

# FE Week

**SFA 'NO' TO CHEAP RATE FOR ONLINE LEARNING**

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**MISSED DEADLINES CRITICISM**

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**OUT AND ABOUT AT #BETT2016**

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## Gloves are off for boxer Shiloh



A City College Brighton and Hove sport learner put on a knockout performance in three hard-fought bouts to win gold at an international boxing tournament.

Shiloh Defreitas, who studies an advanced level apprenticeship in sporting excellence, showed off his class when he travelled with a team of 12 England boxers to the Sven Lange Memorial Tournament in Schwerin, Germany last month. The 16-year-old was crowned champion in the under 50kg category

where he competed against opponents from Germany, Denmark and France.

Along with his gold medal, Shiloh was named junior boxer of the tournament for his consistent displays of skill.

"We've been working with Shiloh to be more assertive in the ring and we're delighted that the work has paid off," said City College's boxing academy coach, Adam Haniver.

"He listens and applies, which is vital. Shiloh will keep expanding his knowledge of how to look after himself as an athlete at an elite level."

Shiloh Defreitas battles against his French opponent in the Sven Lange tournament and emerges victorious

## DOES BOLES HAVE ANY IDEA ABOUT INSTITUTE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS' POLICING?

@ALIXROBERTSON4

ALIX.ROBERTSON@FEWEEK.CO.UK

**EXCLUSIVE**

➤ **'I have no idea — or if I had an idea I'm not going to share it' Skills Minister tells FE figures**

➤ **Former SFA director David Hughes tells of worries about employers policing employers**

Skills Minister Nick Boles told key FE figures that he had "no idea — or if I had an idea I'm not going to share it" about how big the Institute for Apprenticeships should be to police employers once reforms took effect.

At a Policy Exchange round-table discussion, sponsored by the Learning and Work Institute (LWI), Mr Boles was tight-lipped as to how the employer-led body, that is due to be fully operational in just over a year, would oversee the new system.

He was asked by *FE Week*, which was granted exclusive reporting access to the event, how big he expected the institute to be in order to police the reformed apprenticeship system of thousands of new standards, 600,000 starts a-year to hit the government's 3m starts target, 1,000 or more providers and half a million employers.

Mr Boles said: "I have no idea — or if I had an idea I'm not going to share it with you."

Among those at the roundtable event, in London on Thursday (January 21), was LWI chief executive David Hughes, who told of his grave concerns that government would step back from a "policing" role for the institute to step in.

"The idea that employers will police themselves is nonsense. That really worries me," he said.

Mr Hughes, who previously had responsibility for apprenticeship funding as a Skills Funding Agency national director, added: "It worries me because the employers

that want to game play will ignore those that want to do it right. That's what history shows us over the years."

Plans for the new apprenticeships institute were announced as part of November's spending review and autumn statement, which said the government would "establish a new employer-led body to set apprenticeship standards and ensure quality".

It would be "independent of government and will also advise on the level of levy funding each apprenticeship should receive".

The round-table discussion focused on apprenticeships quality and featured

LWI plans for an apprenticeship charter, first mooted in the *FE Week* Annual Apprenticeship Conference last year, to act as an employers' quality mark.

Mr Boles described the new apprenticeships institute as "a body that has quite a narrow remit but has very, very deep power within that remit".

He added: "The way the institute is set up and the processes that it will be running will be ones that should ensure that collective policing of self-improvement."

Mr Boles did reinforce the idea that the institute "is not a body that is constantly subject to directions by ministers and the latest whims of the latest politician".

He said: "We will be bringing forward clauses in the Enterprise Bill that will set up the new Institute which will explain, and I hope clarify to everybody's satisfaction, that that is exactly what it will be."

See editor's comment on page 6

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## FE WEEK TEAM

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Head designer:	Nicky Phillips
Designer:	Russell Hardman
Designer:	Zuleika Testone
Chief reporter:	Paul Offord
Reporters:	Alix Robertson Billy Camden Jude Burke
Photographer:	Ellis O'Brien
Financials:	Helen Neilly Victoria Boyle
Sales manager:	Hannah Smith
Administration:	Frances Ogefere Dell

<b>Contributors:</b>	Graham Taylor Angelica Finnegan Nigel Evans
----------------------	---

## Managing director: Shane Mann

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**Learning & Skills Events,  
Consultancy and Training Ltd**  
161-165 Greenwich High Road  
London SE10 8JA  
T: 020 8123 4778  
E: [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk)

## NEWS

## Online learning 'not cheap option'

@JUDEBURKE77  
JUDE.BURKE@FEWEEK.CO.UK

A Skills Funding Agency (SFA) decision not to introduce a reduced funding rate for online learning has been welcomed by the sector.

The SFA had been looking into online learning following the publication of the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) report in March 2014.

But speaking as a member of the audience during a talk at the Bett education technology show in London on January 20, Stephen Nichols, policy implementation manager at the SFA, said that online learning was not "the cheap option".

"We've taken a lot of feedback on online funding rates," said Mr Nichols.

"The Skills Funding Agency isn't going to implement a cheap rate for online learning. I think we all appreciate that it's not the cheap option," he added.

Paul Rolfe, director of technology and innovation at Highbury College, Portsmouth, was part of the Feltag group. He said Mr Nichols' announcement was "very much welcomed".

He said: "Developing high quality online courses with interactive and engaging resources is incredibly time consuming and therefore expensive."

The SFA's acknowledgement of this "will enable innovative providers such as Highbury College to continue to invest in new delivery models which will respond to the changing needs of learners and employers," he said.

A spokesperson for the Association of Colleges said the SFA was "right" that

"developing and delivering high-quality online courses is not cheaper" than face-to-face learning.

"Colleges, and other providers, which choose to provide both types of course should receive funding that is accurate and commensurate with the type of content and means of delivery for specific courses," she said.

Feltag also recommended that all publicly-funded learning programmes should have a minimum of 10 per cent online content from 2015/16.

In its Feltag progress report in February last year, the government said it had reviewed this recommendation "in the light of concerns raised about setting a target without first testing the impact".

As a result, it said, the SFA would be undertaking "information gathering" to "baseline current activity", as well as running a number of pilots and asking the sector to complete a "temperature check" survey.

Another Feltag member, learning technology adviser Bob Harrison, said: "What's really encouraging, from an FE point of view, is that they are now actively looking to remove the barriers in the funding mechanism, which will allow teachers and FE providers to use technology in an innovative way."

A spokesperson for the SFA said that the evidence they had seen showed that "there are a wide range of variables involved" in setting an online funding rate.

"Final recommendations on an online funding rate will be made when our online learning report is published in due course," she said.

See page 4 for more on the Bett show

## Deadline missed on apprenticeship consultation

@PAULOFFORD  
PAUL.OFFORD@FEWEEK.CO.UK

The government has missed the first key deadline from its own timeline for apprenticeship reform implementation over the next five years, following delays to the launch of a consultation on the "public sector target".

It published a 59-page document on December 7, called English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 vision document, setting out a number of imminent dates.

The first was that the government was supposed to consult "on the [apprenticeship] target for the public sector" before the turn of the year.

It explained that "through the Enterprise Bill, we [the government] intend to introduce new statutory targets for public sector bodies to employ their fair share of apprentices to contribute to our goal of achieving 3m apprenticeship starts".

"The proposal is that the targets will apply to public bodies with 250 or more people working for them in England," it said in the document.

"In December 2015, we will publish a consultation which will give the rationale behind a minimum target of 2.3 per cent and list the bodies proposed to be in scope.

"Following this and subject to Parliamentary approval, we will put these

targets in place in 2016. Public bodies will then be required to report annually on progress."

However, a Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) spokesperson admitted to *FE Week* on Thursday (January 21) that the "consultation has not yet been launched", although he said "this will change in the next few days".

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and BIS were also unable to comment ahead of publication on how the government was progressing with four other developments the 2020 document set for the first month of this year.

It said that a "National Careers Service digital platform will determine the potential suitability of a young person for apprenticeships, traineeships or the JCP work experience programme" from January.

"Data on apprenticeship wage returns by sector subject area" was also set to be published in the same month.

It added that "an integrated communications campaign to promote apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience opportunities" would also be created in January, and "guidance on funding both frameworks and standards for the 2016/2017 academic year" would be issued at the end of the month.

Shadow Skills Minister Gordon Marsden said: "It is the government that has set itself

## FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

## Prevent review launched

Ofsted has launched a thematic review of the implementation of the anti-terrorism Prevent Duty in the FE sector.

Paul Joyce, Ofsted deputy director for FE and skills and independent schools, first told *FE Week* that it was planned in October.

A spokesperson has now said that "work is under way and we hope to publish our findings on the implementation of the duty before the end of the summer", after *FE Week* asked on January 11 if it had begun.

## Meetings over pay freeze

Further education trade unions met twice in five days to discuss an ongoing row with the Association of Colleges (AoC) over a proposed 2015/16 pay freeze.

Representatives from Unison, the University and College Union (UCU), Association of Teachers and Lecturers, Association of Managers in Education, GMB, and Unite met on January 15, then again on Monday, January 18, this time with AoC present.

The UCU confirmed they agreed to wait for the results of a Unison ballot on industrial action at the end of this month before deciding further steps.

