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Your FE Week inside



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# LIFE AND LIVING SKILLS

Photograph of a graduate at Luminary Bakery

# FE Week

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**'IT DOESN'T LOOK OR FEEL LIKE A FAILING COLLEGE'**  
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Science learner Hannah Walker-McDaid, aged 19, with the moon samples

## Lift-off for learners with moon rocks

City College Coventry achieved lift-off with their studies after they were loaned rare meteorites and moon rocks to study. Level three diploma science students were given samples collected in the late 1960s and early 1970s during some of NASA's first manned space missions to the moon. The fragments were provided by the UK's Science and Technology Facilities Council and came enclosed in a clear plastic disc.

Among the samples was volcanic glass beads created by a lunar eruption three and a half billion years ago and found by astronauts on the Apollo 17 mission in 1972. Science lecturer Lucy Denton said: "All the students relished in the chance to hold and study these samples. "They learned all about how they were formed, the different types of materials they are made off and speculated on the areas of the moon they came from."

# AREA REVIEWS ALREADY BEHIND SCHEDULE

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**EXCLUSIVE**

The government's area reviews of post-16 education and training are already running behind schedule, with the government accused of working to an "unrealistic" timetable. According to the government's own published guidance, the first wave of reviews in Birmingham and Solihull, Greater Manchester, and Sheffield City region, which began in early September, ought to be wrapping up within the next month. However, *FE Week* checks indicate that they are barely half-way through the process. The government's guidance on post-16 education and training area reviews, published in September, gave a "typical timescale" for a review of around three to four months.

However, a spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) told *FE Week* on Tuesday (January 5) that they only expected the first areas "to be moving to analysis of options and recommendations over the next month or two". Meanwhile, the 'options analysis' stage only featured after the third of five steering group meetings, in a flowchart produced by the government that plotted how the reviews should progress. It indicates that there is still a long way to go and principal of Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College Chris Thomson said the Sussex area review that his college is part of, which was announced on September 25 and had its first steering group meeting in October, was likely to overrun. He said there was "tension" between the drive to complete "as quickly as possible" and

"the more practical wisdom of about how you actually achieve change at a local level". "If the process actually overruns by a couple of months on individual reviews, but you get outcomes that are workable and genuinely improving, that's a price worth paying," he added. James Kewin, deputy chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association, said "extending the timescale is the sensible thing to do, particularly as academy status for sixth form colleges is now linked to the review process". The delay led Gordon Marsden, Shadow Skills Minister, to hit out at what he called the "botched nature" of the reviews. He accused his government counterpart, Skills Minister Nick Boles, of "moving with sometimes inordinate haste to a fixed agenda". "The timescales for the review have always

been unrealistic," he added. Gill Clipson, deputy chief executive of the Association of Colleges (AoC), said the reviews "should not be rushed through". "It is important that the area review process is carried out thoroughly, taking the appropriate amount of time to consider the best possible outcomes," she said. The government has so far announced details of how 101 general FE colleges and 54 sixth form colleges feature in the first two waves of the area reviews covering 15 regions. Education Secretary Nicky Morgan claimed in November that they "haven't been set up in order to save money" in an evidence session for the House of Lords Social Committee. A BIS spokesperson denied that the area reviews are behind schedule.

See editor's comment on page 6

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NEWS

Ramadan set to affect exam dates

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Summer exams will be affected by the timing of Ramadan for the next four years, with GCSE re-sits compounding the issue for colleges, a senior exams officer has warned. Andrew Harland, chief executive of the Exam Officers' Association, said the summer exam period was expected to clash every year between now and 2019 with the Muslim period of fasting, prayer, and charitable giving.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, and falls at a different time on the Gregorian calendar each year. This year, it falls between June 6 and July 5, which is traditionally when many of the summer GCSE, A-level and vocational exams take place in colleges in England. Mr Harland said that the length of the Islamic calendar meant Ramadan would fall in May or June in 2017, 2018 and 2019 as well as this year, but added that changes as a result of religious or other events were not uncommon.

He added that the sharp increase in the number of pupils re-taking GCSEs as part of new study programmes which require post-16 study of maths and English for those who fail to achieve a C grade in year 11, would create a particular problem for colleges. He said: "With the retakes there are going to be thousands and thousands more pupils taking exams, which will be an issue for FE colleges." Mr Harland said a recent change in the way GCSE exams are sat would also have an impact.

He said: "The reason why these things are perhaps more critical now is because under the linear system all exams now happen in the summer."

Under the previous modular system pupils could re-take modules in November.

The Joint Council for Qualifications has announced changes to timetables to bring forward some tests in subjects taken by large numbers of pupils such as English, maths and science, so they do not coincide with Ramadan.

But timetables released by AQA, Edexcel and OCR show a significant number of exams in those subjects are still scheduled to take place in June.

The Association of School and College Leaders has planned to meet Muslim leaders to discuss plans and issue guidance to colleges.

Malcolm Trobe, the organisation's deputy general secretary, said the guidance would be non-prescriptive and would not "advise families or students on how they should address the question of fasting during Ramadan".

It comes after children's commissioner Anne Longfield told the Education Select Committee on Wednesday (January 6) that discussions were taking place around "delaying the exam timetable" this summer to fit with the Muslim tradition.

She had been pressed on the issue of how Muslims could be accommodated by Conservative MP for Fareham Suella Fernandes.

The Muslim Council of Britain was unable to comment as FE Week went to press.

FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

Colleges start merger process

Two London colleges have begun the process of merging with an official partnership.

Greenwich Community College and Bromley College of Further and Higher Education will officially merge in August, but partnership working between the two institutions has begun this month.

In a statement, the colleges confirmed senior management at Bromley had taken over operations at Greenwich, but said the latter would retain its own identity and board of governors.

Topslicing checks finished

An investigation into declarations of management fees topsliced by lead contractors when subcontracting has been completed by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA).

A spokesperson told FE Week on Wednesday (January 6) it had completed "compliance work" checks on whether any providers had ignored a ruling that all their management fees be published online by Monday (November 23).

She added it was "finalising checks on the results of that work" and would "then determine where action needs to be taken".

New role for Ofqual chief

Ofqual chief executive Dame Glenys Stacey has been appointed as the chief inspector of probation at the Ministry of Justice.

Dame Glenys announced in August that she would be leaving the qualifications watchdog when her five-year term ends in February.

The Ministry of Justice, which is headed by former Education Secretary Michael Gove, said Dame Glenys will begin her three year tenure at probation, the Inspectorate that reports on the effectiveness of work with adults and children who have offended, from March 1, 2016.

Positive message from new principal of 'inadequate' college

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The new interim principal of troubled City College Coventry said lessons would be learned from its second inadequate Ofsted rating in less than three years — but insisted it didn't "feel or look like a failing college". Dr Elaine McMahon was drafted in from January 4 as an interim replacement for Steve Logan, who had spent just 18 months as principal. He arrived just as the college was graded as 'requires improvement' — having received a disastrous grade four result the previous year that resulted in the departure of the then-principal Paul Taylor.

John Hogg was subsequently appointed interim principal to turn around college fortunes in July 2013, and Dr McMahon (pictured) now faces the same task.

She faces 'inadequate' ratings for effectiveness of leadership and management, quality of teaching, learning and assessment, personal development, behaviour and welfare, outcomes for learners, 16 to 19 study programmes, and apprenticeships.

The report on the college, which was allocated £4.8m by the Skills Funding Agency for 2015/16 as of August, said that "much teaching is inadequate, too few learners complete their qualification successfully and too few current learners make good progress in their learning", although it recognised that

the leadership team had "secured successfully college finances". But Dr McMahon told FE Week: "When I walked in my first impression was that this doesn't feel or look like a failing college."

However, she added: "We acknowledge the findings of the Ofsted report and will most certainly learn from it. To do so, we'll need to work hard to help ourselves, but there are many reasons to be optimistic."

Such optimism will come in the face of inspectors' comments that "performance management of managers and staff is weak and has not raised the quality of provision to good across much of the college's work."

They added: "Managers continue to overgrade the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and do not use a wide enough range of measures to judge fully and reliably the quality of learning".

Dr McMahon, who introduced herself to



NEWS Minister to visit centre proposed as new FE college

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Skills minister Nick Boles has agreed to visit a Kent skills centre following an invitation from the local MP who proposed the site as a potential new FE college.

Mr Boles accepted an invitation to visit the Swale Skills Centre in response to a parliamentary question from Gordon Henderson, Conservative MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey, on December 15.

Mr Henderson told Mr Boles in the House of Commons that "Sittingbourne is the largest town in Kent without its own FE college".

He added: "However, we have a unique opportunity to change that. May I invite the Minister to visit the Swale Skills Centre in my constituency to learn about how, with the right help, it could easily and cheaply be extended into a small college?"

Mr Boles replied: "I would be delighted to visit my honourable friend's constituency. We do not hear the opposition celebrating when new institutions open, including the Swale Skills Centre."

Clayton Laker, head of the Swales Skills Centre, declined to comment on current funding arrangements for the centre.

A DfE spokesperson said: "Swale Skills Centre is funded by the EFA [Education Funding Agency], but as it is part of Sittingbourne Community College it's funding allocation isn't reported separately."

Sittingbourne Community College was



Nick Boles allocated £1.18m 16 to 19 funding for 2015/16 by the EFA as of October.



Credit: www.swaleskillscentre.co.uk

Other local FE providers include MidKent College's Maidstone campus and Canterbury College, which are 14.6 miles and 16.6 miles from the skills centre respectively.

