

FE Week

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**SAVE OUR
APPRENTICESHIPS**



SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

BOSSES 'SWITCH' FIRMS LEAVING HUGE STUDENT & COMPANY DEBT

SFA did nothing to stop directors switching the ownership of successful provider they ran from one parent company to another, before transferring out £5.6m, liquidating it, and leaving learners and creditors on the hook for millions of pounds



**Number crunching - we keep pressing
Halfon for honesty over cuts**

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Exclusive **PAUL OFFORD** @PAULOFFORD | **ALIX ROBERTSON** @ALIXROBERTSON4

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**FE WEEK ANNUAL APPRENTICESHIP
CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 2017**

ICC, BIRMINGHAM | WED 22 - FRI 24, MARCH

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OFSTED ALREADY CONSIDERING CLIMBDOWN OVER LOGO USE

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Ofsted could be heading for an embarrassing U-turn over its surprise decision to threaten providers with legal action over their unauthorised use of its logo to advertise ‘good’ inspection ratings.

Last week, FE Week revealed that several training providers had been threatened out of the blue with court action by the education watchdog, for the crime of using a modified version of the Ofsted logo.

They were told in harsh legal letters that they were breaching Crown copyright law – and that Ofsted would only allow institutions rated ‘outstanding’ to display such a logo, according to little-known regulations.

However, FE Week understands officials at the watchdog have indicated that they could now revisit the policy, following what might politely be called a bemused response from the education community.

A spokesperson for Ofsted denied to FE Week that there had been a “formal” review, and said the policy was “very much as it was last week”, but added: “We do look at policies across the board on a regular basis.”

A policy rethink would be welcome news for numerous schools, colleges and training providers who are currently in breach, by publishing ‘good’ logos on websites, outdoor banners and in prospectuses – leaving them open to potential action.

Mark Dawe, the boss of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, last week told FE Week that he’d never even heard of Ofsted’s outstanding-only logo policy, and labelled it “the best kept secret in education”.



Mary Bousted, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, echoed his sentiment, saying: “Every day you go past schools with signs and logos saying they are graded as ‘good’. These letters are a monumental waste of time and resources.”

Ofsted insists that the policy, which was apparently introduced in the year 2000, has been enforced over the past 16 years. The spokesperson revealed that although the watchdog doesn’t keep a central register of contacts it has with providers it’s had concerning logo misuse, they estimated there had been more than 500 cases in the last four years alone.

“We have clear guidelines published on our website governing its use, which are applied consistently across all remits,” they said.

“When we find the Ofsted logo has been used inappropriately we approach the provider and request that they remove it.”

In one letter recently received by an unnamed FE training provider, which had deployed a version of the logo on its website,

the education watchdog said it would begin legal action if the image was not removed from all materials within 14 days.

The letter read: “The Ofsted logo is covered by Crown copyright. In addition, the Ofsted name is a registered trademark with the Intellectual Property Office. Therefore, the logo cannot be used without Ofsted’s express permission.

“You should be aware that the unauthorised use of our logo may give rise to a civil action against you. To avoid this, please remove the Ofsted logo from your website and any other offending materials with immediate effect.”

AELP welcomed a the possibility of a review.

“A quick review has got to be the way forward,” said a spokesperson. “For a government championing better informed choices by employers, learners and parents, surely people shouldn’t be denied a sensible sharing of information about quality provision in this way?”

Inspectorate picks Damar for intake of 31 apprentices

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

Ofsted is using just one training provider for its new cohort of 31 apprentices, FE Week can reveal.

The recruits will all follow a two-year business administration programme at levels two and three with Stockport-based provider Damar Ltd.

In March, the Skills Funding Agency was found to be using a total of 13 different providers – three colleges and 10 independent training providers – for just 26 apprentices.

A spokesperson for Ofsted told FE Week that Damar Ltd, which was rated ‘good’ overall in its last full inspection in August 2012, was chosen following a selection process that covered criteria including quality, suitability for the role, and location.

“They demonstrated that they are a good provider, with experience of working with the civil service, and a track record of targeting hard to reach communities,” she said.

Jonathan Bournen (pictured), Damar Ltd’s managing director, said it was “a great privilege” to have been chosen as Ofsted’s apprenticeship training provider.

“We look forward to working with the

talented new recruits and Ofsted colleagues and seeing the apprentices grow into confident, knowledgeable and skilled professionals,” he added.

The 31 new recruits will take on a variety of roles, including inspection support, social care policy and education policy.

They were chosen from a field of 200 applicants, following a recruitment drive that specifically targeted young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Twelve of the 31 are aged between 16 and 18, with a further 16 aged 19 to 23; the remaining three are 24 or older, Ofsted told FE Week.

The apprentices’ levels of English and maths had been assessed, and those without at least a level one or two qualification in these areas will be supported to achieve it during their apprenticeship.

Ofsted will paying a financial contribution to Damar Ltd for the apprentices aged 19 and older, while the new programme will build on a previous apprenticeship scheme, run in May 2013, which recruited six apprentices to work at the organisation.

Of those six, three are still working with Ofsted.

Last October the education watchdog published a highly critical report into

apprenticeships that singled out poor-quality training programmes, particularly those that use government cash to subsidise low wages for older learners.



In an exclusive interview with FE Week at the time of the report, Ofsted chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw said: “What we’re seeing is that a lot of apprenticeships are simply accrediting what they’re doing already, and again employers are using funding from government to subsidise already low wages – that’s got to stop.”

The report also found that “far too few” 16- to 18-year-olds were starting apprenticeships.

Matthew Coffey, Ofsted’s chief operating officer, said he was “delighted” to welcome the new apprentices.

“We want to provide individuals with a genuine opportunity to improve their lives, by offering them an alternative career path from the traditional university route.”

NEWS

Reform roll-out in 2017 still on track insists DfE

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

There will be no delay to apprenticeship funding reforms, the government has insisted, despite growing concerns in the sector over a series of setbacks to key policy details.

The Association of Colleges called for all funding and regulation reforms to be delayed beyond the planned May 1 launch date for the first time last week, after FE Week exclusively revealed that the new apprenticeship provider register was being pushed back.

However, the DfE remains adamant that it would neither alter the April 6 launch of the apprenticeship levy on April 6, nor push back the May 1 deadline for its funding arrangements.

“The dates set out on gov.uk regarding apprenticeship dates still stand,” a spokesperson told FE Week.

Some delays, however, are unavoidable. Applications to the first wave of the controversial new provider register – which will work alongside the existing register of training organisations, Roto – will not now be accepted until the end of October, rather than of the third of the month as was planned.

The Skills Funding Agency claims this delay has been due to “changes to the register proposals and approach” following feedback from providers.

Mark Dawe, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, was quick to slam the delay as “incredibly unfair”, adding: “These are busy people and busy businesses who need to plan.”

AoC’s boss David Hughes has also expressed major concerns, saying: “The changes proposed to apprenticeship funding and regulation are complex and risk undermining the high quality provision already in place. If there is a delay in opening the register or confirming funding rates, I would like to see a more phased implementation.”



Mark Dawe



David Hughes

“More than anything colleges, providers and employers need certainty and confidence about the changes, with a timetable they can rely on to plan how they will continue to deliver apprenticeships.

“It is a tough call for the minister, but perhaps now a delay in implementing the new arrangements would be the most prudent.”

The government also announced this week that growth requests for advance learner loans have been paused until further notice, after FE Week last week exposed lengthy delays with processing. The government is understood to be struggling to cope with extra demand for new 19-to-23 loans (see box).

In July, the CBI called for the launch of the apprenticeship levy to be put back.

Mr Dawe has also previously told FE Week that while he supports pressing ahead with the launch of the levy, he wants to delay other apprenticeship reforms.

“We can’t afford to wait longer because the levy is even more vital following the Brexit vote and the need to develop our own skills base, with the likely ending of the free

movement of Labour,” he said. “However there are other aspects of the apprenticeship reforms, such as the standards, the provider register and this autumn’s non-levy payers’ procurement exercise, where the transitional risks are very high, and where a pause for further deliberation would be welcome.”

ADVANCE LEARNER LOANS HALTED INDEFINITELY

Growth requests for advance learner loans have been paused until further notice, after FE Week exposed lengthy delays with processing.

The SFA said it was “changing the way providers apply for growth to their loans facility” and would not accept any new growth requests “until the new approach is in place in autumn”.

FE Week revealed on September 23 that some providers have been waiting for responses on loan growth requests made as long ago as June and July. The government is understood to be struggling to cope with extra demand for new 19-to-23 loans.

“The advanced learner loans programme

continues to grow and establish its market within the FE Sector,” said an SFA spokesperson.

“This is in line with the planned expansion of the loans programme to support 19- to 23-year-old learners for the first time.

“We wish to continue to support growth in 2016 to 2017 and beyond, so we are taking the opportunity to review our approach to managing loans facilities.”

The agency has seen a 25 per cent increase in loan applications compared with this time last year, and the review is supposed to ensure that the programme “continues to be effectively and robustly managed”.

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Lord Baker hits out at planned post-16 divide

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Controversial plans for a post-16 academic and vocational divide have been rejected by a key backer of the under-fire university technical college programme.

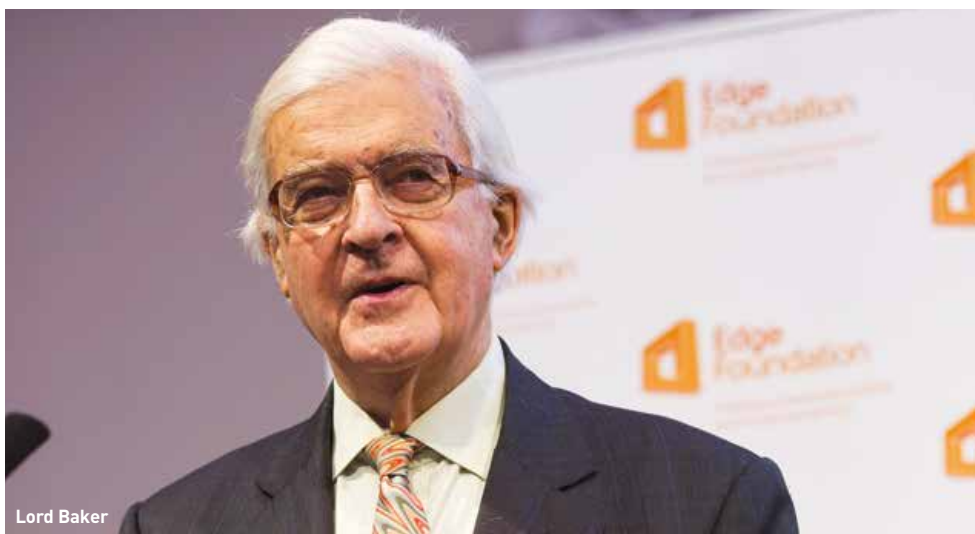
Lord Baker said that while he backed the Sainsbury Review’s “ideas for simplifying technical education for young people aged 16 to 19”, he has “concerns about reinforcing an artificial divide at 16 between the academic and technical routes”.