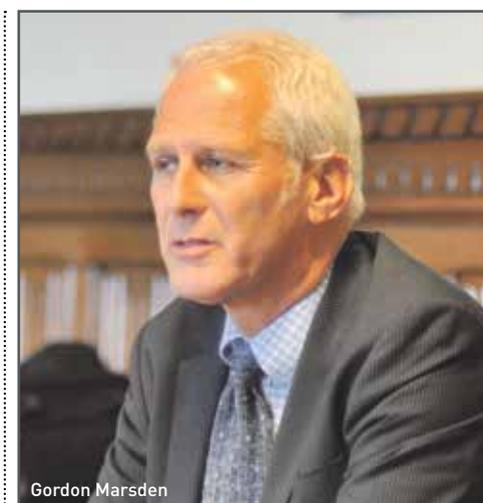
See [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) for more

## New study programme resources

Two key study programmes resources have been launched.

The Study Programmes: Modelling and Operation — e-guide and self-assessment tool were unveiled at an Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) conference funded by the Education and Training Foundation.

The January 21 event, entitled Modelling 16-19 Study Programmes across the FE & Skills Providers, at UCL Institute of Education in London aimed to give FE leaders the "skills and confidence required to effectively manage" the courses, an AELP spokesperson said.



Gordon Marsden

all these targets.

"Therefore, it doesn't look good when it starts not being able to meet them. It raises questions over whether they have sufficient [staff] resources to do all these things."

It comes as members of the Apprenticeship Delivery Board (ADB), which it is thought will be tasked helping ensure that the government doesn't miss any more reform programme deadlines, were unveiled on Monday (January 18), five months after its creation was first announced.

But an SFA spokesperson told *FE Week* two days later that it was still "in the process of setting up the first meeting of the full ADB".

Both BIS and the SFA declined to respond to Mr Marsden's comments.



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NEWS



Bett-goes on way to Excel



Bob Harrison



Nicky Morgan



# Feltag online learning target was 'red herring'

@JUDEBURKE77  
JUDE.BURKE@FEWEEK.CO.UK

The 10 per cent target for online learning included in the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) report in 2014 was a "red herring" according to one of the members of the group.

Bob Harrison, learning technology adviser, made the comments during a discussion about the Feltag recommendations two years on at the Bett educational technology trade show at London's ExCel on Wednesday (January 20). "The percentages were always a massive

red-herring. They were put in there deliberately — not because we believed it should happen, but because we knew it would put it on the management agenda," said Mr Harrison.

"It was always about the direction of travel," he added.

The discussion, which was chaired by Diana Laurillard, professor of learning with digital technologies at the Institute of Education at University College London, was one of a number of talks in the FE and Skills: Learn Live arena at this year's four-day Bett show, in London's ExCel, from January 20.

The arena was new for 2016, and its introduction came after the Bett team acknowledged last year that FE had been underrepresented in the past.

Speaking in the same talk as Mr Harrison, Roy Currie, chair of the 157 Technology and Innovation Group and director of information and learning at Bedford College, agreed that Feltag had put technology on the management agenda.

But, he added: "Two years is nowhere near enough time to see the kind of substantial and attitudinal change we need."

Looking to the future, Mr Harrison said that the "spirit of Feltag" had been "embedded in the area review process".

The free online course, funded by the Ufi Trust, is designed to give teachers the skills they need in order to use technology more effectively to support their learners.

The BLE "will be one of the ways that you can support upskilling your workforce when you're going through the area review process," said Ms Deepwell.

Doug Belshaw, IT in education consultant, and Bryan Mathers, visual thinker, spoke about their work to develop open badges that recognise individual learning steps, and which can be "issued for anything".

The badges are designed to "recognise the skills and qualities that don't fit on a CV" in an education world that's "moving from a centralised model of learning", they said.

Cathy Ellis, director of enquiry and emerging practice at Highbury College, Portsmouth agreed that the "Feltag agenda" was being taken forward through other priorities.

"Prevent, area reviews, apprenticeships, maths, English — looking at those through the lens of technology. That's where I think we are," she said.

Earlier in the day, Maren Deepwell, chief executive of the Association for Learning Technology, told a packed arena that over 15,000 people had signed up for the first part of the Blended Learning Essentials (BLE) course, which ran for six weeks at the end of last year.

Elsewhere at the show, Education Secretary Nicky Morgan gave a keynote address in which she talked about what the government was doing to support technology in education.

In it, she praised the Fashion Retail Academy, which she said was run by leading fashion retailers and offered learners digital qualifications "to complement their more traditional ones".

"It is these kinds of partnerships that will lead Britain to be the very best at vocational training because they are focused on what the economy needs," said Ms Morgan.

## MAREN'S MARVELS



When *FE Week* reporter Jude Burke asked Maren Deepwell, chief executive of the Association for Learning Technology, for her pick of the Bett show exhibition she made a beeline for Bett Futures.

Featuring around 30 new educational technology start-ups, Bett Futures is "one of the places where start-ups and colleges and providers can meet and mingle", said Maren.

Start-ups are "usually a lot more flexible", Maren said, and colleges can get a "solution that fits your particular context".

"I think it's a great way of driving innovation in your classroom."

The start-ups we speak to are certainly innovative. One — the Curiscope (picture 1) — uses virtual and augmented reality to get learners

"excited about subjects", according to founder Ed Barton.

It certainly got Maren excited, who said it was "very accessible" as it used "equipment that most colleges already have".

Another start-up that got our attention was OhBot (picture 3, 4 & 6). This programmable robot head is a novel way for learners "who've never done any programming before" to "get going".

Our final stop, Raspberry Pi (picture 5), is rather more established. Carrie Anne Philbin, education pioneer, told us the "tiny and affordable computer" has many uses in FE, including in science "to collect data", and in arts to "create digital art exhibitions" as well as teaching programming.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS DIGITAL SKILLS 'BOTTLENECK'

A lack of digital skills is a "key bottleneck" for industry, and FE providers should work with businesses to ensure learners develop the right skills, according to a government-commissioned report.

Digital Skills for the UK Economy, published on January 18, made a number of recommendations aimed at ensuring that the supply of digital skills meets the demands of the labour market — including some specifically for the FE sector.

"The shortage in digital skills represents a key bottleneck for industry and is linked to on-in-five of all vacancies," the report said.

It recommended that providers, including those in FE, should work "in partnership with industry" to develop their digital curricula, so that learners have the right skills. By working with local partnerships, it said, FE providers could ensure that "education and training provision is better matched to local demand".

The planned new National College for Digital

Skills, the report continued, "should provide people with the advanced digital skills that will make a difference to the adoption of technology by companies across all sectors".

Teachers should also have access to CPD to develop their own digital skills, the report said.

A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills declined to comment on the report.



## NEWS

## Cameron's 3m target boost — but no standard take-off

@ALIXROBERTSON4

ALIX.ROBERTSON@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Reformed apprenticeships have shown little sign of taking off in latest government statistics that indicate the programme could be on target for Prime Minister David Cameron's 3m target.

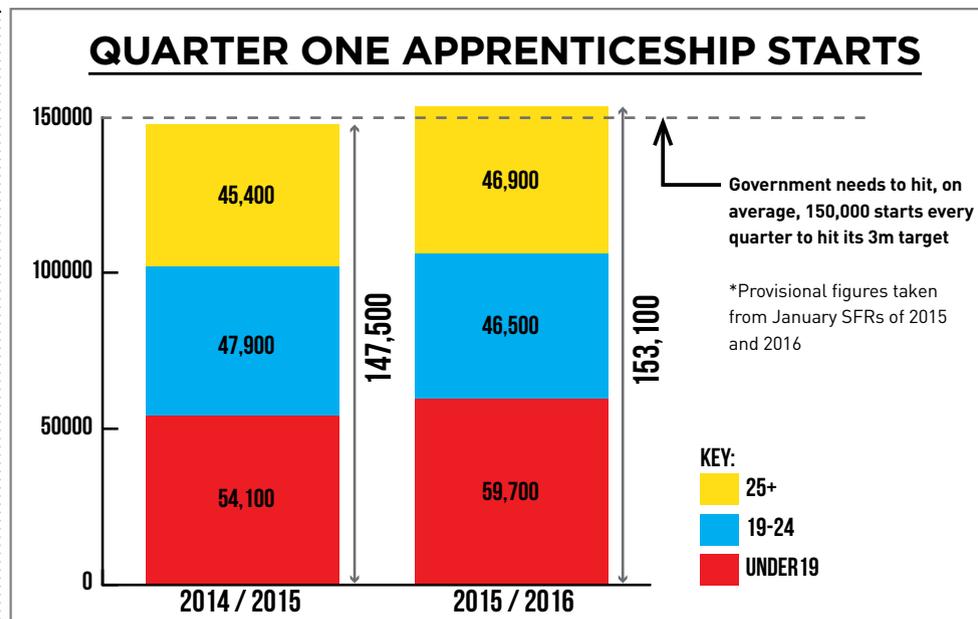
Just 700 starts across all ages and all levels were listed for the new standards in the statistical first release, published on Thursday (January 21). There were 400 confirmed for the whole of 2014/15.

The figure, which relates to the first quarter of 2015/16, is a stark contrast to the 153,100 starts on apprenticeship frameworks, which are being phased out for standards. It compares to 147,500 starts for the same period last year.

All the figures are provisional, but it paints a picture in which starts across the framework board were up 4 per cent on the same figures last year.

And to hit the Mr Cameron's 3m target in the next five years there needs to be an average of 600,000 apprenticeship starts per year, or 150,000 per quarter.

However, the final figures could yet call this success into question. Last year's final figures showed the first quarter to carry the most new starts at 163,600 — subsequent quarters brought lower figures, resulting in total new starts of 499,900 for the year.



Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal said: "Adjustment of the provisional data for 2015/16 may lead later to better figures, but we are concerned that the programme is not growing at a pace we would like and in particular for 19-24 year olds.

He added: "Not all 19+ growth requests during this year have been approved and we are still waiting on the 16-18 responses as well which is a real concern when we are already half way through the year."

