

FE Week



**MIXED VIEWS ON
TECH AND FE BILL**

PAGES 12-13



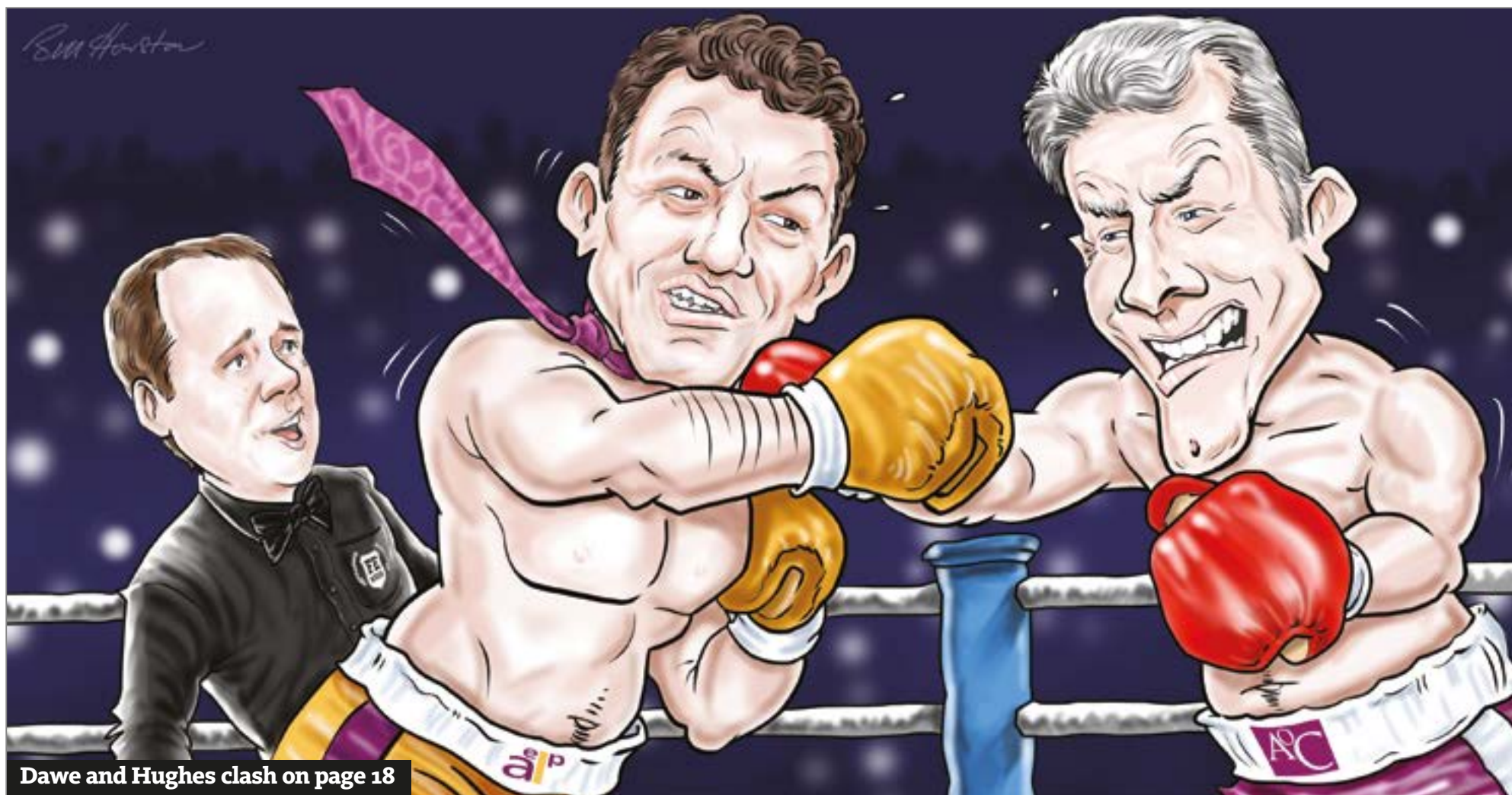
**SATISFACTION
WITH COLLEGES**

PAGES 8-9



**PRINCIPAL ON THE
14-16 'WIN-WIN'**

PAGE 24



Dawe and Hughes clash on page 18

COLLEGE SECTOR IGNORING MINISTER'S CASH WARNING AS PRIVATE PROVIDERS CLEAN UP

**TOTAL APPRENTICESHIP CASH
AVAILABLE TO COLLEGES**

LAST YEAR
37%



THIS YEAR
32%

4.4 PERCENTAGE POINT FALL

JUDE BURKE @JUDEBURKE77

EXCLUSIVE ON PAGE 8

ncfe.

let's get to work.

Come and visit NCFE at Stand F4, Hall 3 Foyer. Take a seat, charge your phone and talk to us!

Visit ncfe.org.uk @NCFE



FE WEEK TEAM

Editor:	Nick Linford
Head designer:	Nicky Phillips
Designer:	Matthew Willsons
Features editor:	Cath Murray
Deputy editor:	Paul Offord
Reporters:	Alix Robertson
	Billy Camden
	Jude Burke
	Sam King
Photographer:	Ellis O'Brien
Financials:	Helen Neilly
Sales manager:	Vikrant Bassi
Sales executive:	Bridget Stockdale
Administration:	Frances Ogefere Dell
PA to managing director:	Victoria Boyle

Contributors:	
David Lammy	Mark Dawe
Tom Richmond	Alison Maynard
Sally Alexander	Angela Rayner

Managing director: Shane Mann

And tweet us your thoughts @feweek

Contact the editor

Please inform the *FE Week* editor of any errors or issues of concern regarding this publication.

Email news@feweek.co.uk with Error/Concern in the subject line.

Please include the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is.

SUBSCRIBE

For an annual subscription to *FE Week* for just £75 visit www.feweek.co.uk and click on 'subscribe' at the top of the page.

www.feweek.co.uk

ADVERTISE WITH US

If you are interested in placing a product or job advert in a future edition please click on the 'advertise' link at the top of the page on feweek.co.uk or contact:

advertising@feweek.co.uk

T: 020 81234 778

Disclaimer

FE Week is owned and published by Lsect Ltd. The views expressed within the publication are those of the authors named, and are not necessarily those of FE Week, Lsect Ltd or any of its employees. While we try to ensure that the information we provide is correct, mistakes do occur and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of our material.

The design of the printed newspaper and of the website is copyright of Lsect Ltd and material from the newspaper should not be reproduced without prior permission. If you wish to reproduce an article from either the printed paper or the website, both the article's author and FE Week must be referenced (to not do so would be an infringement on copyright).

Lsect Ltd is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites linked to.

Please address any complaints to the editor. We are fully committed to the Press Complaints Commission's Code of Practice. If you have a complaint which cannot be resolved by the editor, write to the Press Complaints Commission, Halton House, 22–23 Holborn, London EC1N 2JD

FE WEEK IS PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF



besa
BRITISH EDUCATIONAL
SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION

**Learning & Skills Events,
Consultancy and Training Ltd**

**161-165 Greenwich High Road
London SE10 8JA**

T: 020 8123 4778

E: news@feweek.co.uk

NEWS

BOLTON COLLEGE PLEADS FOR APPRENTICE REPRIEVE

PAUL OFFORD @PAULOFFORD

EXCLUSIVE

A desperate principal has pleaded with the Skills Funding Agency to relax rules that would prevent Bolton College from recruiting new apprentices from May next year.

On October 25 the SFA launched an application process for the new register of apprenticeship training providers, but those with the lowest Ofsted rating for the apprenticeships are barred from applying.

Ofsted rated the college as grade three overall, but declared it ‘inadequate’ (grade four) for its apprenticeships in March last year.

Bolton College’s principal Marie Gilluley (pictured) has now sent a six-page letter setting out her case to Kirsty Evans, deputy director of funding and policy for the Skills Funding Agency.

FE Week understands that the agency has subsequently engaged in “positive dialogue” with Bolton College – although neither body officially confirmed this – relating to her request to be allowed to carry on running the training.

Ms Gilluley warned in her letter that “the use of the Ofsted grade alone, rather than more recent available data as an indicator of quality” of providers allowed to run the training will have “serious consequences” preventing Bolton from running



apprenticeships.

“In our case the historic grade does not reflect the considerable improvement which has recently taken place,” she claimed.

“For some providers, there may be the opposite effect. For new providers there will be no Ofsted grade.”

This approach was “unfair and inconsistent”, she added, with other measures “encouraged by SFA to be used by providers, such as success rates, and employer and learner satisfaction scores, all of which show us to be performing very highly”.

She elaborated, explaining: “Our most recent data shows the college three per cent above the national average for overall outcomes and seven per cent above for timely outcomes.”

The government wants the new register to work alongside the existing register of

training organisations.

Its rules state that providers are ineligible if they were rated ‘inadequate’ for apprenticeships within the last three years.

They can still apply if they were ranked ‘inadequate’ overall, but grade (‘requires improvement’) three or better for apprenticeships.

Ms Gilluley said: “The three-year window that has been specified can result in provision from as far back as 2013/14 being used to form the judgement – this is the case for Bolton.”

This year Bolton College has been allocated just under £2 million for apprenticeship provision.

“Between 2014/15 and 2015/16 academic years, we have increased our apprenticeship starts by 40 per cent and had an in-year request of over £100,000 granted for our 16-to-18 learners,” she said.

She pointed out that the college is due for an Ofsted reinspection, which it understands could happen within the next four months, and expects a better apprenticeships grade.

“We are confident that all the improvement points in the previous inspection have been addressed,” she added.

“Our outcomes for learners on both apprenticeships and class-based provision have increased significantly.”

An SFA spokesperson told FE Week that “we do not comment on individual cases”, adding: “The SFA will be responding directly to Bolton College in due course.”

Gazelle’s underpants partner hits the skids

ALIX ROBERTSON @ALIXROBERTSON4

The company that the Gazelle Colleges Group employed to run a competition to help teach young people entrepreneurial skills has been dissolved.

Pants to Poverty, a fair trade underwear brand, ran the contest, initially named the ‘Pantpreneur Challenge’ and then the ‘PantpreneurSHIP Challenge’, in partnership with Gazelle.

The challenge encouraged college students across the country to work on business projects that involved designing, marketing and selling custom-made underwear between 2012 and 2015.

In its first year, the challenge involved 15 colleges, and over 250 students designed Olympics-themed pants.

It is claimed that more than 100,000 students engaged with the competition over the three years it ran, but according to Companies House, Pants to Poverty was dissolved on October 11 this year.

Pants to Poverty Ltd was launched in the Make Poverty History youth movement in 2005, as an ethical fashion company selling underwear made of Fair Trade cotton.