The Tory peer, who founded the Baker Dearing Educational Trust to promote UTCs for 14- to 19-year-olds, made his feelings clear in a new Edge Foundation report entitled ‘14 – 19 education – a new Baccalaureate’.

“I am convinced that many young people would benefit from taking a mixture of technical and academic programmes, in varying proportions according to their talents and ambitions, throughout the period from 14 to 18/19,” he wrote.

The government’s Post-16 Skills Plan involves replacing 20,000 post-16 vocational courses with just 15 so-called “high-quality routes”.

Sixteen-year-olds are to be “presented with two choices: the academic or the technical option” in the form of these 15 routes, covering “college-based and employment



based (apprenticeship) education”.

Lord Baker’s opposition to the plans come as little surprise – he was the principal architect behind the UTC model of technical-based education, which prefers learners start from 14 instead of 16.

In July Ofsted’s former chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw slammed UTCs, telling them that they need to make “radical improvement” if the model were to survive.

Research by FE Week in February meanwhile found that 40 per cent of UTCs which opened between 2010 and 2013 had seen student numbers fall during the last academic year.

Many have now been forced to close. UTC Lancashire said in a statement on May 3 that it would shut its doors for good just three years after it opened, due to difficulties it found in enrolling enough students “to secure future financial viability”.

Lord Baker also spoke out against the government’s “narrow” English Baccalaureate.

The EBacc is a new performance measure, brought in by the previous coalition government, which is achieved when school pupils get a grade C or above in a “core” group of seven subjects: English (x2), maths, science (x2), a modern foreign language, and

history or geography.

Lord Baker called on the government to expand the EBacc to include a technical qualification from 16 – with programmes delivered in “cities and large towns by clusters of mainstream schools and colleges, and specialist institutions modelled on UTCs, career colleges and studio schools”.

In rural areas, he called for “dual enrolment”, which would see students spending the bulk of their time at their local school, and travelling “one or two days a week to a college or specialist institution to learn from people with first-hand industrial, creative and commercial experience”.

He added: “In my vision for 2025, all students would follow a single, coherent 14-19 framework leading to a leaving diploma recognising the full range of academic and technical achievement including GCSEs, A-levels and technical qualifications.”

A Department for Education spokesperson said: “The EBacc is studied as part of a broad curriculum and provides a strong academic foundation, while allowing students to study additional subjects that reflect their individual strengths and interests.

We agree that subjects like technology are important and have worked closely with employers to review the curriculum to make sure young people have the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century.”

Local MP will fight Hull College over 141 proposed job cuts

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

The shadow attorney general has vowed to fight Hull College all the way over nearly 150 job losses it wants to make.

Karl Turner, the MP for Kingston upon Hull, has previously joined striking staff on the picket line, and has promised to meet with representatives from the University and College Union again, as another strike ballot closes.

The UCU has balloted its members on the possibility of another strike, and “action short of a strike”, which could include work to rule – when employees do no more than the minimum required in their job – which closed on Friday (September 30), after the college announced of the summer vacation it would make 141 redundancies and close its three nurseries before the end of the year.

Mr Turner said the college’s actions would “hit students the hardest”.

He previously joined college workers on strike in May, supporting their dispute over pay and a controversial new lesson observation system.

He ended up calling for an investigation into the college’s chief executive Gary Warke, 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.”

Speaking ahead of the new ballot, Mr Turner told FE Week that “redundancies have become a yearly exercise at Hull College, which will not help staff morale”.

He said: “It is deplorable that many staff found out about redundancies during the summer holidays, reducing their ability to organise effectively, and have an input in the consultation period.

“It is students that will be hit hardest by

these cuts with proposals to shut the on-site nursery service as well as closing down many vital student facing services which provide pastoral care.

“I am meeting with representatives from the UCU as a priority to discuss how we can fight these cuts in staff numbers. It seems that Hull College is more interested in protecting profits than providing the community with a vital service.”

The UCU said the plans “made a mockery” of what they claimed was a college promise not to cut more jobs following the last round

of redundancies.

The previous strike ended in a payrise for staff and an end to no-notice observations.

In a statement, the college said: “Hull College Group is currently in formal consultation with trade unions and members of staff on restructuring proposals, which include a number of potential redundancies as well as the creation of up to 75 new roles across the group.”

A spokesperson for Mr Turner’s office confirmed that the college never responded to the MP’s public concerns over the letter

Council wants small-school sixth forms to merge or close

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

Brighton and Hove council wants to merge or close its small-school sixth forms, it has announced following a review of local post-16 education.

Its report calls for school and academy governing bodies to “consider the future financial viability of their sixth form provision” and develop a plan to increase numbers or merge with another school.

The review was launched last October so that school sixth forms and independent training providers could be fully considered in the larger Sussex-wide area review.

The council is “not ducking the difficult issue” of telling schools to increase their numbers, according to Tom Bewick, the managing director of consultancy firm New Work Skills, who chairs the council’s children, young people and skills committee.

He told FE Week that the council would tell schools to “either increase your numbers, justify your sixth form provision – or you should be considering getting out of it”.

The Association of Colleges last week announced it was launching a judicial review into the Department for Education’s decision to fund a new sixth form which won’t meet minimum student numbers – contravening its own rules.

FE Week found that student numbers at many sixth forms fall below the minimum of 200, despite growing evidence that students at small sixth forms do less well than those at larger sixth forms or colleges.

The Brighton and Hove review covered five school or academy sixth forms – Cardinal Newman, Hove Park, Blatchington Mill, Portslade Aldridge Community Academy, and Brighton Aldridge Community Academy – as well as Varndean College and Brighton and Hove Sixth Form College, both SFCs, as well as

City College Brighton and Hove, a general FE college.

According to Education Funding Agency allocations for 2015/16, Cardinal Newman had 453 students, Hove Park had 266, Blatchington Mill had 163, Portslade Aldridge had 129 – while Brighton Aldridge had just 50 students.

Despite this, Mr Bewick told FE Week he was “less concerned” about the two academies, which he described as being “on an upward curve”.

“I worry more about Hove Park and Blatchington Mill,” he said.

The report, which will be presented on Monday, found that the academies have been focused on increasing numbers to 550 across both schools by 2017, with the intake at Brighton Aldridge having already “increased significantly” for the current year.

Hove Park and Blatchington Mill started working together in September this year to offer a joint curriculum across both schools, with a target of at least 15 to 20 students per class.

Ashley Harrold, the head at Blatchington Mill, said he was “disappointed” that Mr Bewick had ignored this collaboration.

“Our sixth form is a caring and nurturing environment that offers a different route to FE



Tom Bewick

and employment than other establishments in the local picture,” he said.

Rob Reed, Hove Park School’s head, said that planning for the partnership had begun before the local review started.

“We are sure that local residents would see it as a hugely backward step for their choices in this area to be significantly reduced,” he added.

TV’s Reggie Yates announced as AoC conference speaker

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Reggie Yates has been unveiled as the latest star speaker for the Association of Colleges’ annual conference.

The actor, presenter and DJ will join other big names including the broadcaster Steph McGovern and the comedian Ruby Wax, at the event which takes place between November 15 and 17 at the ICC in Birmingham.

The conference will also feature the first speech to delegates from the new apprenticeships and skills minister Robert Halfon since he was handed the ministerial brief in July.

Mr Yates (pictured) is the opening speaker for the event, and will discuss his time at City and Islington College and how it supported him in his broadcasting career and achievements.

As a previous AoC Gold Award winner, he will also be interviewed by Ms McGovern, who has signed up to chair the conference, the first under the AoC’s new chief David Hughes since he took over from Martin Doel.

The comedian, author and mental health campaigner Ruby Wax OBE will deliver a keynote speech on the morning of November 16, while the TV impressionist Jon Culshaw will also make an appearance, entertaining dinner guests at the AoC Charitable Trust Beacon Awards ceremony that evening.

Mr Yates first found fame in the Disney hit comedy Desmonds aged just eight, and went on to host the children’s TV shows Diggit and Smile on the BBC.

He landed on primetime TV with a hosting gig at Top of the Pops, and spent several successful years at Radio 1 presenting Weekend

Breakfast, the Request Show and the Chart Show until December 2012.

He has also voiced the lead character in hit children’s animated TV series Rastamouse for CBBC.

Other TV appearances include documentary work such as Reggie Yates: Extreme Russia in 2015, which won the Best Factual Programme at the Edinburgh TV Awards and the RTS award for Best Programme and Best Presenter.

Behind the camera, Mr Yates’ career has include writing and directing.

His first short film, Patriarch, was aired on Channel 4 as part of their Random Acts season, while his second, Date Night, won best UK Short at the London Independent Film Festival.

“We’re delighted to have Reggie Yates coming to speak at the AoC’s annual conference and exhibition,” said an AoC spokesperson.

“Reggie won an AoC Gold Award earlier this year, as a testament to how a former college student has gone on to become so successful in his chosen career.”

She added: “He will be the first speaker at the conference and I have no doubt that hearing about his experiences as a student, and how City and Islington College helped him get to where he is now, will be inspirational to delegates.”

FE Week is the premier media partner for the conference and exhibition, so look out for more reports on what to expect in the coming weeks.

For more information and to book a place at the AoC annual conference and exhibition,

you can also visit www.aocannualconference.co.uk



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CAMPAIGN

ANGELA RAYNER GETS BEHIND #SA

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

FE is a “lifeline” for learners, the shadow education secretary Angela Rayner has said, as she backed FE Week’s #saveourapprenticeships campaign at the Labour Party conference.