But the provisional figures also showed an increase in the number of

new traineeship starts, with 7,600 starts recorded in the first quarter of 2015/16, compared to only 5,000 for the previous year. And the growth could well continue with news, reported by *FE Week* on January 20, that restrictions limiting who can deliver traineeships were to be lifted next month rather than from August.

Skills Minister Nick Boles said: "Apprenticeships and traineeships are creating the highly skilled and productive workforce that is supporting our country's economic growth. We are on the right track to delivering 3m apprenticeships by 2020."

## TOUGH NEW STRIKE LAWS WILL 'ADD CONFUSION' IN FE

Confirmation that tough new strike rules will apply to FE workers will "add confusion" rather than clarity, unions have warned.

The government's ballot threshold consultation response, published Thursday (January 21) lists teaching and leadership of "pupils aged 5 to 16 in state-funded schools" as "important public services" which would be subject to the new 40 per cent support threshold for strike action, as part of the new trade union bill.

And a spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) confirmed that the tough new threshold would apply to "any teacher teaching a child under 17" whether in FE or a school.

Dr Mary Bousted, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), called the policy "ill-thought through".

She said: "The government has a poor understanding of how schools and colleges work.

"This will lead to a greater likelihood of legal challenges from employers which will prolong disputes, even when, like the wider public, union members want a resolution."

"This legislation will do nothing to serve the interests of students or their parents," she added.

"Today's clarity is more likely to add confusion," said University and College Union (UCU) head of bargaining Michael MacNeil.

## Sector set to step up for Muslim women's £20m English funding

@PAULOFFORD

PAUL.OFFORD@FEWEEK.CO.UK

The services of colleges and independent learning providers (ILPs) could be called upon to deliver English language lessons to Muslim women from a £20m fund announced by the Prime Minister.

David Cameron said on Monday (January 18) that the government needed to be "more clear about the expectations we place on those who come to live here" and the new fund would help Muslim women from areas with "segregation" issues to integrate more smoothly into British society.

A government spokesperson told *FE Week* two days later that it planned to launch "a bid process on who will deliver these classes to encourage a wide range of approaches and providers that meet the specific needs of women in the most isolated communities".

She added the plan was to make "the fund open to all providers", so FE colleges and ILPs could bid to run the classes in the women's homes, local schools and community facilities, with travel and childcare costs provided for learners.

She added the £20m would be allocated "on top of existing Esol [English for speakers of other languages] schemes

— which have seen more than £800m of government investment since 2010 and supported over 800,000 learners.

"In addition, we have invested £8m for community-based English tuition, which will have helped 33,500 isolated people by March 2016."

When asked about colleges lodging bids for a slice of the new fund, an Association of Colleges spokesperson told *FE Week* they "will work with national and local government to support all communities to access English language courses at FE colleges, as a means of helping them to integrate in society".

But AoC chief executive Martin Doel said the new fund would "not make up for" previous cuts to English language provision.

He added the government had made a 50 per cent (£160m) reduction in the funds available for Esol courses from 2008 to 2015.

Meanwhile, the Association for Employment and Learning Providers' chief executive Stewart Segal said: "We're not sure why this had to be part of a stand-alone fund, when it could have been part of mainstream funding which would allow providers to integrate provision with other programmes."

The government declined to respond to Mr Segal's comment.

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## FE WEEK COMMENT

## Boles bottles it

'I don't know, or if I did I wouldn't tell you' — it's quite a statement for Skills Minister Nick Boles to make to FE Week readers.

And to be clear, our presence at this exclusive round-table had been cleared with him.

So it's disappointing to hear his refusal to give straight answers to simple questions about apprenticeship quality.

As a holder of public office, he cannot simply bluster away such questioning and nor should he want to considering the question asked could well be key to paving the way for standards. Employers and providers are understandably anxious about the shift from frameworks — and on page 5 there's just more evidence of this.

So if the Apprenticeship Delivery Group serves just one purpose then it would be most helpful if that purpose were to get Boles to be more forthcoming.

David Hughes is quite right to air concerns about giving employers the job of policing employers. We'll just have to wait and see if it's a view heard by Boles.

And while the minister may well not want to share his views with the public, the sector would like to share its views with him on this with a consultation — it might just be the only hope of slowing down the mad dash to launch the Institute for Apprenticeships.

**Chris Henwood**

chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk


**TOP #BETT2016 TWEETS**

@bobharrisonset  
Years ago Education Ministers from around world came to learn from us about learning technology #Bett2016 @NickyMorgano1 didn't mention it!

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#Bett2016 inspiring demo from moodlite Roy Currie at @bedfordcollege

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For me there's lots of focus on computing/coding and not enough on digital skills here at #bett2016

@Realtimedu  
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@WBoeIema  
@bobharrisonset #Bett2016 had to drag myself away from @NickyMorgano1 speech to listen to #feltag 2 years on



## Leaders rush to defend FE from Sir Michael

@JUDEBURKE77  
JUDE.BURKE@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Key FE figures have spoken out in defence of the sector following a scathing attack by Ofsted boss Sir Michael Wilshaw.

During a speech on Monday (January 19) for thinktank CentreForum, the education watchdog's chief inspector accused the sector of being "inadequate at best" and criticised the sector for offering "uniformly weak" careers advice.

"It is a real pity that Sir Michael chooses to use such outdated and incorrect language to describe the education and training provided by FE colleges," said Martin Doel, chief executive of the Association of Colleges.

Far from being the "large, impersonal and amorphous" institutions failing to deliver "high-quality vocational education" that Sir Michael referred to in his speech, Mr Doel said that FE colleges "provide excellent pastoral support, work hard to ensure that all students are supported to help them succeed and advance their valuable employability skills and develop their career opportunities".

Dr Sue Pember, director of policy and

external relations at Holes and *FE Week* agony aunt, said that, while Sir Michael was "right to draw attention to vocational education" the sector should not be held responsible when government changes to the education system fail.

"Colleges and providers have been the pawns in these policy changes and really can't be blamed if the systems that governments have advocated don't actually succeed," she said.

"What vocational education and training in England needs is policy stability and sustainable funding."

In response to Sir Michael's comment that 16 to 19 study programmes have "yet to make an impact" on maths and English GCSE pass rates, Dr Pember said it was "unrealistic to think that any college can turn round 6 to 10 years of poor schooling".

"We need to put the emphasis on getting it right in secondary school," she said.

Malcolm Trobe, deputy general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), said that FE colleges should be "celebrated" for the "enormous contribution" they make to meeting the needs of learners and employers.

"They are doing extremely good work under circumstances in which they have received horrendous budget cuts," he said.

Sally Hunt, general secretary of the University and College Union (UCU), agreed with Sir Michael's call for better careers advice for college students, but warned that providing it "will require proper investment".

She added: "Sir Michael is wrong to dismiss further education colleges as simply having failed the pupils that struggled academically at his schools.

"All young people deserve access to the best education that most suits their needs."

During his speech Sir Michael also outlined his vision for what he called "federations" of schools, which would include university technical colleges "that would admit youngsters across the ability range to focus on apprenticeships at levels four, three and two".

"It would not be a dumping ground for the disaffected and cater just for the lower-ability youngsters," he said.

See page 13 for an expert piece by former Ofsted inspector Phil Hatton

### COMMENTS

#### Segal stepping down as Association of Employment and Learning Providers boss and moving to new role at training provider

Congratulations to Stewart on his new role at 3aaa, he will certainly be missed at AELP and an extremely hard act to follow.

Paul Eeles

On behalf of the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) I'd like to acknowledge the excellent job Stewart has done, representing learning providers very effectively in difficult times. I'd also like to thank Stewart for his support and note that he is "not disappearing" so I look forward to working with him again in the future.

Stephen Wright

#### Apprenticeship Delivery Board members announced

How is this Board truly representative of all employers and sectors who employ apprentices? Are there even any SME's represented? #justanothertalkingshop.

Andrew G-H

No SME representation, will they ever learn?.