It claimed to support 5,000 farmers in India,



Pants to Poverty at Gatehead college

and students that won the company’s entrepreneurial challenge were given the opportunity to visit the country to live and work with the farmers and factory workers who made the underwear they had sold.

FE Week called the phone number on the Pants to Poverty website to ask about its closure, but found it was no longer in use, while messages to Pants to Poverty founder Ben Ramsden via LinkedIn had received no response at the time of going to press.

However, in describing the ‘Pantpreneur

Challenge’ on his LinkedIn page, Mr Ramsden wrote: “With crushing government cuts in the FE sector, the programme was put on hold after three fabulous years.”

There are also questions surrounding the current membership of the Gazelle College Group.

Of the 11 members currently listed on its website, only five would confirm that they are still members and have no intention of ending their membership.

Two colleges said they have left the group, one is in the process of leaving, one refused to say either way – and the final two didn’t respond.

See next week’s edition for a full update on the Gazelle Colleges Group.

Marsden: Key questions on IfA still dodged

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

The government’s handling of the new Institute for Apprenticeships has been “shambolic” according to shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden, after it evaded a series of parliamentary enquiries about its capacity.

He says that questions he asked about staffing, resources and appointments in a letter posted on November 1 were dodged.

His queries were prompted by the government’s plans to expand the remit of the Institute, which is set to launch next April, to cover technical education as well as apprenticeships, which were first set out in the Technical and Further Education Bill announced October 27.

But despite the tight timeframe and its new responsibility, he was told only that the “detailed structure” of the IfA was still in development and that the government was “therefore not yet able to set out initial staff numbers”.

It is now “absolutely pressing” that the plans are finalised, Mr Marsden told FE Week.

“The questions I put down were based on a very real concern about the fairly shambolic history of the government’s handling of the IfA – and as important, what they’re going to do about it imminently,” he said.



He also urged the government to speed up the recruitment process for a permanent IfA boss.

“Peter Lauener, for all his skills and experience as a senior civil servant, cannot be expected to be carrying this job until the middle of next year, as if it was another bauble on his Christmas tree,” he said.

Mr Lauener, who is also the boss of the Skills Funding Agency and the Education

Funding Agency, was named in September as shadow chief executive for two days a week.

So far, only shadow appointments have been made for senior IfA posts, and official information about its scope and capacity is not widely available.

At a recent select committee grilling, the apprenticeships and skills minister Robert Halfon and Department for Education mandarin David Hill were asked whether the

role should be full time “given the importance of making sure the institute is up to speed as quickly as possible”.

Mr Halfon assured MPs that the chief executive, chair and board would in post by next April, while Mr Hill said recruitment was underway for many of the key roles, with the board expected to be in place before Christmas.

The latest questions about capacity at the IfA come after former skills minister Nick Boles told senior FE figures at a Policy Exchange event in January that he had “no idea — or if I had an idea I’m not going to share it” about how big the IfA should be.

FE Week later discovered in May that the apprenticeship body was only planning to have 40 members of staff until 2019/20.

A leaked document called ‘BIS2020 — Finance and Headcount outline’, seen by FE Week, indicated that the IfA would take on 40 employees in 2016/17 — and the number would not increase over the next three years.

And a job advert for the permanent chair, posted by the Cabinet Office in early October, said the institute would have an estimated annual budget of £8 million until 2020.

The role itself would be part-time for two days a week, and would pay £56,000 a year.

The government advertised for eight board members during the summer, with a salary of up to £15,000 available for each position.



FREE COFFEE

SPILL THE BEANS

Come and grab your delicious free coffee from the FE Week Spill The Beans coffee bar, exclusively at AoC conference.

Visit us on stand F15, in Hall 3 Foyer (registration). Oh...and of course they'll be an edition of FE Week waiting there for you.

Always wanted to feature in an FE Week cartoon?

FE Week cartoons are not just for the likes of David Hughes. On Wednesday at AoC Annual Conference we'll be bringing FE Week cartoonist, Bill Houston, along to capture the fun you're having in cartoon style! So pop along to FE Week's Spill The Beans coffee shop and see what you look like caricatured.

10:30 - 16:00, WEDNESDAY, STAND F15, AOC CONFERENCE

NOT TO BE MISSED AOC CONFERENCE BREAKOUT SESSION FOR DELEGATES

PRESENTED BY NICK LINFORD

FUNDING FUNDING FUNDING – WHAT THE EFA AND SFA WON'T TELL YOU

Are you a college leader with an interest in funding policy?
Do you need help separating the worthless wheat from the critical chaff?

Would you like to find out if it's possible to put the 'fun' into funding?


If you answered yes to these three questions then get along to this workshop. Nick Linford, author of several practical guides to FE funding, will explore the latest funding news and implications for EFA (Study Programme) and SFA (adult education budget, loans and apprenticeships). People will be talking about this afterwards for months – that's a threat not a promise...

TUES, NOV 15, 2016 12:15 - 13:15

HALL 6A

NOT TO BE MISSED, EXCLUSIVELY AT

AoC Annual Conference & Exhibition,
15-17 November 2016, The ICC Birmingham



NEWS

The Skills Show is back and it's bigger than ever

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Strictly Come Dancing stars and the apprenticeships minister will be among more than 90,000 people heading to NEC Birmingham for the fifth annual Skills Show next week.

Visitors will be taking part in over 50 hands-on activities, receiving careers advice, and watching the country's most talented apprentices and learners compete in finals of the national skills competitions, from November 17 to 19.

Employers including Jaguar Land Rover, NHS Careers, IBM and the BBC will be there throughout offering careers advice.

The BBC stand will feature professional dancers from this year's Strictly Come Dancing, who will talk to young visitors about how they made it to the big time, and will perform on the main stage before lunchtime on Thursday.

This year's Skills Show will also for the first time offer "accelerated learning" – a continuing professional development offer for colleges to learn how competition activities can be used in their curriculum.

Neil Bentley, chief executive of WorldSkills UK – the organisation that runs the Skills Show – explained: "There will be three 45-minute taster sessions available throughout the show to demonstrate how competition activity can be used both to increase or improve teaching practice and to raise standards through teaching and learning."

Visitors can also take advantage of the show's new "sign-up Saturday", where people can sign up to college courses, training, apprenticeships and even apply for live job vacancies.

Also new to 2016 will be the Skills Show "pre-show". Young people have been encouraged to take part in a Careers Cloud before attending the show – a test where visitors answer questions and it comes up with their "perfect career choice".

Mr Bentley said: "It is all about getting visitors prepared and thinking about what

specific events they want to take part in and see during their time at the Skills Show."

The finals of the national skills competitions will as ever be at the heart of the show.

They will run across the three days and will involve 530 apprentices and learners taking part in 61 different skill areas ranging from floristry to forensic science.

Each category will have its own hub, with have-a-gos, spotlight stages, featured exhibitors and careers advice.

Top-scoring competitors will be recognised during a glitzy awards ceremony on the Saturday evening, hoping their efforts get them talent-spotted as a potential competitor at WorldSkills 2019 in Kazan, Russia.

With an estimated 90,000 visitors expected over the three days, Mr Bentley said the competitors will "certainly feel the pressure".

"The audience size is part of the learning from the competition cycle," Mr Bentley told FE Week. "It is not just about being technically excellent, it is about being able to work under pressure, being able to work in a team, in a specific environment where you are observed."

"Those are the key employability skills that will stand any competitor in great stead with any employer."

There are also five inclusive skill competitions for students with physical and learning difficulties.

These will include a total of 33 competitors taking part in carpentry, catering, ICT, health and social care, and media competitions on the Saturday.

Robert Halfon will also attend the show for the first time on Thursday, as part of his new role as the UK's apprenticeships and skills minister.

He might be tempted to have a go at one of the more than 50 hands-on activities available to try, including furniture design, electric installation, car bodywork, nail art, and media make-up among others.

With the NEC Birmingham scaled to the size of 10 football pitches, Mr Bentley recommends visitors "bring some comfortable shoes".



Neil Bentley



Winners of the skills show 2015 take to the stage to celebrate their awards



Daryl Head competing in automotive engineering at last year's skills show



Families take part in a have a go activity at Sheet Metal Technology in the building zone at last year's skills show



Yasmin Impson competing in stonemasonry at the skills show 2015



Ashlea Gissing competing in the skills show 2015 beauty competition



Strictly Come Dancing professional dancers at the launch of the 2016 show. From left: Oksana Platero, Gorka Marquez, Chloe Hewett, AJ Pritchard, Katya Jones and Neil Jones


EXCLUSIVE MINISTERIAL FEATURE


Minister on a monthly mission by Robert Halfon

 I've been appointed as Minister for apprenticeships and skills. I am very excited and very happy. My first speech as a backbencher in the House of Commons was on apprenticeships – I'd never have thought that one day I'd be responsible for an area I am so passionate about.

- I know it is important to set priorities for my brief straight away. For me they are:
- improving the prestige of technical education, including apprenticeships;
 - helping people get on the ladder of opportunity, especially those from a socially disadvantaged background;
 - Making the funding system sustainable in the long term, through the apprenticeship levy;
 - reaching three million new apprentices by 2020;
 - raising the quality of technical education, making sure it provides people with the skills they need for long term success.

I spent the last days of July in teach-in after teach-in, learning every possible aspect and area of my brief. I quickly found that there are some truly outstanding people working in my department, who are really dedicated to transforming the skills base of our country.

 I am working on the announcement we made in August on apprenticeship funding. The document states clearly that we are consulting on the funding and that we will consider all responses with attention. I am looking forward to hearing all the views from stakeholders to help us shape the final policy.

 I continue with teach-ins, keen to get to grips with this exciting policy area. I carry on working on the apprenticeship funding proposals, as they need to be finalised by the end of October. But I am also working on other areas of the brief: careers, FE, skills. The ministerial boxes start coming, as every day I'm given a number of submissions to discuss with officials – everything from changes that might be happening in FE colleges to proposals on helping people from disadvantaged backgrounds progress in their careers.

I make the decision to attend a Parliamentary rally organised by FE Week, supported by David Lammy and Gordon Marsden, on funding for frameworks for 16- to 18-year-olds to be protected in the new system. I feel it is important to listen to their concerns.

The end of September brings my first

tour as minister: from Durham to Cambridgeshire, via Blackpool, I learn about great colleges and amazing opportunities.

Although I have visited my local college in Harlow over 50 times since being an MP, I know that it is incredibly important to see what's going on all over the country. I learn more from what I see on the ground than from almost anything else and meeting the people who make apprenticeships and skills education a success is an inspiration.