The shadow education secretary gave a moving speech about her journey since she left school pregnant and with no qualifications at the age of 16, which was widely praised as one of the highlights of a rally at the Pullman Hotel in Liverpool, organised by FE Week.

The campaign was launched to increase pressure on the government to abandon planned cuts of between 30 and 50 per cent to apprenticeships funding, which will hit 16- to 18-year-olds in some of the most deprived areas of the country.

This stark drop in funding, exposed by our exclusive analysis, has prompted a furious backlash throughout the sector. In fact, more than 600 people have already written messages pledging support for FE Week’s first official campaign.

Rayner used her keynote speech to the conference on Tuesday to discuss the need to end the “snobbery” that surrounds vocational education, and later told FE Week that she and millions of others had relied on the FE sector.

“I came up through the FE route with a national vocational qualification in care,” she said. “Let’s face it, it’s a lifeline for learners like me to do well in our work, and for people who maybe failed in their GCSEs, but who actually have some really solid vocational skills,” she said.

Rayner said apprenticeships offered young people a “really good career” in whatever they wanted to do, but insisted that they needed to be “proper, quality apprenticeships” and warned that the government would damage the economy if it failed to listen to FE Week’s campaign.

The MP for Ashton-under-Lyne received a standing ovation in the conference hall after she pledged to bring back the education maintenance allowance for 16- to 19-year-olds, and spoke about the need for a Labour government to boost the skills agenda.

“I want to see a Labour government put as much effort into expanding technical, vocational education and meaningful apprenticeships, as we did with higher



From left: Shane Mann, Gordon Marden MP, Angela Raynor MP and Mark Dawe

education,” she said.

“With our country facing a massive skills gap, we need to equip our young people with the expertise and abilities that Britain needs. So the snobbery about vocational education must end.”

Shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden, who was one of the first MPs to back the campaign, told the rally that the government needed to be “very clear” that it was being “watched very carefully”, and warned that it had form when it came to “disappointing 16- to 18-year-olds over apprenticeships”.

FE Week’s damning findings on the impact of apprenticeship funding reform plans have already provoked Mr Marsden, alongside more than 50 other MPs led by Tottenham’s David Lammy, to write to the government begging for a change of heart.

Senior politicians from across the political divide, including skills minister Robert Halfon, who defended the cuts, spoke at the launch of the campaign earlier this month.

It took place on the same day that Theresa May was asked about the issue during Prime Minister’s Questions, when she told the Commons that she did not “recognise” that there will be cuts of 30 to 50 per cent – even



Angela Raynor MP

though the numbers come from her own government.

Mr Lammy said that “it’s an absolute scandal for the PM to say she doesn’t recognise the figures. It’s her funding agency, they’re her figures.”, but insisted: “We will force a U-turn”.



Gordon Marsden MP

SAVE OUR APPRENTICESHIPS



CAMPAIGN ENDORSEMENTS INCLUDE:



NICK LINFORD

FE Week editor and author of the Complete guide to funding apprenticeships

Mr Halfon, please correct the record

As editor of FE Week I'm used to skills ministers being economical with the truth.

I'm used to questions going unanswered or hearing non-answers to the question being asked.

What has come as a new surprise, though, is the new minister claiming in a DfE blog something that simply is not true.

Essentially, he argued that FE Week has been selectively emphasising only those 16-to-18 frameworks in which the funding rate has been falling.

Robert Halfon's exact words were: "While FE Week has highlighted some frameworks will be losing some funding, there are some that will have increased funding, and not just in science, technology, engineering and maths."

I was immediately sceptical because the Skills Funding Agency has applied a consistent approach to the new framework rates.

It set the new rate for all 16- to 18-year-olds at the current, much lower, adult rate, while later admitting it had removed both the disadvantage and area cost uplift.

So I asked the DfE to provide some examples in which the 16-to-18 framework funding will rise from May 1, to justify the minister's claim in his blog.

After a bit of prodding, it replied with three: logistics operative at level two, accounting at level three and farriery at level three.

Naturally I had to do the analysis myself, and even after including the proposed £1,000 provider incentive, I calculated that the logistics framework funding has fallen between three and 34 per cent, that accounting fell between 29 and 51 per cent, and that farriery dropped between 41 and 60 per cent.

In all three cases, far from the funding going up, it fell across the board, and as much as 60 per cent.

How does the DfE explain this?

I sent back my analysis and prodded again for a reply, and was told that in fact these examples aren't about 16- to 18-year-olds at all. In fact, they "refer to 19+ frameworks" – while "the op-ed was written with a broader scope in mind".

Surely this means the DfE would want to correct Mr Halfon's blog? Surely the minister would want to amend the record?

However, neither the DfE nor Mr Halfon took the opportunity to correct the blog, which I find immensely disappointing.

The simple fact is that we are campaigning against this government's decision to fund 16- to 18-year-old frameworks at the much lower adult rates.

I was really grateful the minister came and spoke at the FE Week campaign event, but I repeat my request to him, this time in the pages of FE Week.

Mr Halfon, please correct your blog to remove the untruth about the way these rate cuts have been applied.

Funding rate cut analysis for apprenticeship starts from 1 May

Framework	16-18 full-funding	16-18 delivery in central London	16-18 apprentice lives in most deprived area in England	Apprentice lives and works in most deprived area in central London
Logistics operative framework at level 2	-£66	-£580	-£888	-£1,260
	-3%	-19%	-26%	-34%
Accounting framework at level 3	-£1,199	-£2,039	-£2,542	-£3,152
	-29%	-40%	-46%	-51%
Farriery framework at level 3	-£7,035	-£10,441	-£12,486	-£14,957
	-41%	-51%	-56%	-60%

Includes £1000 provider incentive. Analysis by Nick Linford

INVESTIGATES

EXCLUSIVE FROM FRONT

Bosses ‘switch’ firms leaving h

PAUL OFFORD ALIX ROBERTSON
@PAULOFFORD @ALIXROBERTSON4

Serious questions are being asked of the Skills Funding Agency, after it allowed directors to switch the ownership of a successful provider they ran from one parent company to another, before transferring out a large amount of money, liquidating it, and leaving learners and creditors on the hook for millions of pounds. After a month-long investigation by FE Week, the SFA has finally agreed to look into the complex web of companies owned by Paul Alekna (pictured), who ran one of the UK’s largest training subcontractors until he liquidated it in August.

The SFA originally declined to object to an ownership change for the Worcestershire-based provider Options 2 Workplace Learning Ltd, to which it had allocated around £2m for apprenticeships and advanced learning loans during the last academic year. Ownership was switched from one parent company – called eResponse Training Ltd – to another – eResponse Recruitment Ltd, which was dormant at the time. All of these companies were owned by Mr Alekna, with his brother Joe as managing director.

However, eResponse Training Ltd, since renamed to ER Training and Development Ltd, went bust in August, leaving learners in limbo and creditors desperate to recover more than £3m debts – but not before assets worth £5.6m were moved to a new company that’s still trading and providing government-funded training.

The SFA took more than a week to respond to FE Week’s initial enquiries, and then insisted that it would not be investigating. However, pressed two weeks later to look again at the findings of our investigation, a spokesperson said on Tuesday (September 27): “We are aware of the issues raised in relation to Options Workplace Training and are following our published procedures.”

This is civil service-speak that effectively confirms they are following a path to a formal investigation.

The original parent company, now called ER Training and Development Ltd, went into liquidation on August 31. It was previously named eResponse Training Ltd for less than a month in July, and before that, eResponse Recruitment Ltd.

Its most recent accounts, ending September 2015, show a healthy business, with £2.4m profit, £1.1m taken in dividends, and a turnover of £27m. The accounts from the year before, lodged with Companies House, similarly show a £2.7m profit for the year and £1.2m in dividends.

When the original parent company went into liquidation, learners were left unable to complete courses, and a range of creditors faced a total shortfall of more than £3m.

But Mr Alekna, who sits on the Worcestershire local enterprise partnership business board, continues to run



Options 2 Workplace and a new parent company – which to add to the confusion retains the eResponse name. Its website offering recruitment, training, skills and development services.

One of the declared creditors, who did not wish to be named, told FE Week: “We feel angry about this as there is a lot of public money involved and individuals have lost a lot too.

“We have worked with eResponse for many years but following their actions we hope it will be investigated by the authorities, as at present they could do the same thing again. I don’t want to see it happening again to anyone else.”

FE Week asked Mr Alekna about the transfer of £5.6m before the company went into liquidation.

An eResponse Group spokesperson said: “The £5.6m dividend is not a dividend of cash. No money passed to eResponse Ltd. There was a long-planned and legitimate separation of the training and recruitment businesses, which included the transfer of its recruitment activity to the Newco.”

He added this was part of a restructuring process that had been going on for more than a year.

The demise of ER Training and Development Ltd was, he claimed, down to “bad debts, the loss of ESF contracts, and a reduction in classroom subcontracting”.

Mr Alekna at first told FE Week that “no learners associated with eResponse Training have been disadvantaged and learning will continue through to completion with the support of our resources within Options 2”.

However, a number of students claimed that, following the cancellation of their courses, they had been left with advanced learner loans to pay off, but had not been offered alternative provision.

“We’ve run a report and can confirm all learners’ (loans) have been cancelled apart from those who have completed the course,” insisted Mr Alekna.

The Students Loans Company declined to comment on the situation with the students’ loans.

IMPACT ON THEIR LEARNERS

Paul Alekna told FE Week that no learners associated with eResponse Training and Development Ltd) had “been disadvantaged”.

A number of learners, who have asked to remain anonymous, have been blighted by having their courses cancelled when the firm went into liquidation.

LEARNER 1



One man said that the cancellation of his course had led to a period of depression that eventually led him to try to take his own life.

He claimed he was dismissed from his job following clashes with his employer over the time he took out to do the course.

The man in his 30s dedicated himself to completing the training instead, in the hope of finding further employment, only to find it cancelled halfway through.

“I just felt really let down by the



company, especially as I had spent hours getting the coursework in, and lots of my time and money travelling to West Bromwich for the training,” he said. “I went through bouts of depression and I almost took my life. It has taken months to pull myself back together.”