John Deaville

#### Ofsted boss hits out at 'inadequate' FE sector

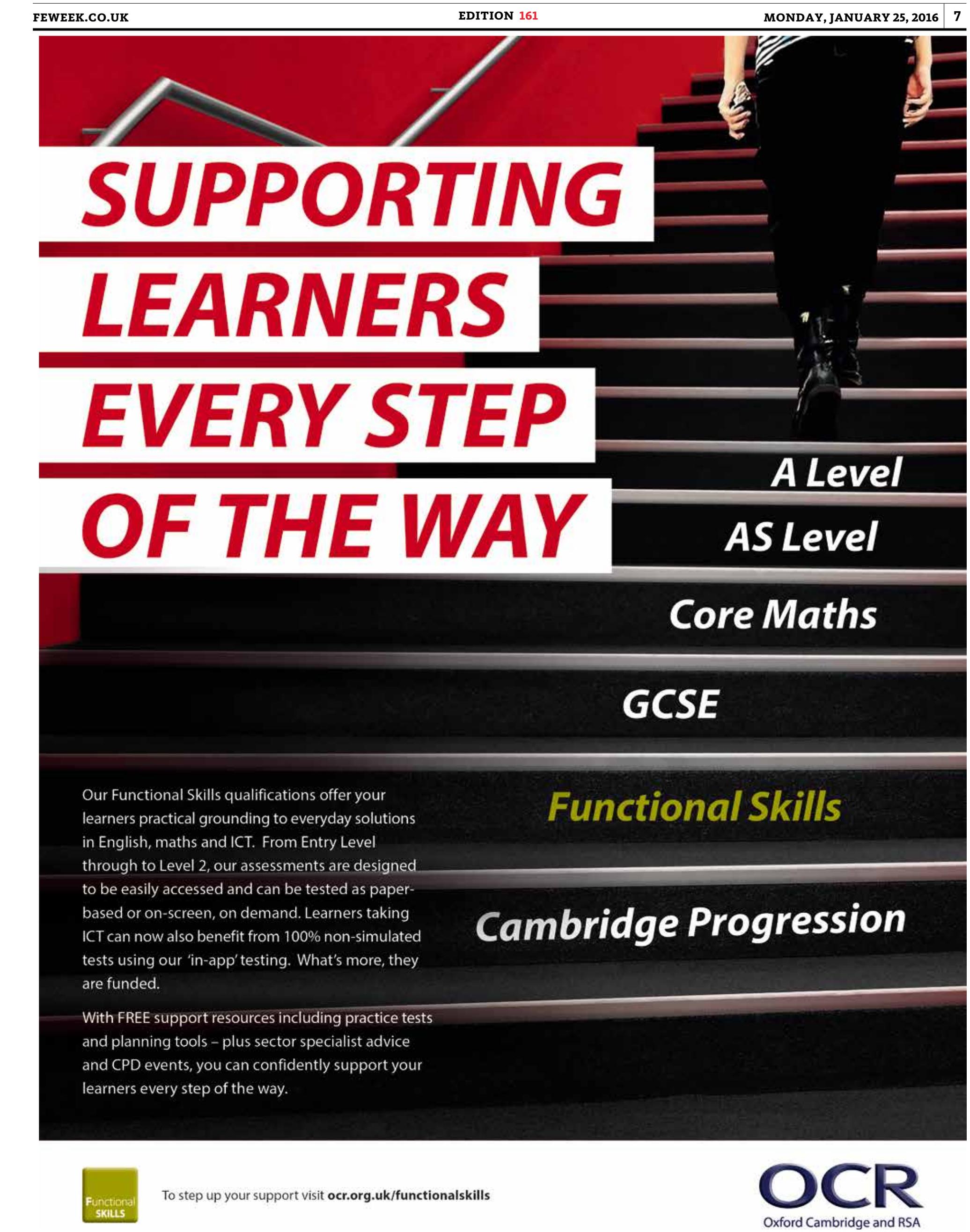
This another example of an ill-informed view in relation to the quality of provision within FE. Broad generalised statements are demotivating

and frustrating at best. Give us adequate funding, focus on quality GCSE delivery in schools, provide sufficient funding to support the rising number of learners entering FE with social, emotional and mental health needs. Stop blaming FE for the failure of entry level learners and focus more on the quality and suitability of the curriculum those learners have received at school.

Helena Thomas

He's correct, there is far too much inadequate, teaching and poor course structure, and there is very little rigour of assessment and knowledge on many courses.

John laird



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## NEWS

# DfE figures reveal the FE sector winners and losers in vocational students.

@ALIXROBERTSON4  
ALIX.ROBERTSON@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Greenhead Sixth Form College has come out on top again in this year's league tables for schools and colleges, according to government figures released on Thursday (January 21).

It boasted the highest average point score among sixth form colleges (SFCs) both per full time vocational student and full time A-level student, in the latest Department for Education (DfE) figures.

Greenhead's success was emphasised by the fact that the SFC also topped the tables for average point scores in 2013/14.

Principal Anton McGrath said: "We are once again delighted to be at the top of the table for both our academic and vocational work. It is testament to the hard work of the staff and the students."

Providers were assessed on a range of measures — including average point score per student, where each grade is given a numerical value and an average taken across the cohort.

Among general FE colleges (GFEs) and tertiary colleges, Riverside College gained the highest average point score per vocational student, while Colchester Institute achieved the best score per A-level student.

A spokesperson at Riverside College said: "We are absolutely delighted to have been ranked as the number one FE college in the country for the achievements of our

vocational students."

In contrast, Derwentside College and Doncaster College both found themselves at the bottom of the tables for the second year running.

Derwentside had the lowest average point score per vocational student, while Doncaster was lowest for average point score per A-level student. Both colleges results had dropped lower than their scores last year. The two

colleges were also bottom of the tables for value-added score, with Derwentside lowest for vocational and Doncaster for A-levels. Derwentside was lowest for vocational value-added score last year and its score has not changed.

Karen Redhead, principal and chief executive, Derwentside College, said: "Derwentside College is not a typical GFE college as we focus extensively on apprenticeships and getting young people into jobs.

"Frustratingly, of the 270 or so young people who studied with us at Level 3 last year, these league tables only count 24 of them.

"We run qualifications that our employers tell us they really value. Sadly these qualifications do not always count in the

		AVERAGE POINT SCORE	
		VOCATIONAL	SCORE
GFE AND TERTIARY	Top	Riverside College Halton	742
	Bottom	Derwentside College	299.4
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE	Top	Greenhead College	1170.8
	Bottom	Gateway Sixth Form College	451.4
		VALUE ADDED SCORE	
		VOCATIONAL	SCORE
GFE AND TERTIARY	Top	Runshaw College	0.99
	Bottom	Derwentside College	-0.67
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE	Top	Stockton Sixth Form College	0.93
	Bottom	The Sixth Form College Farnborough	-0.53

league tables which still tend to favour academic programmes."

Among SFCs, Gateway Sixth Form College and John Ruskin College held the lowest average point scores for vocational students and A-level students, respectively.

Naz Leivas-Mistry, vice principal for quality at Gateway College, said: "Gateway Sixth Form College offers a broad curriculum of vocational and academic qualifications from entry level one to advanced level three for a range of learners. The vocational elements represent a relatively small fraction of the overall offer and when viewed as a whole, the college success rates exceed national rates."

A spokesperson for John Ruskin College said: "The information about the point score is based on a very small cohort of learners. John

Ruskin College is a mainly vocational college with high success rates and excellent value added data.

"We introduced A-levels as a pilot in 2013/14 with a very small cohort of four learners who completed the full A-level in 2014/15 and all passed."

In terms of value-added scores, Runshaw College came top for vocational students for the second year in a row and Harlow College was highest for A-level students.

Michelle Brabner, deputy principal for vocational courses at Runshaw, said: "These results are a testament to the hard work and dedication of all our staff and students."

Karen Spencer, principal of Harlow College, said: "Outcomes like this are only achieved by the hard work of our students, the high

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## ational and A-level provision

### IT SCORE PER STUDENT

Source: <http://bit.ly/1JIL09M>

A-LEVEL	SCORE
Colchester Institute	840
Doncaster College	250.1
Greenhead College	998.9
John Ruskin College	371.5

### E ADDED SCORE

A-LEVEL	SCORE
Harlow College	0.32
Doncaster College	-0.9
Rochdale Sixth Form College	0.42
St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College	-0.55

expectations of our staff, and the support of parents and carers.”

Among the SFCs, the successful stories were Stockton Sixth Form College with the best value added score for vocational learners, and Rochdale Sixth Form College for A-levels.

Julian Appleyard, principal at Rochdale SFC, said: “This is the third year in a row the college has topped the performance tables, we are delighted.”

Stockton SFC principal Joanna Bailey said: “Over recent years we have refined our curriculum and increased the number of vocational courses ... so it is particularly gratifying to have achieved such outstanding results.”

At the lower end were The Sixth Form College Farnborough for vocational, and St

Francis Xavier Sixth Form College, which saw its second year as the provider with the lowest value-added score for A-levels.

James Kewin, deputy chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges’ Association, said: “Parents and students should look beyond the headlines of today’s performance tables to understand how their local school or college has fared this year.

“These headline results mask the performance of institutions in the non-selective state sector - where the vast majority of young people are actually educated.”

Colchester Institute, Doncaster College, The Sixth Form College Farnborough and St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College were yet to comment. The Association of Colleges declined to comment.

## PROPOSED FOREIGN WORKER LEVY COULD NET SECTOR MILLIONS

@JUDEBURKE77

JUDE.BURKE@FEWEEK.CO.UK

A proposed new levy on foreign workers could net the FE sector millions a year — but businesses warned it would be “unfair and unnecessary”.

Details of the proposed new levy, called the Immigration Skills Charge (ISC), were published in a report by the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), a quango sponsored by the Home Office, on January 19.

It recommended that all employers should be charged £1,000 per year for every highly-skilled foreign worker they recruit from outside the European Union, in order to encourage businesses to upskill UK workers. The government had already “signalled its intent” to introduce the charge, according to the report, and the committee had been asked by the government to look at which workers the charge should apply to, and how much it should be.

“We consider that the imposition of an ISC will serve to incentivise employers to reduce their reliance on employing migrant workers and to invest in training and upskilling UK workers,” it said in the report. “Further, the ISC will provide a source of funding to help with this training and upskilling,” it added. No detail is given about how the funds would be used, but, the report said, “we assume that the funds raised will be reinvested into the general provision of skills”.

Stewart Segal, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said that investing in apprenticeships would be the

“most effective solution” as it would encourage employers to retrain existing and new staff.

“Many providers are working with employers to meet the skills gaps such as ITC so the focus should be on investing on these programmes,” he said. But the report’s proposal to reinvest funds generated has provoked strong criticism from industry leaders.

“We are concerned that the proposed ISC will prove to be an unfair and unnecessary barrier to growth for small employers desperately seeking to fill skilled vacancies,” said John Allan, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) national chairman.

He added: “While we support measures to encourage and improve investment in the training and development of UK workers, we do not think that making it even harder and more expensive to fill vacancies is a helpful solution.”