My first visit is to the brilliant New College Durham, who have been achieving outstanding results. Then I go to Derwentside College, where they train 5,800 apprentices, some doing healthcare, whom I meet in person. I also have the opportunity to see the incredible, highly technical work of apprentices at Unipres in Sunderland, just another example of how varied and excellent the apprenticeship offer is. Next is Churchill College, which is implementing the principles outlined in the Gatsby Foundation review into careers services.

We then drive to Blackpool to visit the Blackpool and the Fylde College, another incredible place. I sit in a career session organised by Blackpool Buildup, a partnership of the college which trains the long-term unemployed in construction.

After Blackpool, I move on to the Cambridge Regional College where I am told that the hospitality and catering apprentices are going to cook squirrel. I thought it was a joke until I saw it for myself. I also visited West Suffolk College who have been doing a lot of work to ensure their learners reach their full potential.

But it's not just about colleges. I get the chance to visit a pub in Cambridge to meet the inspirational young apprentices employed by Greene King. This company supports many apprentices who are single parents, fitting their apprenticeships around their very hectic lives. I am really impressed by the quality and commitment of the people I meet, a clear sign that a flexible approach is key to success.

 October always starts with the Conservative Party conference, in Birmingham this year.

It is my first public outing as minister for skills and apprenticeships in terms of speeches and events. Every year, the best part of conference is visiting the apprenticeship zone, a key part of every Conservative conference. There I meet young apprentices




from many different companies, like Fujitsu and Pimlico Plumbers, whose life options are being transformed by apprenticeships. I find it truly amazing that level two apprentices can earn up to £74,000 more over their lifetime, thanks to the skills they gain (this goes up to £117,000 for level three apprentices and £150,000 for higher levels).

Back from conference and it's back to work. We also start planning the introduction to Parliament, in late October, of the new Technical and Further Education bill. This bill will expand the remit of the Institute for Apprenticeships to include technical education, as well as ensure students are protected when their college falls into financial difficulty. There will be a lot more work on this in the weeks and months ahead.

After a huge amount of work, having

listened carefully to all stakeholders, we publish the final apprenticeship funding proposals. The new funding, on one side, helps improve productivity, but also reflects the Government's commitment to address social disadvantage. That's why we are doing so much to encourage employers to hire apprentices of all ages and people from deprived areas across country.

For the most part the levy gets a good response. Even FE Week describes it as "a big step in the right direction".

 I have two debates and my first appearance in front of the education, skills and the economy sub-committee, something clearly noted regularly on social media by FE Week.

These first few months have certainly been very interesting. It is wonderful to do this job and to play a part in helping to improve the skills, apprenticeships and careers offering in our country.

Very early on in the job, I said "FE Week makes the social media of a minister unbearable but complacency impossible". I stand by my words and appreciate the importance of being challenged.

Protocol

Excellence in FE

COLLEGE PLANNING MEETING

How can we reduce salary cost?

Can my college survive on its own?

Flexible staff

Collaborative working

Area reviews

The future?

VAT free assessment

Apprenticeships?

Do we have enough maths & English lecturers?

Which apprenticeships should we deliver?

Can we find engineers?

Is our agency compliant?

Get protocols seasonal staff

Protocol shared services

Merger? Acquisition? Federation?

Is my college at risk of take over?

LEP: Are we aligned?

FRAZZLED?

Come and join us for a coffee and a chat at the AoC Annual Conference
15-17 Nov at the ICC, Birmingham
to see how we can help.

INVESTIGATES

Think tanks go head to head to i

IPPR: A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ROUTE SHOULD REPLACE ALL 16-18 LEVEL 2 APPRENTICESHIPS

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The government should phase out level two apprenticeships for 16-18 year olds and replace them with a programme only offered by colleges, according to left-leaning think-tank IPPR.

In a new report entitled ‘Earning & Learning – Making the apprenticeship system work for 16-18 year olds’, it warned that youth unemployment is being fueled by “too many” 16-18 year olds studying level two courses that do not help them progress through vocational education or into work.

Authors Joe Dromey, a senior research fellow, Jonathan Clifton, who left the IPPR to become head of strategic policy at Department for Education after drafting the report, and Charlynn Pullen, now head of workforce data at the Education and Training Foundation, instead proposed that level two apprenticeships should be replaced by “a distinct pre-apprenticeship programme”.

This, they added, should “only be offered by FE colleges, or training providers which are run on a not-for-profit basis”.

The report says that level two apprenticeships “are often very job-specific; they do not include much off-the-job training, they only last one year, and – from next year – they will not be required to include a recognised qualification”.

Furthermore, “young people who leave full-time education with a level two qualification have an employment rate of 70 per cent – which is almost 20 percentage points lower than those who leave full-time education with a level three qualification or higher education”.

In addition, they said, wage returns for level two qualifications are low, and relatively few of these learners progress to level three – only 39 per cent of those on one year level two courses.

In contrast to the current system, pre-apprenticeships would be “explicitly designed to help young people move onto a full level three apprenticeship at age 18 or 19”.

The proposed scheme would differ from the current system in a number of ways, including “more off-the-job training”, “more general education including English and maths”, and a final “transferable qualification” at its outcome.

The report also suggested “employers do not want to hire young apprentices” and therefore should be subsidised for taking on a young person on a pre-apprenticeship – for example by being “allowed to use their levy payment” to cover the wages.

In response to the report, David Hughes, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said: “The AoC has been calling for the introduction of a pre-apprenticeship offer for some time, so it’s good to see other

organisations pushing for the same idea.

“All FE colleges provide apprenticeships and are keen to do more, so it is interesting to see the suggestion that this offer should only be open to colleges and not-for-profit training providers. I’m sure that will be debated long and hard.”

AELP’s chief executive Mark Dawe, said: “We should be debating what is in the best interests of young people based on evidence rather than institutionally biased proposals.

“Many industries need and want a level two starting point and therefore it would be a denial of social justice to disallow a 16-year-old the opportunity to gain knowledge and proper experience of work.

“Moreover due to failings in the schools system, many 16-year-olds need to start at level two and yet some opinion-formers seem bent on punishing them further.”

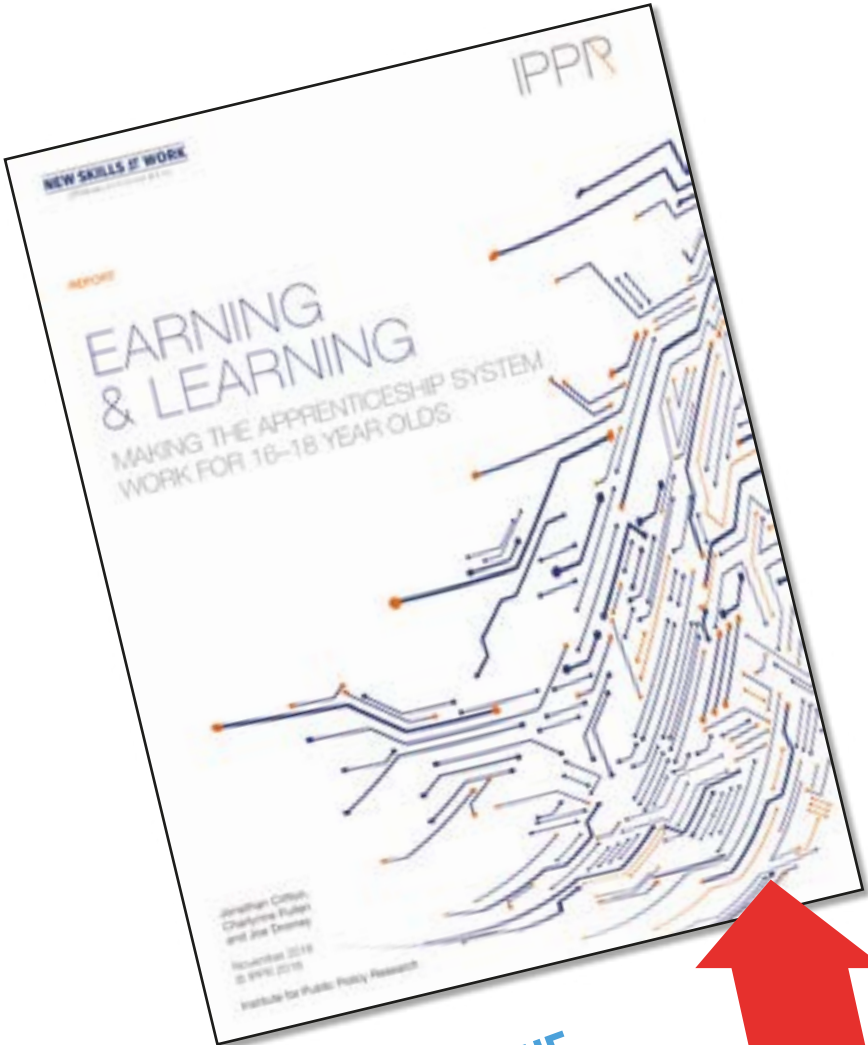
Last year there were 130,400 16- to 18-year-olds apprenticeship starts, of which 86,700 (66 per cent) were on level two frameworks.

Skills and apprenticeships Minister Robert Halfon defended level two apprenticeships, saying: “We are determined to ensure that people of all backgrounds and all ages can get on the ladder of opportunity. That is why we introduced traineeships, which are backed by business, and provide young people with the vital work experience and skills they need to gain an apprenticeship or a job.

“We want to transform this country into an apprenticeship nation and level two apprenticeships are a key part of that. Level two apprentices can earn up to £74,000 more over their lifetime, thanks to the skills they gain. We are also supporting young people into full-time jobs with training through 16-18 apprenticeships – providing sustainable careers, with proven returns on future earnings and employment.”

IPPR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The government should abolish level two apprenticeships for 16- to 18-year-olds and replace them with a pre-apprenticeship programme
- Pre-apprenticeships should contain more off-the-job training and a final transferable qualification
- Employers should be subsidised for hiring pre-apprentices – giving them a clear financial incentive to take part in the programme
- There should be one pre-apprenticeship programme for each of the 15 technical pathways
- Pre-apprenticeship programmes should only be offered by FE colleges or not-for-profit training providers
- Pre-apprenticeships should be explicitly designed to help young people move onto a full level three apprenticeship at age 18 or 19



WHAT JOE DROMEY SAYS ABOUT THE POLICY EXCHANGE REPORT...

ALSO SEE PAGE 22 FOR REACTION

JOE DROMEY

Responding to the Policy Exchange report, Joe Dromey, senior research fellow at IPPR, said:

“The government’s goal of increasing the number of apprenticeships is laudable, but as Policy Exchange warns, there is a risk that the focus on quantity alone may come at the expense of quality.