A Kent County Council spokesperson confirmed that the local authority had agreed to attend a meeting where the possibility of the centre becoming a general FE college could be discussed.

When questioned on the visit, a Department for Business, Innovation and Skills spokesperson told FE Week that full details of the visit "have not yet been confirmed".

She added: "The Kent area review is scheduled to commence in November and will consider how the current post-16 institutions can best meet the needs of learners and employers in the local area.

"It will include a consideration of the

location of institutions, the curriculum they offer and the travel to learn patterns for students in the Sittingbourne area."

Mr Boles visited Essex in August 2014 to mark the "milestone" transformation of Prospects Learning Foundation in to the first new FE college in more than 20 years.

Former Skills Minister Matthew Hancock had confirmed five months earlier that Basildon-based charity Prospects Learning Foundation was to become an FE college.

The move was exclusively revealed by FE Week in July last year.

The former independent learning provider was renamed Prospects College of Advanced Technology (PROCAT) and Mr Boles, who was appointed as Minister that July, spoke at the opening ceremony.

THIRD ROUND OF DELAYED ESF CONTRACTS LAUNCHED

The third round of invitations to tender for delayed European Social Fund (ESF) contracts has been published.

Six local enterprise partnership (Lep) areas are involved: Cumbria, New Anglia, Cheshire and Warrington, Worcestershire, Lancashire, and London.

One contract has been tendered for each of the first five Leps, collectively worth £7.9m, while 28 contracts were issued for London, worth £30.2m. The contracts focus on provision for individuals not in education, employment or training.

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) unveiled the invitations on Wednesday (January 6).

Contract delivery commences May 24.

It comes after the second round of invitations for ESF cash totalling £16.2m was published on December 14 for four Lep areas — Swindon and Wiltshire, Greater Manchester, West of England, and Cornwall and Isles of Scilly.

On December 4, FE Week exclusively revealed the first invitations to tender would go to the Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Solent, Leeds City Region, Northamptonshire and Leicester and Leicestershire Lep areas. These was confirmed three days later when tendering for £15m of contracts was launched.

It followed a summer when ESF-funded providers had to lay-off staff due to delays in issuing new ESF contracts. It is thought this was caused by disagreements between the British government and European bureaucrats over the role Leps should play in the ESF process.

Moving tributes to former principal Peter Roberts CBE 1955-2015. Extracts from Farewell Retirement Ode to Peter Roberts, by Dr Lynne Sedgmore. The death of former Leeds City College principal and ex-157 Group chair Peter Roberts sent shockwaves through the sector on New Year's Day. Warm tributes to the 60-year-old, who suffered a heart attack on New Year's Eve, were paid and widely reported. Former 157 Group executive director Dr Lynne Sedgmore sent the poem she wrote for his retirement, just last year, in for publication in his memory.

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Funeral arrangements Mr Roberts' funeral is due to take place on January 14 at 11.30am, at St Mary's and All Saints Church in Chesterfield. All are welcome to join the family at Chesterfield Football Club from 1pm.

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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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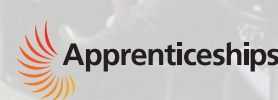
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## NEWS

# New Year honours for more than 20 sector figures

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**M**ore than 20 FE and skills figures were recognised in the 2016 New Year's Honours List for services in areas ranging from apprenticeships to learning disabilities and offender learning.

Top of the FE stars was Dr David Collins, who received a knighthood for his work in the sector, particularly in delivering area reviews.

The education sector also gained a new Dame in the form of Ofqual chief regulator Glenys Stacey, while Association of Colleges chief executive Martin Doel scooped a CBE.

Two further CBEs went to Richard Atkins, principal of Exeter College, for services to FE, and Bob Paton, managing director of Accenture (North East), for services to the promotion of IT skills and apprenticeships.

FE and skills figures also clinched four OBEs, including familiar faces such as Sam Parrett, principal of Bromley College, and a collection of MBEs rounded off the year's achievements.

Stewart Segal, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said: "It was very good to see the recognition that strong supporters of apprenticeships and offender learning have been given in the New Year's Honours.

"With the priority that the government is giving to apprenticeships and traineeships, we hope to see more frontline deliverers of these programmes achieve recognition in the future as well as others making a difference with programmes under the new Adult Education Budget."



Sally Cooke



Margherita Biller



Anita McGowan



Kate O'Rourke



Philip Round



Donald Graham

## RECOGNITION OF 'PASSION' FOR SKILLS TRAINING

Sally Cooke's career in making technology accessible has seen her work with many FE providers, including Myerscough College, which granted her an Honorary Fellowship PhD in 2014. She is now able to add an OBE for services to FE, accessibility and inclusion to her achievements.

Most recently a director for TechDis, a Jisc-funded advisory service on technology and inclusion, Ms Cooke said she was "delighted" and "humbled" by the award.

"Many will know that FE & skills has been my passion for over 30 years ... It seems fitting to me that other recipients on this year's list include many people working (often voluntarily) for the benefits of those individuals who need to be able to live and learn independently, which is a skill that I am proud to say FE providers work so hard to try and provide," she added.

Helping FE learners master maths led to York College's Margarita "Miggy" Biller earning her MBE. The many achievements of the head of maths at York, who has worked in FE for the last 44 years, include supporting student Daniel Lightwing throughout his selection process for the British International Maths Olympiad team. The team went on to win four silver medals and a bronze in 2006.

Principal Alison Birkinshaw said: "I join staff and students at York College in congratulating Miggy on her MBE. We all know she is thoroughly deserving of this honour."

An MBE for services to FE and the community in Sutton and Croydon was a special surprise for Anita McGowan, lecturer and tutor at Croydon College, as she celebrated her birthday over the New Year. Previously working in law firms, she now lectures in human resources at the college, was elected academic staff governor in 2012 and works with community groups.

"Hearing about the nomination and the award just before Christmas and keeping it quiet from family and friends has taken tremendous effort," she added.

For Kate O'Rourke, vice chair of the governing body at City and Islington College, receiving an MBE for services to FE was "just the cherry on top of the ice cream".

A qualified solicitor, Ms O'Rourke has been a member of the college's governing body since 1996 and became vice chair in 1998. Her work has included a special focus on championing adult learning. Ms O'Rourke said: "I feel very privileged to have been part of the City and Islington College for so long as it has given me

wonderful opportunities to work with great people, and for such a great enterprise."

Philip Round, ex-chief executive of Herefordshire & Worcestershire Group Training Association, was awarded his MBE for services to apprenticeships and skills. Mr Round retired last year after 35 years with the association, which delivers work-based training and apprenticeships. He said: "I benefited from a superb start to my own career through an apprenticeship and have tried to promote this route and make it accessible."

Receiving an MBE was a "shock" for Donald Graham, the vocational programme manager at Foxes Academy, a specialist college for 16 to 25-year-olds with learning disabilities in Minehead. "I could not believe that it was for me," said Mr Graham. "I feel so proud to work for Foxes Academy and fortunate to have been given the opportunity to achieve such prestigious recognition on their behalf."

His work involves helping young people with learning disabilities to gain work experience skills.

See [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) for more New Year's Honours coverage and an expert piece by Ms Hill on page 13

## Awarded from FE

The following FE and skills-related people were recognised:

**Knighthood**

For services to FE — Dr David Collins, FE Commissioner

**Damehood**

For services to education — Glenys Stacey, chief regulator Ofqual

**CBE**

For services to FE — Richard Atkins, principal, Exeter College and former Association of Colleges (AoC) president; Martin Doel, AoC chief executive

For services to the promotion of IT skills and apprenticeships — Bob Paton, managing director, Accenture (North East)

**OBE**

For services to FE — Catherine Hill, deputy principal, Blackpool and The Fylde College; Sam Parrett, Bromley College principal

For services to FE, accessibility and inclusion — Sally Cooke, former director, TechDis

For services to adult education — Richard Ward, head of offender learning, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

**MBE**

For services to FE — Ms Kate O'Rourke, vice chair of the governing body, City and Islington College

For services to FE and to the community in Sutton and Croydon — Anita McGowan, lecturer and personal tutor, Croydon College

For services to maths in FE — Margherita Biller, head of maths, York College

For services to FE and the construction industry — Clare Harrigan, chair of the board of governors, Leeds College of Building

For services to vocational education — David Cowell, managing director, Melton Learning Hub, Leicestershire; Ian Eva, apprentice manager, Jaguar LandRover

For services to vocational training for young adults with learning disabilities — Donald Graham, vocational programme manager, Foxes Academy

For services to apprenticeships and skills — Philip Round, former chief executive, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Group Training Association

For services to business and apprenticeships and charitable services in Southern England — Timothy Brown, managing director, Superior Group

For services to skills development in South West Northern Ireland — Maria Hackett, head of the training department, South West College

For services to sport, education and health in the community in Huddersfield — Eva Lambert, former chair of governors, Greenhead College

For services to health and care — Richard Griffin, director, Institute of Vocational Learning and Workforce Research, Buckinghamshire New University

For services to health education in the NHS — Judith McGregor, head of programmes, Skills Academy for Health North West, Health Education England

For services to career education and guidance — Paul Chubb, former executive director, Careers England and chair of governors, The Dales School

FE WEEK COMMENT

### Reflection hopes from delays

It has been an open secret for months now that many representatives from colleges taking part in the government's post-16 area reviews consider them to be unwieldy and counterproductive.