Neil Carberry, director of employment and skills at the Confederation of British Industry, said the proposal “could hold back firms’ ability to grow and create jobs, particularly for exporting, medium-sized businesses”. “They would increase the cost of hiring skilled workers at a time when businesses are already having to manage government policies like the apprenticeship levy,” he added.

A Home Office spokesperson said: “We are grateful to the Migration Advisory Committee for its report. We are considering its findings and will respond in due course.” A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills declined to comment. The Association of Colleges declined to comment.

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## PROFILE

## LEARNING, LECTURING AND LABOUR

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As both a former FE learner and lecturer, Labour MP for Birmingham and Selly Oak Steve McCabe knows the sector intimately.

Born in Thornhill maternity hospital on the West coast of Scotland in 1955, McCabe was the middle child between two sisters, Sandra and Susan.

His mother was a housewife who later worked as a dinner lady in a local school, while his father's jobs included working at a Rootes car factory.

McCabe's first experience of education came at Boglestone Primary School in Port Glasgow, which he remembers fondly for its expansive playing fields. He and his sisters then went to the same local secondary school, Port Glasgow High School.

"Boys were primarily prepared for jobs in the shipyard. Clever boys went to work in the drawing office, and then you worked your way down the trades," he explains.

"Girls were primarily trained for childcare, domestic science or factory work."

Taking the Scottish Higher exams — the equivalent of A-levels — in his fifth year opened the door for McCabe to attend Moray House College in Edinburgh, where he studied social care.

The college, which is now part of Edinburgh University, specialised in teacher training, PE teaching and social and community work skills.

In hindsight, he says that 18 or 19 years old was quite young to train in the social care profession.

"We had a broad range of subjects that we were taught, we did a number of practical placements and in theory I acquired some skills — but if I'm really truthful I was pretty clueless!" he says.

His first full time job took him to Wolverhampton to join a social work area team. His mentor at the time was his boss, Doreen van Hiley, who he says was a very positive influence, and helped him to survive the first 18 months.

As the work went on he found himself engaging with the world of FE again, working with students from local colleges in both Wolverhampton and Newbury in Berkshire.

"In those days it was quite common to take students sometimes for placements, experience and opportunities ... I worked for a spell with young offenders and I had contact with FE colleges through helping students to get

through their training courses."

He found working with colleges a "patchy" process.

"Although there have been dramatic changes in the FE sector over the years, some of it doesn't strike me as that different," explains McCabe.

"There were always arguments about funding, there were always arguments about people who want to offer courses in a particular way, and there were always customers who were seeking something that didn't quite fit the model that the college was trying to sell — the challenge is how you make those things responsive to real demand."

McCabe had a chance to experience this challenge head on when in 1985, after a decade in social work, he completed a Master's degree in the subject at the University of Bradford. It made him think more about the way social work education was being offered in colleges, and he took a position as a lecturer at North East Worcestershire College in Bromsgrove.

He taught mostly older students over three years, and says it was a great experience.

"They were fascinating people, usually people who were a bit frightened by education, because their earlier experiences hadn't been so great. But they were really clever, interesting folk to work with," says McCabe.

"I did teach a class of young people who were doing a primary social care course, which was quite entertaining and amusing, and I also taught one class for adult returners — people who had no formal academic qualifications at all."

McCabe then moved to do two years of part time child care work with the Family Protection Team, combined with a part time research job for the British Association of Social Workers, looking at childcare for young offenders.

Now in his 30s, he did five years working for the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CETS), as a regional adviser responsible for advising on changes in curriculum and inspecting and setting up social work training programmes, including the launch of the health and social care NVQs.

"It was an exciting and interesting time when issues like gender, equality and racism were surfacing where social work training had almost been devoid of content in those areas for years before," he says.

Alongside working for CETS, McCabe was also selected as a local councillor in Birmingham in 1990, and later became a father to Rhianna and then Keiron, who are

now 22 and 19 years old. Rhianna is completing an information and administration apprenticeship with the local authority and Keiron is in his first year of a law degree at the University of Bristol.

In 1997, McCabe won the seat of Birmingham Hall Green, holding it until 2010 when the boundaries were changed, making him the MP for Birmingham Selly Oak.

He has worked with the colleges in his constituency in a variety of ways, particularly South and City College which was created through the amalgamation of South Birmingham College & City College Birmingham in 2012.

It's an experience that has helped him form a view of today's sector and the issues it faces.

"I think in order to be able to accommodate a changing employment market, we probably do need to rationalise and specialise a bit. But with anything like that there will be good historical and territorial arguments which will make that very difficult for people," he adds.

During his political career McCabe has taken a special focus on education, working as Charles Clarke's Parliamentary Private Secretary when he was Secretary of State for Education and then taking up the position of Shadow Children and Families Minister under Ed Miliband's leadership of the Labour Party.

He still follows developments in the education sector, including the government's post-16 education and training area review process. McCabe, who is divorced, now lives in King's Heath with his partner of 10 years, Fiona Gordon, and his local area and constituency fell under the first wave of area reviews.

"I'm a bit sceptical about [area reviews] because I think maybe this is the government just simply thinking about money, and the danger is it may become a cash recovery exercise," he says.

"But the idea that we have a review that seeks to develop a greater knowledge of the demands of the market and sectors, and tries to come up with a rational plan with a significant degree of specialism where it's appropriate quite appeals to me."

Looking to the future for FE, McCabe says he would like to see more coherence across the education sector as a whole.

"We waste a phenomenal amount of resource, and we fail to capitalise on the best practice," he explains.

"We need to create a facility for lifelong learning. People are going to have to train, update, and retrain throughout their lives now — that is part of living in a flexible economy with changing demand."

1999



Steve spending some quality time in North Wales with his children Rhianna and Kieron when they were young

2001

Steve on a week long walk from the top of Mount Snowdon to the centre of Birmingham with volunteers from Kings Heath Cricket Club, to raise money for the Anthony Nolan Trust and other charities



2010

Steve shows off his pancake flipping skills in a House of Commons Charity pancake race



2013

Steve takes part in a sponsored walk for MacMillan nurses



2015

Steve and Kieron at the Aston Villa vs Arsenal FA cup final last season



OUR



I think in order to be able to accommodate a changing employment market, we probably do need to rationalise and specialise

### It's a personal thing

**What's your favourite book?**

It's probably *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropist*, because it had such a big impact on me when I was at a young age, and it made me think a lot about politics

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

I read, I cook and I watch Aston Villa getting beat

**What's your pet hate?**

People on the bus with headphones on that they're sharing with me

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

I'd definitely invite Jose Mourinho [former Chelsea football team manager] and his banker, and I would ask his banker to buy Aston Villa and Mourinho to manage them

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

A policeman or a train driver

## 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.

## What's so special about apprenticeships?

**Graham Taylor questions whether apprenticeships are really worth all the funding and special attention being lavished on them by the government.**

Don't get me wrong, I've nothing against apprenticeships but I've nothing against the hundreds of other qualifications in the adult skills budget.

'Other' says it all, but it encompasses some great qualifications. The budget has been cut by 28 per cent this year.

We could overspend it three times over, such is the demand from learners and business, but the money has dried up.

Whisper 'apprenticeships' and politicians go weak at the knees, but what's so special about them? And can we sell more to meet Cameron's 3m 2020 target? The product content keeps changing and so does price (who pays and how much?) Standards are uncertain and quality is, at best, 'variable'.

As Mrs Merton says 'let's have a heated debate'.

So what are they? In essence they ape occupational standards. NVQs had a rough ride under Train to Gain — deemed to be 'deadweight' qualifications.

Apprenticeships were only 'NVQs with knobs on', the useful knobs being functional skills or GCSEs English and maths GCSEs.

Trailblazer content is still a work in progress. Many frameworks are still to be released.

Most now combine a competence-based NVQ with a substantial knowledge qualification. For example, the level three business diploma is now a huge beast counting 58 credits.

Other key considerations are who pays and how much? Why wouldn't apprentices take out loans? Uncle Vince [Cable] rapidly withdrew this option as a growth strategy. Why not treat them just like any other loanable qualification? Let the learner decide what's best.

How will large companies react to the levy [that they will be forced to pay]? The government expects to raise £3bn. Businesses will want their money back through high quality training which demonstrably improves productivity.

One thing's for sure, the levy and the Digital Apprenticeship Service will add complexity and additional costs to the process.

Then there are standards to consider. Like all assessment-based qualifications, there aren't really any national standards, but devil's contracts between assessor and apprentice.

It leads to variations in quality and output. Quality could vary wildly as the supply side expands (get yourself on ROTO) and companies and colleges chase the money.

Companies like Next and the Priory Group have been accused in the national press of taking on low paid trainees without giving them proper training to develop skills and complete qualifications.

Sir Michael Wilshaw condemned such schemes that wasted taxpayers' money on accrediting low level skills "such as mopping floors and making coffee".

It's true that most apprenticeships are level two and many are in service occupations where it's sometimes hard to see the added value (shades of Train to Gain).

It's hard to tell whether an Institute for Apprenticeships or the assessment organisations can help to ensure quality across each standard, no matter where, how or by whom they're being delivered. Good luck with that.

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) aims to increase competition "to help employers make an informed decision...."

**Like all assessment-based qualifications, there aren't really any national standards, but devil's contracts between assessor and apprentice**

There'll be no distinction between primary (who have direct SFA contracts) and sub-contractors. Anyone can submit information about their organisational viability and quality assurance. If they meet due diligence standards and get on the Registers of Training and Organisations and Apprenticeship Assessment they can become a lead provider and negotiate commercial terms directly with employers, to deliver apprenticeship training.

Employers can choose any registered organisation. A competitive price and quality bunfight will ensue.

So get the content right (some are much easier to pass than others) and bring on the competition.