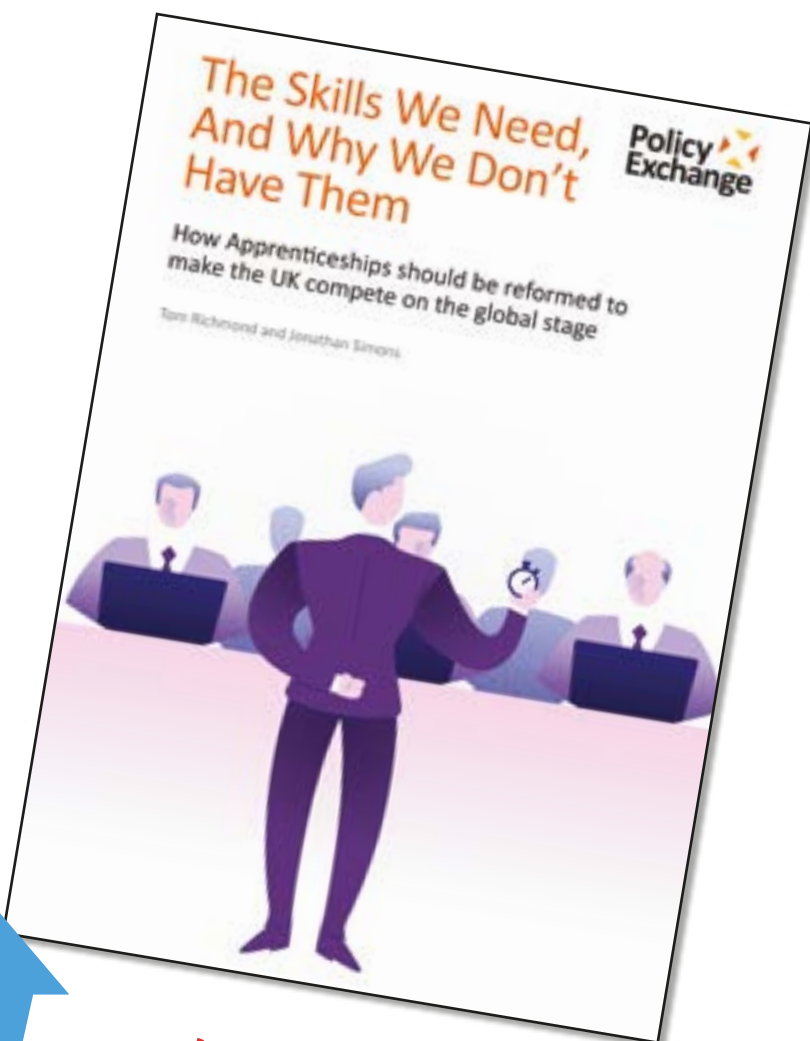
“In its ‘England’s Apprenticeships’ research, IPPR argued that many new apprenticeships are not worthy of the name, that they risk devaluing the brand, and that the system provides little

additional training and poor value for money.

“Policy Exchange calls for the government’s commitment to three million apprenticeships to be abandoned in favour of a focus on driving up quality. This and its other recommendations are eminently sensible.

“Boosting the number of apprenticeships, without ensuring they are up to scratch will just mean more learners let down.”

influence apprenticeship policy



WHAT JONATHAN SIMONS SAYS
ABOUT THE IPPR REPORT..

ALSO SEE PAGE 22 FOR MORE INSIGHT



JONATHAN SIMONS

Responding to the IPPR report, Jonathan Simons, head of education at Policy Exchange, said:

"I agree with IPPR's conclusion that too many of these apprenticeships are too narrowly focussed and have insufficient off-the-job-training – we found similar when studying all new approved apprenticeship standards at levels three and above as well.

"I also agree that the answer isn't to ban level two apprenticeships from existing at all, but instead to make sure that it acts as

: a pathway onto level three and beyond
: "Given the prevalence of independent
: training providers in the market – many
: of which have high learner and employer
: satisfaction rates – it seems perverse to
: bar them from doing what they do well.
: "There's also a question as to the sheer
: capacity existing within FE colleges
: to suddenly deliver all of these new
: qualifications."

POLICY EXCHANGE: DROP THE 3M TARGET AND SCRAP £500M LOW QUALITY APPRENTICESHIPS

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The government should "move away" from its target for three million apprenticeships, to avoid wasting £500 million a year on substandard training, according to experts from the Policy Exchange.

A new report from the right-wing think-tank claims that a significant proportion of the apprenticeship standards are inadequate, and raises concerns about the government's focus on quantity over quality.

Its authors, Tom Richmond, a sixth form college teacher, and Jonathan Simons, the organisation's head of education, called on the government to "move away from the three million target for apprenticeship starts being the sole metric of success of the apprenticeships programme".

Instead, they said, the government should set "a new system goal which focusses on quality".

"Large numbers – perhaps as many as a third – of the new approved apprenticeships standards do not meet the required standard," according to the report.

"In light of the forecast spend of £2.5 billion a year on apprenticeships by 2020, this means that at a conservative estimate, £500 million a year will be spent on training courses that are unjustifiably being branded as apprenticeships."

Mr Richmond and Mr Simons wrote that the process of rolling out the reforms creates an environment where apprenticeships had been developed without adhering to "the best in class definition or the high expectation of quality".

The report, entitled 'The skills we need, and why we don't have them – How apprenticeships should be reformed to make the UK compete on the global stage', recommends introducing a new definition of an apprenticeship.

This would build on international best practice, using it as "a legal definition through which to assess all current standards".

To be branded as an apprenticeship, they said, courses "must both meet the identified skills needs in scope and content terms, and contain sufficient long-term on and off the job training, rather than being a generic training course".

Mr Richmond and Mr Simons identified six areas in which the new approved apprenticeship programmes could be improved.

These included "apprenticeships that are insufficiently stretching to meet the demands of the profession and the level of qualification within it", do not "represent a skilled occupation", or "require substantial and sustained training".

Other problem areas were "apprenticeships which are in fact professional development courses", or where "too much content is

duplicated between different levels", and there's "inadequate assessment methods".

According to the report, difficulties with end-point assessment included companies being able to sign off their own apprenticeships, and apprenticeships having no agreed method of assessment or awarding organisation in place.

In response to the report, David Hughes, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said: "Policy Exchange rightly highlights the unhelpful nature of the government's target of three million new apprenticeships by 2020.

"Apprenticeships need to be both valuable to the apprentice and the employer; giving people the experience and transferable skills to help them launch a career."

He added: "In our autumn statement submission, we recommend that the government considers topslicing the apprenticeship levy, to not only promote access to apprenticeships but also help raise quality and to focus more on outcomes."

Mark Dawe, the chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said: "We totally agree, for example, with the report's observations that apprentices should not be starting on programmes without proper assessment arrangements in place."

Skills and apprenticeships Minister Robert Halfon said: "We have made clear that all apprenticeships must be of the highest quality, and all standards are now developed by employers themselves and rigorously checked before being introduced.

"From next April the new Institute for Apprenticeships, with employer expertise at its heart, will be charged with approving standards to ensure they are high quality."

POLICY EXCHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- All newly approved and reapproved standards should have to include evidence that they are focussed on skilled occupations, and a detailed training plan covering content, time allocations, off the job training and qualifications
- Add a new gateway for Ofqual to inspect all new assessment tools and to accredit all apprenticeship assessment organisations
- The Institute for Apprenticeships should become the voice of technical education for all post-16 learning
- Trailblazer groups should be converted into Technical Education Councils, following the pathways set out by the Sainsbury Review
- Funds from the apprenticeships levy should sit in a separate, dedicated fund, with the institute choosing whether to distribute it on a sectoral basis
- State funding for technical education should be widened to include higher-level classroom-based qualifications, funded by loans and with a lifetime allocation

What does the latest performance i

Colleges going backwards one year on from Boles’ challenge

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

EXCLUSIVE

FROM FRONT

Colleges have failed to take up the apprenticeships challenge laid down a year ago by former skills minister Nick Boles – with figures showing the proportion delivered by them has fallen significantly.

Mr Boles urged delegates at last year’s Association of Colleges conference to stop letting independent training providers “nick your lunch”.

He also challenged colleges to go from delivering a third of all apprenticeships to two-thirds.

Yet despite this, the proportion of all apprenticeship funding going to colleges has dropped from 37 per cent in 2015/16 to 32 per cent in 2016/17, according to latest Skills Funding Agency allocations.

Colleges were allocated £564,697,386 for all apprenticeships this year, compared to £1,175,506,126 for other providers.

While the college cash figure is 7 per cent higher than the same time last year, the Skills Funding Agency automatically set 2016/17 allocations 19 per cent higher for adult apprenticeships.

So, although actual delivery figures for 2015/16 has yet to be published, this is likely to mean colleges did not use all the funding they were allocated.

And of the £305 million extra cash allocated for apprenticeships this year, just £35 million,

All ages apprenticeship allocations				
Provider type	August 15/16	August 16/17	Shift	
Colleges	£528,786,369	£564,697,386	£35,911,017	7%
	37%	32.5%	-4.5%	
Non-colleges	£905,999,576	£1,175,506,126	£269,506,550	30%
	63%	67.5%	4.5%	
Total	£1,434,785,945	£1,740,203,512	£305,417,567	21%

16-18 apprenticeship allocations				
Provider type	August 15/16	August 16/17	Shift	
Colleges	£265,110,747	£291,939,688	£26,828,941	10%
	38%	35%	-3%	
Non-colleges	£433,980,118	£546,840,927	£112,860,809	26%
	62%	65%	3%	
Total	£699,090,865	£838,780,615	£139,689,750	20%

19+ apprenticeship allocations				
Provider type	August 15/16	August 16/17	Shift	
Colleges	£263,675,622	£272,757,698	£9,082,076	3%
	36%	30%	-6%	
Non-colleges	£472,019,458	£628,665,199	£156,645,741	33%
	64%	70%	6%	
Total	£735,695,080	£901,422,897	£165,727,817	23%

Comparing apprenticeship allocations for colleges and non-colleges in 2015/16 and 2016/17

or 12 per cent, has gone to colleges.

And, shockingly, some colleges’ allocations have shown a massive drop compared to last year.

The figures for 19+ apprenticeships are even more damning, with colleges representing just 30 per cent of total allocations – a drop of six per cent from last year.

Colleges were allocated £272,757,698 for this age group as of August this year, compared to £628,665,199 for other training providers.

Astoundingly, a number of colleges still have only a tiny proportion of their allocations given over to 19+ apprenticeships.