Indeed, one principal warned at the Association of Colleges' conference in November warned that they would, like the fairy tale, amount to little more than the emperor's new clothes for Skills Minister Nick Boles, as it was predicted he would see little to no benefit from a costly process.

The wheels already appear to be falling off, if indications that they are taking longer than expected are anything to go by.

We have heard claims from the government that the aim behind them is not just to save money, and there is little doubt that FE Commissioner Dr David Collins will have the best interests of the sector in mind as he leads them.

Let's hope that any delays demonstrate that he is refusing to be rushed into making any hasty decisions over half-baked college merger plans.

**Chris Henwood**  
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### NEW YEAR'S HONOURS TWEETS

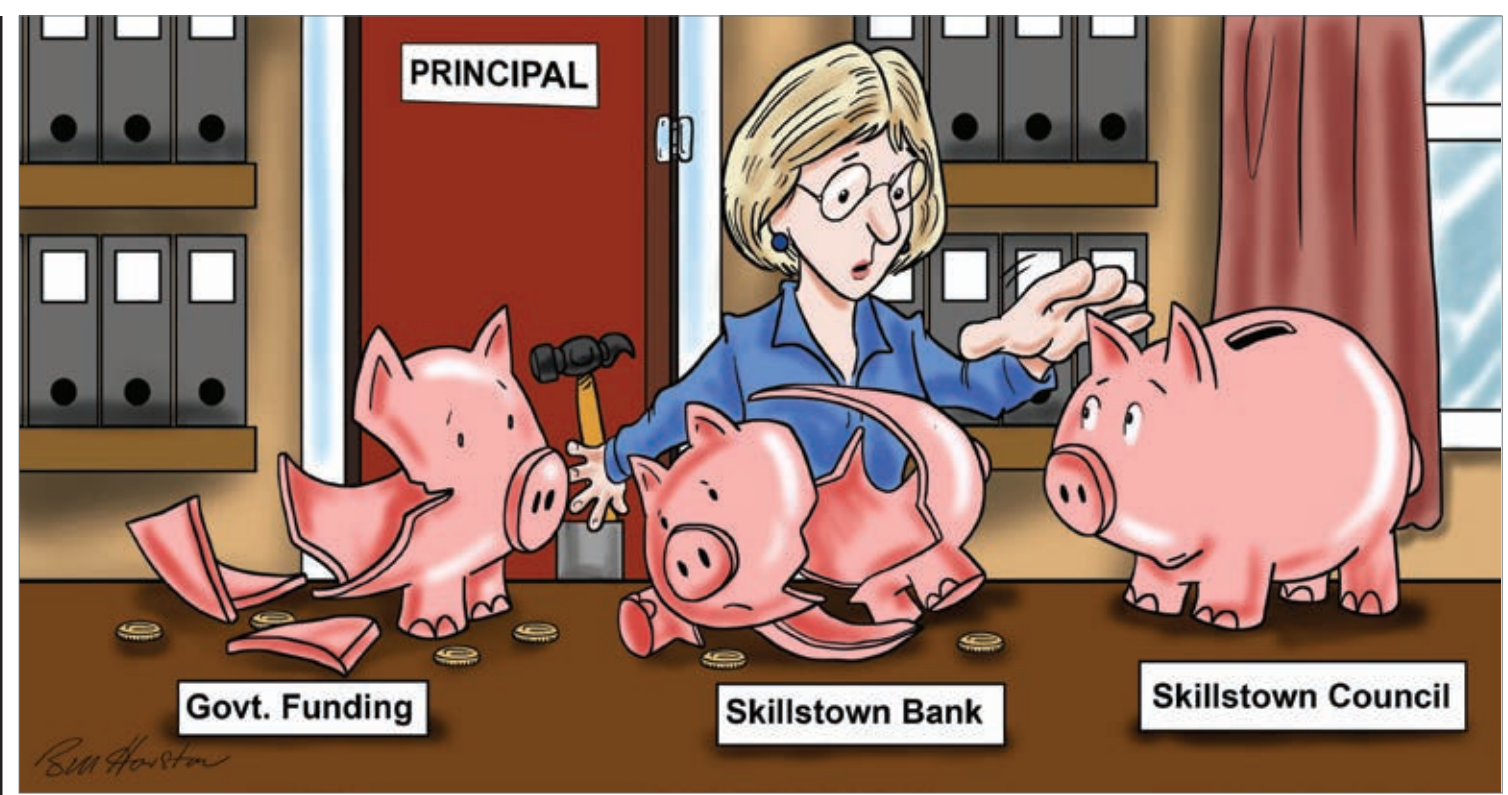
@OCNLondon  
Many congratulations to Sam Parrett, principal from one of our member centres @BromleyCollege for the #OBE

@CareerCollegesT  
Many congratulations to @BromleyCollege 's Sam Parrett on her #OBE - pioneer of London's first Career College

@Paul4Cowick  
Congratulations to @ExeterCollege Principal, @RichardAtkinsz \*CBE\* for services to #FurtherEducation

@ceoch  
Well deserved. Martin has done a lot for the sector in very challenging times

@kirkhookham  
Many congrats to Sam Parrett Principal and Chief Exec of @BromleyCollege on her OBE @FEWeek @AoC\_info #NYH



## College resorts to £700k from local council

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A college has turned to its county council for a £700,000 loan to help address a "need for short-term cashflow support".

A Carlisle College spokesperson told *FE Week* on Tuesday (January 5) that the loan from Cumbria County Council would be repaid "in May 2016".

The announcement prompted general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders Brian Lightman to say that he was "not surprised" colleges were having to turn to alternative sources of finance, bearing in mind the precarious financial situation for the sector.

"All FE colleges are under immense financial pressure at the moment," he added.

When asked by *FE Week* why Carlisle College did not ask the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) for a loan, which a number of colleges have done to tide over their finances, the college's spokesperson said it had "followed Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) guidance published in October 2015.

"It states that 'exceptional financial support (EFS) will only be considered when it is clear that the college, following full consideration by its Governing body, has exhausted all other options'.

"The college, having identified a need for short-term cashflow support and in line with the guidance approached an alternative lender, in this case the County Council, for consideration of such support on a commercial basis.

"The college kept the SFA informed of its actions."

He added that the college's financial health remained "satisfactory".

"The loan fulfils a cash flow requirement until May 2016, given that the revenue funding payment profile restricts the cash paid to colleges between January and March then makes it up between April and June," he said.

It comes after college's principal, Moira Tattersall, reportedly told the Cumbria-based News and Star: "Normally in a situation like this we'd would just go and get an overdraft.

"But banks are nervous nationally

because there is a lot of uncertainty in the sector at the moment."

"This is also happening elsewhere in the country and other colleges are being encouraged to go to their local authorities and ask for loans."

Cumbria County Council declined to comment to *FE Week* on the loan.

However, draft minutes from its cabinet meeting on December 18 showed the council agreed to provide a "short term secured loan at commercial rates" in response to the college's request for financial support.

A spokesperson for the Local Government Association said it did not collate data on the number of councils that have given loans to colleges.

A spokesperson for the SFA said it was unable to comment specifically on the council loan to Carlisle College.

However, she added: "We work with colleges to seek assurance, that as independent institutions they are taking responsibility for their own financial health and developing robust recovery plans."

The Association of Colleges declined to comment.

### COMMENTS

**Trailblazer process 'out of control,' says government adviser Nigel Whitehead**

We've been warning that this may happen since the original Richards proposals, but its only now that Mr Whitehead has highlighted it that it's come to prominence?

It's a pity that BIS/Boles (& Hancock before him) weren't in 'listening mode' a bit earlier...

Andrew

The UKCES funding around NOS has shrunk year on year since 2009 meaning that, in reality, it is already employers in many sectors who continue to fund the bulk work necessary to develop, review and maintain standards.

UK Govt continues to look at NOS solely through the lens of adult qualifications, but for many employers they actually play a fundamental role as the consistent common language of 'what

good looks like' throughout their HR and learning systems and processes.

The changes to NOS being pushed for by BIS through UKCES risk making them more complex, more opaque and less user friendly; the complete opposite of the intended 'simplification' exercise.

They are the one, single consistent component of the UK skills landscape and where they are used well, play a vital role. Nick Skeet

**Public Accounts Committee chair says topslicing is 'outrageous leeching' of public cash**

Whilst not wanting to defend organisations that charge high management fees I think it's unfair to state they are merely conduits for funding and add no value. As the SFA has reduced its staffing structure

prime contractors have been used to manage smaller contracts.

They have an obligation to manage the quality of these providers and take the risk in terms of success rates and under performance.

Reader

**Second wave of invitations to tender published for delayed ESF contracts**

They should publish the full program of dates for tendering, in which areas, and for what. At least then providers could plan. David

**ATL survey reveals 85 per cent of FE staff consider quitting their role due to workload & it's not just the teachers....** D pressed

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# PROFILE

@ALIXROBERTSON4  
ALIX.ROBERTSON@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Stroud MP Neil Carmichael knew a thing or two about the world of FE and skills before he was elected as chair of the Education Select Committee in June.

He did not study in the sector himself, attending St Peter's independent school in York and then taking a politics degree at the University of Nottingham.

But his initial involvement with FE came in 1989, when at the age of 28 he was appointed a governor of Kirkley Hall College of Agriculture, in Northumberland. He held the role until 1993.

Carmichael was a county councillor at the time and colleges were under the control of local authorities.

"Local authorities had a direct interest in what happened and often chose councillors as governors, and that was the reason I became a governor," he says.

He adds that among his responsibilities was "dealing with issues that were cropping up at the college — there were one or two irregularities in terms of finance which had to be overcome".

