

FE Week

GAZELLE GROUP SHRINKS TO NINE

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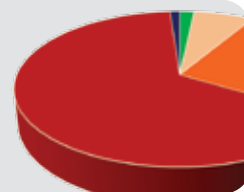
DEVOLUTION DELAY DEMANDED

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APPRENTICESHIP LEVY PLANS IN THE DOCK

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SKILLS WHITE PAPER TO PROPOSE ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL DIVIDE

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STEP INTO MY OFFICE: MP CLAIMS COLLEGE BOSS BULLIED HIM



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FE sector still concerned over funding though fears are easing, survey shows

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Funding is still the biggest source of worry, the latest FE Week and Policy Consortium survey of over 730 FE sector leaders has found.

It topped the list of concerns once again in the third annual FE Week sector survey — which was carried out by FE and skills experts from the Policy Consortium.

The latest results did, however, indicate that respondents might be feeling slightly more optimistic about finances than they were a year ago.

Compared with 2015 — when 72.8 per cent of survey respondents said they were “extremely concerned” about levels of institutional funding — just under two thirds (65.3 per cent) gave the same response this year, a fall of 7.5 per cent.

Those who classed themselves as “moderately concerned” about institutional funding, meanwhile, rose from 17.9 per cent to a quarter — showing that fears do remain, but have eased slightly over the year.

This change could have been influenced by Chancellor George Osborne’s decision not to deliver cuts in his autumn statement, in which protection of funding for the “core adult skills participation budgets in cash terms, at £1.5bn” was confirmed.

But analysis by Policy Consortium member and FE journalist Ian Nash (see page 12), and

comments left by participants, indicated that the issue is still causing sleepless nights.

One respondent wrote: “I have seen the word ‘good’ used to describe the funding settlement for FE in the November spending review.

“I don’t think the flatlining of funding through to 2020, which is very definitely a real-terms cut and comes on the back of 27 per cent real-terms cuts 2010-2015, can be described as ‘good’.”

Another felt more reassured: “I am much less anxious about finance and funding than 12 months ago. The multi-year funding framework put in place last November is very welcome, as is the higher funding rate for land-based colleges.”

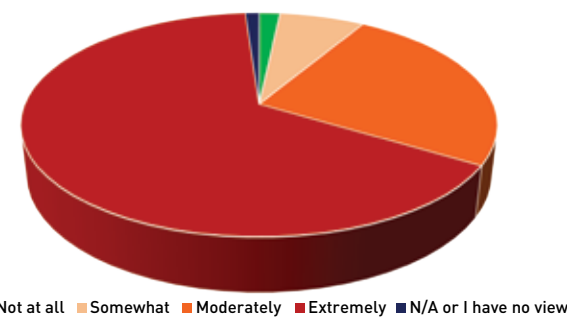
The drop in respondents feeling “extremely concerned” from 2015 to 2016 was also reflected in the answers given on learner funding, as well as on the pace and volume of change.

A lack of clarity around change was the focus for some comments.

One participant said: “I suppose the changes at the moment make us all feel that we are treading water, with regards to the new curriculum delivery, and until it is embedded it will be a challenge to know how to plan for our own delivery.”

Another added: “Still a lot of unanswered

Levels/rates of institutional funding
Level of concern



questions with new funding structure and it is starting soon.”

The theme of uncertainty in responses from the survey echoed what FE Week heard in our parliamentary debate on the apprenticeship levy on May 3 (See page 8), where sector leaders admitted that they felt they had been “out of the tent” on decision-making.

One survey respondent, for example, commented: “Each new government and skills minister wants to bring in changes.

“My main concern over current changes, particularly for apprenticeships, is the lack of involvement that FE professionals have had, coupled with a huge lack of understanding of what apprenticeships are within the teams overseeing the changes.”

For more coverage see page 12

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Third London college at risk of administered status

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A struggling college is in danger of becoming the third in London to be placed into administered status by the FE Commissioner, according to the latest intervention report.

Dr David Collins’ team visited Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College (EHWLC) in December, after was rated inadequate by Ofsted following an inspection in October.

His report, which has now been published, recognised that progress was being made with turning around financial problems, but it warned there was “still much to do”. In addition to an inspection notice of concern, EHWLC has been subject to a Skills Funding Agency (SFA) financial notice of concern since March 2014.

The commissioner is now due to return to the college for a stocktake visit, at which point he reserves the option “to reconsider administered college status at this stage, if progress is insufficient”, his report warns.

If this were to happen, it would become the third London college the commissioner has placed into administered status — after Lewisham and Southwark College, and Greenwich College.

“Clearly there has been significant and much-needed focus on the finances of the college over the last 15 months,” Dr Collins

wrote in his report.

“The strategy has quite rightly been to remove costs (mainly staffing) and rationalise the sites to both reduce costs and provide much needed injections of cash,” he continued.

“As a result, the operating out-turns are beginning to turn around, but there is still much to do as income levels continue to fall steeply.”

Dr Collins recommended that the college should revisit its year-end forecast out-turn for 2015/16 “as a matter of urgency”.

He added: “From this reforecasting exercise the impact on 2016/17 needs to be modelled along with the impact of the fall in EFA funding, to ensure that sufficient action is taken in 2015/16 to reduce cost levels down to ensure a surplus and cash-generative position in 2016/17.”

However, the commissioner also warned that financial recovery should not dominate the college’s planning.

His report stressed that “the quality improvement agenda is [also] urgent”.

He said: “The corporation should ensure that priorities are not deflected towards



new ventures until learner outcomes are significantly improved.”

Principal Garry Philips (pictured) told FE Week that the college agreed with Dr Collins’ findings, and had made “real and significant progress” towards addressing his recommendations.

He said: “The actions and improvements made have resulted in the college now being a financially strong and resilient organisation, which has the learners at the heart of everything we do.”

In his follow-up letter to the college’s chair, Tony Alderman, skills minister Nick Boles urged him to “continue to pursue a college-led recovery process and in parallel, participate in the area review”.

The college is involved in the London (West) area review, part of wave two of the area reviews, which had its first steering group meeting on March 8.



NEWS

Troubled Gazelle Group loses two more member colleges

PAUL OFFORD
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Two more colleges have quit the troubled Gazelle Group, including one of its founder members, FE Week can reveal.

There are 11 colleges still listed on its website — but Gazelle has now indicated that two of them, Warwickshire College Group and City College Plymouth, have left.

Warwickshire was one of five colleges which helped found the group five years ago, of which only City College Norwich remains.

Gazelle's executive director Carolyn Chapman-Lees told FE Week that the group had "undergone a restructure".

She said the group's other remaining members were Activate Learning, Amersham & Wycombe College, Barking & Dagenham College, Cambridge Regional College, Cardiff & Vale College, Glasgow Kelvin College, Highbury College Portsmouth, and South West College.

She added: "Our website is currently being updated and this information will be amended accordingly."

Eight months ago, Gazelle published the results of a membership review, which was prompted when several other colleges left the group, and which led management to slash annual membership fees from £35k to £15k.

In June 2014 meanwhile, FE Week revealed that it had raked in around £3.5m from more than 20 member colleges, in membership subs and other fees.

The group was formed in around 2011 with a promise to "develop innovative new learning models and new partnerships with business to deliver an improved outcome for students, their communities and the economy".

COLLEGES UNDER FIRE ON GAZELLE'S £3.5M

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A month-long FE Week investigation into multi-million pound funding of Gazelle by UK colleges has resulted in criticism that public money was being used on "expensive initiatives which have little educational impact".

The group's five founding colleges have dished out more than £530,000 each to Gazelle, according to figures obtained under the Freedom of Information Act.

More than 20 current and former member colleges were asked what they had spent on the organisation, which was launched in January 2012 with standard annual membership priced at £35,000.

Gazelle, which raked in around £3.5m from

colleges, claims to "develop innovative new learning models and new partnerships with business to deliver an improved outcome for students, their communities and the economy".

Its chief executive, Fintan Donohue, said the "enrichment of student experiences and outcomes" was its "overriding goal". But no independent research has been carried out into whether learners benefit, while of the 11 Gazelle colleges inspected since 2013, six were rated as good, four were told they required improvement while one was branded inadequate. Four of these were an improvement, one was a decrease and the rest were no change.

The findings of the FE Week investigation have prompted University and College Union general secretary Sally Hunt to question the

sums of cash being handed over by colleges.

"At a time of financial pressures on colleges across the UK, students and staff alike will be dismayed at how much is being paid by some institutions for Gazelle membership which seems to have little impact when it comes to improving learner experience," she said.

"The amount that some colleges are paying Gazelle seems incredible given the apparent lack of return on investment for the institutions involved. We would seriously question whether this is resulting in a better education for learners."

"Colleges should focus more on ensuring better learning environments for students and working environments for staff, and less on expensive initiatives which have little educational impact."

The highest paying Gazelle college was

grade three-rated Gateshead, one of the founders, and it gave £642,000.

The payments included including £120,000 for "purchase of educational concept" and more than £22,000 for staff development and student activities, but deputy principal John Holt defended the contract.

He said: "As a college we place considerable value on key aspects of the Gazelle membership and activity."

He said the benefits included the formation of pro-active development groups across key areas of curriculum innovation, engagement of students in national competitions, exposure to business and entrepreneurial expertise and innovation in teaching and learning.

The remaining founder colleges were Warwickshire, City College Norwich, New

Continued on page 2

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It came under fire, however, over a perceived lack of return-on-investment analysis, and its failure to justify such expenditure of public money amid shrinking FE budgets.

Companies House also confirmed that the Norfolk-based Gazelle Global Ltd and the Gazelle Foundation had missed their April 30 deadlines for filing accounts.

However, no accounts are due for Gazelle Colleges Group — which was only set up three months ago — until November 2017.

Asked to clarify the situation, Ms Chapman-Lees revealed that Gazelle Foundation and Gazelle Global had "now ceased trading" and were therefore "not required to file accounts".

She said: "Gazelle Colleges Group is a new legal entity and will be required to

submit accounts in the future."

A Warwickshire College Group spokesperson told FE Week: "After careful consideration, we decided not to proceed with membership of the newly created Gazelle Colleges Group organisation."

City College Plymouth was unable to comment before we went to press.

Fintan Donohue retired from his role as Gazelle's chief executive at the turn of the year, after more than four years at the helm.

At the time, Stella Mbubaegbu, principal of Highbury College Portsmouth and an officer for Gazelle Colleges Group, said: "All of the members past and present pay tribute to the vision and groundbreaking thinking that Fintan has brought to the enterprise and entrepreneurship agenda in our sector."

