**

**Closing date: 11 December 2015. Interview date: 22 December 2015.**

Writtle College strives to be an Equal Opportunities employer. All applicants who are offered employment will be subject to a criminal records check from the Disclosure and Barring Service. This college is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



## TUTOR / ASSESSOR VACANCIES

East Midlands - £22,000 - £26,000 pro rata  
(Part-time or Associate)

Closing Date: January 12, 2015

### Tutor / Assessor - Marketing

#### Role and Responsibilities

- Delivery of high-quality, accredited programmes in Marketing, Digital Media and Social Media
- Meet the quality assurance requirements as set by Mitre Group, the Awarding Body and the Funding Provider

#### Qualifications and Education Requirements

- Minimum 3 years' experience of working in marketing / digital media / social media
- Teaching / tutor qualification (e.g. PGCE, L4 Education and Training)
- Understanding of Marketing Principles and up to date experience of Digital Media software and Social Media platforms
- Microsoft Office skills

#### Preferred Skills

- NVQ Assessor qualification (e.g. A1, TAQA)
- Experience of working with Government funded programmes
- Minimum GCSE A-C in English and Maths

### Tutor / Assessor - Business Skills

#### Role and Responsibilities

- Delivery of high-quality, accredited programmes in Business Skills including Customer Service, Business Administration, Contact Centre and Team Leading
- Meet the quality assurance requirements as set by Mitre Group, the Awarding Body and the Funding Provider

#### Qualifications and Education Requirements

- Minimum 3 years' experience of working at a managerial or supervisory role within business
- Teaching / tutor qualification (e.g. PGCE, L4 Education and Training)
- Experience and up to date understanding of customer service, administration and business principles
- Microsoft Office skills

#### Preferred Skills

- NVQ Assessor qualification (e.g. A1, TAQA)
- Experience of working with Government funded programmes
- Minimum GCSE A-C in English and Maths

## MITRE GROUP

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carmel  
college




A COLLEGE FOR  
THE COMMUNITY



## Principal £competitive salary plus relocation, St Helens

With 2,100 students drawn from 40+ secondary schools across Merseyside, Cheshire and Lancashire, Carmel College is an inclusive Catholic Sixth Form College that welcomes students of all faiths and backgrounds. Recently ranked as the top Sixth Form College in the country for student progress by ALPS, the College operates from a single campus which has seen £23m of investment and provides an outstanding place of learning. Our mission is to be a centre of educational excellence, opportunity, challenge and support within a caring Christian environment. Our new Principal will lead the College to achieve continued academic excellence and provide exceptional pastoral care, whilst maintaining the ethos of the College.

With unprecedented levels of change in 16-19 education, we do not underestimate the challenges ahead and we will expect you to have experience of developing and implementing effective and sustainable strategies in response to the national agenda. You will have a successful track record of strategic leadership in an educational setting which has high academic standards, a culture of continuous improvement and effective management of resources. A collaborative, inspirational and ambassadorial leader, you will be able to bring out the best in your team, develop strong working relationships with stakeholders and have the gravitas and credibility to influence agendas at a sector level.

This post presents a significant opportunity for professional rewards in a values-driven organisation with a strong team ethic and where the student experience is at the heart of every decision. It is a requirement of this role for the postholder to be a practising Catholic.

To find out more, visit [www.carmelprincipal.co.uk](http://www.carmelprincipal.co.uk) or contact Trudy Searle, Mike Galloway or Peter Ryder on **0113 287 8445**. Closing date: 3 January. Initial interviews: 11 & 12 January. Final interviews: 20 & 21 January.



**BILBOROUGH**  
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

## MANAGER OF LEARNING SUPPORT (FULL TIME, PERMANENT)

£34,250 - £39,487

To start ASAP

We are looking to appoint a Manager of Learning Support. This will be a key role in helping us to support students' progress more effectively, increase their chance of success and help them achieve their learning goals. The successful candidate must have a level 7 certificate in assessing exam access arrangements to enable them to complete JCQ compliant exam paperwork (Form 8s) and it would be desirable for the successful candidate to have the practicing certificate to complete DSA reports for university progression.

Your role will be to take a pro-active approach in supporting students, who have a wide range of learning support needs and physical health issues by providing a range of integrated, anticipatory and responsive, student centered support services to enable them to be successful during their time at Bilborough College. Experience of working with 16 to 19 year olds with learning support needs is imperative. We are keen to recruit and retain talented staff who strive to achieve excellence, in a place where individuality and success is celebrated and hard work recognised.

We are a Sixth Form College with a diverse student community. 25% of our current students are from black or minority ethnic backgrounds and we are committed to constantly adapting to meet their needs. We expect the successful candidate to have a commitment to high standards and hard work to support the curriculum in securing high quality outcomes for all students, and be able to interact effectively with students of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. We particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates as they are under-represented within our staff.

The College is committed to the Children's Act and all successful appointments will be subject to Barred List and DBS clearance (formerly CRB).