Judge providers by the quality of their work and the outcomes they achieve. Stiffen the standards so that short cuts can't be taken.

Will the planned changes shake up the market the way the government wants?

Let's see, but favouring any group of qualifications distorts the market and leads to unnecessary waste, increased bureaucracy and expensive national marketing campaigns.



## ANJELICA FINNEGAN

Senior policy and public affairs officer, Charity Finance Group (CFG)

## Making the levy work for charities

**Anjelica Finnegan looks at what needs to be considered to make the apprenticeship levy work for charities.**

In April 2017, all employers with a pay bill of over £3m will be required to pay the new apprenticeship levy.

The government believes this will significantly increase the quantity (with an expected 3m apprenticeships by 2020) and quality of apprenticeships in England.

The exact details of how the levy will work in practice are still being thrashed out, but what we know so far is that the levy will be set at 0.5 per cent of employers' pay bill.

Every employer will receive a £15,000 allowance to offset against payment of the levy.

As an example, if Employer X's pay bill is £3.2m, the cost of the levy will be £16,000. Employer X will receive £15,000 to offset this cost and so the total payable to the levy is £1,000.

Employers that pay the levy will receive a digital voucher to the value of the amount they have paid. This voucher can then be used to buy training, from an approved trainer, for apprentices. So, Employer X from the above example will receive a £1,000 digital voucher.

Employers will have a fixed amount of time to spend the voucher — this time limit is still to be decided but initial discussions suggest it will be two years.

After this time the money will be redistributed to other organisations, potentially outside of the charity sector.

Initial estimates suggest that around 1,200 charities will be affected by the apprenticeship levy and will cost £70m collectively.

So will the levy work for charities? In a meeting with 35 of CFG's members last week, it became clear that the levy poses significant and unique challenges to the charity sector.

Perhaps the most significant challenge is that there has been a lack of strategic oversight and investment in apprenticeship programmes across the sector.

It is because the sector is still in recession and facing a £4.6bn funding gap by 2018, as such charities have scaled back on their investment in skills.

Moreover, the sector has not had a skills council in place since 2013, so there has therefore been no strategic oversight of development and quality of apprenticeships, both of which are critical to a successful apprenticeships programme.

The levy should therefore be made available to charities to develop new

apprenticeships and recruitment as well as paying for training.

It will help to ensure that they can provide meaningful, high quality apprenticeships, thereby attracting people into the sector.

Secondly, there is the question of how this levy interacts with the principles which underpin the use of charitable resources.

For example, redistribution outside of the charity sector of apprenticeships levy funding could call into question whether money given for public benefit should be allowed to leave the sector in order to subsidise private sector employers and support private benefit.

Neither is it clear that funding given to one charity by a funder or donor should be allowed to leave it in order to subsidise another charity's operations which was not the donor's intention?

It is because of these unique challenges, and that the charity sector is a major contributor to the British economy, that we have urged Skills Minister Nick Boles to ensure a representative from the charity sector will sit on the board of the new Institute for Apprenticeships.

From our conversations with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, we are confident that this is being considered, but we have not yet been given confirmation that this will happen.

**Redistribution outside of the charity sector of apprenticeships levy funding could call into question whether money given for public benefit should be allowed to leave the sector**

It is vital that someone who understands the charity sector is able to inform and shape the apprenticeship levy to ensure that charities are not just crowbarred into the policy, but actually benefit from it.

After a visit from FE Commissioner Dr David Collins in 2014, Weymouth College went from an Ofsted rating of inadequate to good in just 11 months last year. Nigel Evans explains how the feat was achieved.

When *FE Week* asked me to write something on the turnaround at Weymouth College, it would be true to say that I was very flattered. However, I appreciate that we have been on a somewhat unique journey over the past year.

One of the key features of our ability to address the (critical) issues at Weymouth College has been leadership and management, and that doesn't mean it is all about me. Quite the reverse.

I read the Barnfield College article in *FE Week* and was interested by the comments: 'We've achieved a lot in 10 months. We now have a fantastic staff team, as over one third of the staff have changed, mostly managers.' This may have been true at Barnfield — it certainly isn't at Weymouth. We significantly reduced our staff ratio percentage but lost very few staff during our journey, and I think that single factor has probably contributed most to our success. The Weymouth College staff know this isn't just about continuous institutional review, restructuring, retracting and redundancy.

I also read with interest, the FE Commissioner Dr David Collins' words: "Dr Collins said that he had also identified issues with the background knowledge of some principals, however he said that this 'doesn't



## NIGEL EVANS

Acting principal, Weymouth College

### The 'painful' path from inadequate to good

matter if you have got a very strong team around you' but warned if the management team as a whole was weak the college 'was at risk of getting into difficulties'.

This is what I wanted to dwell upon. Dr Collins has provided real clarity for us at Weymouth. What he has said is true, we didn't have it right and what was worse, we didn't know what was wrong. So last year we had some painful reshuffles at senior level where we did lose a small number of senior staff where we didn't have sufficient expertise, particularly at financial level. As a consequence we engaged Andrew Tyley (ex-finance director and principal and now part of the commissioner's team) to help lead us out of our financial mire. Crucial here was also the ability of our new senior leadership team to provide accurate management information. The college culture was always going to be another key factor that brought Weymouth College out of difficulty.

The current corporation and senior leadership team are the best that I have ever worked with and all staff contributed to our current position as we continue our journey to outstanding. The lessons from us are — teamwork, trust, openness and transparency, everyone working together for the benefit of the college's future. We are now very lean (and mean) and it is a really good place to be, we have rapid and effective decision-making and with the notable lack of egos this creates a great formula for being a responsive and effective College.

And anyway, if you want my personal view, I think we all need to remember that, at principal level, we are only custodians of our colleges. It simply isn't our role to lead our colleges as a reflection of ourselves — but it is about us ensuring that our colleges are fit for purpose, financially viable and serve our communities to the upmost.

It isn't about us — and that, for me, is a potential danger facing the sector as we

sit in the middle of a very ambitious and all-encompassing Area Review process following a government steer towards 'larger and more resilient Colleges'. Even if a college is 'larger and supposedly more resilient' — whatever the size and makeup, you only need one errant principal and unreliable financial management information to bring it to its knees.

We have rapid and effective decision-making and with the notable lack of egos

We need to be aware that what can come with 'larger'/federated colleges can be, multi-layered hierarchies, where decision-making is constipated and sometimes impossible. The problems we had at Weymouth were nothing to do with being a small college and the fact we are back on the right track so quickly shows how much can be achieved without mergers, shared services or federations.



## PHIL HATTON

Former Ofsted inspector and lead consultant with The Learning Improvement Service

### Chief inspector should look closer to home for poor performance

Phil Hatton rebuts claims by Ofsted chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw that the FE sector was "inadequate at best" and questions the consistency of the education watchdog.

The chief inspector does not understand first-hand what it is like to work in a sector that is often a 'second or third chance' for those who have not achieved sufficiently.

From what was reported, these are personal opinions that appear not to be based on facts derived from the primary source that should be inspection evidence.

Those who conscientiously work for Ofsted must be embarrassed by these latest pearls of wisdom cast down to the sector by Sir Michael.

Of course, part of this is down to him not understanding that a real inspector should only make a public judgement if it is based on fact and as such can be proven by evidence.

So Ofsted, please show us where data on inspections supports the headline statement in the article that the FE sector is "inadequate at best"?

Strangely, this completely contradicts the statistics contained in the chief inspector's report, published only a few months ago.

At this moment in time, I would seriously question the consistency of Ofsted in terms of being led and 'managed' as a champion of quality.

I can think of a number of examples of variable performance by Ofsted.

Firstly, with publishing reports on time. A college report was published in January, over seven weeks after completion, with the target of five weeks missed (there are many more examples of no contact made by Ofsted to acknowledge dates agreed for accuracy checking not being met).

Secondly, wasting taxpayers' money and resources. For a report on a small private provider published in December, five inspectors took three days to inspect 22

apprentices. Is inspection resourcing really being well managed?

Thirdly, equity of resource allocation. A college was inspected under the new CIF, with 1,038 apprentices, by one inspector for four days. How can this hold water with the above case?

Fourthly, website information not available data dashboard questions for Learning and Skills governors, link not working

Fifth, consistency and checking of judgements in the much simpler report

Those who conscientiously work for Ofsted must be embarrassed by these latest pearls of wisdom cast down to the sector

structure. A 'safeguarding effective' judgement made for a training provider report contained the judgement that 'staff are not trained in the Prevent strategy'.

Sixth, carrying out inspections on time. A Sixth Form College that required improvement, with a latest date to be

inspected in the 18-month window up to early May, was actually inspected in the first week of December, with no apology

Seventh, judgements about apprenticeships nationally in a survey. Many 'apprenticeship training agencies' have gone uninspected, or judged as to their 'fitness for purpose', despite being around since 2009 and involving thousands of apprentices and millions of pounds in funding.

Although Sir Michael did well in the past as executive principal at Mossbourne Community Academy, in Hackney (although the best college principals that I meet, give the credit to their staff, students and the ethos created), what about the pupils it failed, who did not stay on in that sixth form?

Yes, they probably went FE to pick up the pieces, but with far less funding.

I thought the concept of a 'level playing field' was finally acknowledged in the recent chief Inspectors report, or does making a controversial soundbite statement reflect a new un-evidenced approach to Ofsted judgements?

Is there real equity in the implementation of the CIF?

Where are similar statements about schools? Looking at national first time pass rates for English and maths GCSEs in schools, too many young people do not achieve A-C grades and the gaps in success between males and females, and between regions are too wide.

Locally to me there are many outstanding schools. Are the same criteria equally applied as in FE?