LEARNER 3



A man in his 40s said he was deeply concerned about the situation. When his course closed before his training was complete, he was told by eResponse that “no monies have been withdrawn from the loan accounts set up” to fund his training, and that he was “not liable for any costs”.

However, he told FE Week he discovered, by ringing the Student Loans Company, that he had over £3,000 outstanding in his name.

He is now struggling to support his



family, as his wife is disabled and unable to work, and he is “very concerned” about paying the funds back.

“I thought this could be a very good opportunity for me to improve my professional career, but I am still unemployed because of them,” he said.

COMPANY STATEMENT...

An eResponse Group spokesperson said: “During the last 12 months we have suffered a series of bad debts, the loss of ESF contracts, and a reduction in classroom subcontracting, down from £4.5m 2014/15 to £500,000 in 2015/16.

“We acquired the services of an in-house bid writer early in 2016 to help source new

funding and bid on future ESF contracts.

“The restructure was completed in May 2016 following the required tax clearances from HMRC and confirmation from our accountants.

“During July we then suffered an additional loss of £800,000 with Pera Training confirming they are to pay back

uge student and company debt

Response Training (which became ER Training and
s, disagree, claiming that their lives have been
nt into liquidation.

LEARNER 2



A female student called for compensation for learners who have suffered as a result of the liquidation. She attended one course for 10 weeks, giving up Saturdays as she was also working during the week, and travelling a 40-mile round-trip each time. The woman in her 50s said: “We weren’t given the right information. We were told it was one loan and then we found out it was actually two. It was nearly £3,000 altogether.”



She claimed that she applied for a student loan she never received, and was told at the training centre to simply wait. “Nobody seemed to know what they were doing,” she said. “I only learned one thing that I didn’t already know. There should be some form of compensation for all of the time that we spent there.”

LEARNER 4



Another learner said he took a place on a course he thought would focus on driving theory and practice – but found himself burdened with modules about training to become a supervisor rather than a driver. Feeling disappointed by the content, he asked to drop out of the course, but was encouraged to stay on. However, shortly after this, the man in his 20s received an email saying the whole course would be closing. He claimed that he also contacted



the Student Loans Company when the course was closed and found that his account was still active, with over £2,000 that he worries he won’t be able to pay back. “I felt like they got me on the course and got the loan but they didn’t provide any more support,” he said.

1.3p in the pound.
“Our largest creditor could not provide extended credit terms and so the business was regrettably put into voluntary liquidation.
“This is the reason for the closure of the business.”
He insisted that “no one actually got a penny” of the £5.6m transfer, as “it was an approved accounting exercise”.
With regards to the restructuring

process, he said: “The board of directors have been working with professional auditors, accountants and our legal team on restructuring the business – essentially to separate its recruitment and training operations.
“Taking advice, it was deemed simpler to move out the recruitment business as the existing business boasted the accreditations with delivering training services.”

TIMELINE LEADING UP TO ONE OF THE LARGEST SUBCONTRACTORS OF SFA FUNDING GOING INTO LIQUIDATION

BACKGROUND IN MAY 2016

- eResponse Recruitment Ltd (company number 04872220) accounts ending September 2015 show a £2.4m profit, more than a £1.1m in dividends and £27m turnover and the accounts from the year before show £2.7m profit for the year and £1.2m in dividends.
- eResponse Recruitment Ltd (04872220) does not have a direct contract with the SFA but delivered significant volumes of subcontracting, such as with Learndirect.
- Options 2 Workplace Learning Ltd (05449672) was bought by eResponse Recruitment Ltd (04872220) in November 2014 and has a direct SFA contract, which for 2016/17 is around £1.4m for apprenticeships and £1.2m for learner loans.
- eResponse Recruitment Ltd (04872220) is the parent company to Options 2 Workplace Learning Ltd (05449672).

END OF MAY 2016

- A £5.6m dividend is made from eResponse Recruitment Ltd (04872220) to one of their dormant companies, eResponse Recruitment Limited (08515470), – as confirmed in the minutes of the creditors meeting on the 23rd August.

IN JUNE 2016

- SFA do not object to Options 2 Workplace Learning Ltd (05449672) shifting from ownership by eResponse Recruitment Ltd (04872220) to the dormant eResponse Recruitment Limited (08515470), and amended the SFA contract accordingly.
- So now Options 2 Workplace Learning Ltd (05449672), which has an SFA contract, is a subsidiary company to the previously dormant eResponse Recruitment Limited (08515470).
- On the June 11 the original eResponse Recruitment Ltd (04872220) is renamed eResponse Training Limited (04872220)

IN JULY 2016

- On July 6 the name of eResponse Training Limited (04872220) is changed to ER Training and Development Limited (04872220)

IN AUGUST 2016

- On the 31st of August ER Training and Development Limited (04872220), the company that in the accounts ending September 2015 show a £2.4m profit (plus more than a £1.1m in dividends and £27m turnover) goes into liquidation. We have a copy of the creditors report, which shows them to include HMRC and learndirect.

EDITORIAL

May 1, 2017 contingency coming?

There is a sad inevitability to the repeated delays to the unrealistic timetable for apprenticeship reforms.

So much of the provisional detail is contested, and with a new minister in post grappling with plans, the situation won't improve any time soon.

As I wrote in a recent blog for NCFE, we haven't given ourselves a chance to predict how the new system will work.

The limited pilot is failing because there were so few available standards to start apprentices on and even fewer approved assessment organisations.

So far just 15 apprentices, all with one firm, have completed a new standard.

The employer response to the new payroll tax is another unknown quantity, as it wasn't part of the pilot.

And we don't know what impact putting employers in charge of 'negotiating' apprenticeship funding rates will have either. Then there are the plans to simplify funding rates which we have exposed for unfairly hitting younger apprentices, particularly in poorer areas.

The DfE claims it won't budge and the levy will launch on the April 6 with the funding reforms shortly after on May 1.

Few can be in any doubt now that the levy will happen, but from where I'm sitting it looks a safe bet that Robert Halfon is considering a contingency plan for the funding reform.

Nick Linford, editor
news@feweek.co.uk

LAUENER ADDS IFA TOP JOB

Ben Rockliffe @openawardben
How many CEO jobs can one person do? SFA, EFA AND The Institute for Apprenticeships

Active IQ @Active_IQ
Positive response to appt of Lauener to IfA, a lot of work ahead to implement apprenticeship & Skills Plan proposals

Ian Pryce @ipryce
Peter Lauener's third chief exec role (EFA, SFA, IfA) making the rest of us look like slackers. New title surely 3CEO?

Bob Harrison @bobharrisonset
Peter Lauener to be boss of Institute of Apprenticeships on top of his other two full time jobs!! Bonkers!

HOLEX @suepemberholex
Congratulations to Peter Lauener. Looking forward to working with you in this new role and the other two.

SDN @SDN_HQ
That's quite a brief for Peter Lauener - SFA, EFA and now shadow CEO for Institute for Apprenticeships!



It's a CEO hat-trick for Peter Lauener as he takes on the IfA

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

The boss of the Skills Funding Agency has been made part-time head of the Institute for Apprenticeships – raising concerns about the new body's impartiality and independence from the government.

The Department for Education announced on Monday (September 26) that top skills civil servant Peter Lauener had been appointed as shadow chief executive of the IfA, until a permanent appointment can be made for the role at some point "in 2017".

He will take on the role on a part-time basis – working two days a week alongside his existing responsibilities as head of the SFA and the Education Funding Agency.

However, critics of the appointment are wondering how the IfA will remain "independent of government" as originally planned, now a civil servant will take the helm.

Mark Dawe, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said: "The fact that Peter [Lauener] is now in three very important leadership roles for skills raises concern about capacity issues in the DfE and SFA when proposed reforms are being challenged."

His words were echoed by Mick Fletcher, the founder of Policy Consortium, who also

warned that Mr Lauener's new gig raised serious questions about impartiality.

"It will be, to all intents and purposes, another arm of the civil service, decorated with a few employers on the board and promoting government policy behind a fig leaf of 'employer ownership'," he said.

A DfE spokesperson said: "Peter Lauener brings extensive skills and experience in setting up and running organisations in this policy area, as well as his knowledge of apprenticeships.

"Peter has strong credibility with employers and with the skills sector and will work closely with Antony Jenkins, the shadow chair, and an independent, employer-led board.

"This is a short-term appointment, focused on the work that is needed to set up the organisation."

The institute is due to launch in April 2017 and is designed to help to police employers as apprenticeship reforms take effect.

When the IfA was announced during George Osborne's Autumn Statement last November, the government said it would be an "employer-led body" that would be "independent of government".

Mr Lauener, who has been in charge at the SFA since November 2014, and at the EFA since it was formed in April 2012, is the second person to have taken on the role of shadow chief executive of the institute.

The previous post-holder, Rachel Sandby-Thomas, announced in May – after just two months in the job – that she would be leaving in September.

The former Barclays chief executive Antony Jenkins was announced as shadow chair by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills on June 9.

At the same time it was also revealed that Nicola Bolton, the former managing director for trade at UK Trade and Investment, was already in post as shadow chief operating officer.

In its statement on Monday, the DfE said that Mr Lauener would be supported in post by Michael Keoghan, the current director of FE at the DfE, who was made deputy chief executive of the IfA.

David Hughes, the boss of the Association of Colleges, said he looked forward to working with Mr Lauener in his new capacity.

"There is a big job to be done and we need a phased, manageable implementation which does not destabilise the system," he said.

Pippa Morgan, head of education and skills policy at the Confederation of British Industry, also welcomed Mr Lauener's appointment.

Another stakeholder, who did not wish to be named, quipped: "In other news, Peter Lauener will also manage the England football team and host Bake Off when it moves to C4."

COMMENTS

SFA pauses loans process after FE Week exposes delays

An absolutely ridiculous decision! The success of advanced learning loans is potentially one of the few good news stories in FE and the minute real progress is being made the SFA put the brakes on! Where will now be huge numbers of learners who will have to be turned away until autumn at the earliest which will no doubt damage the reputation of the programme? All because the SFA cannot manage an increase in capacity which should have been expected anyway. Shamblolic!

Miriam

Given the breadth of reform currently in play and the very recent consultation for the new register, October 3 was very optimistic. Why wasn't this picked up as a risk in the project/implementation plan earlier and mitigated?