UTC LANCASHIRE TO CLOSE AFTER JUST THREE YEARS

JUDE BURKE
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A fourth university technical college (UTC) has announced it will be shutting its doors due to low student numbers.

UTC Lancashire said in a statement on May 3 it would close for good at the end of this term — just three years after it opened — due to difficulties in enrolling enough students "to secure future financial viability".

Figures obtained by FE Week through Freedom of Information requests made earlier this year showed that the 14-to-19 vocational institution had just 113 students enrolled in 2015/16, down from 200 in 2014/15 — despite a capacity of 800.

This news comes not long after Central Bedfordshire UTC announced in March that it would close in August — after admitting it had not been able to attract "sufficient pupils".

Hackney UTC closed in July 2014, also following problems attracting learners, and Black Country UTC shut last summer after a "disappointing" Ofsted inspection and, again, low student numbers.

Rod Dubrow-Marshall, a board member of Visions Learning Trust, which runs UTC Lancashire, said the decision to close was "hugely disappointing".

"Unfortunately, although we have made every attempt to try to find an alternative solution, the board agreed that closure was the only available option due to low student numbers," he said.

UTCs are the brainchild of former education secretary Lord Baker and are promoted by the Baker Dearing Trust.

The trust said in a statement that it "regretfully supports" the decision to close UTC Lancashire.

Its chief executive Charles Parker acknowledged that UTCs "tend to find it hard" to recruit students at 14, as "this is not a normal age of transfer, and the UTC programme is still in its early stages".

But he added: "Most UTCs in England are steadily building effective long-term relationships with schools, employers and local communities."

An investigation by FE Week earlier this year found 40 per cent of the 15 remaining UTCs opened between 2010 and 2013 experienced a drop in student numbers this academic year.

The largest fall was at Royal Greenwich UTC, which had 140 fewer students in 2015/16 compared to 2014/15.

Together, the 15 institutions were operating at a little over 50 per cent of their combined capacity.

Only one — the JCB Academy in Staffordshire — was at or above capacity.

UTC Lancashire was one of three to be running at less than 20 per cent capacity, along with UTC Central Bedfordshire and Wigan UTC.

Skills minister Nick Boles told the House of Commons in March that UTCs should function as part of multi-academy trusts to make them stronger.

Responding to a question from MP Gareth Johnson about Leigh UTC, Mr Boles said the institution was a "particularly good example", not least because it was "part of a very successful multi-academy trust".

He continued: "That is a situation we want to see replicated across the UTC movement, because UTCs are stronger inside multi-academy trusts."

A spokesperson for the Baker Dearing Trust said that there are currently 39 UTCs open, with a further 20 in development.

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NEWS

North-east sixth form merger is first of its kind in two decades

MERGER on the grapevine

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77



Two sixth form colleges have joined forces in what they claim is the first merger of its kind in 18 years.

The formal merger between Prior Pursglove College in North Yorkshire and Stockton Sixth Form College in Stockton-on-Tees went through on May 1.

The combined institution is now called Prior Pursglove and Stockton SFC (PPSSFC).

The former principal of Stockton SFC, Joanna Bailey, who was also interim principal of Prior Pursglove SFC following the retirement of former principal Judy Burton in December, will lead the newly-incorporated institution.

Paul Gavens, the new PPSSFC chair, said: "This will allow us to continue to fulfil our vision of providing high-quality education and life-changing experiences to young people and adults across the Tees Valley.

"We firmly believe in the benefits our merged college will produce for current and prospective students, staff, local employers and other stakeholders within our communities."

A consultation on the merger was held between September and November last year.

The accompanying report said the SFCs had already been "working in partnership with great success" for two years, with joint staff managers introduced in finance, data and marketing.

The move has pre-empted any final recommendations from the Tees Valley area review, which both colleges are part of.

The merger is considered a "first step" and



both colleges were "open to other proposals which may emerge" from the area review, PPSSFC said in a summary document published after the consultation closed.

This comes as two more SFCs confirm that they are also pursuing a potential merger.

East Norfolk SFC (ENSFC) and Lowestoft SFC (LSFC) announced on May 4 that they

plan to work closely together with a view to merging, that arose from the pilot area review in North East Norfolk

and North Suffolk, which took place in 2015.

LSFC has previously been involved in a planned merger with Great Yarmouth College (GYC) and Lowestoft College (LC), but pulled out to pursue joining -up with ENSFC.

Yolanda Botham, LSFC's principal, told FE Week the decision to change merger partner had been prompted by "government policy which changes the landscape", including the option for SFCs to convert to academy status.

"Our perfect partner to go forward in this changed landscape is ENSFC," she said.

She added: "This is about working with someone who speaks our language. We're two SFCs. We've both got strong provision."

As previously reported by FE Week, ENSFC was recently in talks with Paston SFC and various local schools about forming a multi-academy trust (MAT).

Catherine Richards, ENSFC, principal, said they were still "very interested in forming a MAT in the future", and that this new partnership would be part of the same trust.

A two-way merger between GYC and LC will still go ahead. It had originally been planned for August 1, but a spokesperson for the colleges said the timescales were now under review.



Catherine Richards

Yolanda Botham

Skills white paper to propose academic and vocational divide

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The first skills white paper in a decade will bring an end to mixed provision and make 16-year-olds choose between academic courses leading to university or a new technical professional education (TPE) route into work, FE Week can exclusively reveal.

The document, which it emerged last week had been delayed, is likely to be controversial for fear the plans will create a two-tier system between academic schools and vocational colleges.

It will reflect the recommendations of an independent panel, led by Lord Sainsbury and set up by the government to look into TPE reforms, which FE Week understands should be published later this month.

Jonathan Simons, head of education for the Policy Exchange group of FE and skills experts, said this could be "hugely significant" for post-16 education — particularly for school

sixth forms that rival colleges in many areas.

"It will mean a dramatic change to the majority of schools' post-16 provision, where they offer a mixture of A-Levels and vocational options, such as BTECs, and may mean some schools pulling out of post 16 provision all together — particularly if the minimum size of 200 pupils is enforced or promoted for existing schools as well as for new ones," he told FE Week.

FE Week understands there will be 15 TPE routes, delivered either full-time over two years or through an apprenticeship.

A three-year course could also be an option, with the first year preparing students to start on TPEs.

There will be a substantial work experience element within each college-based TPE "pathway", within its relevant industry.

Bridging courses at the higher levels between academic and vocational pathways is also being considered.

FE Week further understands that each

of the 15 TPEs will be overseen by a panel of industry experts, potentially by the new Institute for Apprenticeships.

Professor Lady Alison Wolf, who is part of Lord Sainsbury's panel, has been a firm advocate of reforming post-16 education and training.

She was highly critical of schools diverting low-attaining pupils onto courses and qualifications not recognised by employers, or accepted by colleges for progression purposes, in her landmark 2011 Review of Vocational Education.

The former Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove agreed with her findings, stating that "courses which offer no route to higher levels of education or the prospect of meaningful employment" were "not just unacceptable but morally wrong".

The department for education said last November: "New professional and technical routes will be created, leading up to employment or degree-level study, which will

be as easy to understand as academic routes."

Skills Minister Nick Boles also announced on April 29 that schools could soon be fined if they sign students up to inappropriate A-level courses that they later abandon.

He evaded a question about the delay to the skills white paper five days later, from Labour's Gordon Marsden during Commons business, innovation and skills questions, after this was exclusively revealed by FE Week.

The shadow skills minister subsequently requested explanation from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) of the hold-up, in a written question that had not been answered at the time of going to press.

The Department for Education and BIS also declined to answer FE Week enquiries over the leaked details of the white paper.

We understand that the government hopes to publish the white paper ahead of EU referendum purdah restrictions which begin on May 27.

NEWS

MP calls for investigation after claiming college boss bullied him

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

The boss of Hull College has been accused of trying to bully a member of the shadow cabinet for supporting a staff strike action.

Karl Turner, who is the MP for Kingston upon Hull and the shadow attorney general, joined “angry and demoralised” Hull College workers on the picket line this week in a row over pay and a controversial new lesson observation system.

He addressed striking members of the University and College Union (UCU), and urged the college to listen to their concerns.

Now however, Mr Turner is calling for an investigation into the college’s chief executive Gary Warke (pictured), after he was allegedly sent a “threatening and derogatory” letter.

The MP uploaded a copy of the letter to his blog, in which Mr Warke allegedly wrote to “express my sincere disappointment that you chose to address striking UCU members without the courtesy of informing me”, adding: “We find your actions, two days before local elections highly inappropriate and disrespectful to the Hull College Group.”

Mr Turner wrote back: “I too am extremely disappointed that you have chosen to use veiled threats against me. I expect that these



are the same bullying tactics that you have clearly used on your staff.”

He has now chosen to take the matter further, writing to Patricia Tomlinson, the chair of the college’s governors, calling for an investigation into the chief executive’s “threats”.

In his blog, Mr Turner added: “While Mr Warke may feel that he can bully and intimidate his staff at Hull City College, he cannot do it to me. He might pay himself more than the Prime Minister while his staff are effectively on pay freezes, but not even the Prime Minister would dare to use threats on an elected MP.”

Mr Warke has declined to comment any further on the matter. However, a spokesperson for Hull College confirmed that Mr Turner has requested an investigation into his conduct.

This is not the first time Hull College has been accused of bullying behaviour. John Giddins, UCU’s Yorkshire and Humberside regional branch development organiser, told FE Week before the strike that the college had conducted its industrial relations in an “appalling and threatening” manner.

The strike action, which was backed 85 per cent of UCU members at the college, also received support from Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of the Labour party, who also joined

more than 120 members of staff on the picket line.

The college spokesperson said: “The group management team and UCU continue to meet to resolve the issues of dispute, recognising the need for its overall financial position to be protected in a challenging funding climate for the FE sector, as well as ensuring the high quality of our teaching and learning is maintained.”

Mr Turner’s office said it had received no response from the college about this before FE Week went to press.



TOP LAW FIRM REJECTS NEW APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME FOR LAWYERS

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

One of the UK’s largest legal firms has turned its back on new apprenticeships as a way of training lawyers.

Clifford Chance told FE Week that it had rejected the three Trailblazer apprenticeship standards for lawyers, which are now approved for delivery by the government, because they were “not the right model” for its training needs.