*This vacancy is only open to candidates who are eligible/have the right to work in the UK. Original documentation will be required as evidence.*

Unfortunately, we do not accept CV's. To apply for this vacancy please visit our website [bilborough.ac.uk](http://bilborough.ac.uk) (towards the bottom of the home page 'Other Links', 'Job Vacancies'), email [personnel@bilborough.ac.uk](mailto:personnel@bilborough.ac.uk), follow this link <https://www.hirewire.co.uk/FE/job/65405/>

or call 0115 851 5861. To request an application form in an alternative format, please contact the HR Assistant on the same number.

**Closing date: Midnight on Tuesday 8th December 2015.**

Interviews for shortlisted candidates will be held week commencing 14th December 2015.

## Director of MIS

### Salary £competitive



The Derby College Group is one of the leading and largest FE providers in the UK supporting over 26,000 learners and working in partnership with over 1800 employers each year. Our vision is to be inclusive, inspirational and innovative and our mission is to prepare individuals for the next phase of their lives. With a record of sustained improvement in overall success rates over the last 3 years, we have ambitious plans for the future which reflect our commitment to excellence through embedding a culture of transformation, resulting in outstanding outcomes and an exceptional learning journey for all.

We boast one of the newest and most impressive estates in the country, with excellent learning facilities and, with a turnover of c£60m, the group has worked hard to improve its financial stability.

This is both an exciting and challenging role for the right candidate with the complimentary values, attitude and leadership skills to play a key role in developing our information services and systems, in order to efficiently and effectively meet the information needs of a wide range of stakeholders.

You will be responsible for developing a 'best in class' MIS service through developing the team and providing reliable, comprehensive, relevant and up to date information and reporting systems.

Responsibilities will include:

- management reporting (strategic & operational) & funding returns;
- the development and maintenance of systems development & reporting systems, process and protocols
- leadership of the MIS team and delivery of service level agreements

The successful candidate will have:

- a successful track record of managing a MIS function of an FE college or training organisation or equivalent;
- knowledge and understanding of the FE sector funding methodologies
- highly effective interpersonal skills

For a job description and person specification please see the following link: [www.derby-college.ac.uk/documents/HRDocs/Director\\_of\\_Information\\_Services.doc](http://www.derby-college.ac.uk/documents/HRDocs/Director_of_Information_Services.doc)

For further information about the Derby College Group or to apply for this position, please visit our website: [www.derby-college.ac.uk](http://www.derby-college.ac.uk)

For an informal discussion about this role with Mandie Stravino, CEO, please contact Katie Dourass on 01332 387440.

**Closing date – 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015**

[www.derby-college.ac.uk](http://www.derby-college.ac.uk)



### Lecturer in Maths HB/788

**£24,149 - £34,386\* per annum**

Hugh Baird College is a friendly, diverse and vibrant place to work where students and the local community are at the heart of everything we do. We have a reputation for providing high quality education and support for all learners and are seeking to recruit high quality maths tutors to teach GCSE maths to 16 – 19 year olds and adults.

You will have the ability to motivate and engage a range of students with inspirational and innovative approaches to mathematics and be able to deliver high quality teaching and learning using practical, real life scenarios. A level 3 maths qualification or equivalent level skills is essential together with GCSE maths specialist teaching experience.

**To apply for this role please visit [www.hughbaird.ac.uk](http://www.hughbaird.ac.uk) or call 0151 353 4449 or e-mail [vacancies@hughbaird.ac.uk](mailto:vacancies@hughbaird.ac.uk). The closing date for this position is 10.00am Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015. Interviews will be held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015.**

\* progression beyond £28,815 subject to performance and meeting specified criteria)



Subject Matter Experts and Contributing Authors in Functional Skills: English and mathematics

#### Job Purpose:

As one of a team of vocationally qualified Subject Matter Experts (SME) and/or Contributing Authors you will have an opportunity to impart your years of knowledge, expertise and understanding in helping to develop the content of i-GVS functional skills.

You will ensure materials are of a high quality, adhere to and meet compliance objectives, and can be mapped to National Occupational Standards and Ofqual. You will liaise with our script writers and SME's to produce outstanding and robust pieces of work.

#### Desired Skills and Experience

#### Duties, Responsibilities & Main Activities:

- Commitment to writing the best, dynamic, most effective materials for the Vocational Education & Training (VET) sector. Applying an innovative contextualised and creative approach to your work;
- Ensuring your materials are fully compliant with and mapped to National Occupational Standards and Ofqual.

#### Essential:

- Recent professional experience within vocational education and delivery of level 2 Functional Skills English and mathematics;
- High level of accuracy and attention to details and ability to work independently and efficiently.

Working from home you will be required to supply and maintain your own computer and have internet access. If necessary, you would be provided with all software required to undertake your work.