He says he felt that the governors didn't have enough collective power to deal with the issues they faced at the time.

"I think that it's very important governors ask the right questions and do not fear to get themselves involved if they see something wrong.

"Organisations do well if they are properly accountable, if they are well-led, and a combination of a strong leader plus a decent governing body is the way forward. I learnt that in those days and I've never forgotten it."

Engaging with local colleges will be even more important for Carmichael's work in the coming year, as his constituency falls into the 'West England' region that will be assessed as part of the second wave of area reviews - the first meeting of the local steering group is this month.

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College, where Carmichael was previously a governor for ten years from 2001, is one provider that will be under scrutiny.

Reflecting on his work at the college, he is proud of the changes that were made with the team there.

"The college was in dire straits — lots needed to be done, and the governing team rallied around," he says.

"We did three things — one was we built a new college, secondly we really addressed the issue of leadership of the college, and we also merged with the Filton College, so it was a strategic objective as well."

Things are now much improved, he says, and the college was rated 'good' with 'outstanding' features by Ofsted in 2014.

"We have a college with a big footprint, with the ability to deliver a wide range of very capably taught courses; a college which is engaging in the community, and investing in the future through developing the old Berkeley Power Station site.

"We've got a training centre coming along for renewable energy, nuclear power and so on, and also on the back of that, a UTC [University Technical College – the SGS Berkley Green UTC will open in September 2017]."

Carmichael is raring to go for 2016 after a busy festive holiday period.

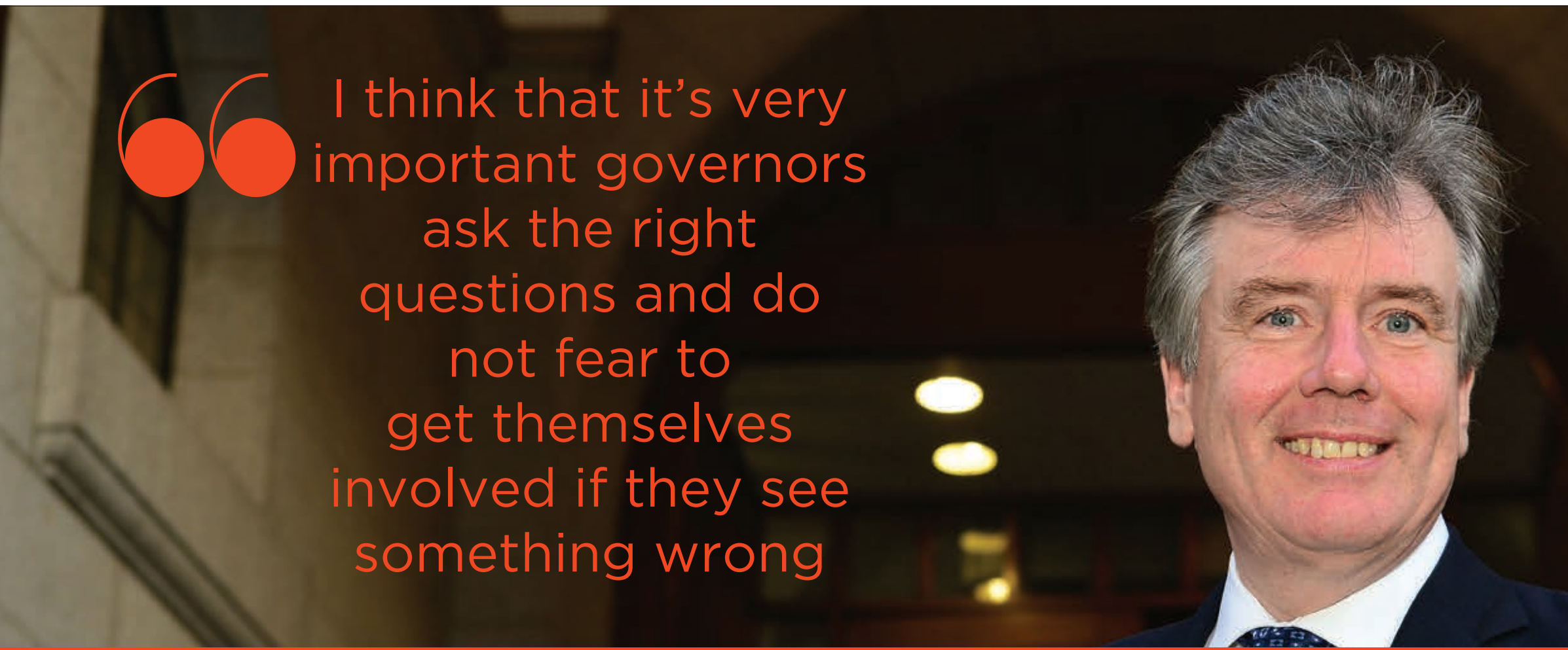
The Conservative MP has been out and about in his constituency, checking in with a local school doing charity trips and visiting the Post Office to thank workers for tackling the seasonal mountain of cards and present.

Outside of professional duties, home life has also been eventful during the festive season, though he did manage to fit in a trip to see Star Wars at the Science Museum's IMAX cinema.

Carmichael drove up to Northumberland, his home county, with his mother to help her negotiate flooding in the area, and managed to spend time some quality time with his three children — James, 19, and twin girls Alicia and Rebecca, 17.

Now that the holidays are over, top of Carmichael's list for the New Year, alongside losing a few extra Christmas pounds, is seeing the Education Select Committee come up with new ideas to challenge assumptions about education.

The committee should be "at the cutting edge of making sure that we have an education system which puts Britain



I think that it's very important governors ask the right questions and do not fear to get themselves involved if they see something wrong

# NO NEWCOMER TO FE

into a very strong position, both within the EU and globally," he says.

He also wants to see people lifted out of "dead-end jobs" and into more rewarding career paths, reflecting an interest in vocational education and skills that he is keen to share.

"I think apprenticeships are one big part of the story," he says.

In Stroud, Carmichael established the Festival of Manufacturing and Engineering, which he says aims to ensure young people can find out more about manufacturing and engineering. It has been running for three years and was opened by the Prince of Wales in 2014.

"One of the things we're going to do next is promote apprenticeships because we think it's really critical.

"I've presented awards to successful apprentices, I've talked to them all and I really value first of all the opportunities that firms give, and the way in which the students seize them and develop them."

He says it is time to consider "a proper National Apprenticeship Award", to raise the profile of the qualification and address "the issue of parity between vocational, technical and academic".

Commenting on the government's target for 3m new apprenticeships by 2020, he adds: "I think that having 3m more is absolutely excellent — but they've got to be quality apprenticeships; they've got to be apprenticeships which people recognise as worthy. They've got to be ones which do lead to sustainable, rewarding careers."

That focus on apprenticeships reflects the fact that Carmichael's work has recently taken an important turn towards FE and skills.

He is now co-chair of the sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy, newly formed through the coming together of a selection of members the Education Committee and the Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) Select Committee.

The new committee held its first meeting in December and so far, Carmichael says, the collaboration with BIS Select Committee chair Ian Wright is "going really well".

"He and I, although we come from different political parties, agree absolutely on the importance of dealing with

productivity," he says. "If we are not a productive economy, then we can't actually start increasing wages and salaries — and that's what we want to do."

"Productivity is not just an economic challenge, it's a social challenge as well, and we have to address it — and one of the key tools is obviously making sure people have the skills, the training, to get the jobs," he adds.

Careers education is another focus for the joint committee, which launched an inquiry looking at careers advice, information and guidance in early December.

It will look at issues such as the quality of current careers advice, its effectiveness in supporting people into apprenticeships.

"It's really important that young people have work experience and get the right sort of knowledge about the opportunities that are before them," Carmichael says.

"One of the reasons why the FE sector has to be more innovative and more responsive is because people do have different careers and want to retrain."

He says that that he "welcomes the attention that the FE sector is currently attracting", but adds that more is still needed.

"We've got to look very closely at the post-16 area in terms of funding, in terms of provision," he says.

Carmichael says he thinks that South Gloucestershire and Stroud College is "well-placed" in the context of the upcoming area review and he wants to see similar practice replicated "all over".

He feels optimistic about the progress of the FE and skills sector overall and the opportunities that the coming year could hold.

"I went to the AoC conference in Birmingham this last

## It's a personal thing

### What is your favourite book and why?

It's going to have to be A Town Like Alice by Nevil Shute. It was one of the first books I ever read at school, and it's a great read because it combines romance with economics.

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

I find the easiest way is to go to a decent pub and have a few pints of beer with some friends. I think that's a good way of switching off, and that's probably what I do. I do like watching films. I was busy watching A Streetcar Named Desire at Christmas, the Marlon Brando version.

### What's your pet hate?

I cannot stand it when people don't treat other people properly, I just don't like that.

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

Charlemagne, the great creator of the European Union.

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

I always wanted to go into politics. My father didn't want me to but I was always very interested. He discovered that Ted Heath was coming to Morpeth — in Northumberland, where we lived — and he said did I want to go, and I said, "I certainly do!" So off we went. And I met Ted when I was just 16.



Neil with Nicky Morgan and Kevin Hamblin, principal of Stroud College, visiting the site of the new Berkeley green campus



Prince Charles visits the Stroud Festival of Manufacturing founded by Neil.



Neil setting off with his father to feed sheep in winter conditions



Neil demonstrates his sheep shearing skills to Stroud farmers



Neil with his 1st year Politics students classmates



Neil with pupils at the Microsoft schools event for computer programming

year, and I was impressed with the principals that I met — they clearly had thought about where they needed to be, and they had an appetite for making the kind of decisions," he says.