The decision will be seen as a blow to the reputation of the new qualifications — as the company, which employs more than 3,000 lawyers and 6,000 other legal workers, is the second largest law firm in this country.

Despite this setback, Law Society president Jonathan Smithers said he was still optimistic about the apprenticeship route to careers in the legal world.

He said: “The solicitor profession is an ideal environment for training through apprenticeships, where practical skills learned from more experienced members of the profession is key.

“The Law Society is supportive of alternative routes of entry into the solicitor profession as long as the quality achieved by new solicitors is maintained at the current high level.”

He added: “Legal apprenticeships which allow apprentices to go all the way to admission as a solicitor are new, and it is possible that more firms will look at including this route to train their staff in future.”

The Law Society is one of 23 different organisations, including other law firms, that helped design the new standards.

There are three standards, which cover training as a paralegal at level three, as a chartered legal executive at level six, and as a solicitor at level seven.

Mark Dawe, chief executive officer of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said: “The law firms involved in the Trailblazers for the three approved standards for law make for a very impressive list of supporters, so we don’t think the opt-out [by Clifford Chance] will have a negative impact on overall delivery.

“In recent years, there has been arguably an oversupply of law graduates from higher education institutions, and as an alternative, firms have been increasingly attracted to the idea of training their recruits on the job.”

He added that AELP believed the new standards would “offer further opportunity for growth”.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills declined to comment on the topic of legal apprenticeships.

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NEWS

College ditches academies, blaming cuts and curriculum change

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

A college is preparing to cut ties with two academies currently under its control — claiming that it is no longer “feasible” to sponsor them.

Oldham College will relinquish control of the nearby Waterhead and Stoneleigh academies at the start of the summer break, and has blamed the move away from vocational education in schools policy as one reason for its decision.

The college said that because the world of education had changed so rapidly, it no longer had the “capacity” to cope with school improvement, aside from worries about the curriculums.

A spokesperson said: “The school curriculum no longer embraces any of the vocational or technical subjects which the college teaches. Even more significant is that academy sponsorship is no longer feasible on a small scale.

“Sponsors need to be committed to growing large groups of schools with all the associated capacity which this brings to the challenge of school improvement.”

He added funding and policy changes to the college’s “core business” of post-16 education had been “dramatic and disruptive”.

“The future promises to bring even greater change [for FE], through devolution and the structural reorganisation of the college system, all of which have huge implications for employment and economic growth in the town,” he said. “This must, therefore, be the college’s sole priority.”

The decision was supported by Richard Atkins, former president of the Association of Colleges, who is currently the principal of Exeter College.

He said that, in order to be successful,



multi-academy trusts (MATs) run by colleges would need around a dozen schools.

Mr Atkins added: “Colleges get into difficulty when senior management attempts to run one or two schools on a day-to-day basis. They start to take their eye off the ball and college standards start to drop.

“You need enough capacity to, for example, appoint a chief operating officer, a head of finance and an executive headteacher for the schools who report to the MAT.”

Sir David Carter, the national schools commissioner, said in March that academy trusts needed to expand, as those with

fewer than six schools “will struggle to be sustainable”.

Atkins also warned colleges of the difficulties of taking over “one or two seriously failing schools”, because it would be tough to find the capacity to deal with them.

He said the best MATs would have a mix of both outstanding and failing schools. However building MATs could be a “win-win” for both schools and colleges.

“I think colleges have quite a bit to offer in terms of governance, leaderships and management of running autonomous education institutions, so we have quite a bit

to bring,” he said.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: “It is for colleges to decide whether to apply to become sponsors and for the regional school’s commissioner to decide on their suitability based on their capacity and their track record in supporting underperforming schools.

“Post-16 education plays a crucial role in supporting future economic growth, which is why we will be protecting the national base rate paid to all schools and colleges, of £4,000 per full-time student. This will bring stability to the sector.”

Delay adult education budget devolution plans, government told

BILLY CAMDEN @BILLYCAMDEN
PAUL OFFORD @PAULOFFORD

The government should delay the devolution of the adult education budget, because the Skills Funding Agency has still not decided how the system will work for providers that cross regional boundaries, the Association of Colleges has said.

Provider groups based in multiple regions have been lobbying the SFA for different treatment under the now-imminent devolution plans, FE Week understands.

An SFA spokesperson said the body would “consider how funding and commissioning arrangements will operate for colleges and other providers which deliver in multiple areas”, “as part of the programme of work being undertaken to support the devolution of the adult education budget”.

However, Julian Gravatt (pictured), assistant chief executive at the Association of Colleges, admitted that he was still concerned that the problem remained unresolved, telling FE Week: “It would be better to delay

the budget devolution rather than move ahead with half-completed plans.”

He said: “The chancellor of the exchequer has now agreed nine devolution deals that promise the local share of the adult education budget to new combined authorities in 2018.

“The National Audit Office recently described this as an experiment with the government drawing the map as it goes along. The nine deals all have six readiness conditions, which must be satisfied and important questions answered before devolution goes ahead.”

This comes after the SFA published geographic funding data for the first time, as reported in FE Week on April 13, in support of the devolution plans.

This was based on learners’ postcodes and related to non-apprenticeship adult skills budget (ASB) delivery in the 2014 to 2015 funding year — also setting out the proportion of provision each provider delivers within both their home local authority and region.

An SFA spokesperson said at the time that it was “publishing this data to support

you [providers] in discussion with local government authorities in future adult education budget commissioning discussions”.

She added: “This will help establish a shared understanding of the current pattern of delivery.”

Concern has also been raised about how employers will operate if they run apprenticeships across several devolved countries within the UK.

A spokesperson for the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) said it wanted to see “greater clarity at the earliest opportunity” on the matter.

He said: “Firms of all sectors and sizes are still in the dark on some vital areas of the levy. We won’t find out until well after the elections how the system will work in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.”

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills guidance states that it is aware some employers have “cross-border operations and training activity” and it is working with the devolved administrations to “make this work



for employers”.

“We are developing rules on which employees and training providers can use funds in their digital account or government support to pay for,” it added. “We will publish more details about these rules in June 2016.”

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NEWS

Parliamentary debate shines a spotlight

Key organisations from the FE and skills sector feel left out in the cold by the planning process for the apprenticeship levy, an FE Week parliamentary debate has revealed.

FE representatives flocked to the Palace of Westminster on Tuesday (May 3) to hear

from an expert panel and join the debate on a topic that has rocked the sector since it was first mentioned in July last year.

Sponsored by awarding organisation OCR, the event was chaired by FE Week interim editor Nick Linford and included

contributions from Martin Doel, chief executive of the Association of Colleges; Mike Cox, operations director of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers; and Gemma Gathercole, head of policy at OCR. Shadow Skills Minister

Gordon Marsden hosted the event, and within hours of closing the debate had submitted five written questions to Skills Minister Nick Boles, following up on the key issues raised. See upcoming editions of FE Week for the answers to his enquiries.

LEVY PUTS CHARITIES IN 'CONFLICT OF LEGISLATION'



ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Charities are caught in a "conflict of legislation" over the government's apprenticeship levy, a senior sector figure has warned.

The requirement for charities to ensure their funds are spent directly on their missions will put them in conflict with the levy, according to Beth Brook (pictured above), the chief executive of Fair Train, the group training association for the voluntary and community sector.

Speaking at FE Week's parliamentary debate on the levy, she said: "There seems to be a conflict of legislation — charities and charity trustees need to make sure charity funding is spent on beneficiaries, and now we have a tax that is coming in that means that charities then need to be spending their money on something else."

Ms Brook's concerns echoed points raised by the Charity Finance Group (CFG), a third sector body with over one thousand members, in a letter sent to Skills Minister Nick Boles on December 1, 2015.

Caron Bradshaw, the group's chair wrote: "Redistribution outside of the charity sector

of apprenticeship 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."

Mr Boles subsequently "accepted that there were difficulties around volunteering" in a meeting with the CFG in March this year, but "could not immediately offer a solution to this challenge", according to CFG minutes.

The meeting covered a number of issues, including the risk of the levy incentivising charities to employ apprentices in place of volunteers — a point that Ms Brook also raised in Westminster on Tuesday (May 3).

Three apprenticeship frameworks that had been developed specifically for the voluntary and community sector, covering fundraising, campaigning, and volunteer management, had also fallen off the agenda, she told legislators.

She said: "At the moment there's no apprenticeship specifically or the voluntary and community sector.

"We've got an issue there with supply and demand — we are expecting these organisations to pay the levy but there's nothing for them to buy."

Furthermore, she said, "neither civil servants nor ministers are referring to the voluntary and community sector in guidance", while messages have been "conflicting".

She claimed that while the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills was pushing charities to pay the levy, Rob Wilson, minister for civil society, had been "castigating" them for being inefficient, and urging them to spend less.

"Despite raising these issues with both politicians and civil servants, no one within government has even acknowledged them,

let alone done anything to engage with us to address them," she told FE Week after the event.

"I am not at all confident that the issues will be addressed in advance of the introduction of the levy next year."

Following the debate, shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden (pictured above) wrote to Mr Boles, asking "what discussions he has had with the Cabinet Office on the liability of charities and voluntary organisations to pay the apprenticeship levy".

BIS declined to comment.



Right on funding for Apprenticeships



Sector leaders left 'out the tent' on reforms

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The controversial new apprenticeship levy was drawn up in “a darkened room”, leading FE organisations to feel they were left “outside the tent” during the drafting process, according to speakers at an FE Week parliamentary debate.

The event, which was hosted by shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden and sponsored by OCR, featured a panel including Gemma Gathercole (pictured top right), head of policy at OCR, Martin Doel (pictured middle right), chief executive of the Association of Colleges and Mike Cox (pictured bottom right), operations director of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP).

Ms Gathercole insisted that examining bodies had been shut out of the reforms, in a speech to a packed committee room at the Palace of Westminster on Tuesday (May 3).

She said: “At this point I couldn’t even tell you where the tent was, that’s how far outside of the tent I think awarding organisations have been kept.”

“I think I can speak on behalf of the awarding organisation community — we have a lot of experience in this sector, a lot of experience on assessment, [but] we’re not even allowed to talk to employers and providers on assessment policy because we’ve got to be invited in.”

Saying that bodies like OCR had been kept “at arm’s length would be the most positive

understatement” she could make for the situation, she added.

Mr Marsden also addressed sector engagement in responding to a question from Linda Hausmanis (pictured left), director of education at BIFM, who asked: “Is anybody looking at employers, who say for instance may have a current employment bill of £3.5m?