We are only two working days away from the original 3rd October date, surely those working on the new register criteria and portal would have known before this week that they weren't going to be ready in time.

The sector understands the pace of significant change brings challenges in design, build and implementation. But confidence will continue to be eroded if those who set the timetable then continue to miss their own published milestones.

Mark Corden

Shock threat of Ofsted 'civil action'

"You should be aware that the unauthorised use of our logo may give rise to a civil action against you." I hope they do not start wasting public money to pay for lawyers to take civil action. Ofsted already wastes huge sums and they are the root cause of nearly all of the bureaucracy, money wasted on people in non-jobs, poor decisions

by management and general stupidity that goes on in schools and FE colleges.

FE Lecturer

The mischief among us might suggest that if every provider in the country started using the logo, we might tie Ofsted in legal knots for years.

Andrew

Exclusive: Further delays to controversial provider register

If only the government adopted some of the principles that businesses have to apply on a day to day basis in order to exist let alone succeed, it might avoid such debacles.

Linda Hausmanis



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ZUBEDA
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Founder and director, ConnectFutures

How do you spot signs of radicalisation?

After Ofsted's thematic review into Prevent found "a worrying number of providers struggling to implement the duty", Zubeda Limbada and Lynn Davies explain how to spot signs of radicalisation.

The actual wording of the Prevent duty on educational institutions is that they need to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. For the FE sector this has a number of strands – being careful about visiting speakers, having a risk assessment policy in place, thinking about internet safety. But one of the most difficult areas is the implied need for surveillance of students, to be able to spot the signs that someone is being radicalised.

Mistakes and overreactions over this have been among the reasons the Prevent strategy has been criticised. Is it the job of teachers and lecturers to be policing students? When is it appropriate for colleges to escalate concerns around extremism by referring students to the government's Channel scheme? Is this what 'due regard' means?

In fact it is, under the duty of care that every educator has. Just as there is no one path into violent extremism, there is no one set of signals to indicate risk. From our research with former extremists, we've found that it's always a combination of behaviours, different for each individual.

In our training courses on Prevent, we draw on a useful Behaviour Barometer devised by the Canadian Centre for the Prevention of Radicalisation leading to Violence. This distinguishes between 'insignificant', 'troublesome', 'worrisome' and 'alarming' behaviours.

Many behaviours that teachers may wonder about – such as increased arguing, dressing in a particular way, being active on social media or becoming more religious or political – might be typical of any teenager searching for their identity. When it becomes particularly worrisome is if when there is a combination of some of the following:

- when a person cuts off ties with friends and family to keep company with a new circle and adopt a whole new lifestyle;
- when they start to support violence for a cause;
- when they suddenly become uninterested in study or college activities;
- when they express hateful views or use derogatory terms towards other individuals or groups, or avoid being with them;

- if they are spending time on their computer looking at extremist groups; or
- if they are posting pictures of fighters on their Twitter or other accounts.

The problem for educators – who may additionally worry about potential Ofsted consequences as part of the Prevent duty – is that the really alarming signs may not be visible at all. It is at the pre-radicalisation, 'worrisome', stage that a teacher can be particularly insightful, especially if they know a student fairly well, and can start to see changes as they occur. Other students may express concerns too and can be consulted.

This observational duty has to be set within college procedures, i.e. that there is a place and system for concerns to be logged and discussed with other people, and for deciding when contacts with parents or authorities should be made. This procedural framework is not just to keep Ofsted happy, but to provide a safety net.

Once a concern is noted and fully discussed, institutions should know about the external mechanisms for referral. Through police or FE Regional Prevent Coordinators (RPCs), a student (or colleague) may be referred to Channel, the government multi-agency scheme.

A local Channel panel will look for three things: engagement, intent, and capability. So if a student simply sounds off or makes extremist or racist remarks, or even sports something as innocuous as a Free Palestine wristband, this is not on its own a reason to think about referral. But some combination of changed behaviours might well be, and it is up to the panel to investigate further. It is important to note that anyone can refer, and parents or relatives do not have to be informed, but that the final participation in the scheme is voluntary.

To come back to the question of whether we can spot radicalisation – the answer is not easily. But FE institutions can take the initiative by ensuring their staff have received good Prevent training. When concerns arise, it is the combination of conversations with colleagues, safeguarding leads, governors or community leaders, together with awareness around internal and external processes that provide the optimum tools for sensitive safeguarding.

Lynn Davies, Emeritus Professor of International Education, University of Birmingham



MARK
CORNEY

Policy consultant

In support of a maintenance loan revolution for FE

Maintenance loans are everywhere in higher education, so why aren't they available for those in technical education, asks Mark Corney.

The three great challenges for education policy as I see them are increasing productivity, extending social mobility, and enhancing the skills base of the resident population as recruitment of EU workers is restricted due to Brexit.

The natural order of things is to accept that higher education can make a significant contribution to these challenges. The problem is that policy makers fail to explain the most basic of reasons why people can and cannot enter higher education.

Eighteen is the peak year for applications to, and acceptances from, higher education at universities and colleges. An estimated 37 per cent of 18-year-olds in England applied to start higher education this September, and acceptance numbers could beat the record of 31.3 per cent set a year ago.

However, the number of initial entrants into higher education tails off significantly by 20, from 173,000 at 18 to 23,500 two years later. Crucially, more than 95 per cent of under-21-year-olds in higher education enrol on full-time courses.

But what makes full-time higher education possible is access to maintenance loans. From this September, all maintenance support for full-time students took the form of loans, at a cash cost of £5bn per year.

If maintenance loans weren't available, the contribution of full-time HE to social mobility, skills development and productivity would cease before freshers' week even began. Full-time HE students don't learn on fresh air; they need a bed, food and water!

Meanwhile, participation in part-time higher education has been in decline for a decade. To expand participation, including by those in employment, the Cameron government announced the introduction of maintenance loans from 2018/19, with a planned cost of £0.6bn by 2020/21.

Maintenance loans are everywhere in higher education.

Recently, the Sainsbury Review explained how technical education could contribute to increasing productivity, enhancing social mobility and reducing youth unemployment.

Yet the obvious question is this: will technical education, outside of apprenticeships, be able to make a significant contribution to these challenges without a

comprehensive system of full-time and part-time maintenance loans?

What is a necessity for higher education is surely also one for technical education.

Maintenance loans should be available to students on full-time and part-time technical education courses at levels four and five.

In addition, fee and maintenance loans for technical education at these levels should be available from 18 rather than 19, in line with higher education.

Politics is the art of the possible

Lord Sainsbury argued that the financial rates of return to individuals and the benefits to the wider economy of higher-level technical education will be greater than from many traditional degrees. If this is the case, the Treasury should be prepared to back fee and maintenance loans for those in level four and five technical education.

Maintenance loans are not required, however, for 16- to 19-year-olds on full-time courses up to level three, as support takes the form of grant-based means-tested child benefit, child tax credit and bursaries. The cost of provision is fully funded and fee-loans, rightly, do not apply.

This leaves level three technical education for 19-year-olds and over. Fee loans at level three are already available; maintenance loans should be available as well.

Politics is the art of the possible. Loans are so much easier to sell to the Treasury than grants – especially when the fiscal deficit remains at £55bn and the national debt continues to rise – and getting the chancellor to agree at least to maintenance loans for technical education would be a good starting point.

The Autumn Statement on Wednesday 23 November is the perfect opportunity for the May government to signal the introduction of 18+ fee and maintenance loans for full-time and part-time technical education.

If maintenance loans for technical education increases participation, the case can be made later in parliament – or in manifestos prepared for an early general election – to extend them to other areas of 'adult' further education.

EXPERTS

Good mental health support is vital and can be improved by sharing good practice, says Ian Ashman.

The Association of Colleges’ 2015 survey on mental health in colleges asked members about changes in the incidence of mental health issues amongst students. The intelligence provided by principals was startling.

Two thirds said that the number of students with mental health difficulties had ‘significantly increased’ in the past three years, with a further 20 per cent saying they had ‘slightly increased’. What is perhaps more of a concern is that 75 per cent felt their college had ‘significant numbers’ of students with undisclosed mental health difficulties. Social media was highlighted as the major reason for the increase, with many also quoting exam and financial pressures.

Though the rise is worrying, the fact is that colleges have a long and proud history of working with students who have particular needs or challenges. In fact, many colleges have been providing support on mental health issues for years.

Hackney Community College is an example of this long-running support. It has won the Queens Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education and numerous other awards for its mental health education and advice service, which has also featured strongly in four consecutive Ofsted reports.

At its heart, the service has two well-qualified and experienced advisers. One post is funded through the college’s student support budget and the other through a long-standing



IAN ASHMAN
President of the Association of Colleges

How can colleges best support students with their mental health?

agreement with its acute mental health trust, helping service users to access education and supporting progress into employment. The latter recognises the strong therapeutic value of participation in education.

These services have been developed through strong local partnerships and help equip all staff with the skills needed to support students.

The AoC is developing and sharing other examples of good practice in particular colleges, and will be doing more in this area during the coming year, including at its SEND Conference on December 14.

Examples include City of Liverpool College, where the clinical commissioning group has funded two college-based mental health adviser posts; Highbury College in Portsmouth with its close links with the CCG; and Birmingham, where colleges encouraged the CCG to move to commission services for 16-25s. This helps to ensure students don’t lose out when they move into adult services at the age of 19.

The AoC survey supported my own experience, that there are helpful features of

a strong approach to mental health within colleges.

Developing a whole-college approach to wellbeing, as well as having clear policies and systems in place to support the mental health of students and staff, is considered to be the most effective approach, ensuring that welfare forms a part of all students’ tutorial programmes. This can also create opportunities for providing additional sessions such as dealing with stress and examinations.

A dedicated staff member for mental health or a counsellor with specific training, who can provide one-to-one and group support to students, means there is always somewhere to turn. They can also run mental health awareness and skills training for staff.

It is through good strategic relationships with health commissioners and mental health service providers that colleges are able to provide the support students need.

AoC is making this a priority both nationally and locally. For example, my first formal meeting as president elect was with

ministers and officials of the Departments of Health and Education on this issue. Nationally we have gained representation on the DoH’s Children and Young People Stakeholder forum, to press the case for colleges.