He says that the spending review was also "surprisingly good for the sector".

"I think there are some good reasons for that. One is obviously the post-16 sector is the one you need to work hardest at to have the most rapid response to the skills crises that we've actually got in terms of recruitment.

"And the second one is, of course, we're looking at the changing area of post-16 anyway with the area reviews, and also with the very wise decision to have sixth form colleges, for example, become academies — I think that's a really good step in the right direction."

Carmichael would like to see this change in particular open the door for multi-academy trusts (MATs) to offer a full range of academic choices to pupils.

"You could have a secondary school and a UTC and a sixth form college, all within the same MAT, which will really be pretty good ... that would be a really good structure for a strong, capable FE college to interface with."

# Reflecting on a dramatic year for the sector with FE Week review of 2015

It has been an exciting year for *FE Week* featuring the first General Election since the paper's launch and widespread changes driven by, for example, area reviews, apprenticeship reforms, and the Spending Review. Reporter Rebecca Jones looks back on the highlights of 2015, the 14 supplements and 36 editions of *FE Week* in a yearly roundup.

## EDITION 123 (JANUARY 12) TO EDITION 127 (FEBRUARY 9)

The first edition of the year revealed that more than 700 colleges and independent learning providers (ILPs) faced a shock clawback on 2013/14 funding after they were accused of incorrectly claiming Skills Funding Agency (SFA) cash.

It was reported in edition 126 (February 2) how FE Commissioner Dr David Collins had said that West Cheshire College was left in crippling debt

from a series of blunders over the "size, location and financing" of £68m worth of new campus buildings.

Edition 127 (February 9) exclusively reported that colleges and local authorities would get a multi-million pound SFA pay-out for non-apprenticeship provision, although it looked like ILPs would miss out on the cash boost.



## EDITION 128 (FEBRUARY 23) TO EDITION 132 (MARCH 23)

After returning from the half term break, edition 128 (February 23) reported on a controversial five-year rule forcing potential apprentices to re-sit their GCSEs, which was to be scrapped.

In edition 131 (March 16) *FE Week* revealed that the government had rejected an employer and provider suggested proposal that traineeship learners should be offered a financial incentive for taking part.

In the final edition of the term, edition 132 (March 23), it was reported that the SFA had struck an eleventh-hour deal to "cushion" funding cuts at 24 per cent for the non-apprenticeship part of the adult skills budget, as opposed to a maximum of 32 per cent in their initial modelling.



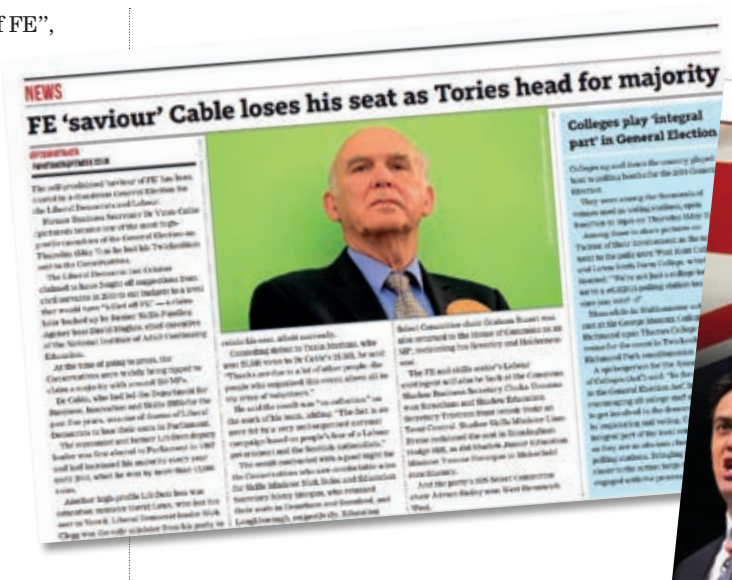
## EDITION 133 (APRIL 13) TO EDITION 138 (MAY 18)

The new term gave *FE Week* the chance to report on the dramatic build up to the 2015 General Election in edition 134 (April 20), which was a first for the paper that started running in 2011.

The paper published a colourful elections supplement, which outlined all of the different political parties' education plans and reported opinions from FE representatives about their hopes for the new government.

In edition 137 (May 11), it was reported that self-

proclaimed "saviour of FE", former Business Secretary Dr Vince Cable was ousted in a disastrous General Election result for the Liberal Democrats after being defeated by the Conservatives.



## EDITION 139 (JUNE 1) TO EDITION 144 (JULY 6)



The paper reported in edition 141 (June 15) that former North Hertfordshire College principal Fintan Donohue had denied any "knowledge of wrongdoing" after it was discovered that success rates were artificially boosted while he was in charge.

Edition 142 (June 22) reported on Shadow Minister for Young People, John Woodcock saying the government was making a "dog's breakfast" of apprenticeships by making providers wait until after the summer budget before learning if they will get paid for provision already carried out.

Edition 144 (July 6) revealed that college leaders were being urged to make the promotion of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) principals a "priority" as their numbers fell nearly 30 per cent in three years.



## EDITION 145 (SEPTEMBER 7) TO EDITION 151 (OCTOBER 19)

After a colourful World Skills 2015 supplement was released over the summer, *FE Week* launched into the



new academic year profiling World Skills champion Rianne Chester, who made Team UK history for achieving the highest score at São Paulo World Skills, in edition 146 (September 14).

The paper reported in edition 149 (October 5) on concern at the scale of the government's post-16 education and training area reviews, with steering groups potentially swelling to around 45 members.

In an exclusive interview

with *FE Week* in the 150th edition (October 12), Cabinet Office Minister Matthew Hancock opened up on just how far officials had to go in designing the new IT system that will determine and track levy cash revenue on one side and pump out digital apprenticeship vouchers on the other.



## EDITION 152 (NOVEMBER 2) TO EDITION 158 (DECEMBER 14)

The paper reported in Edition 152 (November 2) figures showing that providers missed out on almost £250m in FE loans cash in the last academic year.

Edition 156 (November 30) saw the announcement by Chancellor George Osborne of the results of the Spending Review, with reports on how the core adult skills budget had been protected at £1.5bn, FE loans extended to 19-23s, and apprenticeship levy plans to raise £3bn.

A special supplement was dedicated to the Association of Colleges annual conference from November 17 to 19 at the ICC Birmingham, before edition 157 (December 7) reported on FE issues with English and maths provision

highlighted in the 2014/15 annual Ofsted report.

Finishing a year in the sector, Edition 158 (December 14) reported that government adviser Nigel Whitehead's warning that the Trailblazer apprenticeship process was "out of control" and his fears that national occupational standards were in "danger" of being bypassed.



## Top 10 feweek.co.uk stories

- Government reveals college cull plans as it launches national review of post-16 education (Jul 20, 11,263 hits)** — The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) set out plans for a national programme of area-based reviews, with the document expressing the "need" to move towards "fewer, often larger, more resilient and efficient providers".
- Demise of the two-year college course (November 6, 10,996 hits)** — The government announced plans expected to end two-year study programmes for many 16 to 18 vocational learners and instead opt for progression to apprenticeships from the age of 17.
- Much-feared Budget looks positive for adult skills budget — but what could the new 19-plus FE loans mean? (November 25, 10,423 hits)** — Further education loans were extended to the 19+ age group through a better-than-expected Spending Review, where Chancellor George Osborne announced plans to protect funding for the "core adult skills participation budgets in cash terms, at £1.5bn".
- Summer budget: Osborne announces apprenticeship levy for large businesses (July 8, 9,856 hits)** — Plans for a levy on large businesses to help fund apprenticeship growth were announced by Chancellor George Osborne.
- Future of nearly 40 colleges in question as BIS and DfE reveals those facing area reviews (September 8, 8,569 hits)** — The names of the 38 colleges to be involved in the first round of post-16 education and training area reviews was announced by the government.
- SFA chief Peter Lauener warns providers of adult funding cut of up to 24 per cent (February 26, 7,894 hits)** — Details of cuts planned for the 2015-16 (financial year) adult FE and skills funding budget were released by BIS.
- EXCLUSIVE: SFA hits providers with shock funding clawback warning (January 9, 7,256 hits)** — More than 700 colleges and independent learning providers were warned by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) that they face a shock clawback on 2013/14 funding.
- Government cuts could 'decimate' adult education by 2020, AoC warns (March 25, 6,548 hits)** — The Association of Colleges warned that continued cuts to the adult skills budget risked wiping out adult education and training in England within five years, after research showed 190,000 course places could be lost in 2015/16 alone.
- Number 10 reveals apprenticeship funding reform ahead of Budget (March 17, 6,358 hits)** — Number 10 Downing Street announced ahead of the next day's Budget that a "digital apprenticeship voucher" would be introduced for employers to give providers who then were to claim SFA funding.
- Sector welcomes 'biggest ever' apprentice minimum wage rise (March 17, 6,235 hits)** — An inflation-busting 20 per cent rise in the national minimum wage for apprentices announced by Prime Minister David Cameron and his then-deputy, Nick Clegg, was welcomed by the sector.



## THE INDY SCENE

John Hyde is the chairman of HIT Training, a hospitality training provider that operates across England, and on the second Monday of every month he writes in *FE Week* about issues affecting independent learning providers

# Framework for a ‘turbulent’ year ahead

Having spent the last four weeks in the Americas, primarily the Caribbean and Brazil, it was interesting to compare the impact of vocational education on the growth of their economies.