“Some sharp corporate lawyers might be thinking we are going to start splitting the companies up so that it will take them below that £3m parapet.”

He stressed the importance of sector engagement, saying: “If you don’t want to get the mass displacement that’s been talked about, such as chopping up groups to escape the levy, you’ve got to engage with the sector.”

“If you don’t involve people who are on the ground, providers, learners and all the rest, the finest minds in the civil service will get it wrong.”

Mr Marsden added that the government should “be prepared to take the flack”.

“Better to do that and get it right, he said, “than plough ahead regardless and find yourself in an undignified scrabble after being rejected by many of the people you need to work with, because basically you haven’t listened to them.”

Fellow panellist Mike Cox, shared the concerns and said: “We have been consulted very lightly.”

He stressed that AELP had been “very strong and robust” in answering the government’s

formal consultation process, but added that “outside of that” there had been few opportunities to comment.

“The parallel I suppose I would draw is with the introduction of the study programme and traineeships — I felt there was a lot more consultative behaviour and there were working groups that we put in place to really help hone the detail on those,” he said.

“I suspect as a result of that there will be an awful lot of follow-ons and clarifications, and that worries me a little bit because at the moment we can’t answer the questions.”

Mr Doel drew a parallel between the levy preparations and his previous work in military planning.

“One of the things we did in any operation is scenario-plan the reaction to whatever we would do, from the opposition’s perspective.

“The way you get to that is actually not just having extraordinarily clever civil servants writing rules in a darkened room,” he said.

“They should come out to the sector and ask how you will react to this bit of policy guidance, then try to anticipate that and how you might go ahead with that policy.”

FE Week put the concerns to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, but it declined to comment.



FE WEEK COMMENT

Simpler at what cost?



The recent schools white paper was essentially geared at simplifying the system by making them all academies.

It seems that simplification is planned for post-16 academic and vocational learning.

The FE sector's very own skills white paper will strip away many post-16 qualifications to make way for the introduction of 15 technical and professional education (TPE) routes.

But in an effort to funnel young people into a university or recognised work-related route the government should avoid creating a two-tier system and restricting choice.

It should think very carefully about provision below level two as well as bridging courses between the pathways at level two and beyond.

And in the creation of 15 routes, Ministers could go as far to seek simplification in accreditation, by tendering for a single awarding organisation for each.

It was considered by the previous Secretary of State for the new GCSEs and A Levels, but quickly dropped in 2013.

So this might be a once in a generation opportunity to reorganise who accredits TPE routes, but surely the single point of failure problem is unsurmountable?

Nick Linfood
news@feweek.co.uk

 #LEVYDEBATE TWEETS
See pages 8 and 9

Geoff Chapman @eAssessmentChap May 3
Will #levydebate give #apprenticeship answers, or are we still fingers crossed 'It'll be alright on the night'?

Janet Clark @ATLJanet May 3
Employers looking to FE providers for guidance on apprenticeship funding but everyone still in the dark about many issues #levydebate

Lea @LeaWatson2013 May 3
#levydebate still many unknowns and much concern about how the theory will translate to process come 6 April @FEWeek a good debate @YourAAT

Janet Clark @ATLJanet May 3
Levy issues distracting from important questions around apprenticeship quality & assessment says @Mikecoxone @AELPUK #levydebate @ATLUnion

Duprez Consulting @Duprezconsult May 3
Martin Doel @AoC_info worryingly if looking at a project plan for #levydebate the Gantt Chart would be stacking up in red at end @FEWeek

Duprez Consulting @Duprezconsult May 3
@G_Gathercole business work to 5 yr plans, 11months only to work out loss to bottom line #noinformation #levydebate @HouseofCommons @FEWeek

NEWS

Six men charged with fraud after training company collapse

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

A former Wales international footballer is one of six men facing charges following a Serious Fraud Office (SFO) investigation into the activity of a now-defunct training company, Luis Michael Training Ltd (LMT).

Mark Aizlewood (pictured), aged 56, from Aberdare, who played for Wales 39 times between 1986 and 1994, was called before Westminster Magistrates' Court yesterday (May 4).

He appeared alongside Christopher Martin, 51, from Newbury, Keith Williams, 43, from Anglesey, Paul Sugrue, 55, from Cardiff, Steven Gooding, 52, from Bridgwater, and Jack Harper, 29, from Southport.

They were charged with offences ranging from conspiracy to commit fraud by false representation, to fraud, and using a false instrument.

It is alleged that LMT, which went into liquidation in 2011, claimed payments from several FE colleges for training and education services they did not provide, according to the SFO.

Aizlewood, Sugrue, Martin and Williams

were directors and shareholders of the firm.

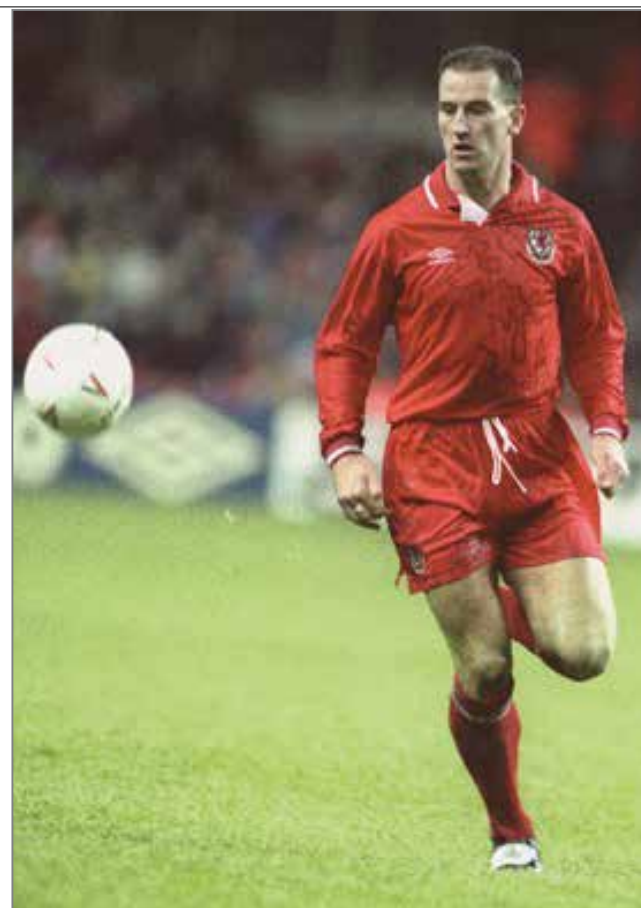
Gooding and Harper are said to have been employed as recruiters of learners for this company.

The SFO is also alleging that a separate attempt to defraud an FE college was committed by Harper, through a company called FootballQualifications.com, which has also ceased trading.

Aizlewood, Sugrue, Williams, and Martin were all barred from holding directorships for up to eight years in December 2013 for failing to comply with apprenticeship rules with LMT, which was reported by FE Week at the time.

LMT was employed as a subcontractor for eight FE colleges, including Sparsholt College and South Thames College.

The six defendants will make their next appearance at Southwark Crown Court on June 1.



Publish subcontractor fees or face sanctions, providers told

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) will be contacting lead providers who have failed to publish subcontracting information in a crackdown on non-compliance.

The SFA told FE Week on Wednesday (May 4) that it had found evidence of providers failing to publish full details of their subcontracting figures — including fees and charges — despite previous threats that this would cause their funding to be suspended.

A spokesperson said: "As a result of our non-compliance subcontracting work, we will be writing to our lead providers who are non-compliant in: publishing their fees and charges for 2014 to 2015 and/or 2015 to 2016; and those that are non-compliant in producing a valid audit certificate on their

Funding threat hangs over providers who missed topslice deadline

PAUL OFFORD
PAUL.OFFORD@FEWEEK.CO.UK

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

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

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

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

to include current supply chain fees and charges policy.

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

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

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

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



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

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

The SFA rule requiring providers to specify how much they charge subcontractors in management fees was first introduced in 2013.

FE Week Edition 156, November 30, 2015

subcontractors, to advise them of the next steps."

The SFA declined to explain what these next steps would be.

The threat comes after the agency warned last September that it would suspend public money for lead providers who failed to

publish what they charged each of their subcontractors in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

The SFA had previously introduced a rule requiring providers to reveal their management fees — before FE Week found (pictured) that it was being ignored by a number of providers.

COMMENTS

Schools could face financial penalties for A-level dropouts

How about providing a comprehensive and fully funded impartial careers service to offer a breathing space for students to fully consider their options? The current system of trusting the schools because they know best offers plenty of variations in quality as we all know. The complex decisions a 16-year-old has to make will not be helped if a school/college is seeing the young person as a potential liability rather than an asset. People do make wrong decisions, plenty of people in DfE and beyond are witness and participants to this — it is human nature, so to suggest a school/college gets penalised for a student's decision is quite peculiar. Maybe DfE could get penalised depending on how good their decision making is?

Mike Shail

Simple solution. Follow the Adult Funding

model. On programme payments, stop at last learning date, possibly with % held back until achieve.

David Neal

Exclusive: CBI boss wants levy launch delayed unless 'radical rethink'

When is it ever a good idea to change absolutely everything about every single aspect of all that you do and make all those changes at the same time? Not only that but you don't tell anyone what the changes are until the last possible moment and you don't test any of the changes beforehand. Surely delay is the only sane way ahead?

Jay

I doubt very much that they levy will be delayed, just look at the Government's stance on the junior doctors!

In my view, companies will struggle to pay the additional 0.5 per cent 'tax' and we will

see more businesses like BHS going under and more people unemployed.

This country is turning into a dictatorship, what they give away they take back 10 fold.

Employers have always been in the driving seat when it comes to apprenticeships, by choosing a provider that meets their needs. An absolute joke to think that employers are so naive that they do not know what training is needed for their business.

Dave Havoc

Former apprentices to promote scheme in school?

I'm all for young ambassadors — brilliant!

However, obliging them to do this is a step too far. An over-zealous twist to a great concept.

Totally wrong approach.

Paul Butler

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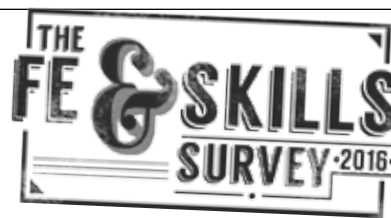


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ANALYSIS

Funding remains top concern for third year



Ian Nash analyses the finding of the third annual FE and Skills annual survey carried out by the Policy Consortium in association with FE Week

Funding shortfalls remain the top concern among those involved in the FE sector in 2016.