The worst offender is Kensington and Chelsea College, with an allocation of just

£79,324 – down 26 per cent on last year.

Its 2015/16 adult apprenticeships allocation of £106,533 was just 3 per cent of its adult skills budget for the year.

Colleges’ performance on 16 to 18-year-old apprenticeships was slightly better, with them representing 35 per cent of the total allocations – although this was down from 38 per cent last year.

Mr Boles’ speech was not the first such appeal by a minister speaking at AoC conference.

The then economic secretary to the treasury, John Healey, urged college delegates 13 years ago to be “more active” in forging links with business, complaining the FE sector was too often a “passive recipient” of decisions made by the government to improve training.

David Hughes, AoC chief executive, has now defended colleges’ poor take up of apprenticeships.

“Colleges are big organisations and there’s always going to be a degree of cautiousness about suddenly shifting your business into new areas,” he said.

Colleges were particularly interested in “the technical, professional stuff, where you need off the job, where you need kit, facilities, gear, as well as doing on the job”, he said.

He added: “How that fits with the skills plan I think is really interesting and I think that’s where our members are really focusing.”

Several college allocations for 2016/17 were not listed in the Skills Funding Agency list, so year-on-year comparisons could not be made.

Employers pass their judgement in satisfaction ratings

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

EXCLUSIVE

General FE colleges have admitted to apprenticeship failings, after government research showed they are significantly less popular with employers than private training providers.

Training providers scored 83.9 per cent in the Skills Funding Agency’s latest employer satisfaction survey published last month, while colleges’ rating was nearly 10 per cent lower at 74.9 per cent.

The survey gives an insight into the experience employers have had with their college or training provider in terms of the quality of training and responsiveness received.

The percentages reflect the median score for 214 colleges and 301 private training providers with sufficient employer satisfaction feedback to be counted in the FE Choices data.

Three of the five lowest-scoring colleges told FE Week their low satisfaction rate was due to issues with their apprenticeship schemes.

A spokesperson for Tower Hamlets College, which had the lowest college score of 34.8 per cent in the survey, told FE Week: “Our position on the SFA list reflects outstanding legacy issues on our apprenticeship schemes, which we have since worked through, introducing more robust systems to improve the outcomes

		Employer satisfaction	
Year	Provider type	Providers with a valid score	Middle (median) score
2015/16	FE Colleges	214	74.9
2015/16	Private providers	301	83.9

FE College	Final score	Employers	Responses	Response rate
Tower Hamlets College	34.8	28	23	82%
New college Nottingham (NCN)	35.6	547	74	14%
Guildford College	37.3	513	76	15%
Highbury College Portsmouth	37.4	501	112	22%
Harrow College	37.5	103	42	41%

The five lowest scoring colleges in the SFA’s employer satisfaction survey 2015/16

for both apprentices and employers.

“This listing does not give an accurate reflection of our relationships with employers today.”

Guildford College had the third lowest score at 37.3 per cent, and expressed “disappointment” with the results, but reassured its employers it was working to resolve the problems.

A spokesperson for the college said: “We are aware of the issues which have prompted some dissatisfaction with a small sample of our employers recently, and as part of the improvements made over the past few months to our apprenticeship programmes, have already taken steps to resolve these.”

Harrow College scored the fifth lowest at 37.5 per cent, and a spokesperson told FE Week the college had “recognised some time ago” that its apprenticeships were an “area we would like to develop and improve and part of this has been the complete restructuring of the employer facing team”.

He added: “The college is highly confident the views of our employer partners will be wholly positive going forward as we develop and build upon the strength of our relationships.”

New College Nottingham scored the second lowest at 35.6 per cent and Highbury College Portsmouth scored the fourth lowest at 37.4 per cent, but neither were able to comment ahead of publication.

The survey represented the views of more than 60,000 employers between March and July 2016, and was based on training in 2015/16.

As well as being counted in the FE Choices data, the survey results will also be used for the first time in a new online tool to help employers choose apprenticeship providers.

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College was the highest-scoring college with a 99.5 per cent satisfaction score.

SGS College principal Sara-Jane Watkins said she was “thrilled” with the results and told FE Week their secret to success.

“There are many key elements that have added to the success of these results but I believe it is down to our responsiveness, the bespoke nature of delivery, close account management, offering a vacancy matching service for apprenticeships and the provision on offer,” she said.

“We are also highly effective at responding to wider economic needs and over the past four years SGS has worked closely with, and is an active partner in, two local enterprise partnerships.

“The college now delivers training to over 1,000 employers and has a targeted approach to develop and increase employer engagement and ensuring all learners experience work through work experience whilst with us.”

Information tell us about colleges?

New destination data for unemployed learners

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

The colleges that are most successful at helping unemployed learners move into work have been named, in the latest learner-destination data.

The new experimental data on outcome based success measures for adult FE learners from 2012 to 2014, published by the Department for Education, details the proportion of sector learners that have moved onto further learning or employment.

The report, covering outcomes for learners across 221 private training providers and 218 FE colleges, comes ahead of the planned introduction of minimum standards based on outcome measures from 2017.

A key measure, for example, looks specifically at the outcomes for learners who were on unemployment benefits before starting their studies.

The most successful college by this measure was Selby College, with 71 per cent of unemployed learners finding sustained employment following their courses.

Liz Ridley (pictured), Selby College’s vice-principal, said she was “delighted” by the college’s learner destination data results.

She said the college had developed a “tripartite approach” which involved working closely with Jobcentre Plus and local employers, and training learners to

Provider type	Number of organisations in the statistic	Number of learners on benefits prior to starting courses	Number in sustained work after courses	Proportion in sustained work after courses
FE colleges	218	276,490	128,563	46%
Private training providers	221	170,740	82,260	48%

Success rates for helping unemployed learners into work across all providers

“undertake specific roles or work with specific companies”, as well as tailoring courses to meet learner and employer needs.

At the other end of the table, South and City College Birmingham was the least successful at enabling its previously unemployed learners to find work – with just 34 per cent moving onto sustained employment.

Mike Hopkins, South and City College’s principal, told FE Week that the college had “one of the highest levels of disadvantage of any college in the country, and a very significant level of our completions are either in ESOL or entry or level one provision, especially for students with learning difficulties and disabilities.”

He added: “These adult students progress into other higher level training and take considerably longer to gain employment hence the apparent low employment rate.”

Across all providers, independent training providers had a slight edge over colleges

at getting their unemployed learners into sustained employment.

In total, 48 per cent of the 170,740 out-of-work learners at training providers found work – compared with 46 cent of the 276,490 unemployed learners who studied at colleges.

This new report is the second set of experimental data on outcomes for FE learners to have been published.

The first, released in September 2015, covered outcomes for adult FE learners from 2010 to 2013.

At the same time, the government ran a consultation, which closed December 2015, on introducing outcome-based success



measures for providers based on learners’ destination data.

The intention was that these new performance measures would have “bite” and would “provoke transformational improvement”, according to the consultation document.

The latest report is “intended as a step towards understanding the long term trends of learners into all types of employment and moves towards routine publication of outcome-based success measures designed to help inform learners, employers, providers and anyone with an interest in the further education sector”.

For the first time, the statistics include self-assessment employment returns, alongside PAYE data for 2013/14 – meaning that it is the most complete set of outcome measures so far.

In its response to the 2015 consultation, the government said it would start to use the measures “for accountability purposes” from autumn 2017 “with a period of shadow running from autumn 2016”.

Learner survey dodge as some refuse to participate

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

EXCLUSIVE

The FE Choices survey into student satisfaction isn’t worth the bother, according to one of the country’s largest colleges – which has refused to take part.

The Skills Funding Agency published the results of its annual learner satisfaction poll in June, showing that private providers were more popular amongst learners than colleges, scoring 89.6 per cent, rated 9.2 per cent higher than colleges, at 80.4 per cent.

The percentages reflected the median score for 189 colleges and 276 private training providers, with feedback counted in the data.

Survey results will also now be used in a new online tool for the first time from this year, to help employers choose apprenticeship providers.

But Karen Dobson, principal of the 9,000-student Newcastle-under-Lyme College, claimed her organisation had stopped participating because it had a “limited purpose”.

She told FE Week: “We no longer participate in the FE Choices survey as we found the task was becoming increasingly labour-intensive and there is limited awareness of its presence and purpose amongst our core target audience.

		Learner satisfaction	
Year	Provider type	Providers with a valid score	Middle (median) score
2015/16	FE Colleges	189	80.4
2015/16	Private providers	276	89.6

Provider name	Final score	Learners	Responses	Response rate
Stanmore College of Further Education Corporation	51.6	2013	274	14%
Barnfield College	57.1	2312	535	23%
North Warwickshire and Hinckley College	61	5263	1211	23%
Tameside College	64.2	4445	836	19%
South Essex College of Further and Higher Education	66	10140	1796	18%

The five lowest scoring college’s in the SFA’s learner satisfaction survey 2015/16

“We have a number of larger, more efficient college-led surveys in place which allow us to benchmark performance and student satisfaction.”

The SFA’s survey is designed to “capture learners’ experiences” of their college or training provider through questions ranging from “how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the teaching on your course?” to “how likely is it that you would recommend the college to friends or family?”

Another large college which did not complete the survey in 2015/16 was City of Bristol College, which caters for around 25,000 learners.

A spokesperson told FE Week that the

timing of the SFA’s survey “coincided with a period of significant change at the college, including staff changes at all levels”, which meant the college missed the completion deadline.

Meanwhile neither Lambeth College, which educates more than 11,000 learners, nor the Manchester College, which has more than 25,000 students, managed to “provide enough data” to award a score in the survey despite their large size.

Neither college was able to comment by the time of publication.

Of the colleges that did take part in the survey, Stanmore College scored the lowest, with a score of 51.6 per cent.

A spokesperson said that the college’s “disappointing” response rate (14 per cent) does not “fully reflect the view of students”.

Barnfield College, in Luton scored the second lowest with a score of 57.1 per cent.

A spokesperson said it “was in the midst of difficult and challenging times” at the time of the survey, but recent internal surveys revealed a “positive shift in our learners’ experience”.

North Warwickshire and Hinckley College was the third lowest college with a score of 61 per cent.

A spokesperson said it was a “disappointing result” and put it down to working as part of a federation with South Leicestershire College during 2015/16.

Tameside College in Manchester scored the fourth lowest at 64.2 per cent, but said its low response rate – 19 per cent – “doesn’t not reflect the positive feedback we receive from the significant majority” of students.