# CAMPUS ROUND-UP



Chelsea Palfreyman before and after her 'Brave the Shave' campaign

## Close shave for cancer charity

**A** South Cheshire College learner shaved off her locks and raised more than £450 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Chelsea Palfreyman, aged 17, is now sporting short hair after deciding to go through with the fundraising stunt.

It was part of Macmillan's 'Brave the Shave' campaign, a fundraising effort which encourages men and women to have their hair shaved off so they can stand proudly alongside people with cancer.

The campaign raises cash to give people with cancer and their families the support they need.

Chelsea, who studies a BTEc 90 credit diploma in health and social, said: "It all feels very strange having short hair but I wanted to do it for a fantastic cause."

"I've always wanted to do something like this and when I saw the appeal I just decided to go for it."

"I'm very grateful to everyone who has supported me by giving generously so far and I'm hoping to raise even more cash in the weeks ahead."

*Visit [bravetheshave.org.uk/shavers/chelsea-palfreyman/](http://bravetheshave.org.uk/shavers/chelsea-palfreyman/) to donate to Chelsea's fundraising appeal.*



Elizabeth Hodgson repairing the body of a car during her level three body repair course at Hull College

**E**lizabeth Hodgson was top of the podium at the home of British motorsport, Silverstone, as she was crowned body repair student of the year.

The 21-year-old, who studies level three body repair at Hull College, was presented with her award at the ceremony organised by the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) to recognise her progression, enthusiasm, achievement and motivation throughout her course.

Elizabeth was one of 14 winners chosen from more than 120,000 IMI learners, 30,000 IMI accreditation holders, and management professionals from across the motor industry.

Elizabeth said: "It is an amazing feeling

to win and I am still getting to grips with the fact that I have been named as the best student in body repair from across the UK."

"I certainly couldn't have achieved this without the amazing help Hull College gave me throughout my course. Big thank you to my course leader David Paine and fellow tutors Paul Wisker and Paul Wiles."



Elizabeth Hodgson

## Model learners renovate dolls house



From left: Sophie Watkins, Michelle Hicks from Myton Hospice and Emma Hodson with the completed doll's house

**T**wo learners from Rugby College used their artistic skills to renovate a doll's house for The Myton Hospices' Rainbow Ripples project which helps bereaved children.

Level three extended diploma in art and design learners Sophie Watkins, aged 18, and Emma Hodson, 17, volunteered to work on the project in their own time after Michelle Hicks and Lisa Sant from Myton approached the college for help.

Sophie said: "Knowing that the house would be used by so many children and could have a big impact motivated us

to spend our free time researching and renovating the doll's house."

The completed doll's house included refurbished furniture as well as personal touches such as a teddy bear and easel.

Emma said: "The end design was a bright, colourful object, which not only would be used as a toy but one which could be used by children to communicate their feelings."

The Rainbow Ripples service supports children who are or have been affected by the serious illness or death of a close family member.

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## CAMPUS ROUND-UP

## College vineyard ships to South Korea

The UK's only college vineyard has shipped its first batch of wine to a South Korean company owned by a former student, writes Billy Camden.

A pallet of cloudy, still and sparkling wines are making their way to South Korea courtesy of Plumpton College.

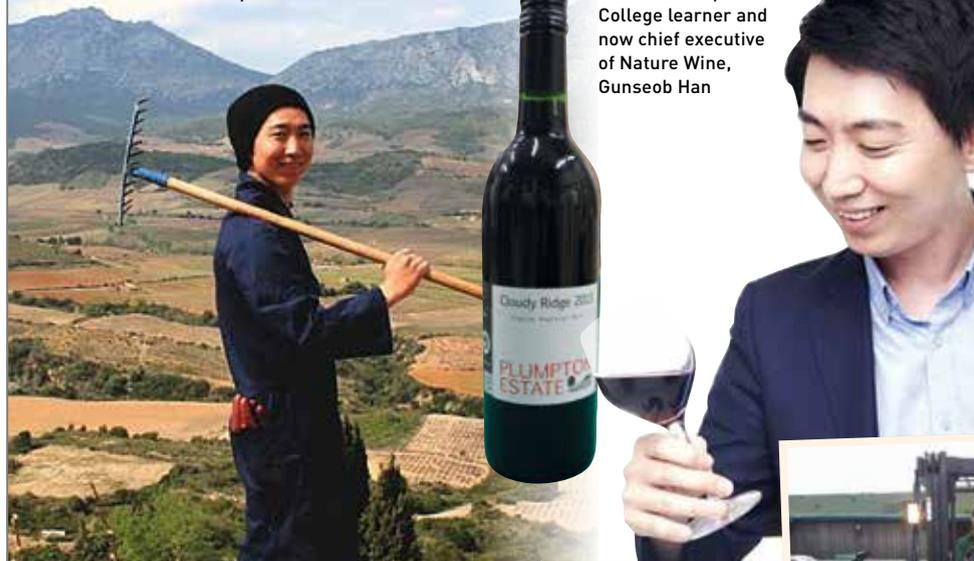
The 30 cases of original produce created in the 9.5 hectares of East Sussex vineyard were despatched to Nature Wine, a distribution company based in Seongnam, and owned by South Korean Plumpton graduate Gunseob Han.

Nature Wine specialises in importing unusual, organic, biodynamic and additive-free wines from Austria, Italy, Georgia, Spain, France, and now England.

Gunseob, who graduated with a foundation degree in wine production in 2011, has fond memories of his studies at Plumpton, particularly his work placement with a biodynamic vineyard in the Languedoc, France.

He said: "The aim of importing Plumpton wines is both to build the English wine brand and promote the Plumpton College courses."

Gunseob Han on his work placement in France



Former Plumpton College learner and now chief executive of Nature Wine, Gunseob Han

Chris Foss, head of the college's wine department, said: "The South Korean's have a very strong interest in wine. A lot of these [developing] countries, when they're starting to build up a middle class, start to think about and introduce fine food and fine wine.

"We've had a good succession of students from Korea who have gone back and set up their little wine businesses and Gunseob set up an interesting one which is specifically to do with unusual wines and natural wines. An English wine over there is pretty unusual."

Mr Foss taught Gunseob during his studies and described him as "absolutely charming".

"What impressed and changed him most was his work placement where we sent him out to a vineyard in the Pyrenees. He was absolutely stunned by that experience. It is

a long way from Korea where he lives in Seoul," he said.

The selection of Plumpton Estate Cloudy Ridge white and red still wines, plus cases of sparkling Plumpton Estate Cloudy Ridge Brut NV has now started its 33-day sea journey to South Korea.

It is the college's first international export but not the first time Plumpton wines has gained recognition.

In 2015 the college won two trophies, including best small-production wine in the UK, as well as two gold, a silver and three

bronze medals in the English and Welsh Wine of the Year competition.

Mr Foss said: "The wine department is now well established at Plumpton and it is a nice product. The teachers and principal all purchase it which is all good business."

Plumpton wines produces around 30,000 bottles a-year and markets the product locally to independent stores, restaurants and high street supermarkets including Marks and Spencer and Waitrose.

And wine making is a subject Mr Foss hopes to grow in colleges across the country.

"It is an interesting topic to teach because there is such a broad range of activities within it," he said.

"You're tasting wine, you're driving tractors, you're in the lab, doing some science, and marketing.

"The skill is a nice ticket to have if you want to go off and travel but we also have a really strong industry developing here in the UK."



College winemaker Sarah Midgley sending the Plumpton wine on its way to Korea



Viticulture and oenology graduate Inma Ollero-Bianchi making Plumpton wine at the college

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

Send your stories with pictures to [campus@feweek.co.uk](mailto:campus@feweek.co.uk) including names, ages and course details of students where applicable

# MOVERS & SHAKERS

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

Sarah Clarke has been appointed principal of Sheffield's second University Technical College (UTC).

The new £10m UTC Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park campus will open in September and will cater for 600 students, aged 14 to 19, specialising in human sciences and computing.

Ms Clarke, who starts in post in March, said: "I feel privileged to lead such an exciting new facility that is building on the success of Sheffield's first UTC. Both institutions offer students high quality technical as well as traditional academic qualifications, so they get the skills that employers need to grow."

Ms Clarke has held a variety of senior roles in education for 11 to 18-year-olds across Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Prior to joining UTC Sheffield, she was principal and vice principal at Landau Forte Academy Sixth Form, West Midlands.

Jason Pepper, executive director of finance and resources at The Sheffield College, which is the lead sponsor of both of the city's UTCs, said: "The appointment of a principal for Sheffield's second UTC marks a significant milestone in the project's progress. As the lead sponsor, we are delighted to welcome Sarah to the UTC Sheffield team."

Meanwhile, Sat Bains has joined grade

one-rated apprenticeship training provider Aspire, Achieve, Advance (3aaa) as its new chief executive.

He joins from the commercial sector where he has "built a reputation of success through his innovative style and unrelenting energy".

"I am excited and energised to have joined 3aaa at a period when apprenticeships are playing such a strategic part of the government's skills agenda," said Mr Bains.

"To join a dynamic forward thinking senior team and board will provide a platform to take the business to the next level and ensure that we offer more young people and employers an opportunity to enhance young lives and the businesses within which they are employed."

At the same time, Stewart Segal will be become director of strategy, policy and funding at 3aaa after stepping down as chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP).

Mr Segal, who will leave the AELP at the end of March, said: "I've been working on policy issues around apprenticeships for

many years, and this was just an opportunity, with the apprenticeship policy established now, with the levy, to work more closely with a training provider, more directly, to help put those policies into practice and to get a bit closer to the delivery side."