Chancellor George Osborne's u-turn on planned cuts in his November autumn statement failed to allay anxieties throughout the sector.

If the government had hoped for at least a few Brownie points, ministers forgot the age-old law of politics — it's not what they don't do that matters, it's what they do. And previously-agreed spending cuts at record levels are now hitting hard.

Ministers might have won more support had they been seen as both more caring and more competent, with a better grasp and understanding of the issues.

Indeed, the third FE and Skills annual survey carried out by the Policy Consortium in association with FE Week shows considerable support for policy commitments towards better apprenticeships, devolution of powers and responsibilities, a clearer focus on skills and improved partnership working.

But such support is undermined by a perceived lack of clarity on funding and confused or poorly-implemented policy.

The whole question of devolution and how the government is going about area reviews is cause for 'extreme concern'.

Additionally, apprenticeships are seen as the only thing ministers now really care about, with little regard for wider FE learner needs, particularly for the disadvantaged.

External bureaucracy is the fourth biggest issue on a list of almost 90 areas of concern expressed in the survey — making a mockery of government's much-vaunted 'bonfire of the quangos' and claims to slash red tape and paperwork.

Again, the survey shows a stark contrast, with colleges and other training providers reducing their own internal bureaucratic burdens, only to be swamped with demands from government agencies.

The profile of more than 730 people responding to the survey is heavyweight — mainly comprising leaders and managers, with a strong showing from admin support staff, lecturers and trainers.

Eight out of ten are full-time employees and over half have been in the sector for at least 13 years.

These are very experienced people with a strong commitment to the sector, therefore, and with around half involved in frontline delivery.

Funding was the chief cause for concern in the first survey carried out in 2014 but it had slipped down the list last year, to be topped by workload and bureaucracy.

However, this was not because colleges and other providers had overcome their worries.

Rather, it was because the impact of the cuts caused even greater concerns around the practical issues of learning, curriculum and management.

The survey has taken the same format each year, in order to assess any year-on-year changes in the patterns of concerns, attitudes and responses to government policy.

This year, however, we included an additional question with new elements around the role, power and status of the sector, to reflect changing context as policy evolves after last spring's general election result.

The government needs to take heed if it is to regain the sector's respect and confidence.

Three-quarters of respondents at every level felt uncertain about the sector's role and value in the emerging post-reform world.

Roughly the same proportion were moderately or extremely concerned about their power to influence change and the impact of devolution.

We included a new question this year, asking what issues people were optimistic about.

Among FE and skills professionals, that feeling remains in short measure, not least because of constant denigration of their efforts by Ofsted.

Over half of the respondents took advantage of this opportunity, but their responses were often phrased along the lines of: "I would be optimistic if it wasn't for..."

The most positive remarks from respondents are around the capacity of the workforce to deliver and hopes for learners.

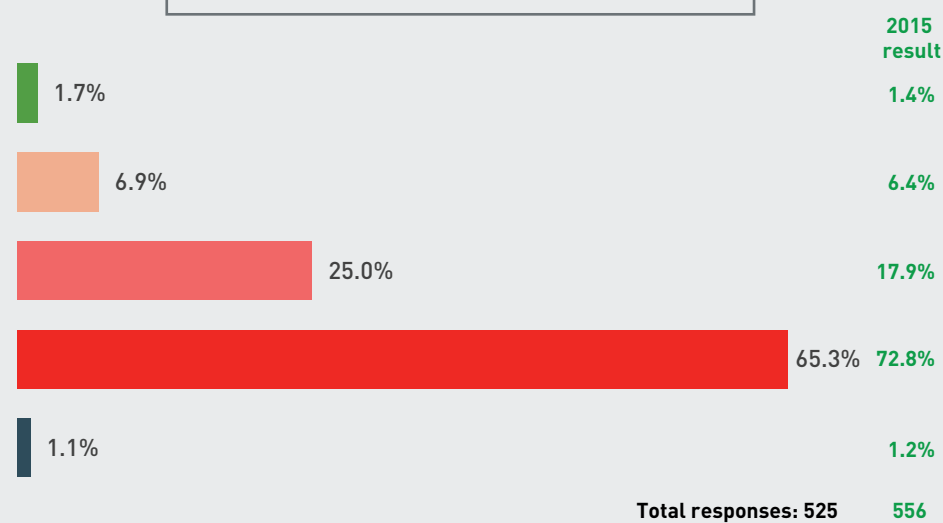
But, set against this, there is a feeling that FE is being run down — and that what matters to so many current and potential learners doesn't matter to the government.

The best that can be said from these survey results in relation to ministerial hopes and expectations for the FE and Skills sector is that there is agreement with some aspects of policy, but that the architecture is flawed and the government needs to do something about it quickly.

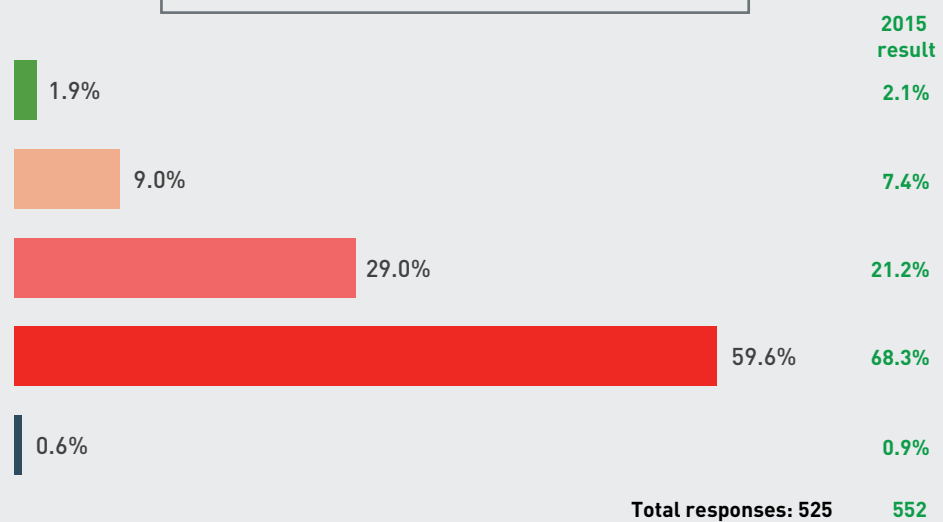
The final report will be available — free to whoever wants a copy — in mid-June.

Level of concern for the following issues:

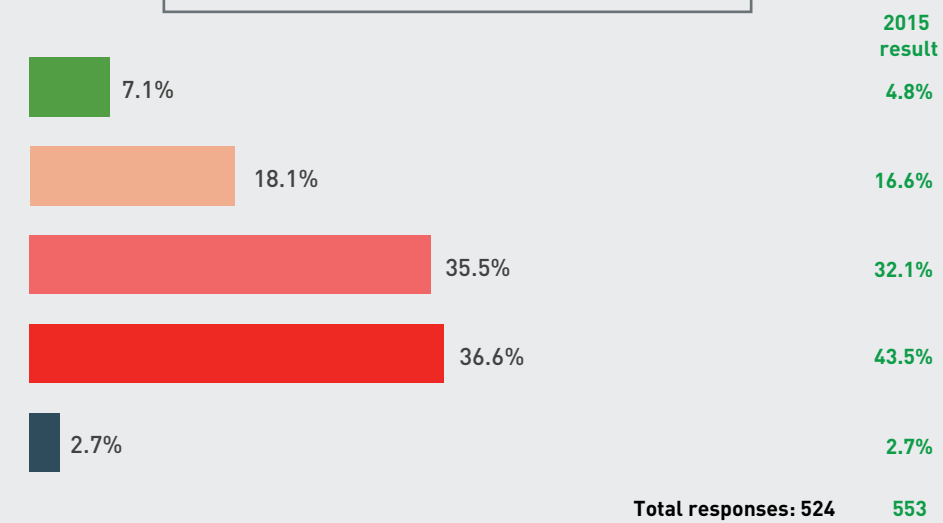
Levels/rates of institutional funding



Adequacy of learner funding



Pace and volume of change



Key

● Not at all concerned

● Somewhat concerned

● N/A or I have no view on this

● Extremely concerned

● Moderately concerned

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EXPERTS



RAW HYDE

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



STEVEN FRAMPTON

Principal of Portsmouth College

Train crash waiting to happen

John Hyde raises grave doubts about apprenticeship reform plans.

Once owned a small part of a racehorse, which has long since gone to that great pet food factory in the sky.

However this introduced me to the world of bookmakers and betting odds, no better demonstrated than by Leicester City winning the Premier League at odds of 5,000/1.

I wonder what odds the bookmakers would give on the government achieving their 3m apprenticeship starts.

Before last week's Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)/Skills Funding Agency (SFA) announcements, I thought it could be achieved.

Now I doubt it's achievable, unless they fudge it by stuffing thousands of government employees onto apprenticeships.

While there are trepidations about the Digital Apprenticeship Service software programmes being ready and fit for purpose, many other concerns of the government's own making will frustrate their success.

Apprenticeship growth has mostly come from small and medium size enterprises (SMEs).

Most SMEs, while funding their own apprentices' wages, have made no financial contribution to the cost of the programmes.

Despite funding being discounted by up to 50 per cent for certain age groups and categories of apprentices, the majority of employers have made no cash contribution to their training provider.

This is well known in work-based learning circles, but continues to come as a surprise to ministers and Treasury officials.

It is going to come as a surprise to most SMEs that they will have to make a financial contribution to their training provider from April 2017.

Bizarrely, most employers will receive more cash back than they pay out from completion payments.

So we have this absurd scenario of cash going backwards and forward, closely monitored by the reduced SFA.

It's bureaucratic overkill and a waste of taxpayers' money.

Providers will encourage SMEs to bring apprenticeship plans forward, bringing a surge of starts before next April.

Thereafter, a sharp drop-off is likely unless the wacky paper-chase of invoices and cash payments both ways is eliminated.

SMEs are facing a tough time with the increased minimum wage and mandatory pension contributions.

The second announcement concerned the SFA wanting to implement the new standards in all sectors immediately.

When skills minister Nick Boles was appointed, he promised Trailblazer standards would be properly piloted and evaluated.

Yet without any new standard having been completed, or any end assessment tested, priced, available, or even sat, the department is still hell-bent on moving over, frequently rubbishing the existing frameworks with no empirical evidence to support its arguments.