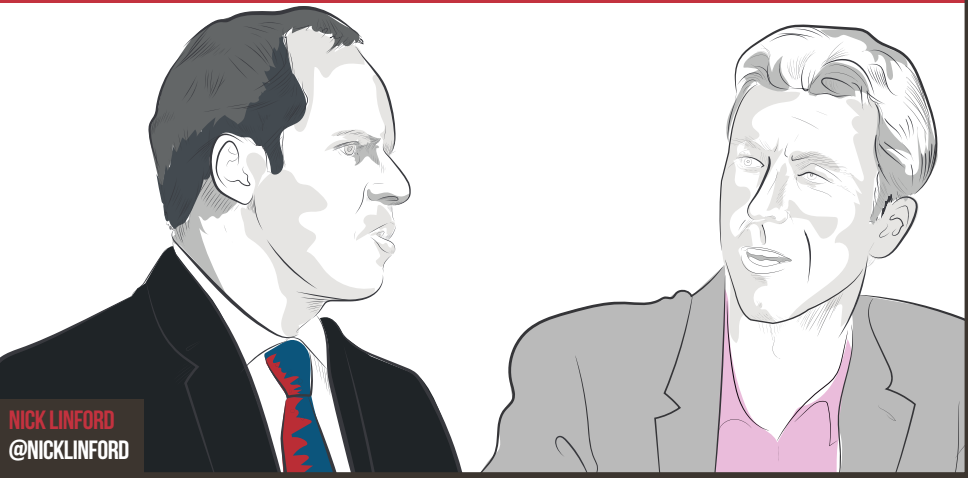
South Essex College was the fifth lowest with a 66 per cent score, but pointed to a response rate of 18 per cent.

A spokesperson told FE Week the SFA’s survey is “very limited and does not accurately portray student satisfaction with most colleges having a low response rate”.

AOC CONFERENCE PREVIEW

HUGHES: LET’S PRESENT A CONFIDENT AND AMBITIOUS

EDITOR ASKS...part one



AOC REGIONS AND THEIR DIRECTORS

Ahead of David’s first three-day AoC annual conference as chief executive, we discuss the area reviews, our ministers and the need for positivity.

“In a way, it being my first conference isn’t particularly important,” he tells me.

“What’s more important is that we’ve got a new government and we’ve got a new secretary of state and we’ve got new ministers. And it’s their first conference, and it’s superb we’ve got Justine Greening and Robert Halfon, we’ve got Lord Sainsbury and we’ve got Richard Atkins, the new FE Commissioner. We’ve got a superb cast of people.”

David clearly wants the new ministers to see positivity from principals.

“I’m really keen we present a very confident and ambitious front for colleges, saying what we can do rather than just diving in to all the problems,” he says.

“Because there are all sorts of problems at the moment. It’s a sector that’s had a lot done to it. It’s had a lot of stress. The funding cuts have been profound. But actually I think we need to look beyond that and start setting the agenda, rather than being victims.”

I press him on whether this was a plea for conference delegates to be upbeat, particularly on Thursday, when both Justine Greening and Robert Halfon will be giving speeches that are likely to feature the Post-16

Skills Plan – and general positivity about the role of colleges.

“I think there will be some scepticism, because people have been hit by funding cuts and area reviews,” he admits.

“There are all sorts of challenges around English and maths, for instance, and the apprenticeship changes are profound, and I want Justine Greening to acknowledge that those exist. I’m not for one minute saying to people, don’t mention the things that are urgent, difficult, challenging now – but if you can, do that as well as look to the long term, because there are opportunities,” he says.

“I genuinely think we’ve got a secretary of state and FE and skills minister who really get FE and colleges, and want to help set out a space for further education and colleges within the education system, and change the machinery of government to bring it all into one place. Some saw it as a risk. I always saw it as more of an opportunity.”

Also speaking at the conference is Richard Atkins, the former principal at Exeter College and a previous AoC president, who this month took up the reins as the FE Commissioner.

I ask what he hopes Mr Atkins’ message will be, at a key time in most of the five area review waves.

“I think Richard will be trying to get that

STEVE SAWBRIDGE - WEST MIDLANDS



Mr Sawbridge has held a range of management roles in colleges and worked as a freelance consultant. He worked with the Learning and Skills Council on policy and strategy and on business planning in the FE sector, and as head of strategic partnerships at the Quality Improvement Agency for Lifelong Learning.

GILLIAN MILLER - NORTH EAST



For 13 years prior to her appointment in 2014, Ms Miller worked at a senior level in the Learning and Skills Council and its successor organisation the Skills Funding Agency, most recently as area director. Prior to that, she was head of economic development for a local authority in the north east.

IAN MUNRO - SOUTH WEST



Mr Munro taught and managed in FE before moving into senior leadership. He is also the national AoC policy lead for sustainability, working closely with the organisation’s Sustainability Portfolio Group. He is co-director of the newly-formed Hinkley Point Training Agency, a collaboration of colleges and independent training providers.

MARY VINE-MORRIS - LONDON



Ms Vine-Morris has over 25 years’ experience of the management of adult education, FE, work-based learning and social and economic regeneration. She has worked with partners in London’s education and business sector to provide strategic leadership of post-16 learning across the capital.

RICHARD CAULFIELD - NORTH WEST



Before his appointment in December 2014, Mr Caulfield was chief executive of Voluntary Sector North West for seven years, a regional umbrella body for the voluntary sector. Prior to that, he held a number of senior roles in both the voluntary and private sectors, including time at the NUS.

US FRONT FOR COLLEGES

“
I think we need to look beyond the problems and start setting the agenda, rather than being victims

balance that says area reviews aren't going to go away, and we're going to finish them," he says. "There are only five or so months to run, and I think that's important. Let's get through them now. We're right in it. I think he might tweak some of it, he might do it a little bit differently from David [Collins, the outgoing FE Commissioner]."

What does he think Atkins might do differently?

"Well, there's a transparency issue that David Collins hasn't been able to do, because ministers change and the delays in the reports have been a bit unhelpful. Hopefully they can speed that up and move things forward more quickly," he tells me.

"But more importantly I'd like him to talk about where he thinks that takes the sector, post area review. There is a sense that with one bound the sector is suddenly sorted for the next 25 years and there will be no more problems, no colleges getting into financial difficulties, and I think that's very unrealistic," he says.

In our next edition, David tackles questions about value for money in the area review process, along with the outcome of his review of AoC, including the future of the regional structure (see left) and what he will do differently.

**CAROLINE ROWLEY -
YORKSHIRE AND
THE HUMBER**



Ms Rowley joined the AoC in 2003 from the National Museums Liverpool where she was head of education for the eight museums and galleries in Liverpool. Before then, she held roles at education charity Campaign for Learning, Lancashire College and North Trafford College.

**PAUL EELES,
DIRECTOR OF
EMFEC (AFFILIATE
ORGANISATION
COVERING AOC'S
EAST MIDLANDS
REGION)**



Mr Eeles has over 29 years' experience of working in FE. As well as his role at AoC, Paul is also chief executive of the Skills and Education Group, consisting of ABC Awards, ASDAN and EMFEC. He was recently appointed chair of the Federation of Awarding Bodies.

**ANDREW THOMSON,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OF ASSOCIATION OF
COLLEGES FOR THE
EASTERN (AFFILIATE
AOC ORGANISATION)**



Mr Thomson is a former college principal who went on to lead the Learning and Skills Development Agency and then the Quality Improvement Agency, before working as a consultant in industry and FE.

**PAMELA
LUMSDEN, CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OF
THE ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTH EAST
COLLEGES
(AFFILIATE AOC
ORGANISATION)**



Ms Lumsden has been chief executive of AoSEC since November 2012. Before this, she worked for various organisations, including the Learning and Skills Improvement Service, the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education, Ofsted, OCR and the Open College Network.

ED**JOBS**Week

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
SCHOOLS WEEK
AND FE WEEK

Schools Week NewsFind

Ed

Jobs in schools, colleges

Search our jobs

BEING THE CENTRE OF ATTENTION.

Being the centre of attention is not necessarily a bad thing. In fact we think it is best way to grab other people's attention. That's why we've relocated our job advert section to the centre of our newspapers. Print advertising is a great way to ensure that you find the right candidate and future colleague.

New location. New jobs board. New approach. New look. More choice for you...

ED**JOBS**Week

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
SCHOOLS WEEK
AND FE WEEK

Email jobs@feweek.co.uk
for more information.

NEWS AND OPINION

MIXED VIEWS AS TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION BILL CONTINUES



LORD SAINSBURY

Chair of the independent panel on improving technical education

We have a once-in-a-generation chance to reform FE

Reforms will inevitably cause upheaval, but the problems with our current system are too pressing to ignore, says Lord Sainsbury.

No area of public life has suffered so much from poor government policy-making, constant change and under-funding as technical education.

The first report which said that our technical education was not as good as that of Germany was in 1870 and since that time, there have been endless attempts to improve it.

Having started my business career in the personnel department of the family firm, I have followed this unhappy saga over the last 50 years, starting with industrial training boards. To illustrate the rate of ill-thought-out change, in the last 35 years alone, there have been 28 major acts of parliament relating to vocational education and skills training.

If one looks at other countries, it quickly becomes clear that if we are going to have good technical education provision, we need three things: a national system of qualifications that is well understood and works in the marketplace; an effective system of funding students while they are learning; and finally, well-funded facilities and teachers to provide the education and training.

So how do we make this happen? I am not going to go through all the recommendations of the independent panel report on technical education. I encourage you to read it if you have not already done so. But I will describe a few key points.

We recommend that a new set of 15 technical education routes should be introduced. For 16-18 year olds studying full-time, each route will typically begin with a two-year study programme. Each programme will start with a common core of knowledge and skills, after which individuals will specialise towards an occupation or cluster of aligned occupations.

So, for example, in the 'construction' route, after a common core, an individual might choose to specialise as an electrician or a carpenter.

For each of these specialisations there will be just one publicly-funded 'tech level' qualification available. The content of these tech levels will cover the knowledge and skills that industry experts have identified as being essential for the relevant occupations.

The clear organising framework we are proposing will cover all occupations where there is a substantial requirement for technical knowledge and practical skills. Technical education is not a catch-all term for everything that isn't GCSEs, A-levels

and degrees. So, falling outside of technical education are many skilled occupations, such as retail assistant, which do not require a significant amount of technical knowledge.

This is not for one moment to suggest that these jobs are not important in the labour market – they offer large numbers of demanding jobs – simply that to perform well in these occupations does not require a substantial technical training. Instead, shorter, job-specific training while in employment is more appropriate.