Mental health support has literally been the difference between life and death

Locally we need to increase the representation of colleges on local stakeholder boards and engage with directors of public health, to ensure that services are shaped to the needs of our students, especially as they move between children’s and adult services.

I know from personal experience the vital work colleges do in this area. On more than one occasion a student has told me that the mental health support provided by the college has literally been the difference between life and death.

This is surely a good enough reason to make this a priority for all of us.

Mental health will be one of the themes at the AoC Annual Conference (15-17 November).



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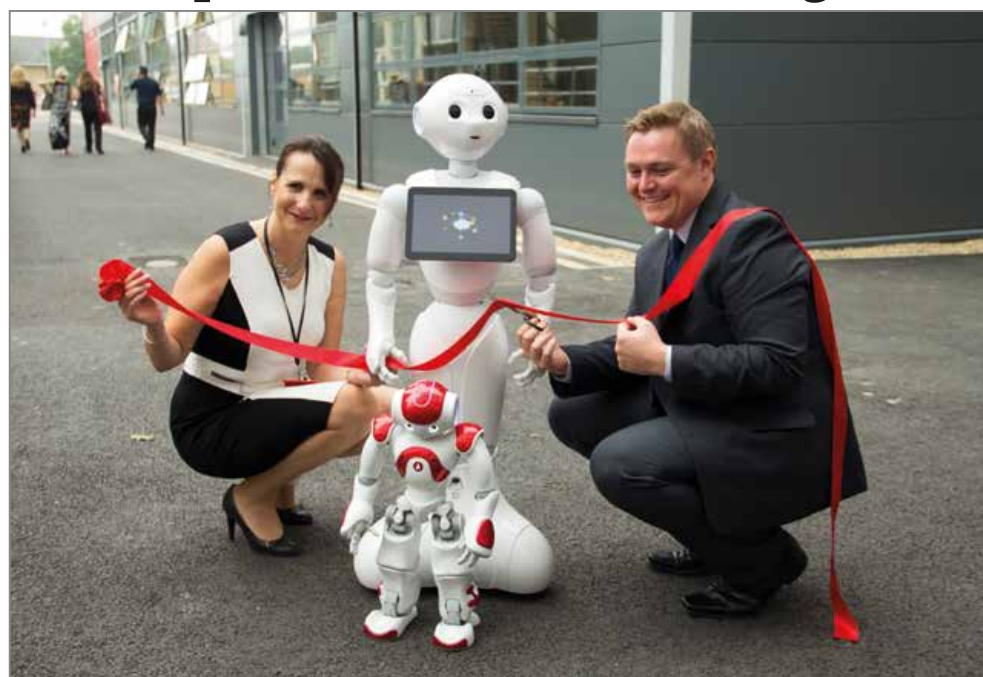
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CAMPUS ROUND-UP *with Sam King*

Robot opens £10m STEM training centre



MP Will Quince opens the STEM Centre with Pepper the robot

A £10m STEM training centre at the Colchester Institute in Essex has been launched by a humanoid robot with help from a human MP.

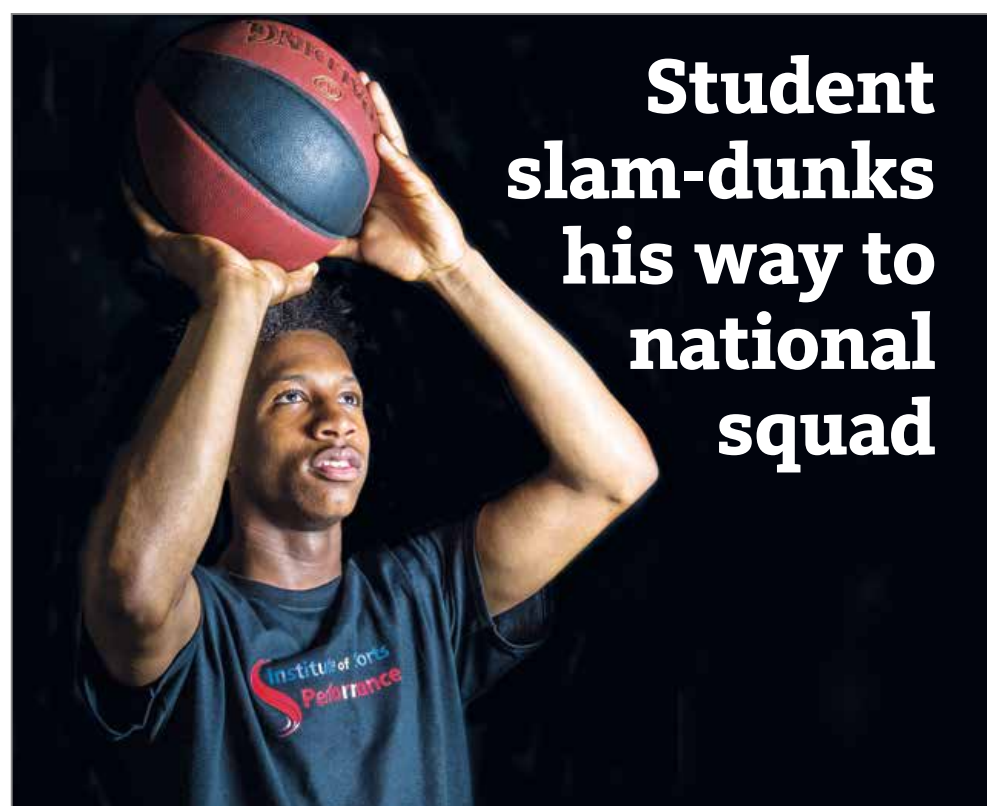
The new South Wing centre, funded by the Colchester Institute and the Skills Funding Agency, will focus on training for skills gaps across construction, engineering and healthcare, and is based at the college's Sheeden Road campus.

The launch was attended by the Conservative MP for Colchester, Will Quince, alongside Pepper the robot – a £16,000 piece of engineering that can recognise emotion and adapt his mood based on those around him.

With an estimated 44,000 recruits needed to fill construction roles in Essex by 2021, the opening of the centre has come at a key time in order to develop a workforce with the relevant skills.

The centre will offer qualifications including City and Guilds qualifications, BTECs, honours degrees and a range of apprenticeships.

Mr Quince said: "It's amazing to have this sort of facility in this town. It's going to provide and contribute significantly to the education of thousands of young and adult students in full and part-time education and apprenticeships from across the region."



17-year-old Rhizwahn Harris

A 17-year-old athlete has been chosen to represent his country after being selected to join England's Under-18 National Basketball Squad.

Stoke-on-Trent College student Rhizwahn Harris is one of 38 boys chosen for the squad, following a gruelling Under-17s regional development tournament at Manchester's National Basketball Performance Centre, which saw players observed closely and assessed on their performance.

Recruits for the England Under-18 women's squad were also announced at the event.

Student slam-dunks his way to national squad

Rhizwahn, who studies level three business at the college, will attend the first national camp in December.

He said: "It's a great honour to represent my country. I love playing basketball, and being able to join an elite team while continuing my studies at Stoke on Trent College is ideal."

Rhizwahn has been coached by professional American basketball player Shawn Jamison, of Harlem Globetrotters fame, who will take up the position of head coach at the college this month.



17-year-old James Connelly has just the ticket

One student's unusual world record attempt

A Barnsley College student is aiming to break a world record for the biggest collection of UK rail tickets.

17-year-old James Connelly, a travel and tourism student at the college, was inspired to set the record after hearing news that the traditional rail ticket will be phased out in favour of a paper receipt.

The current world record holder for the largest collection of rail tickets is German, Frank Helker, who has a collection of 163,235 Edmondson railway tickets that he has amassed since the 1980s. He was awarded the title in 2004.

James is aiming to collect a total of 163,235 train tickets – which will match Frank's record. He already has 6,953 in his collection, and is now requesting help from fellow college students and staff to help him reach his target.

Collection boxes will be placed across the college's Old Mill Lane and Honeywell campuses for train ticket donations.

Programme leader of travel and tourism at the college, Clair Victory, said: "James is interested in the rail industry and hopes to travel in the future. We will do all we can to support James with his challenge, and wish him the best of luck."

Holocaust survivor shares her story with students



Janine Webber shares her story with students

A -level history students at Weston College have heard a harrowing first-hand account of the Holocaust, during a talk from Polish survivor Janine Webber.

Webber was born in Poland in 1932 and after Germany's invasion of the country, she and her family had to endure living in one of the many ghettos set up for Jewish people.

In the years that followed, Webber went into hiding in order to survive and lost numerous family members along the way, with both her father and brother killed by SS officers.

Following the talk, a question-and-answer

session was held with students, allowing them to further understand the Holocaust, and understand the emotional impact of the events that unfolded.

The visit was organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust's outreach programme, which is available to schools across the UK.

Karen Pollock MBE, chief executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust, said: "At the Trust, we impart the history of the Holocaust to young people, to ensure that we honour the memory of those whose lives were lost and take forward the lessons taught by those who survived."

College lecturer breeds beautiful, deadly frogs



Poison dart frogs are known for their minute size, bright colours and highly toxic skin that can result in a trip to A&E – but one daring lecturer at North Shropshire College is on a mission to breed them. Samantha King reports.

At 2.5cm in length and available in a wide variety of colours, the poison dart frog could be considered the perfect pet – if it weren't for the fact that it's one of the most poisonous animals on the planet. Originating from the rainforests of South America, the tiny creatures range in toxicity, with the larger golden variety harbouring enough poison to kill 10 grown men. Laura Pugh, an animal care lecturer at the college's Walford campus, started her unconventional project 12 months ago, overseeing the delicate process from egg, tadpole and froglet, all the way through to



Blue poison dart frog in its natural habitat



Laura Pugh with an adult and baby frog

fully-fledged frog. The particular species bred by Ms Pugh is known as the blue poison dart frog. Discovered in 1968, it is also referred to as the poison arrow frog, after rainforest hunters' practice of rubbing toxins from the frogs' skin on the end of their arrows. This isn't the first time the species has been bred at the college. Three years ago, a donation of two blue poison dart frogs from an ex-student who was joining the marines inspired Ms Pugh and animal technician Simon Metcalfe to attempt to breed the frogs, but they only managed to rear one.