Moving to the standards without completing a single pilot is like Ford going into full mass production of a new model without even completing a prototype, let alone testing it.

It's bureaucratic overkill and a waste of taxpayers' money

Unless the new standard has a qualification, you don't even need qualified trainers, assessors or tutors to deliver or assess. How does this improve quality?

Outside of BIS/SFA and a few vested interests, the whole sector is highly critical of the new standards and sees them as a train crash waiting to happen.

There are many horror stories emerging from employers intending to abuse the levy, especially regarding paying young people the apprenticeship slave wage and sacking them after completing, especially in the retail sector. BHS ethical management comes to mind!

Now we know the IfA will have a total staff of just 40 to monitor the quality of apprenticeships.

With one million apprentices on programme by 2020, up to 800 standards and frameworks and 4,000 providers, who is kidding who on whether quality will improve?

Around 710,000 apprentices are on-programme today, and this figure is set to expand by 2020.

If the government has its way, the end tests would mean in excess of 1m face-to-face interviews and practical skills tests in-year.

Assuming 230 working days per year, there would be over 4,000 practical tests and face-to-face interviews taking place every day across England.

Where is the workforce and structure to implement this?

Only within the current providers' workforce and facilities, not with the awarding bodies or professional institutions, who are coming forward to be assessment organisations.

Academies: One size does not fit all

Steve Frampton leads a sixth form college which decided against applying for academy status following an area review. He explains here why this decision was taken and advises other senior managers facing the same choice.

The area-based review process is about change – it may be your wish to be stand-alone, as we did, but this will require internal change of your own.

For example, you will need to consider whether you plan to increase set sizes, or to specialise or rationalise your provision to create economic efficiencies and improvements to quality and the student experience.

Or will it involve one of several external change models? This needs appraisal work informed by thorough research, cost-benefit analysis and risk analysis by governors, and is time-consuming and demanding.

My advice is to ensure you know the candid views of your stakeholders, especially all your governors, your students and their parents, your staff and key partners (secondary/primary schools, employers, trading partners), and the three parties who may have seats around the table: your local authority, LEP and HE sector.

You will need to identify a range of options, your preferred choice at an early stage, and be able to confidently articulate this in line with your college strategic plan, linked to your financial and accommodation strategy.

Our board – based on a community consensus viewpoint, and looking at what was best for the students in our city – concluded that remaining as a stand-alone SFC was their preferred option.

As an innovative, rapidly growing college, in a locally declining demographic environment, they wanted to communicate this very robustly and very regularly to both the area review team and all local audiences, including our staff, parents and students.

Staff especially valued this approach.

Financial stability for the sector is the driving force behind the area review process, and colleges who are showing financial weakness enter the process under pressure to have a miracle cure for their financial ills or face merger.

Going into our review, Portsmouth College's financial challenge was also its saviour due to the impact of the lagged funding for 16-18 growth.

Leading up to 2015/16, the growth in applications was so significant that the governing body agreed to recruit additional staff to ensure a quality experience could be enjoyed by every member of the swollen student body.

This decision was taken in the knowledge that a deficit would be incurred in 2015/16, costing us our 'satisfactory' financial health score of, but in the calculated hope that there would be jam tomorrow.

The college curriculum teams were able to clearly demonstrate that the claimed efficiencies would be made and that despite further anticipated growth in 2016/17, a reasonable surplus would be posted.

Colleges who are showing financial weakness enter the process under pressure to have a miracle cure

The ongoing surpluses we'd predicted were reflected in the three-year financial forecasts, allowing cash reserves and liquidity measures to improve, and winning us a financial health score of 'outstanding' by year three.

On April 28, our local draft area review report validated our governors' assessment that we are a high-quality, innovative, viable, resilient and sustainable standalone institution. We're an agile and responsive SFC that wants to serve all its local secondary and primary partners.

This is the appropriate outcome for our city and our current and future students, but it's by no means the right option for all other colleges and communities.

It has been a time-consuming process, especially for college principals, chairs of governors and their senior governors, and our finance director, but it has forced us to look very closely at our mission, values and future strategic direction.

It was based on a secure understanding of our college finances, student recruitment, partnerships, curriculum offer and delivery, accommodation strategy, and staff recruitment, retention and succession planning.

This has been the real bonus for us, and brought all of our staff and students even closer together and focused on what is right for our learners now and as we go forward.

It does seem ironic that as an educator, we have learned so much from going through the process, and working with the area review team, that we might never use it again.

EXPERTS

Julia Von Klonowski looks at how girls could be encouraged into a broader range of digital-related careers.

Education, at its best, should allow everyone to have independence of decision, fulfilment and equality.

It should enable entrepreneurship, leadership and life balance whatever your gender.

Much has been written about the difference between women's and men's business achievements — often backed up by a variety of studies and statistics.

This spans a whole variety of career pathways, including digital and technology — an industry which is facing a huge skills shortage in the coming years.

Instead of discussing why, in 2016, this is still happening, I want to focus on what colleges and employers can do to help lose the gender bias and widen the pool of talented employees that so many businesses are desperate for.

As in any successful long-term project, we have to ask ourselves if there is a quick win, which I believe there is.

Firstly, we need to steer away from presenting the opportunities available within the digital and technology industry in too narrow a way.

For example, we should stop using words such as coding technology companies, STEM, maths, engineering as the only way of representing digital and technology careers.

This is because it is these areas that so many girls see as being male-dominated.

Of course this perception needs changing, but it will take time and is not something we can fix quickly.



JULIA VON KLONOWSKI
Digital and technology consultant at the Career Colleges Trust

Encouraging more girls to set foot in the digital world

What is true though is that more women succeeding in technology and digital careers will result in more female role models.

This will in turn encourage more girls to follow their lead, which is crucial.

We must also ask why so many girls are attracted to the areas of HR, PR, marketing, fashion, beauty, journalism, apps and design.

We will all have many different answers to this question and ultimately it will be for a variety of reasons.

However, these sectors (and many others) have already won the hearts and minds of girls — which begs the question, why are we not using them to influence their career decisions?

There are so many technology and digital careers in these very industries, and yet when I talk to careers advisors in colleges and schools, they are often not aware of them and neither are the students' teachers or parents.

We often choose our careers based on the lifestyle it represents, so we should therefore be using this to sell technology and digital careers

to girls.

I wonder if we are frightened of talking about these areas because we fear we may be continuing the male/female bias.

Women (like men) are attracted by the lifestyle a job will give them, and will thrive in areas that they feel confident in.

Girls still tend to see certain areas as female domains — such as teaching, nursing and hairdressing, and STEM areas as male subjects. Why not use this bias as a means of leading them into STEM careers?

There is a similar issue with apprenticeships. These have traditionally been perceived as a male-dominated area, with most people associating this educational route with becoming a plumber, builder or engineer.

Companies can help change this outdated view. For example, if employers within the fashion and beauty industry were to engage girls in technology and digital apprenticeships, this would help to change the perception of our industry.

It is widely recognised that much of the education system in this country fails to recognise the link between work and education.

Fortunately the FE sector is leading the way when it comes to understanding employers' and business' needs, but there is still a way to go when it comes to opening up digital and technology careers to girls.

More women succeeding in technology and digital careers will result in more female role models

We need to work with our careers advisors, parents and teachers to broaden the minds of the next generation of women — with regard to the many exciting jobs that are available and the skills that are necessary.

Changing long-held perceptions is no easy battle and for this reason, policy change needs to happen.

However small steps can and must be taken by employers, colleges and schools to help ensure that the UK's digital and technology industry is not missing out on some very talented young women to fill the huge skills shortages it faces.

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CAMPUS ROUND-UP *with Billy Camden*



World kickboxing champion Rhys Smith

East Durham Student is kickboxing clever

An East Durham College student has become a world kickboxing champion in just his second fight in the sport.

Rhys Smith, aged 15, was victorious in the World Traditional Kickboxing Association Intercontinental Junior Muay Thai Boxing Championship 51kg weight category.

The student, who studies on the college's 14-to-16 engage course, has only been training in the sport for 18 months and this is his first experience of competitive fights.

Rhys trained four days a week at Durham's

Unity Gym in preparation and said he is looking forward to more fights in the future.

"These were my first real fights outside of the gym and I certainly wasn't expecting to come away with the title," said Rhys.

"But once I got through my semi-final I knew there was a chance that I could go on and win the final.

"I'm over the moon and really proud of my achievement. I can't wait to go on to my next fight which will hopefully be in the next couple of months."

Making friends with Moodle



From left: Students Abi Farrant, aged 20, Connor Bryant, 16, Millie Lewis, 16, Shannon Culliven, 17 and Alex Harris, 18, with Moodle the puppy

A trainee guide dog who is sponsored by Weston College has showed off the progress he is making.

Moodle, the 10-month-old black labrador, proved extremely popular with learners during a recent visit to the college in Weston-super-Mare.

They were more than happy to volunteer to help with part of the dog's training process — getting him used to crowds.

Volunteer puppy walker Isabelle Matthews was also on hand to speak about the good work done by guide dogs.

Ms Matthews will look after Moodle until he is 13 months old, when he will then be sent to be harness- and road-trained.

The college has sponsored Moodle throughout his training process, and receives updates on his progress and training every three months.

The college's student union president, Abi Farrant, 20, said: "It's so good to see him as he grows. He's so well behaved for a 10-month-old dog.

"Seeing him go from a tiny little puppy to a much bigger dog has been fantastic."



Barnsley College principal Chris Webb (front) with (from left) Neil Johnson, the college's sports academy assistant director, Saffron Smith, Natalie Butterfield and Matthew Pinder

Racing for the cure

Barnsley College principal Chris Webb has received expert advice from his own students as he prepares to tackle two monumental challenges to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

Level three sport and exercise science students Natalie Butterfield, aged 16, Matthew Pinder, 16, and Saffron Smith, 17, met with Mr Webb to discuss his training programme ahead of his Great North 10k and Great North Run efforts later in the year.

The trio advised him on which exercises will get him into top shape, what to eat and drink and numerous ways to stay motivated during his training regime.