What struck me as interesting was developing countries, including China, India and most of South America, don’t have the hang-ups we have in the UK, and also the USA, between vocational and academic learning.

Despite overwhelming evidence we learn more at the workplace than school, college and university put together, when it comes to developing skills policy this seems to be forgotten and academia rules, unless of course you need a plumber, hairdresser or carer for your own mum.

This looks like being another turbulent year for apprenticeship providers with so many unanswered questions about Trailblazers, end assessments and the levy.

The timetable for moving from Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) frameworks to Trailblazer standards seems to have stalled, delayed or even been abandoned. The minister has told some employers they can retain their framework if they want to.

All participating employers knew what a SASE framework entailed, whereas each Trailblazer standard is unique with very different delivery and content requirements.

So employers who operate over several skill areas, even if their main occupation is ,say, manufacturing, will have clerical, or warehousing, or sales, or accounts, or maintenance apprentices all undertaking a very different type of apprenticeship not just with different vocational skills, but different delivery, assessment and end-testing requirements.

This will create difficulties for providers who operate over several sectors and for Ofsted inspectors to understand the vagaries of each standard. At least there now seems to be a glimmer of hope for standardisation with the realisation, led by Nigel Whitehead, that the National Occupational Standards (NOS) should still have a role. The NOS are the only common language we have to define vocational skills across all sectors.

Ironically, Trailblazer standards do not require formal qualifications, unless employers’ want them, resulting in the demise of awarding organisations (AOs) from apprenticeships.

However with the complex end assessment testing being devised by the various employer groups, AOs see themselves as the only party in town to undertake this, and in the hospitality sector have secured the monopoly.

End-testing with exams, interviews, projects, practical skills tests, etc, are estimated to cost on average a third of the total apprenticeship funding. So one of the unintended consequences of the Hancock/Richard reforms is AOs, instead of earning less than £100 per apprentice, will now be earning thousands. All this, without any pilots or cost analysis as to whether this will actually improve apprenticeship quality and provide better results than the current system, or any ‘value for money’ evaluation.

## There now seems to be a glimmer of hope for standardisation

Without formal qualifications in place, there will be no government regulator to oversee the AOs’ role in end-testing, at least until the first scandal.

This calendar year will be full of changes for providers, nearly all of them of government’s making, to be ready for the levy in 15 months’ time and Trailblazer standards — if and when frameworks are withdrawn.

For leaders in the sector it will require some second-guessing and smart moves to keep ahead of the game when so many policy decisions, especially regarding the levy and small and medium-sized enterprise contributions have to be made. At the same time we have to ensure our staff are prepared for the changes, our clients informed and our learners motivated as we continue to grow to play our part in the 3m starts target.

Cynics might suggest the reason the levy was introduced was to allow apprenticeships to continue to be funded without Brussels monies, if the referendum takes us out of the EU.



## SIMON PERRYMAN

Barnsley College governors’ board chair, director at Perryman, Yeandle and Associates Ltd and former UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) executive director responsible for investment and National Occupational Standards (NOS) programmes

# Loss of UKCES standards proves an occupational hazard

Reforms to apprenticeships could be leaving behind the lessons learned by the UKCES in the development of NOS, government adviser Nigel Whitehead warned in the last edition of *FE Week*. Simon Perryman picks up on the issue.

As we enter 2016, I remain an optimist for the UK skills system. Much of what we do is excellent, the budget settlement wasn’t as dreadful as some had predicted, the idea of a new style levy will certainly energise apprenticeship uptake and the area-based review process, together with greater devolution, is a sensible policy response in a challenging world.

Other countries look to the UK as an exemplar of effective and pragmatic employer engagement. They admire our labour market information (LMI), copy our occupational standards and competence-based approach to vocational education and try, but rarely have the courage to develop, employer-owned institutions like the UKCES and sector skills councils (SSCs). In particular, they envy our apprenticeships as the glue that binds employers and education together to support the proper introduction of young people into the world of work. They admire our system for its pragmatism and adaptability.

The Government was right that apprenticeships and standards needed to be adapted and refreshed. The challenge as ever will be whether we can effectively execute this raft of new policy. It worries me when I hear Nigel Whitehead from BAE Systems and a UKCES Commissioner, raising concerns on a public platform about occupational standards.

It is particularly disappointing that the Government in England seems to place so little value on NOS, when internationally they are held in the highest regard along with the rest of our competence-based approach to technical and vocational education.

Trailblazer work has added new energy to the standards debate and has been effective at engaging employers. Managed sensibly, Trailblazer standards can provide a valuable ‘front end’ to NOS, testing their relevance and enhancing their value. But, it seems curious that the Government continues to deny the

importance of having UK-wide standards and fails to acknowledge the importance of SSCs in doing the ‘leg work’ of turning Trailblazer standards into apprenticeships that can be assessed.

Might it also have been better if we had started with a ‘road map’ of the occupations that needed to be covered rather than the ‘making-it-up-as-we-go-along’ approach to policy making that has led to proliferation and has been so frustrating for employers?

Shouldn’t we now be actively supporting SSCs in reaching out to their employers to co-ordinate Trailblazer work and its integration with NOS to retain our UK-wide system and make sure the new apprenticeships are ready for 2017?

Then there is the wider issue of delivering apprenticeships effectively. Is the Skills Funding Agency capable of delivering the new online Digital Apprenticeship Service? Its track record on IT and data collection hardly gives room for confidence.

Are colleges going to be able to step up quickly enough to take on the challenge of direct delivery. We are ready at Barnsley, with one of the best apprenticeship records in the country, but it would be good to have levy policy nailed down so we know what we are aiming at.

Just who is going to supply the energy to bring the new apprenticeship and levy system to life without totally confusing the business community? I hope Government creates an Institute for Apprenticeships that has employer leadership, the vision, the LMI and the partnership skills to continue to build a quality apprenticeship system for the UK. A system based on UK-wide consensus over a set of coherent occupational pathways, incorporating the best of Trailblazer standards and NOS for each part of the economy, supported by effective local brokerage to help bring education and business together.

I do remain optimistic for skills in the UK, but there is much we need to do together in 2016 to turn policy intent into practical reality if we want to continue to have an apprenticeship system that delivers quality as well as volume.

The quality of apprenticeships is an issue never far from the FE headlines. Nida Broughton outlines her view of the possible effect of reforms.

Apprenticeships are an important part of the Government’s productivity plan — a high quality apprenticeship system is seen as vital to help meet the need for new technical and professional skills over the coming years.

While the apprenticeship programme has grown substantially over the past decade, its shortcomings in terms of the quality of training provided have been well-documented. With a new funding system to be put in place, the big question for policymakers in 2016 is how to solve the quality problem.

Research by Professor Alison Wolf has highlighted the low and falling levels of spending over the past decade. By 2013-14, spending per apprenticeship start came to £2,500, down from around £3,000 in 2002-03 before taking into account inflation. In this situation, it is unsurprising that there has been so much concern about the quality of some apprenticeship programmes and the value of the skills that they provide.

With a target for 3m apprenticeship starts this Parliament, the funding question was an urgent one. The new apprenticeships levy promises to bring in the kind of cash that is needed to pay for higher quality schemes. According to the Chancellor’s Autumn Statement, the levy is expected to bring in £3bn a-year by 2019-20, allowing a cash terms doubling in spending compared to 2010-11.



## CATHERINE HILL

Deputy principal at Blackpool and the Fylde College

# New Year’s honour is just reward for 30 years of dedicated service to FE

Catherine Hill reflects on her experience of being awarded an OBE for services to FE and why she is proud to represent the sector on the New Year’s Honour’s list.

My 2016 got off to a fantastic start as I celebrated being awarded an OBE with family and friends.

I was ‘officially’ awarded an OBE for services to FE in the Queen’s New Year’s Honours list, which was released on December 31.

I was, however, informed by an official letter from the Cabinet Office at the end of November.

The letter was posted to my home address and sat un-opened for a few days.

We were having a new bathroom fitted and the plumber had kindly piled our post up on the shelf.

It was my husband who spotted the envelope marked ‘Urgent and Personal’.

I shared the news with my immediate family when we were all together at



## NIDA BROUGHTON

Nida Broughton  
Chief economist at the Social Market Foundation

# Getting to a higher quality apprentice system

## A restrictive approach that only looked at how apprenticeships are delivered, and not the results that they produce, would be unlikely to result in value for money

Problem solved? Not yet. In fact, on quality, there is a danger of slipping into complacency. Just as important as how much funding is available is how that money is spent.

This is an important question because

the problem with the last decade of apprenticeships wasn’t simply poor overall quality. Some types of apprenticeships were very good indeed, providing good quality training that improved career prospects. Research by the Social Market Foundation, and others, show that level three apprenticeships generally provide a greater boost to earnings than level two apprenticeships. And there are substantial differences by occupation and sector, as might be expected given the differing patterns of skill demand across the economy. One apprenticeship is quite definitely not just as good as another. We need to make sure that money is directed towards the areas that make the biggest difference to productivity and good employment opportunities.

Putting employers in charge has been a much trumpeted change under the new system. A new Institute of Apprenticeships, independent and led by employers, is to regulate the quality of apprenticeships. But how is it to deal with the fact that some

College, Accrington and Rossendale College in the Red Rose County and Bury College in Greater Manchester; all of which were graded as Outstanding by Ofsted during my tenure with them.

I came to Blackpool and The Fylde College in 2005 as head of quality and standards.