Mr Segal was one of the original directors and then worked with AELP as the funding and contracting expert for 10 years before becoming chief executive in 2013.

Peter Marples and Di McEvoy-Robinson, founders and joint owners of 3aaa, said: "We are absolutely delighted to announce these two complimentary appointments. We have invested heavily in the business over the past five years and these appointments are further commitment of this."

Both appointments will also join the board of 3aaa alongside chairman Derek Mapp and chair of quality and standards sub group, Sir Howard Newby, as well as Mr Marples and Ms McEvoy-Robinson.

And Fintan Donohue has retired from his role as chief executive of the Gazelle Colleges Group after more than four years at the helm.

The troubled group, which dropped from a high of 23 member colleges to just 10 during Mr Donohue's time at the head, said the chief executive role "will not be replaced at this point in time".

The group added that Stella Mbubaegbu will continue as chair and Carolyn Chapman-Lees continues to support the network as executive director.



Sarah Clark



Sat Bains



Stewart Segal



Fintan Donohue

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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## QUALIFICATIONS & ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT MANAGERS

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Location: Nottingham (flexible home working will be considered)

ABC Awards, which is part of the EMFEC group, is recruiting for Qualifications and Assessment Development Managers to grow our Nottingham based team.

Key responsibilities will include managing the review and development of a portfolio of qualifications and supporting materials. Working with stakeholders and consultants to manage the lifecycle of development projects as well as proposing and developing

assessment strategies including e-enabled systems, keeping to Ofqual requirements.

For this exciting and challenging role we are looking for individuals that have experience of different types of assessment methods and practices used within the 14-19 and 19+ education sectors, as well as excellent communication skills and a high level of attention to detail.

If you are interested in working for an organisation where you can directly contribute to its continued success please visit EMFEC or ABC Awards or contact Tracy Roser [tracyr@emfec.co.uk](mailto:tracyr@emfec.co.uk) or tel 0115 8541628 for further details.

INTERVIEWS: **Tuesday 9 February 2016** at Robins Wood House, Robins Wood Road, Aspley, Nottingham, NG8 3NH

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## OFFENDER LEARNING LECTURER: MATHS

Location: HMP Bullingdon OX25

Hours: 37 hours per week, 52 weeks per year

Salary: £17,662 – £31,940 per annum

Closing Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016

Bullingdon Prison accepts Category-B prisoners from the local courts on remand as well as general Category-C prisoners and is now a recognised rehabilitation prison. A range of work, education and training courses is offered, some of which can lead to Open University qualifications.

## OFFENDER LEARNING LECTURER: MATHS

Location: HMYOI Glen Parva

Hours: 37 hours per week, 52 weeks per year

Salary: £22,388 – £31,940 per annum

Closing Date: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016

*Skills shortage allowance available for exceptional candidates*

Located in Wigston near Leicester, HMYOI Glen Parva is one of the largest young offender institutions in England and Wales, providing places for over 800 prisoners. The Education Department delivers a range of programmes to the offenders to support them during their learning journey. This is an exciting opportunity for a talented individual who is looking to further develop their teaching career.

In return, we offer a wide range of benefits to our employees, including: Childcare vouchers, a multitude of training opportunities, Car Salary Sacrifice, LGPS and TPS pensions, and flexible holiday entitlement.

## AS A SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE YOU WILL HAVE:

- Hold a qualification (level 3 or above) in Mathematics.
- Hold a recognised teaching qualification (Level 4, PGCE, Cert Ed) or be working towards a full teaching qualification.
- Have teaching experience in Math's subject area and relevant up-to-date knowledge of functional skills.
- Have a proven track record of managing and supporting diverse groups of learners through nationally accredited programmes.
- Have experience of identifying, developing and sharing innovative and creative teaching resources
- Have experience of working with students who may have had a negative experience of education and training (desirable).
- Have knowledge of current curriculum and accreditation developments within Further Education and specific subject area(s).
- Have the ability to teach creatively, adapting to the needs of individual learners and willing to explore new teaching and learning strategies.
- Have good IT skills.
- Show accuracy and precision in written presentation.
- Be sensitive and understanding to the complexities of safeguarding within a prison or closed institution and have the ability to work positively within the inherent restraints.
- Have the ability to work well under pressure, meet tight deadlines and adapt to change quickly.
- Be able to manage your own workload, planning, marking, tracking learners' success and completing team duties as and when requested by your line manager.



### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Milton Keynes College is a committed "safer recruitment" employer. We take extreme care in ensuring the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All positions therefore undergo a stringent vetting process to include DBS for all positions.

We want to develop a more diverse workforce and positively welcome applications from all sections of the community.

Milton Keynes College is committed to promoting the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All positions therefore require a DBS check.

The College is proactively committed to Sustainable Development through the learning opportunities it delivers, its management of resources and its engagement with communities.



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A copy of the full role profile is available at [www.yh-group.co.uk/about-us/join-our-team](http://www.yh-group.co.uk/about-us/join-our-team).

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**CLOSING DATE: MONDAY, 1ST FEBRUARY 2016**

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<http://www.midchesh.ac.uk/vacancies>

[hrjobs@midchesh.ac.uk](mailto:hrjobs@midchesh.ac.uk)

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### 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
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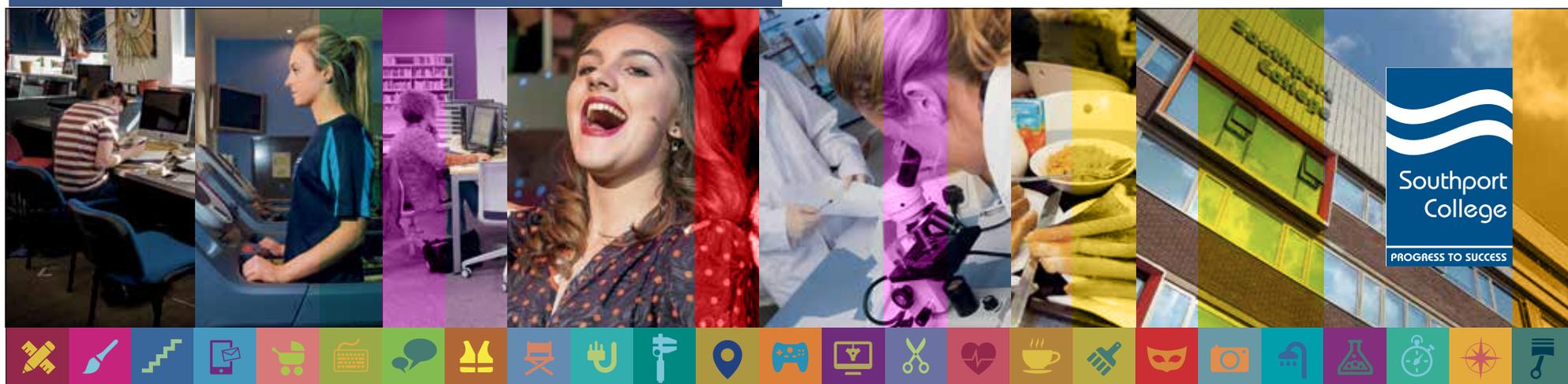
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**Ref: SL0042-0116**

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**The closing date is Friday 29th January 2016  
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The role is to teach GCSE English and/or functional skills to classroom-based learners, including those aged 16-18 within a specified curriculum area and other areas of the College.

Sessions will be conducted on the main college campus.

The successful candidate will have relevant teaching experience of GCSE English and/or Functional Skills and be able to meet the flexible access and delivery demands of 16-18 learners.

**For further details please visit our website or email [personnel@southport.ac.uk](mailto:personnel@southport.ac.uk) or call 01704 392721 during office hours.**

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# AAC | 2016

## FE WEEK ANNUAL APPRENTICESHIP CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 2016

ICC BIRMINGHAM | WEDNESDAY 16 - FRIDAY 18 MARCH

CONFERENCE THEMES FOR AAC 2016 HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED:

### DAY ONE - 16TH

APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM REFORM - FEES, FUNDING, LEVY AND DIGITAL VOUCHERS

### DAY TWO - 17TH

FROM FRAMEWORKS TO STANDARDS

### DAY THREE - 18TH

ASSESSMENT - PLANS, END-POINT ASSESSMENTS AND APPROVED ORGANISATIONS

WORKSHOP TOPICS WILL INCLUDE:

FEES, FUNDING, LEVY AND DIGITAL VOUCHERS | FROM FRAMEWORKS TO STANDARDS | ASSESSMENT - PLANS, END-POINT ASSESSMENTS AND APPROVED ORGANISATIONS | DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS | ENGLISH AND MATH FOR APPRENTICES | TRAILBLAZER EMPLOYER GROUPS AND STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT | BEST PRACTICE WHEN SUB-CONTRACTING APPRENTICESHIP DELIVERY | GROUP OR APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING AGENCIES | CAREERS ADVICE OR MARKETING | INSPECTION AND AUDIT

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## 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

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

Solutions:  
Next week

### Last Week's solutions

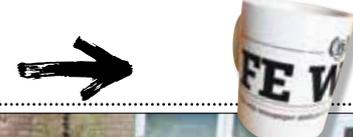
6	5	2	7	4	1	8	9	3
1	3	9	6	5	8	2	4	7
7	8	4	2	9	3	5	6	1
9	1	5	3	6	4	7	2	8
3	4	6	8	7	2	9	1	5
8	2	7	9	1	5	6	3	4
5	9	8	1	3	6	4	7	2
4	7	1	5	2	9	3	8	6
2	6	3	4	8	7	1	5	9

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

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.

Last week's spot the difference winner was New College Durham vice principal Mo Dixon.