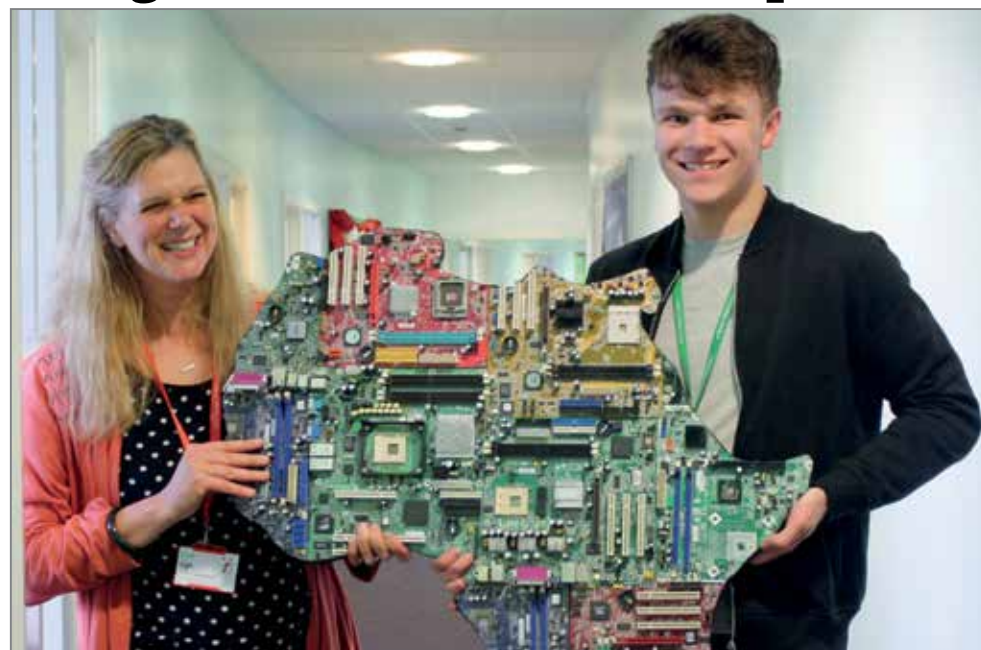
Mr Webb said: "The students were very knowledgeable and gave me some excellent tips and information, which I am going to implement into my training plan."

The principal selected Cancer Research UK because of his own family's tragic experience of the disease.

Mr Webb's mother beat breast cancer more than 20 years ago — but he lost his dad and older sister to stomach and brain cancer.

Mr Webb said: "I can't imagine how hard it is for someone to battle cancer, so completing these challenges is the best way for me to support a charity which is so close to my heart."

Design students donate sculptures



From left: IT Schools Africa donations coordinator Louise Mee is presented with the motherboard sculpture by student Ollie Hulbert, aged 18

Sculptures of Africa created with computer motherboards by South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS) product design students have been donated to a charity.

The four level three students completed the project in their spare time for IT Schools Africa, who provides access to e-learning to students in Africa.

They had to follow a strict brief, in just one month, to create one large sculpture of the continent for the charity's head office and a smaller one for them to take around to promote its work.

IT Schools Africa provided the boards,

and the students had to experiment to find successful tools and techniques to cut and fix them into the specified design.

Student Lizzie Soremi said: "We are very proud with what we have achieved. This project was full of unexpected challenges, but we worked together and when we had overcome these challenges we found we had learned new skills.

"We improved our professional and communication skills and had to work with a variety of SGS staff and different departments to achieve the final product — it was a team SGS project in the end."

On his majesty's sporting service

FEATURED
CAMPUS
ROUND-UP

After coming to terms with life-changing war injuries, a former British Army soldier turned Stockton Riverside College worker is celebrating after he was selected to represent the UK at the 2016 Invictus Games next month, writes Billy Camden.

Overcoming life-changing injuries suffered while serving as a British Army soldier in Afghanistan has been a long and emotional journey for Seveci Navelinikoro.

But the dad of two, known to his friends as Nav, won't show any signs of trauma when he heads to Orlando this month to represent the UK at the 2016 Invictus Games.

The assistant Prince's Trust team leader at Stockton Riverside College in Teesside was previously a keen sportsman, and said he is anticipating the games with great excitement.

"It has been a long process but for me this represents overcoming another hurdle, and one I never expected to achieve," he said.

Thrown from his vehicle by an IED explosion in Afghanistan in 2012, Nav suffered a mild brain trauma, loss of his hearing in one ear and extensive nerve damage to his lower back, left hip, knee and ankle.

He was 32 years old at the time and spent the next two and a half years in rehabilitation.

"It was a very frustrating time for me, trying to accept the fact that I could never do some things ever again both in the physical and mental side," said Nav, who was even struggling to hold his own children, son Adrea, aged five, and daughter Akeneta, seven.



Prince Harry unveils GB's 2016 Invictus Games squad, and [inset] Nav in his army days

But with support from the military and Help for Heroes he was introduced to different types of sport and paths of work.

Finding himself a dab hand at sitting volleyball, he qualified for the inaugural Invictus Games in London 2014, bringing home a gold medal.

Now the 36-year-old is returning to the games this year, not only competing in sitting volleyball but also for wheelchair rugby, shotput, discus and swimming.

"It is an amazing opportunity," he said.

"The main thing for me is being able to show people it is not the end of the world when you get injured. Another door does open."

Nav and his fellow competitors were invited to Buckingham Palace for the official unveiling of the UK team by Prince Harry, patron of the Invictus Games Foundation, whom Nav described as a "really down-to-earth guy".

The Invictus Games is an international sporting event founded in 2014 for wounded, injured or sick servicemen and women.

Nav is one of four current and former Help

for Heroes soldiers working with Stockton Riverside College on the delivery of their Prince's Trust Team programmes.

"I help students with their confidence

and show them that there is always another door if they've got any issues or anything that is troubling them," he said.

"I tell them about my story and inspire them that it is not the end if they have mental health issues or other problems. Life goes on."

Assistant principal for curriculum Jason Faulkner said: "The college is very proud to have a member of staff such as Nav to represent the UK in the Invictus Games.

"Nav is an inspiration to the students he works with who themselves have faced challenges in life. We wish Nav the best of luck and hope his determination and courage will continue to inspire students and others around him."

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CAMPUS ROUND-UP?

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

& MOVERS SHAKERS

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

Jenny Trapp has been appointed deputy principal of the new University Technical College (UTC) in South Durham, due to open this September.

Ms Trapp is the current assistant headteacher at Queen Elizabeth High School, Hexham, and was previously an air traffic controller.

She said she was "delighted" to join the UTC as "this is a fantastic opportunity to be involved in the development of an innovative education establishment and to shape the culture of the organisation".

Ms Trapp qualified as an air traffic controller with the RAF and was stationed in the UK and overseas controlling both military and civilian aircraft.

On leaving the RAF, she trained to become a training manager and since then has held a number of roles in adult skills and education, as well as running her own business.

A spokesperson for the UTC said Ms Trapp's leadership positions in schools had focused on learning and teaching management and the post-16 curriculum.

The role of David Jones, the current principal and chief executive at Coleg Cambria, is also set to change.

He will only be chief executive in future, and a new principal will be found.

Mr Jones said: "This recognises the nature of the senior executive role. We are a large and complex organisation with a significant external focus, particularly with business.

"The new position of principal will be

responsible for all courses that are based and taught on our college sites."

Mr Jones started his career in electronic engineering before moving to the education sector in 1987, when he was appointed as a senior lecturer at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff.

He was appointed principal in August 2013 when Coleg Cambria was formed, after Deeside and Yale colleges merged.

Mr Jones was awarded an OBE in the 2015 New Year's Honours List for services to FE in north-east Wales.

The board of governors at the college said they hope to appoint a new principal by early July.

Professor Tristram Hooley has also been appointed senior research advisor at the Careers & Enterprise Company.

His previous work has focused on career development, guidance and education, as well as social science research methods and learning technology.

Professor Hooley is currently also a professor of career education at the International Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby, and an adjunct professor at the School of Linguistics, Adult and Specialist Education, University of Southern Queensland.

He was also the specialist adviser to the House of Commons education committee inquiry into career guidance.

Claudia Harris, chief executive of the Careers & Enterprise Company, said: "Research is fundamental to the company, enabling us to pinpoint which areas are most in need and to identify the most effective ways of targeting them.

"Tristram's extensive experience in this area will be a valuable addition to the company's progress and impact."

Professor Hooley said: "The Careers & Enterprise Company places significant importance on the role of research in developing new solutions and approaches to the way we improve careers and enterprise provision in this country.

"It's a really exciting time to be joining the team. I'm looking forward to helping the company continue in its aim of ensuring its interventions are rooted in evidence."



DAVID JONES



JENNY TRAPP



TRISTAM HOOLEY

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

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Richard Huish College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

These posts require a criminal background check via the disclosure procedure. We actively promote equal opportunities and welcome applications from all sections of the community.

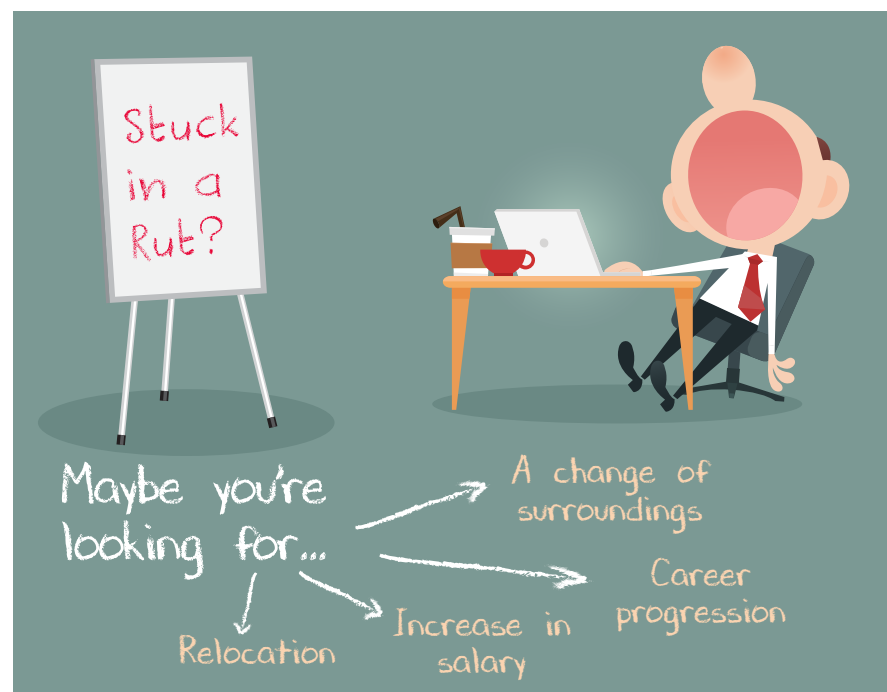
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If you can help to inspire and support our learners to progress and achieve their qualifications, and want to be part of our successful team please submit your CV to Sarbjit Bahia, HR Manager, **email address: sarb.bahia@gbtraining.org.uk** or post, to be received by 5.00pm Friday 27th May 2016. This post will require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. We strive to achieve diversity in our staff to reflect the community we serve.