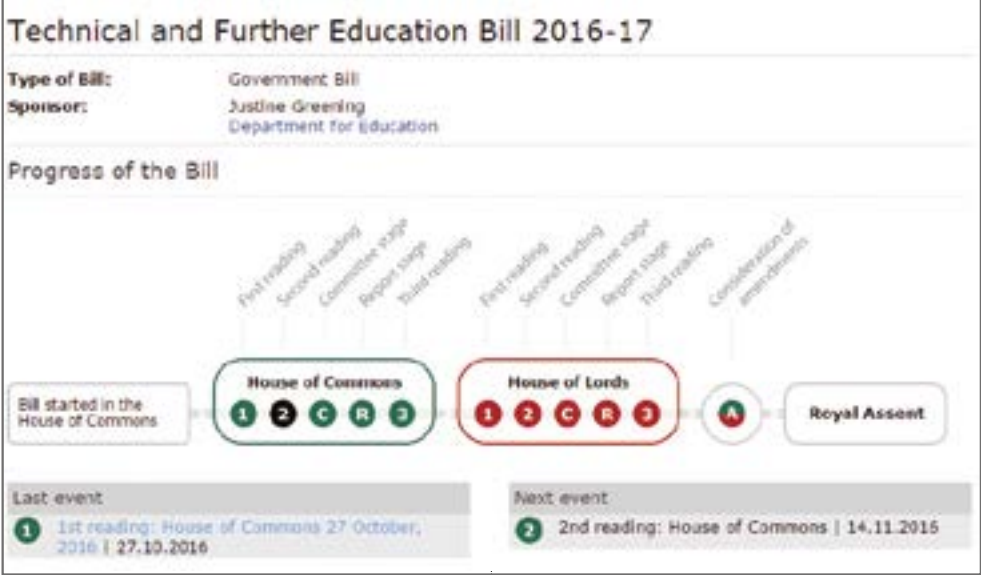
By focusing technical education in this way, there will inevitably be some young people who are not ready to access either the 15

Technical education is not a catch-all term for everything that isn't GCSEs, A-levels and degrees

routes or the academic option at the age of 16. Those with low prior attainment, including some with special educational needs and/or disabilities, will need additional support. This group of young people should be offered an additional, fully-funded 'transition year' to help them prepare for further study or employment, and this transition year should be flexible and tailored to a student's prior attainment and aspirations.

Any reforms to the technical education system, especially those as significant as the ones we are proposing, will inevitably cause upheaval for colleges. Some people will say that the last thing the sector needs is more reform, and I do understand this view. But the problems with our current system are simply too pressing for us not to act. I know it is all too easy for me to say that this is about 'opportunities' rather than 'challenges', but I genuinely think these reforms present a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the FE sector.

Further education is the only sector with the expertise to deliver world-class technical education and there is no more vital area of public endeavour. This country faces huge challenges to meet the skills needs of a modern advanced industrial economy, and it is only a strong, appropriately-resourced FE sector that can deliver the technical education we desperately need.



ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The new Technical and Further Education Bill will have its second reading in the House of Commons on Monday (November 14).

It sets out proposals for a new insolvency regime for FE colleges, and includes plans to extend the role of the Institute for Apprenticeships, the new vocational training policing body.

According to the Department for Education's factsheet on the bill, its aim is to "take forward the government's reforms to technical education, which will help boost the country's productivity by addressing skill shortages and ensuring high quality technical education".

The first reading of the bill took place on October 27.

It will go through three more stages in the House of Commons, and then five stages in the House of Lords before it can gain Royal Assent.

On October 27, FE Week reported details of the bill's proposals for a new insolvency regime.

The new system will carry the objective of minimising disruption to students' work if their college is affected.

A DfE spokesperson said at the time that the new regime, which follows a consultation launched in July, will address the "current absence of any provisions for college insolvency, giving creditors certainty for the first time about how their claims will be dealt with".

This week Angela Rayner criticised the bill in the pages of FE Week (see page 13), arguing that the government should be investing more

in FE – instead of than creating a system that makes it easier for colleges to go bust.

The legislation also includes a provision to rename the Institute for Apprenticeships to include 'Technical Education' in its title – to highlight its role in monitoring the 15 new 'professional and technical' routes introduced in the government's Post-16 Skills Plan.

The first hint that the Institute would be expanding came in the Skills Plan, which said: "We will bring forward legislation in this session of parliament that will expand the remit of the Institute for Apprenticeships to encompass all technical education.

"It will become the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education."

The white paper accepted a series of recommendations made by the Independent Panel on Technical Education headed by Lord Sainsbury, who has also written for FE Week this week in an expert piece on why his proposals are vital, despite change fatigue in the sector (see left).

In his foreword to the Skills Plan, the former skills minister Nick Boles acknowledged the impact of the work of the Sainsbury review.

He said: "We accept and will implement all of the Sainsbury panel's proposals, unequivocally where that is possible within current budget constraints.

"We want to ensure there is a strong and stable network of colleges and other training providers, and want to take this chance to put in place wider changes to the system, including reforms to accountability, funding, and careers education and guidance."

Lord Sainsbury will be speaking at 4.15pm on the first day of this year's Association of Colleges conference, taking place from November 15 to 17 at the ICC in Birmingham.



ITS PATH TO BECOMING LAW



ANGELA RAYNER

Shadow secretary of
state for education

Government is overseeing the managed decline of further education

Rather than creating a regime that makes it easier for colleges to become insolvent, government should be investing more in further education, says Angela Rayner.

More than four million people in Britain are learning in the further education sector every year.

The sector plays a crucial role in supporting our young people. Those who are seeking qualifications to move on to university. Those learners who, later in life, are retraining and gaining new skills to get better jobs.

Also, as I know from my own personal experience, it's helping those people who didn't get what they needed from the education system the first time around to go further in life.

Going into further education after leaving school at 16 was life-changing for me. It enabled me to gain new skills and qualifications so that I could get work and start to fend for myself and my baby son.

Most of all, perhaps, further education helped me to understand that I was far more suited to a vocational approach than an academic one.

The vocational skills I gained are invaluable to me even more today when I try to help my constituents as a member of parliament.

That's why I am passionate about further education and the route it can offer for people from every walk of life to go further and reach their full potential.

So I was hugely disappointed when the government missed a great opportunity to get behind the sector when it recently announced, to as little fanfare as seems possible, a new Technical and Further Education Bill.

Because it is clear to anyone who has read the bill that this Conservative government has no plans to develop a system of technical and further education fit for the 21st century.

Over 20 clauses in the government's bill are committed to developing an insolvency regime for further education providers. Only under a government that has continually starved the further education sector of the investment it needs would this be necessary.

Last year, a report by the National Audit Office said that the FE college sector was in deficit for the first time in 2013/14; 110 colleges had an operating deficit, more than double the number from 2010/11.

In the same period, the number of colleges assessed by the Skills Funding Agency to

have 'inadequate' financial health rose from five per cent to 12 per cent. All of this from the party of so-called fiscal responsibility!

Everyone who works in the further education sector will have witnessed the dangerous levels of deficit denial coming from the Tories.

Anyone truly committed to an education

Going into further education after leaving school at 16 was life-changing for me

system that works for everyone could see the dire warnings in that report and take immediate action to invest in our colleges.

Education is the best investment we can make in Britain, to support young people at every stage of their lives to get the skills which they need to live well and to contribute to Britain's economic prosperity.

So when I see a government that, looking at the millions of people who rely on the FE sector and how it can change lives, decides that the priority is not investment but to create a regime that makes it easier for colleges to become insolvent, I see a government that is failing in its duty.

As shadow secretary of state for education, I have been urging the government to invest in our young people, to help them get the skills they need to go further. It's an investment that we know will pay off down the line.

That's why Labour has pledged to bring back the Education Maintenance Allowance, which would support hundreds of thousands of young people from low- and middle-income backgrounds.

I want to make it clear that Labour will never accept second best for our young people. Everyone deserves the opportunity to succeed. And instead of turning their backs on a generation, government has a moral, economic and social duty to help make their dreams come true.

This is a government that, instead of investing to build a better future for all, has instead chosen the path of managed decline.

And I for one, will not rest until we see every young person go further.

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

OPEN TO ALL FE STUDENTS



INFO

Our annual *FE Week and Me* photography competition is back and once again FE Week has teamed up with NCFE to hunt for stunning pictures that portray learning in FE and skills.

TWO CATEGORIES

This year there are two levels of entry: photography student and non-photography student. Entrants will be in with a chance of winning some stunning prizes and the chance to shadow a high-profile professional photographer.

The competition is open to anyone studying within the FE and skills sector.

Our readers will vote for the winner, which will be announced in February.

To enter simply email your entry by January 6, along with with your name, college or independent learning provider, course details and whether you are entering as a photography or non-photography student.

We look forward to seeing entries.
For more information visit feweek.co.uk.



DEADLINE FOR ENTRY: JANUARY 6, 2017

TO ENTER EMAIL: FEWEEKANDME@FEWEEK.CO.UK



WWW.FEWEEK.CO.UK

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

ncfe.

Employers hit out at government meddling

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

Government meddling has meant that students didn't start on some apprenticeship standards for two years after they were launched.

Using the latest Skills Funding Agency data FE Week examined the first standards given government sign-off in 2014.

We found two had no starts at all in that academic year or in 2015/16, while low numbers of students were recorded in several others.

The National Skills Academy for Food and Drink took a lead role developing one of the apprenticeships which had no learners, for food and drink maintenance engineers.

Justine Fosh, its chief executive, laid the blame squarely at the door of the government.

She said employers involved with the trailblazer group led by NSAFD, which developed the standard, had been "frustrated by the evolutionary nature of the government's decision making process for approval".

"We were advised at the start that this new and innovative approach was called 'open policy-making', whereby new ideas were tested to see if they worked or not.

"Unfortunately policy implementation

All apprenticeship funded starts up to July 2016 on standards that were available for delivery in 2014				
Standard	Level	Available	Starts in 2014/15	Starts in 2015/16
Aerospace Manufacturing Fitter	3	12-Nov-14	-	30
Control /Technical Support Engineer	6	12-Nov-14	-	10
Electrical /Electronic Technical Support Engineer	6	12-Nov-14	10	180
Financial Services Administrator	3	12-Nov-14	-	20
Food and Drink Maintenance Engineer	3	09-Dec-14	0	0
Laboratory Technician	3	09-Dec-14	0	0
Manufacturing Engineer	6	12-Nov-14	20	30
Mechatronics Maintenance Technician	3	12-Nov-14	70	150
Network Engineer	4	12-Nov-14	50	200
Power Network Craftsperson	3	12-Nov-14	20	300
Product Design and Development Engineer	6	12-Nov-14	40	-
Product Design and Development Technician	3	12-Nov-14	80	-
Relationship Manager (Banking)	6	12-Nov-14	30	20
Science Manufacturing Technician	3	09-Dec-14	-	20
Software Developer	4	12-Nov-14	60	150

Source: October statistical first release. A dash means from zero to four starts (so fewer than five)

does not lend itself well to this approach and valuable employer time and effort has been spent unpicking decisions made as policy decisions have firmed up.