In 2009, I was appointed as vice principal and in 2013 I became deputy principal with the responsibility for all the college curriculum areas; working with the heads of schools to drive quality and standards.

During my time with Blackpool and the Fylde College, it has become one of the largest general FE colleges in England and gone from strength to strength.

Over the past 30 years the FE culture has changed considerably.

Contemporary FE includes higher education, FE, and commercial work, and is about providing students with skills and attributes to take advantage of the career opportunities available, and for the fact that they may have several different careers over their working life.

Our sector also provides employers with highly skilled individuals to fill the skills needs of existing industries and the new and evolving jobs of the future.

I am humbled that the work that I am so fervently committed to has been recognised and the honour of the OBE gives me great pleasure.

I do feel extremely privileged to have held the roles that I have as there is nothing like witnessing first hand when a student has a light bulb moment. That instant when they find something that they are good at and enjoy and realise they can be successful.

employers’ apprenticeship programmes will be much better than those of others — both in terms of boosting productivity and improving the career prospects of those enrolled on them? How the new Institute’s remit is drafted and how the Institute chooses to meet its remit will make a big difference to the future success of the apprenticeships programme.

Quality can mean many different things. A limited interpretation could mean the Institute sets some baseline criteria to ensure all apprenticeships meet a required standard, for example, number of training days, programme length and types of qualification that are included. These sorts of requirements may be relatively easy to set and monitor, but such a restrictive approach that only looked at how apprenticeships are delivered, and not the results that they produce, would be unlikely to result in value for money.

A more difficult approach, but one that is vital, is to build in greater rewards and funding for training that genuinely contributes to improved productivity and wage growth. Encouraging progression from level two to level three apprenticeships would be a positive step. Capturing information on how well former apprentices from different programmes go on to do, and publishing that data to help both prospective apprentices and the Institute to decide how funding can best be used would be even better.

It would be a great shame now, if having found a way to make the funds available, we do not invest them wisely in training that will make a genuine contribution to improving skills, pay and productivity.

Since the announcement, I have been astounded by the number of well-wishers who have congratulated me.

I would like to thank the teams of people I have worked with across the years, all of whom played a role in me receiving this honour.

The investiture will be at Buckingham Palace sometime over the next seven months.

Until then, its business as usual with our quality remit heavily focused on providing Blackpool and The Fylde College students with the best possible experience to help them secure their dream job.

## For the past 30 years I have dedicated my career to the FE sector as I am passionate about helping students succeed, progress to employment and become productive members of the community



## CAMPUS ROUND-UP



## Full throttle with super Foggie

Carl Fogarty visits Blackpool and the Fylde College learners. Inset: Carl Fogarty with his Triumph motorcycle at the college

World superbike legend Carl Fogarty sped full throttle into Blackpool and the Fylde College last month to take a behind-the-scenes look at its new Advanced Technology Centre (ATC).

The most successful World Superbike racer of all time treated spectators to a lap of the college car park on his Triumph motorcycle before taking a Porsche 911 for a spin on the facility's dynamometer equipment, clocking a top speed of 202mph.

He also held a question and answer session with more than 100 local schoolchildren interested in engineering

and science who had been invited to see the facilities for themselves.

Mr Fogarty said: "I've seen a few of these technology centres over the past ten years and this is by far the biggest and best, it really is impressive. When I was at college back in the early 80s there was nothing like this. There's more incentive for kids to learn more when they have such great facilities."

The ATC includes advanced engineering workshops with industry-level technology and a project zone for pneumatics, robotics and electronics.

## Golden memories from England hero



Football legend Peter Beardsley visits New College Durham sports learners. From left: learners Ashley Adams, Alex Wilson, Amber Metcalfe, all aged 16, the college's Football Development Centre manager Ronnie Thompson, Peter Beardsley, learners Lewis Bell, 16, Kieran Alderson, 17, and Luke Murphy, 16

Former England and Newcastle United footballer Peter Beardsley gave New College Durham learners an insight into the Beautiful Game.

The retired striker told more than 70 sports learners about his experiences playing under management greats such as Bobby Robson and Kevin Keegan.

Among the crowd was second year foundation degree applied sport and exercise

science learner Tom Curry, aged 19, who has played for the college for four years.

He said: "As a coach and a student wanting to be a PE teacher, I was really impressed by his talk and that he gave us so much of his time."

"He was really friendly and his stories were great."

"I will definitely use some of his tips in future."

## CAMPUS ROUND-UP

# Fast learner is world kickboxing medalist

FEATURED  
CAMPUS  
ROUND-UP

A Warwick Trident College engineering apprentice proved his kickboxing mettle by taking home two medals at the World Kickboxing Union (WКУ) World Championships — despite only taking up the sport last year, writes Billy Camden.

Engineering apprentice Nick Stott has returned to the UK with two medals from the World Kickboxing Union after battling his way to the podiums of the World Championships.

The 18-year-old is an engineering apprentice with 3P Innovation in Warwick which involves studying one day a-week at Warwick Trident College, part of Warwickshire College Group.

Despite only taking up the sport seriously in 2014, Nick quickly showed his fighting ability last year when he was crowned a British Champion in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), setting him up for the international stage.

He then travelled to Spain for the WКУ World Championships and picked up a bronze medal in full contact kickboxing and a silver medal in K1-kickboxing in the under 60kg category.

"Standing on the podium twice and receiving the medals was amazing, but I don't think anything will



### NICK STOTT'S TOP MARTIAL ARTS MASTERS

**1 BRUCE LEE**  
I have always loved his fighting style, speed, power and philosophies

**2 GEORGE ST PIERRE**  
He has a 25-2 professional record and mixes traditional kyokushin karate with modern boxing and Brazilian jiu-jitsu

**3 JON JONES**  
He uses a very unorthodox style to defeat his opponents, and my style is also very unorthodox

Warwick Trident College engineering apprentice Nick Stott wearing his English Open Champion belt. Inset top right: Bruce Lee

ever come close to the feeling on having my hand raised after my first [international] K1 fight," said Nick.

"Countless people have won fights nationally, but to win one at a world championships was something I cannot describe. I felt out of my depth but winning that fight was the first time I thought, actually I'm not bad at this."

Alan Davy, work-based learning manager at Warwick Trident College, said: "Nick is a fantastic student and it's impressive to see his

dedication to his sport too. He has to juggle a lot of things, study, work and training, but his commitment is superb. We're all really proud of Nick's achievements at the college and wish him every success for the future."

Nick took up karate for a short time aged seven, but started with kickboxing and jiu-jitsu "just for fitness" in 2014.

After quickly showing his talent, Nick entered a regional competition in MMA and "accidentally won".

"It has just snowballed from there,"

he said. "I then won the English Championships and the British Championships and so was invited to be a part of Team England who I now train with regularly."

Nick now trains six times a week in a variety of disciplines and it has all paid off.

"My parents are super proud, although I think they were quite shocked that I'm doing MMA as most of my family are into motorsport."

"My employers and the college have also been really supportive as well which really helps as they have been flexible to allow me to train and compete."

The World Championships took place in November and Nick's next goal is to compete in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

"I would love to fight at the Olympics, so I'm looking to transfer to Taekwondo as MMA and kickboxing are not Olympic sports," he said.

"I will keep the full contact training and competing going because that is my passion, but I will now start training and competing in Taekwondo."

### 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

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# & MOVERS SHAKERS

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

City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College has started the New Year with Mark Kent as its new principal.

He takes over from Mike Hill, who held the position on an interim basis. Mr Hill returns to his position as deputy principal.

Mr Kent has spent his entire 30-year teaching career in sixth form colleges in Oxford, Middlesbrough, Birmingham, Solihull, and most recently at King Edward VI College, in Stourbridge, where he served as deputy principal since September 2010.

Mr Kent has also spent 15 years as an examiner and is a member of the national charity Mathematics in Education and Industry.

"When I came to Stoke I was bowled over by the friendliness of the staff and students, and I will do everything I can to help move the sixth form college forward," said Mr Kent.

"Sixth form colleges are the jewel in the state education crown, and the City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College is a shining

example. We offer a broad range of subjects and qualifications with excellent results, but we're not an exam factory, we offer a holistic education which develops the whole person."

Chair of the sixth form college's governing body Dr Charles Freeman said he was looking forward to working with Mr Kent.

"With so many challenges within the sector of post-16 education, we are confident that with his strong background and experience Mark is the right person to lead the college through this period of change," he said.

Meanwhile, Dr Elaine McMahon has started as interim principal at troubled City College Coventry.

Dr McMahon takes the reins from Steve Logan, who spent just 18 months in post, following the college's second 'inadequate' Ofsted report in less than three years.

Governors' board chair Maggie Galliers said Dr McMahon's priorities would be "accelerating the pace of quality improvement, ensuring the continued



Mark Kent



Elaine McMahon



Lord Digby Jones

financial health of the college and preparing for a local area review of FE provision announced for November 2016".

Dr McMahon has more than 30 years' experience in further and higher education in the UK and USA and was awarded a CBE in 2009 for services to local and national education.

She has also represented education at the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and the Chamber of Commerce and is a former 157 Group chair.

Dr McMahon said: "City College has all the right ingredients to be successful having passionate staff and superb facilities. I look forward to working with colleagues to meet student, employer and community needs, to improve success rates and to help our students progress into meaningful employment."

And former CBI director general and UK Skills Envoy Lord Digby Jones has started in his new role as chair of governors at Stratford Upon Avon College.