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You will have excellent knowledge of vocational education and have past experience of either reviewing or writing national occupational standards, qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks.

You will have experience of successful bid writing and project management, as well as an ability to keep abreast of skills policy across multiple sectors.

The successful candidate will lead the expansion of the company's portfolio in response to changing policy or market demand.

You will report to the Chief Operating Officer, Instructus Group.

For the right individual we offer a starting salary of **£24,500** with the potential for an end of year performance related bonus as well as 26 days holiday per year

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To apply please submit your CV and a covering letter to jobs@instructus.org



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Lecturer in Functional Skills - Variable Hours x 2 posts
(with learning co-ordination responsibilities)

Closing date 23rd May 2016

To apply for any of these roles or to see our other live vacancies please visit the Bath College Website at <https://www.bathcollege.ac.uk/college-information/join-our-team/job-vacancies>

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(Temporary for 12 months)

Crookesmoor, Sheffield, S6 3FP

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The successful candidate will be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service

form in line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 and the Police Act Regulations.

We are committed to fairness and social justice and welcome applications from everyone. We value our diverse workforce and aim to work together to make the most of our differences. Under the Two Ticks Scheme, disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria of this job, are guaranteed an interview.

Closing date: 18th May 2016

Please quote relevant Post Ref: 700091

Please note that we do not accept CVs.

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DP19263

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Ref: RQ360

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For full details and our online application process, please visit the College website www.wmc.ac.uk

Closing date: 23 May 2016

Interview date: 6 June 2016

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Wirral Met College



Academy Manager - Higher Technology Skills

- **One year fixed term contract**
- **£32,691 - £37,306**
- **Plymouth, Devon**

Excellent leadership opportunity in technology

STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) related industries are vital to the UK economy and the Government has made increasing the quality and quantity of teaching in STEM subjects a national priority. In response to this growing demand, the College is working with local industries to create a fantastic state-of-the-art Regional Centre of Excellence for STEM due to open in September 2017.

See www.cityplym.ac.uk/stem-coe for more information about this exciting new £13million facility.

The Faculty of Technology, Marine and Renewables is seeking a qualified, motivated professional to manage a team of staff delivering HE and FE in technology and engineering across a range of courses from level 3 and HNC to Foundation Degree. The post holder will need to work with the management team of the faculty and Plymouth University to maintain the high standards of delivery already achieved and bring experience of successful work in the industry to the post.

If you would like to take advantage of this fantastic opportunity, you will need:

- successful teaching experience in higher or further education
- experience of managing an area of curriculum
- relevant industry experience
- successful course/subject leadership experience
- appropriate teaching qualification
- professional, academic and vocational qualifications at Degree level equivalent or above.

In return we offer an excellent benefits package which, for this post, includes an enviable 35 day annual leave entitlement in addition to statutory and additional bank holidays, an excellent pension scheme (Teachers Pensions), family friendly policies and opportunities for training and development.

City College Plymouth is a large further education college in the South West of England with over 12,000 students and a turnover of £32m. Following a very successful OFSTED short inspection in March 2016, there has never been a more exciting time to join us.

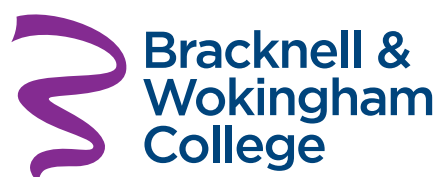
Known as 'Britain's Ocean City', Plymouth is a bustling cultural hub superbly located in the heart of the South West with beautiful beaches and scenic Dartmoor just a short drive away. The College sits at the centre of the community and prides itself on offering an exceptional experience to its students. We are also justifiably proud of the significant contribution we make to the social and economic success of the region.

To apply online, please visit www.cityplym.ac.uk/jobs.

Closing date: Monday 16 May 2016



City College Plymouth is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The College is an equal opportunities employer.



Teacher of Maths and IT: 0.5 FTE

£12,228 - £15,816 actual salary per annum

At Bracknell and Wokingham College, we pride ourselves on being a great College, responsive to the needs of the community, where our learners are encouraged, stretched and supported to achieve their potential, whilst in parallel, develop essential employability skills. We aim to create an inspirational environment to ensure that our learners have a great learning experience.

The College is seeking to recruit an inspiring and enthusiastic teacher who shares our vision of being a great College to deliver maths, across the age and ability range, within both functional skills and GCSE. We are looking for someone who can demonstrate the passion and

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Successful candidates will have a degree in maths or a subject with a high proportion of maths content together with some teaching experience, preferably up to Level 3.

Whilst a teaching qualification and/or previous teaching experience would be an advantage it is not a requirement. As long as you have the qualifications to teach maths, we can provide you with the necessary training, development and support to equip you to teach in the Further education Sector.

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Salary will be based on a band in the range of:

£24,222 - £35,969

To start September 2016

Applicants should hold a degree or a similar professional qualifications and a recognised teaching qualification. The successful candidate will be able to contribute to all aspects of our provision: Functional Skills and GCSE English, AS/A level, IB and our English Studies Foundation degree. An interest in linguistics is an advantage. The successful candidate will also be committed to our tutorial programme. Please specify on your application which campus you would be willing to work from – Truro, Penzance or Both.

Full Time Lecturer/0.5 Lecturer required in:

MATHS (PENZANCE)

Salary will be based on a band in the range of

£24,222 - £35,969 per annum

To start September 2016

The successful candidate will be able to contribute to our Functional Skills and GCSE provision. Candidates will also be committed to our tutorial programmes. Applicants should hold a degree or similar professional qualifications and a recognised teaching qualification. This post will be based at our Penwith campus in Penzance.

Full Time

ESOL AND TESOL TRAINER (TRURO)

Salary will be based on a band in the range of:

£24,222 - £35,969

Working within Truro and Penwith College Business you will be joining a successful team engaging with local businesses to provide training and development solutions. You will lead the design, development and delivery of ESOL and TESOL programmes. Experience of delivering English as second language and a strong commitment to supporting students to progress is essential. You should hold a teaching qualification or be willing to work towards one.

Applications for the above posts should reach us by:

12 NOON FRIDAY 13 MAY 2016.

Curriculum Vitae are not accepted, Application Forms only.

Successful candidates will be notified within 4 weeks of the closing date.



Contact & how to apply

For an application pack go to:

www.truro-penwith.ac.uk/work-for-us

email: recruitment@truro-penwith.ac.uk

or call: 01872 267000

Truro and Penwith College is an Equal Opportunities Employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, all applicants must be willing to undergo a Criminal Record (DBS) Check and past employment checks.





Lecturer in Mathematics

Closing Date: 16/05/2016

Salary: Up to £32,475 per annum (pro rata for fractional contract)

Hours: Full time – 37 hours per week (pro rata for fractional contract)

Location: Macclesfield College

Employment Type: Permanent (full or substantial fractional contract considered)

Contract Type: Academic

Vacancy Summary:

Macclesfield College is part of a modern, inspiring campus providing education to learners of all ages and abilities. Based in East Cheshire the College offers free secure campus parking and excellent transport links.

Our mission is simply "Empowerment through learning".

Working within the Mathematics Curriculum Area you will be responsible for the delivery of effective teaching, learning and assessment to learners.

You will teach across a range of programmes including; Apprentice; Functional Skills and GCSE to 16-18 age group students/Adults.

The successful candidate will be an experienced GCSE and Functional Skills Maths tutor. You must possess a degree in Mathematics or equivalent qualification. Knowledge of A Level, BTEC and Higher Education programmes and associated administration systems would be an advantage.

It is also essential for you to possess a teaching qualification to the required national standards or a willingness to undertake a formal teaching qualification in a timely manner.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

All appointments will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and satisfactory references.

The post will close at 9.00am on May 16 2016.

For more information and to apply for this post please visit:

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

For any further details contact Human Resources – Macclesfield College

Tel: **01625 410007**

Email: recruitment@macclesfield.ac.uk

The College is committed to equality of opportunity. We welcome applications from all sections of the community, particularly from members of ethnic minority groups.



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Functional Skills Assessor Maths, English & ICT

Lancashire - Full time for the remainder of the academic year

Must have Assessors award and at least Level 2 in English and Maths

£16 - £19 per hour + statutory holiday pay

Lecturer - Level 3 Award in English for Literacy Teaching

Basildon - 16th – 20th May, full time hours (potential for further classes in the near future)

Delivery to HE Teachers

Must have previous experience of delivering this course and also hold a relevant teaching qualification (DTLLS, PGCE, Cert Ed) and relevant degree or English specialism qualification

Competitive hourly rate

A Level Maths Lecturer (with the ability to teach GCSE Maths)

Lancashire - Permanent

Must have a relevant teaching qualification (DTLLS, PGCE, Cert Ed) and relevant degree in maths

Salary up to £33,753 depending on qualifications and experience

Maths Lecturer

Greater Manchester - Part time permanent

Must have a relevant teaching qualification (DTLLS, PGCE, Cert Ed) and relevant degree or maths specialism qualification

Salary experienced Lecturer £26,629 - £30,863 pa.
NQT £24,379 - £25,856 pa Pro rata

GCSE English Lecturer

Kent - Full time permanent

Must have a relevant teaching qualification (DTLLS, PGCE, Cert Ed) and relevant degree or English specialism qualification

Competitive salary

GCSE, Functional Skills and Access to HE Maths Lecturer

County Durham - 2 days a week for the remainder of the academic year

Must have a relevant teaching qualification (DTLLS, PGCE, Cert Ed) and relevant degree or maths specialism qualification

£22 - £28 per hour + statutory holiday pay

To apply for one of these roles or to be considered for any of the amazing opportunities we have across the UK please send your CV to:

jobs@protocol.co.uk or visit www.protocol.co.uk to register online.

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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

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

Difficulty: **EASY**

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

Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

Solutions: Next edition

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty: **EASY**

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

Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

Spot the difference to WIN an FE Week mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an FE Week mug. Email your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to: news@feweek.co.uk. Last Edition's winner was Catherine Storey, HE Academic Administrative Assistant, New College Durham.