Now, Ms Pugh has kicked the project off again with great success, so far rearing three blue poison dart frogs, with seven tadpoles waiting in the wings. She said: "The process takes a few months, whereas a normal, average frog takes about two to four months. They also have to learn to breathe as well on land after they've been in the water that whole time." The agonising process involves keeping the eggs perpetually moist, monitoring the tadpoles as they develop their front and back legs, and assisting them as they attempt to leave the water and take their very first

breath. Ms Pugh has even invested in a special tadpole flake to feed to the youngsters, with a helping hand from students. "Students have been involved with watching and transferring tadpoles into the water, helping with feeds, and topping up the water when they need to. They've also helped in choosing what would best mimic a natural environment," she said. Despite the frogs' poisonous disposition, students, staff and health and safety officials alike need not worry, as it's their diet that determines their toxicity. In captivity, they are fed on the likes of micro crickets and fruit flies so they remain safe to handle – a milder dinner option than their usual cocktail of fire ants and termites. Despite their tiny size, the frogs have a life span of up to 15 years in captivity, and Ms Pugh is keen to add more varieties to her collection, saying: "I'd like to breed more, and I'd like to actually trade in for some different colours of the dart frogs. Maybe even a strawberry poison dart frog, something like that." FE Week asked the poison dart frogs for a comment, but they politely declined.

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

Jeff Chadd has been appointed assistant principal and head of sixth form at Barrow Sixth Form College, as it undergoes a merger with Furness College. Furness College and Barrow Sixth Form College, in Cumbria, merged in August as a result of recent area reviews. They will form one partnership, but still retain their separate sites and identities. There will also be a whole new executive structure, with Mr Chadd based at the Rating Lane campus in Barrow. Mr Chadd has worked at the sixth form college for 22 years teaching languages, and is the former deputy principal. The board of governors has also seen changes following the merger, with four governors from the sixth form moving to the new board – which will hold its first meeting in November. Speaking of his appointment, Mr Chadd said: "Under a merged college we have the opportunity to expand the curriculum to keep pace with what students and employers are looking for. "My aim will be to strengthen that offer

to ensure we best meet the needs of young people, adults and employers through excellent education and skills training." Meanwhile, David Gallagher has been appointed as commercial director at training course provider, Babington Group. Founded in 1974, the group provides training across a wide range of sectors, covering everything from accounting to hairdressing. The company's mission statement says it

wants to inspire 'everyone to realise their full potential by providing training and opportunities to improve quality of life, and thereby create a better future'. Prior to his new role, Mr Gallagher was managing director of Employment and Skills Innovation Services, a consultancy business which he set up in 2012 – and now plans to sell. The business supports local enterprise partnerships, training organisations, employers and sector bodies to innovate within the education, employment and skills markets. In his new role, Mr Gallagher will be leading on growth across the business, with an emphasis on the government's apprenticeship reforms, and how these changes will impact the sector. Speaking of his new appointment, he said: "Babington are real pioneers and have

a genuine passion and belief in making that difference. I'm looking forward to the challenge, and to help build on the collaborations and knowledge that is already taking place." Specialist education and care provider the Aurora Group has appointed Kathryn Rudd OBE as its new managing director of adult services. The Aurora Group is a provider of education and care services for children, young people and adults with special needs, and has adult care homes in both Cambridge and Bristol. Prior to accepting her new position, Ms Rudd was at the National Star College in Cheltenham, where she worked for 16 years. In 2015, she and the rest of the senior leadership team at the college were the Association of Colleges Beacon Award Winners for Outstanding Leadership of Improvement. She is also the chair of the National Association of Specialist Colleges. In her new role, Ms Rudd will oversee the adult services team across the company's growing group of schools, colleges, transition services and adult care homes. Speaking of her new role, she said: "This was a real opportunity to make a positive difference to the lives of thousands of young people and adults across the UK. "We will be enabling people to build on their strengths and will be putting the individual, not the disability, first."



JEFF CHADD



DAVID GALLAGHER



KATHRYN RUDD

Lancaster & Morecambe College

Proud of Who We Are



Principal & Chief Executive, Salary c. £100k negotiable

Owing to the retirement of the current post holder, the College is seeking to appoint a new Principal & Chief Executive who will build on achievements so far, including a strong financial base. The successful applicant will have a proven track record within a college setting of driving teaching and learning strategies for improved learner outcomes, and will be an exceptional communicator with students, staff, governors, partners and wider stakeholders.

We are a small general FE college, focused on technical and professional provision, with a turnover of £12m, 1,434 full time and 2,401 part time students.

The College has undertaken major campus redevelopment work in recent years to improve both the practical teaching areas and the student social and study areas, and the College is justly proud of the resulting high quality learning and work environment.

We are a college which contributes to workforce skills in our local and wider community and our vision is to remain an independent college linked directly into the employment needs of the area. Over 90% of our learners have a successful outcome, either moving into the workplace and starting a career or successfully entering Higher Education, allowing learners at all levels to meet their personal aspirations.

This is an exciting opportunity for an enterprising and dynamic individual to lead the college to even greater success as it embarks on new challenges and opportunities, as well as offering the prospect of living and working in an area of outstanding natural beauty close to the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks.

Closing date for applications is 4pm on Friday 14th October 2016 and selection will be held at the College on 10th and 11th November 2016.

If you wish to have an informal discussion about the College or post, please contact David Wood, current Principal & Chief Executive on **01524 521289** or email **d.wood@lmc.ac.uk** Alternatively, you may arrange a discussion with **Roy Thorpe, Chair of Governors, via the Clerk.**

Application forms and further details can be obtained from Oona Cushen, Clerk to the Corporation, Lancaster & Morecambe College, Morecambe Road, Lancaster, LA1 2TY. Tel: 01524 521238 or email o.cushen@lmc.ac.uk



Maths Tutor, GCSE and Functional Skills (0.5)

**£25,856 - £29,112 per annum,
(pro rata to £12,928 - £14,556)**

Energetic and driven, your experience in teaching Maths at GCSE level will ensure you engage our learners from the start. Your lessons must be effective and innovative, and help all achieve success at this level. You will also have proven experience teaching Maths Functional Skills, and be used to working across a College site, coordinating your strategies and best practise with your colleagues.

Essential for this role, you will hold a PGCE/Cert Ed and a Degree in Maths or related area, and be able to demonstrate positive results from previous teaching roles. Having studied the Level 5 GCSE enhancement programme would be an advantage.

If you feel you have the skills and experience for this role we would love to hear from you.

Closing date for receipt of applications is 12 noon, Wednesday 12 October 2016.
Please email your CV and a covering letter detailing your suitability for the role to:
human.resources@bsdc.ac.uk

**Burton and
South Derbyshire
College**

ENGINEERING CURRICULUM MANAGER
UP TO £30,000



KITS is an Ofsted Grade 2
Independent Training Provider
specialising in engineering based in
Brighouse West Yorkshire.

You will manage a team of Instructors/Assessors, be responsible for learner discipline, day to day operations of the Engineering Skills Training Department, manage curriculum planning, delivery and resources and be involved with quality assurance.

To apply please send your CV and covering Letter to info@kits-training.co.uk

The successful Engineering Training Manager will have the following qualifications and experience:

- Teaching qualification DTLLS, Cert Ed or PGCE or equivalent (Essential)
- Mechanical Engineering qualification at Level 3 or above (Essential)
- Engineering background (Essential)
- Previous experience in managing in a similar environment
- An excellent track record in managing people
- Strong organisational skills

For your commitment KITS is offering the following:

- A competitive salary of up to £30,000 (Depending on qualifications and experience)
- Up to 10% Performance Related Pay
- 25 days holiday
- Contributory Pension Scheme at 8.5%

English and Maths Non-Leadership Teaching Roles

We are continuing to offer free recruitment advertising for all English and Maths teaching roles.

Get in touch with Bridget for more details.

To advertise with us contact Bridget Stockdale on
020 3740 1577 or bridget.stockdale@feweek.co.uk



AVIATION HERITAGE SKILLS OFFICER

Brooklands Museum is seeking to fill a new post to develop, deliver and manage an Aviation Heritage Skills Training Programme for volunteers and participants from external organisations. This is an important part of the Activity Programme for the Heritage Lottery-Funded Brooklands Aircraft Factory and Race Track Revival Project.

Candidates should have a good educational qualification, preferably to tertiary level, and a minimum three years' experience of working in the aviation industry as an Engineer, Technician or in an Aeronautical Engineering teaching position. Experience of delivering training or facilitating learning events to various audiences will be an advantage.



The role is part-time 3 days a week, flexible. The salary is c £35,000pa pro-rata, with the post starting as soon as possible. This post is initially funded for 5 years.

Application by CV & covering letter to: Virginia Smith, Learning & Visitor Services Manager Brooklands Museum, Brooklands Road, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 0QN

Closing date: 17th October 2016
Interviews: Week commencing on Monday 24th of October 2016
www.brooklandsmuseum.com

HEAD OF STUDENT SERVICES

PERMANENT, FULL TIME
SALARY: £42,625 TO £46,275 PER ANNUM

Hertford Regional College is seeking a Head of Student Services.

You will have overall responsibility for the on-going development and management of the Student Services department and be responsible for the quality of the provision offered, ensuring good value for money by efficient and effective management. The role will lead a department that always responds to the diverse and changing needs of the learners, potential learners, employers and other college stakeholders.

You will be a leader with proven track record of managing high quality delivery within Student Services; the successful candidate will have experience of middle management within the FE sector and also of management to raise standards in line with OFSTED.

To find out more about HRC, please visit our website: www.hrc.ac.uk

To apply, please go to <http://www.hrc.ac.uk/about/careers-at-hrc/> and apply directly on the vacancy.

CLOSING DATE: 14 OCTOBER 2016 | INTERVIEW DATE: 03 NOVEMBER 2016



Hertford Regional College



HEAD OF ENGLISH & MATHS

£30,000 - £40,000 per annum

SCL Education and Training (SCL) is the leading private training provider of sports based education.

The main purpose of this role is to manage, support and develop the English & Maths delivery within our Education and Training Department.

The ideal candidate will have excellent English and Maths skills, with a high level of writing and numeracy, along with the ability to build good working relationships with learners and lecturers.

Candidates must have a teaching qualification and experience of GCSEs is essential. Additional experience of Functional Skills would be advantageous.

To apply please email your CV to workforscl@wearescl.co.uk.