Lord Jones first joined the college in October as a member of the board of governors.

He said: "The solution to the UK's productivity problem, poverty gap and the nation's finances is to maintain a supply of more, better skilled people."

"The path to self-respect and personal freedom is education. That is why I am delighted to accept the position of chair of governors."

Lord Jones' appointment comes after FE Commissioner Dr David Collins recommended the college "significantly" refreshed its board to include "a majority of new members" following a 2014 inspection.

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)



## MIS & Exams Manager

£42,959 - £44,862 per annum

Ref: KC1840

We are seeking to recruit an MIS & Exams Manager. This is an exciting opportunity to join the college as a Manager responsible for the production and processing of key information about student records, funding, and exams.

Responsible to the Director of Finance and MIS, as the colleges MIS and Exams Officer you will play a key role in ensuring that data is accurate, timely and accessible and that the college's data management processes comply fully with the requirements of the funding bodies, exam boards and other bodies.

You will be able to present complex data in a way which is meaningful and accessible to Managers across the college and be able to advise and support the College in planning for future funding levels and quality improvement targets.

You will be required to apply for an enhanced DBS Disclosure and comply with all employment checks before starting work.

**For further details of the job and to apply online, please visit [www.kcc.ac.uk](http://www.kcc.ac.uk). You can also request an application pack (quoting the reference number) by emailing [hr@kcc.ac.uk](mailto:hr@kcc.ac.uk) or telephoning 020 7573 5256.**

**Closing date for receipt of completed applications is Monday 25 January 2016.**

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**For more information and to apply for the role please visit our website [www.peopleplus.co.uk/work-with-us](http://www.peopleplus.co.uk/work-with-us)**



Applications close 8th February 2016



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city college plymouth



# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

## Join an outstanding team

# WE ARE HIRING



This is an exciting opportunity to join a fast-growing training provider based in the North East, playing an integral role in the future development of our business as part of our Apprenticeship Assessor team.

We are looking for people who have a deep understanding of how apprenticeships work and how they can be the personal link to marry the needs of the employers and the needs of the apprentices to make sure that this is a perfect match. We are looking for passionate people who can really bring our apprenticeship programmes to life for our employers and learners and for whom nothing is too much trouble.

We all know that starting an apprenticeship can be a new and daunting experience for a number of our employers and learners and that they need support from trusted professionals that take the time and care to make sure that they know what is happening every step of their journey. As well as being a great 'people person' we need you to be able to deliver outstanding success rates and meet our audit needs. If this is you, here is your chance to join a dynamic organisation with a real desire to transform our learners' lives and help employers to grow their businesses.

## Apprenticeship Assessors

The role incorporates a multitude of tasks; below is a snapshot of the experience we are looking for to fulfil this position:

- a proven track record of delivering SASE apprenticeship provision and growing new areas of business
- a proven track record of meeting and exceeding challenging targets through your own activity and through the effective use of time and resources
- a proven track record of delivering to high success rates, high timely completions and audit compliance
- it would be great if you had a knowledge and understanding of the anticipated changes to apprenticeship delivery to be ready to support us to move to deliver Trailblazers by 2017
- carry out learner and employer inductions including learner skill scans, initial assessment and completion of individual learning plans
- manage a caseload of learners and employers and be their first point of contact and a safe pair of hands
- work with our dedicated Functional Skills Tutors to assess and support our learners to achieve their full apprenticeship frameworks.

For our full-time posts we are offering competitive salaries with a laptop, mobile phone, mileage at 45p per mile, 25 days holiday plus statutory bank holidays and even a uniform too. We also offer a comprehensive induction and ongoing CPD with additional staff development days. Plus there is a company pension scheme for you to join.

We are recruiting for assessors in the following subject areas:

- Health and Social Care Levels 2, 3
- Health and Social Care Management Levels 2 to 5
- Business Administration Levels 2, 3
- Business Management Levels 2 to 5
- Customer Service Levels 2, 3
- Functional Skills Levels 2, 3
- Business Improvement Techniques Levels 2, 3
- Housing Levels 3,4
- Childcare Levels 3,4
- Recruitment Levels 3,4
- Teaching and Learning in Schools Levels 3,4
- Enterprise Level 3
- Contact Centre Levels 2,3

To join our challenging, fast-paced and hugely rewarding team you will be committed to delivering exceptionally high standards for our employers and learners. With our growth plans we are looking to fill these key roles as either full-time permanent positions or on an associate basis (give us a call to discuss the package for this). The roles will be field-based within the regions that are appropriate to you.

**For a full job description and to find out more about this exciting opportunity, visit:**

**[www.learningcurvegroup.co.uk](http://www.learningcurvegroup.co.uk)**

To apply for this role please send your CV and covering letter to [hr@learningcurvegroup.co.uk](mailto:hr@learningcurvegroup.co.uk) or for more information please call 01388 741105 where a member of the HR team will be more than happy to talk to you.

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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
- 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)

**MATHS LECTURER**

Salary up to £33,753

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We are seeking outstanding practitioners who will lead and manage achievement and support the Director of maths and English in the progress of all our students. The maths and English team work from a dedicated learning zone which brings together the resources and lecturers to ensure that learners have the best possible experience. Applicants will be expected to deliver on a range of courses including GCSEs, Functional Skills, Adult Awards and Level 3 Progression.

Wigan & Leigh College believe that maths and English are key areas of study which support students on their progression through College and on to HE or employment. Our aim is to assist students to become independent learners who can meet standards of maths and English and are able to utilise these in the world of work. We are committed to ensuring that students reach their full potential and learn in a stimulating environment that challenges and motivates, using learning technology effectively to enhance and extend students' and apprentices' knowledge and skills.

**Closing date 22 January 2016**

For more information on this vacancy or to complete an application form visit: [www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/job-vacancies](http://www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/job-vacancies)

The successful candidates will be required to apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced check.

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We are looking for people who are passionate about ensuring that learners receive an outstanding experience and reach their full potential.

**CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS NOON ON MONDAY 24TH JANUARY 2016**

**YORKSHIRE COAST COLLEGE**

**DEPUTY PRINCIPAL £60,000**

Responsible for leading a number of key college aspects, this role is pivotal in maintaining the highest standards for all students and stakeholders ensuring appropriate resources are available to deliver the curriculum offer, delivering high success rates for students.

**DIRECTOR OF SUPPORT & RESOURCES / OPERATIONS £38,764 - £44,884**

Taking a strategic role in overseeing the leadership and management of the college support services the Director will ensure the consistent, effective and efficient business planning, delivery and review of the services through championing the learner, understanding their needs and utilising this knowledge and understanding to promote and deliver a consistently outstanding learning experience across all support areas and services.

**CURRICULUM MANAGERS £34,683 - £36,724**

Driving the performance, delivery and development of each area, Curriculum Managers will ensure high achievement for all learners through exemplary teaching and learning practice and take responsibility for the effective recruitment, retention, achievement and success of individual learners.

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For an informal discussion, please contact Clare Wareing, College Principal, on 01723 356246 or Susan Brady, Interim HR Manager, on 01723 356103

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E-mail: [HRUnit@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:HRUnit@riversidecollege.ac.uk)  
Closing date: 12 noon Wednesday 20th January 2016

**Riverside College**  
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**WE ARE LOOKING FOR MATHS LECTURER**

Salary: £12996 - £17948 per annum  
Appointments will not usually be made above point L10 (£15474) and progression beyond point L10 is subject to the attainment of certain qualifications  
Post Ref: 564034  
Base: King's Lynn  
Hours: 20 hours per week  
A Golden Handshake of £1,600 is applicable, which is payable on joining.

You will have a Degree in Maths or a related subject or equivalent and experience in teaching Maths in a School, College or to adults. You must also have Teaching qualification eg Certificate in Education and Training (L4) or equivalent and Level 2 Literacy (GCSE A-C) or equivalent or be willing to obtain them.

**GCSE ENGLISH CO-ORDINATOR / LECTURER**

Salary: £24,044 - £33,205 per annum  
Appointments will not usually be made above point L10 (£28,627) and progression beyond point L10 is subject to the attainment of certain qualifications  
Post Ref: 528003  
Base: Kings Lynn  
Hours: 37 hours per week

You will teach English on a range of programmes and co-ordinate the work of the English GCSE team. You must have a Degree in English or equivalent and experience of teaching GCSE / Functional Skills English in schools or an FE College. You must also have Teaching qualification eg Certificate in Education and Training (L4) or equivalent and Level 2 Numeracy (GCSE A-C) or equivalent or be willing to obtain them.

We offer an excellent package including a generous annual leave allowance, plus five College closure days (pro-rata for part-time), fee waivers on some College courses and a contributory pension scheme.

You can now view all our current vacancies on [www.cwa.ac.uk](http://www.cwa.ac.uk) and apply on-line should you wish to. For more information on working in the local area, please go to [www.workinginwestnorfolk.co.uk](http://www.workinginwestnorfolk.co.uk).

**Closing date for receipt of all applications: 12 noon, Friday 22 January 2016**

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**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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# APPRENTICESHIPS



Photograph of a Business & Administration Apprentice

Bringing learning to life  
[ocr.org.uk/vocational](http://ocr.org.uk/vocational)

**OCR**  
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

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

Difficulty: **EASY**

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

Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

Solutions: Next week

### Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty: **EASY**

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

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.  
The last edition's spot the difference winner was Heart of Worcestershire College principal's PA Donna Baldwin.

# ***SUPPORTING YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY***



Photograph of an attendee at Cambridge Technicals Expo, London