## FULL TIME MATHS & ENGLISH TUTOR/ TEACHER - £35,000PA OTE

### LOCATION: ENGLAND

Due to the outstanding successes of our work to date, we are looking to recruit a new team of 15 experienced Skills for Life tutors.

You will be delivering English and Maths from Entry Level through to Level 2, contextualised with a vocational award. Some delivery will be in the Health and Social Care sector, and therefore any experience in the H&SC sector would be an advantage but not essential. The role will be working on a peripatetic basis, delivering in your region. Willingness to travel and your own transport are essential.

### ESSENTIAL CRITERIA - PLEASE DO NOT APPLY IF YOU CAN'T COMPLY:

- Full time ONLY with flexible hours
- Have achieved a recognised full teaching qualification - Cert ed/ PGCE/ DTLLS or equivalent
- Experience in teaching English and/or Maths
- Outstanding personal written and verbal communication skills
- A driving license and access to your own transportation

### HIGHLY DESIRED CRITERIA

- Experience of working with adult learners
- Working towards or have achieved a Level 4/5 Subject Specialist qualification in literacy and/ or Numeracy
- Excellent ICT Skills

The successful candidate will also be required to have a valid DBS Clearance Check. In the first instance, please send an email outlining your recent relevant experience together with your CV. NCC Skills Ltd is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

No agencies please [jobs@nccskills.co.uk](mailto:jobs@nccskills.co.uk)

[www.nccskills.co.uk](http://www.nccskills.co.uk)



## Sessional Lecturer - English

£salary £18,392 - £33,170

We are looking for a Sessional Lecturer (full-time hours) to join our Cross College delivery team to deliver GCSE and Functional English.

### The Role

You will be a dedicated and motivated professional ready to contribute to the development of new strategies to improve the delivery and quality of English teaching and learning for our 16-19 cohort. You will be qualified up to at least Level 3 in English, a relevant degree qualification (or equivalent) would be desirable. In addition, you will hold a recognised Level 5/6 teaching qualification (PGCE/CertEd) or will be working towards achieving this.

### The Person

You will be an enthusiastic, flexible and innovative teacher with experience of delivering English, preferably in a FE context. The ideal candidate will be able to deliver both GCSE and Functional Skills English to a wide range of students. Excellent administration and interpersonal skills together with a commitment to working effectively as part of a team are also essential in this role.

Closing Date: **Friday 4 December 2015 at 12:00 noon**

For further details and to apply, please visit the job vacancies section of our website [www.derby-college.ac.uk](http://www.derby-college.ac.uk)

## MATHS AND ENGLISH JOB OPPORTUNITIES AT SOUNDSKOOL



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[WWW.BIGCREATIVE.EDUCATION](http://WWW.BIGCREATIVE.EDUCATION)



# MY-VOC<sup>®</sup>

## A new component-based vocational skills framework from nocn

MY-VOC is a flexible framework of components, enabling employers to create specialist pathways for learners to become competent in key job roles, such as a Plasterer, Business Administrator, or Healthcare Support Worker.

Employers, colleges and training providers are able to focus learning around a range of job roles. The components give flexibility to tailor the programme of learning to meet the requirements of the job roles as identified by the employer.

### Features

- 1 Flexible design for employers
- 6 Credit achievement accumulation
- 2 Targeted at specific job roles
- 7 RQF levels and sizes
- 3 Large component bank
- 8 Supports qualifications and apprenticeships
- 4 CPD-friendly, always up to date
- 9 Range of assessment methods
- 5 Generic and specialist knowledge
- 10 Recognition of prior learning

### Further information

If you would like to know more, call **0114 227 0500**  
[www.nocn.org.uk/my-voc](http://www.nocn.org.uk/my-voc)



### FE Week Sudoku challenge

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

6		4		2		9		3
			4		7			
	9						7	
3				6				7
		1	3		4	5		
4				1				9
	4							2
			1		2			
1		6		4		3		5

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

### Last Week's solutions

8	2	4	1	9	3	7	6	5
5	7	9	8	4	6	2	3	1
6	3	1	2	7	5	4	8	9
9	6	3	4	2	7	1	5	8
4	8	5	3	1	9	6	2	7
2	1	7	5	6	8	9	4	3
1	4	8	7	5	2	3	9	6
7	5	6	9	3	4	8	1	2
3	9	2	6	8	1	5	7	4

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

				2	4			3
			8			1		
	7					8	5	
6		4			7			
1		7				5		9
			5			4		6
	2	6						8
		9			6			
7			4	8				

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

Solutions:  
Next week

4	9	5	3	2	6	7	8	1
7	6	1	8	4	5	2	3	9
3	8	2	1	9	7	6	5	4
2	7	3	6	1	8	4	9	5
8	5	6	4	7	9	1	2	3
9	1	4	2	5	3	8	7	6
6	3	9	7	8	1	5	4	2
5	2	7	9	6	4	3	1	8
1	4	8	5	3	2	9	6	7

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

### Spot the difference to WIN an FE Week mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an FE Week mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.