SCL is an exciting and dynamic place to work. We value the ideas and suggestions of our staff and look to them to help our business expand and become an even bigger name in education. Our aim is to help improve education through sport and deliver a range of high-quality services.

Protocol

Excellence in FE



Maths & English jobs nationwide...

Functional Skills Maths and English Lecturer
Wakefield

Part time - 10.5 hours per week
£16:00 - £17:00 per hour + statutory holiday pay
Must have: Relevant teaching qualification, and level 3 qualification in specialist area

Functional Skills Maths and English Lecturer
Isleworth

Part time - 21 hours per week
£21:00 - £22:00 per hour + statutory holiday pay
Must have: Relevant teaching qualification, relevant degree in specialist area

GCSE Maths and English Lecturer
Telford

Part time - 10 – 15 hours per week
£17:00 - £18:00 per hour + statutory holiday pay
Must have: Relevant teaching qualification, level 3 qualification in specialist area

GCSE & Functional Skills Maths Lecturer
Birmingham

Part time - 4 hours per week
£21:00 per hour + statutory holiday pay
Must have: Relevant teaching qualification, level 3 qualification in specialist area

Lecturer – Maths, ESOL & ICT
Croydon

Part time - 15 hours per week
£18:00 - £20:00 per hour + statutory holiday pay
Must have: Relevant teaching qualification, level 3 qualification in specialist area

Lecturer – GCSE & Functional Skills English
Slough

Part time - 11 hours per week
£19:00 - £20:00 per hour + statutory holiday pay
Must have: Relevant teaching qualification, level 3 qualification in specialist area

LECTURER IN GCSE MATHS & GCSE ENGLISH

FULL TIME: 37 HOURS PER WEEK

SALARY: UP TO £33,187

Central Bedfordshire College is one of the most successful colleges in Bedfordshire and has just completed a £15m capital build programme to provide state of the art facilities for its vocational students. The college achieved “Good” from its latest Ofsted rating in March this year for a second time and received praise for continuous improvements in teaching and learning that are reflected in the outcomes for students, most of whom achieve their intended employment or next level of study.

We have great opportunities available for September 2016 for a Lecturer in GCSE Maths & GCSE English to deliver effective, up-to-date and stimulating learning opportunities, leading to success and progression for our learners. The right candidate will underpin the teaching activity with timely completion of all administration duties and professional development.

Be part of the new look, feel and culture of the college and the drive to enhance every aspect of teaching and learning and the student experience.

Interested? Please apply by completing our on-line application form available at www.centralbeds.ac.uk/work-for-us.

CV's should be sent to recruitment@centralbeds.ac.uk

All roles are subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure.



Maths and English Functional Skills Tutors required

- Location: Aylesbury or High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire
- Ref: TM210916
- Closing date: 12th October 2016
- Contract type: Casual Worker
- Salary: £Hourly rate dependent upon qualifications and experience

Buckinghamshire Adult Learning is the main provider of part-time learning opportunities in the county.

We are looking for part-time tutors to deliver classroom-based English and maths sessions in our main centres in Aylesbury or High Wycombe.

How to apply?

For more information about these roles, please contact:
Tessa Murray on 07921 940496 or email tmurray@buckscc.gov.uk



www.adultlearningbcc.ac.uk



Riverside College

We are looking for talented individuals with a commitment to excellence, to undertake the following role:

GCSE and Functional Skills English Lecturer

Full time, Permanent

The qualified lecturer scale starts at **£23,832 rising to £35,982**

We welcome applications from NQTs

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS Disclosure

Application forms and job descriptions are available on our website www.riversidecollege.ac.uk

E-mail: HRUnit@riversidecollege.ac.uk

Closing date: 12 noon, Thursday 6th October 2016

Riverside College
Widnes & Runcorn



Part-time Tutors Required

Posts: GCSE Maths Tutor
GCSE English Tutor
Maths Functional Skills Tutor
English Functional Skills Tutor

Based at: Any of the College Centres

The Learning Centre Bexley is Bexley Council's main provider of Adult Education, providing education, guidance and support to over 8,000 students.

The College offers over 1000 part-time courses across the borough and we are constantly reviewing and expanding our programme.

Vacancies have arisen for experienced tutors to join the GCSE Maths, English and Functional Skills departments to teach adult students.

The GCSE Maths post would involve teaching at Foundation and at Higher levels. All posts involve teaching at various sites, days and times.

Applicants should have expertise and experience of teaching the subject. You must hold a relevant subject qualification and a teaching qualification or be willing to work towards one.

Successful applicants will be required to complete a DBS check if they are teaching vulnerable adults or students under the age of 16.

If you would like to discuss this post please call Nick Little on 020 8298 2843.

For an APPLICATION PACK email a request to: personnel@tlcbexley.ac.uk

Closing date for Applications: **Friday 29 October 2016**

For more information about the college visit:
www.tlcbexley.ac.uk



Newcastle City Learning

ADULT LEARNING AND SKILLS TUTOR (ENGLISH AND MATHS FOR APPRENTICES)

**£23,166 - £26,556 per annum,
pro rata (Hourly teaching pay £21.94).
18.5 hours per week.**

Newcastle City Learning wishes to recruit a new English and Maths tutor to support our expanding apprenticeship delivery.

You must have experience of delivering Functional English and Maths up to Level 2 and a proven track record of delivering qualifications to high success and timely completion rates.

Experience of working with apprentices in the workplace is desirable.

This position will require you to manage a caseload of learners and employers and work across multiple employer sites. To apply you will need to hold both teaching and subject specialism qualifications in at least one of the specialisms as well as demonstrating relevant experience.

Use of own vehicle, current valid driving licence, or access to mobility transport and a willingness to travel are essential for this role.

We are committed to protecting and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expect all staff to share this commitment. This post is working in regulated activity. If you are successful we will undertake additional recruitment checks which will include a check to see if you have had any criminal convictions, a check of police information and we will check the barred list(s). It is a criminal offence for a barred individual to apply for a job in regulated activity.

Apply online at:

www.northeastjobs.org.uk/job/Adult_Learning_and_Skills_Tutor/155605

Closing Date: 6 October 2016

Sessional English GCSE/Functional Skills Tutor

must be fully qualified and have experience of teaching adults

£28.21 per hour

If you are looking for a new challenge and would like to utilise your skills and knowledge whilst developing your own career, this opportunity will be rewarding and fulfilling. In this role you will teach English GCSE and English Functional Skills, to enable learners to fulfil their aspirations and improve their work opportunities. Our learner group are adults

The successful candidate will demonstrate the qualities to deliver innovative and creative teaching for GCSE and Functional Skills to a variety of learning levels

If you have exceptional communication skills and the ability to prioritise and coordinate a challenging workload, this may be the right role for you. You will be a self-starter, who can quickly develop a good rapport with a variety of people. You will also need to be suitably qualified and an experienced teacher who will bring knowledge of delivering this subject to a high standard

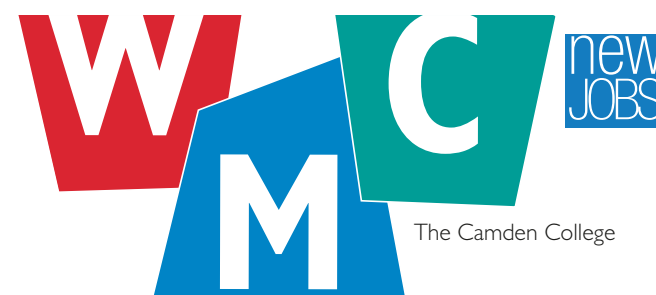
This role will be based at our main site in Camden, two minutes' walk from Mornington Crescent

This role requires the appointed person to undertake an enhanced DBS check

The closing date for applications is Friday 7 October 2016

Interview and assessment for this role will take place Tuesday 18 October 2016

WMC – the Camden College, is the oldest surviving adult education institute in Europe and was founded in 1854. Our mission is to provide diverse, enriching and enjoyable lifelong learning, including skills for work, in a supportive environment for adults in Camden and the local area



To apply for this role, please review the job description and download, complete and return an application form to recruitment@wmcollege.ac.uk or by post to:
HR Department, WMC – The Camden College, 44 Crowndale Road, London, NW1 1TR

When completing the application form, in your supporting statement, refer to each of the criteria in the person specification, stating how you meet the requirements and provide an example, or you are unlikely to be shortlisted

Interviews and assessments will take place on Thursday 14 July 2016 - please ensure that you are available to attend on this day if selected



WMC actively strives to be an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community. All appointments will be solely on merit. Registered Charity No. 312803.
Tube: Mornington Crescent 2mins / Camden Town, Euston & St Pancras 10 mins



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OUTSTANDING!
College**



**COMMITTED
TO EQUALITY
EMPLOYER**



FAB

Federation of Awarding Bodies

Media partner

FE Week

CONFERENCE, AWARDS AND EXHIBITION

20th & 21st October 2016 • Marriott Hotel, Leicester

Be more informed and better connected

The only two-day conference aimed at those working in or with awarding bodies

Facing unprecedented change in the industry, FAB 2016 is the only place to get together with colleagues to hear the latest from industry experts, and discuss the issues and implications with your peers over dinner or coffee.

Keynote speakers include:

- Baroness Burt of Solihull
- Sally Collier – Chief Regulator at Ofqual
- Warwick Sharp – Deputy Director, Head of 16-19 Policy and Technical Education Division at DfE
- Mark Dawe – Chief Executive at AELP
- Nick Linfood – Editor of FE Week
- Shakira Martin – Vice President Further Education at NUS

A choice of seminars

- Ofqual's regulatory approach
- Adult education budget, loans and the post-16 skills plan – joining up the dots
- An update on education in Wales
- Here we go again: some reflections on the Post 16 Skills Plan
- How to make purchasing qualifications easier and legally compliant
- Leading your organisation through structural change
- The end-point assessment of apprenticeship standards and the register of assessment organisations
- European VET tools – continuity and change
- The continuing contribution of NOS skills development
- Professional and vocational qualifications in Asia (Hong Kong, China, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore and Vietnam): markets and opportunities
- The application of validity theory in vocational awarding organisations

For more information and to book, visit www.awarding.org.uk

FE Week Sudoku challenge

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

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next edition

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

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 Richard Hodgson, HE Development Manager, New College Durham