"This has led to redrafting, reworking and lost time, such that the industry has written to the new skills minister, requesting that the Department for Education implements a far more structured and clear process for the future."

She claimed that the standard had not actually been ready for apprenticeship starts

until the start of this academic year, though "at least 60 students that I know of" have started since September.

When asked to explain more about the causes of the delays, Ms Fosh pointed to confusion surrounding the assessment plan.

The first one, she said, to be initially approved included detail on the mechanism of the end assessment".

"In the first approved version, 40 per cent of the grade that the candidate would achieve resulted from the score for the qualification

that they undertook on programme – i.e. they could take their score from the qualification into the assessment room," she said.

"But subsequently the Department for Business Innovation and Skills decided that on-programme qualifications could not form part of an end assessment. As a result we had to redo the assessment plan."

FE Week contacted a number of employers involved with developing those standards which had had few or no starts over the past two academic years.

They all declined to comment on why they did not take on apprentices themselves.

The DfE told FE Week in October that a change in policy would in future "require all groups of employers bidding to develop a standard to commit themselves to using it".

In response to Ms Fosh's complaints, a DfE spokesperson said: "We expect to see starts on employer-led standards increase over the course of this parliament as providers and employers adapt their delivery models towards new standards.

"The open policy-development approach towards standards and assessment was adopted to ensure that input from employers and other stakeholders could be taken into account along the way so that all new standards deliver the skills that they need."

Enable your learners to #BeginWithBetter

The Active IQ Technical Level Diploma in Physical Activity, Fitness and Exercise Science equips learners with the specialist knowledge and skills they require for the workplace or a pathway to higher education.

This truly innovative and versatile vocational programme ensures your students stand out from the crowd.



Find out more and apply at:
businessdevelopment@activeiq.co.uk
www.activeiq.co.uk
follow us on Twitter @Active__IQ



Sector digs in over repeated apprenticeship plan rejections

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The mining and processing sector has been left without the means to deliver apprenticeships even though it faces a "recruitment time bomb", sector representatives told FE Week.

A trailblazer group has been working on new apprenticeship standards for over two years, but faced repeated rejections from the government – including having one plan turned down seven times.

The old framework for the industry, meanwhile, which is commonly referred to as 'extractives and mineral processing', has been inoperative since 2014. And with less than five months before the apprenticeship levy kicks in, employers are concerned.

Karen Wright, learning and development manager at British-based international building materials company Hanson, is chair of the Mineral Products Qualifications Council and the trailblazer group that has worked to get new apprenticeship standards passed.

She said employers initially saw the levy as "a big opportunity" to "attract new blood into the industry" with an aging workforce.

Her team has been working for "at least two years" on a range of new apprenticeship standards, and now has five in development.

However, she added: "We have had hurdles at every single stage."

None of the new standards have been approved for delivery yet, and Ms Wright said "constant changing of requirements" had been a barrier.

"The government hasn't made this easy at

all," she said, explaining that when their first standard was submitted for approval it was "returned seven times".

"Even rewriting it in the exact wording we had been given by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, it was rejected."

Anthony Elgey, general manager at standard setting organisation MP-Futures, warned employers faced a "recruitment time bomb", adding just 14 per cent of the workforce was aged below 35.

Mr Elgey explained that while the trailblazers had been fighting to get standards approved, employers had "no useable framework to offer". An application had been made by employers to update the 'Extractives and Mineral Processing Occupations' framework, but this was rejected.

Then in January this year, Mr Elgey said he was informed by issuing authority Proskills that the framework would be taken down altogether by April or August.

This was delayed until December, but, he said, the extension was irrelevant because only three of the 33 qualifications embedded in the framework are still operational.

The DfE declined to explain why there had been so many problems with the new standards, or the old framework had not been renewed in the meantime.

A spokesperson said:"We are working constructively with the mineral processing industry – and currently developing five apprenticeship standards with them – to ensure they have high quality apprenticeships in place."



FE WEEK ANNUAL APPRENTICESHIP CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 2017

ICC, BIRMINGHAM | WED 22 - FRI 24 MARCH

**MAKING THE MOST OF THE LEVY |
THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EMPLOYERS
AND APPRENTICESHIP PROVIDERS 2017**

In its third year, AAC has quickly become recognised as the premier professional apprenticeship conference, providing policy and practical updates. More than 100 workshop and 50 exhibitors will again provide senior staff from colleges, training providers, universities, employers and assessment organisations with business critical news and information.

Ahead of the launch of the apprenticeship levy in April, and the new 'upper-limit' funding methodology kicking in from 1 May, there is no better time for you and your organisation to benefit from attendance.

AAC 2017 is the not to be missed three day policy and practice conference dedicated to apprenticeships.

EARLY BIRD
SAVE 25% ON
DELEGATE PASSES
WHEN BOOKING
BEFORE JAN 6, 2017

**MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SPONSORSHIP AND EXHIBITION OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE
FOUND AT FEWEEKAAC.COM OR BY EMAILING EXHIBIT@FEWEEK.CO.UK**

Conference sponsors



nochn
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES



Pearson



SMARTASSESSOR
NEXT GENERATION E-PORTFOLIO SOFTWARE

Registration sponsor



ncfe.

NEWS

City Literary Institute could be first in college merger

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE

EXCLUSIVE

Kensington and Chelsea College is in advanced merger talks just a few days after the surprise departure of its principal.

The college confirmed to FE Week that it is looking to join forces with City Literary Institute, a specialist designated institution for adult learners based in central London.

The talks follow the shock resignation of KCC's principal Mark Brickley on October 28, and speculation is mounting that his departure could be related to a dispute over who would lead the combined institution.

The college declined to comment, insisting his departure was due to "personal reasons".

There are currently nine specialist designated institutions across the country, including City Lit, and FE Week understands this is the first proposed FE college merger involving one.

A KCC spokesperson told FE Week that it was "engaged in continuing discussion with City Lit with regard to a proposed merger".

She stressed that discussions "continue to be positive" and said the college "is excited about its future".

No date has yet been set for when any merger would take place, and neither college would comment on who was likely to take the helm at the new organisation.

The 3,250-learner college received a



'requires improvement' rating following its most recent Ofsted inspection in June 2015, having received the same grade at two previous inspections in 2013 and 2012.

Both Kensington and Chelsea College and City Lit are involved in the central London area review of post-16 education and training, which began in March and is expected to complete later this month.

City Lit was one of three specialist designated institutions to have opted to take part in the review.

These differ from general FE colleges as they are independently constituted charities typically delivering short courses for adults.

City Lit, which was rated 'outstanding' by



Ofsted at its last inspection in 2011, has more than 20,000 learners, the majority of whom are adult learners studying for personal and social development rather than for qualifications.

Staff at KCC were told about the merger plans in a newsletter dated July 8.

The newsletter, seen by FE Week, said the link-up would make the colleges "more financially stable and viable and, critically, able to offer a cohesive range of learning opportunities to the communities which we serve".

Mark Malcomson, City Lit's principal,

confirmed his institute was in talks with Kensington and Chelsea as part of the area review process.

He said: "We see some very positive opportunities for both colleges given the many synergies between our curriculum and our experience in adult learning."

Sue Pember, director of policy and external relations at HOLEX, the sector membership body for SDIs, described the merger as "an exciting development".

She added: "Any merger would be good for Londoners as it would give City Lit greater reach."



Sally is making it happen.

As a horticultural technician at the Cambridge University Botanic Garden, Sally supports research across plant sciences – from forest conservation to investigating disease-resistant plants.

Right now across industry, UK employers need highly skilled technicians to join their workforces. Technician roles are well paid and offer huge scope for career progression. Why not plant a seed and encourage your students to consider pursuing a career as a technician?

Join us on Stand 37 at the AoC Conference to find out more, or visit technicians.org.uk

ROUND-UP

MERGER
on the grapevine

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77



A college that leapt to the rescue during one of the most disastrous mergers of recent years now plans to join forces with its neighbour.

East Kent College, which took on two of K College’s campuses following the latter’s meltdown in 2014, has announced plans “in principle” to join forces with Canterbury College, having combined their leadership teams on August 1.

This is the latest merger to be announced after Sir David Collins, the outgoing FE commissioner, told MPs on the education select committee last month that there were 88 colleges engaged in merger discussions, following the first three waves of the area reviews of post-16 education and training.

Both East Kent and Canterbury are involved in the Kent review, which is due to start December 8.

No date has yet been set for when the merger will go ahead, although both said in a statement it was “unlikely” to be before next summer.

Beverley Aitken, East Kent’s chair, said: “We have seen a wide range of benefits since forming the partnership with Canterbury College, and our governors were minded to recommend we examine a full merger.”

Colin Carmichael, Canterbury’s chair, said that the college had already seen “significant efficiencies” through the shared leadership team.

“At this stage, it feels like the time is right to move forward with our planning, and look to bring the two together,” he added.

K College, which was formed through a merger between South Kent College and West Kent College in 2010, fell apart in 2014 after racking up huge debts.

It split into two, with East Kent taking over campuses in Dover and Folkestone.

East Kent, which has around 6,000 learners, was rated ‘good’ during its latest Ofsted inspection in March 2013, while Canterbury, which has around 9,000 learners, was given a ‘requires improvement’ grade following its last inspection in May 2015.

In a separate move, four colleges in Devon have come together to form the Devon Colleges Group – but they’re not merging.

The link-up between Petroc, Exeter College, City College Plymouth and South Devon College will see them working in collaboration rather than merging.

In a joint statement, the four said the group was a “partnership with a shared vision focussed on enhancing skills, raising aspirations and driving regional economic growth and productivity”.

All four were rated either ‘outstanding’ or ‘good’ at their most recent Ofsted inspections.

John Laramy, Exeter’s principal, said he welcomed the opportunity to “work together in collaboration with our neighbouring colleges”.

City College Plymouth’s principal Phil



Canterbury College



Petroc College

Davies said the college was “fully committed to the collective and strong collaborative working that the Devon Colleges Group will provide”.

Diane Dimond, principal at Petroc, said “effective collaboration is key to delivering the skills our regional economy needs, both now and for the future”.

Stephen Criddle, South Devon College’s principal, added the group would “provide a coordinated approach and greater focus on identifying good-practice areas of strength and specialism”.

The announcement came ahead of the Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly area review, in which all four colleges are involved and which held its first steering group meeting on November 9.

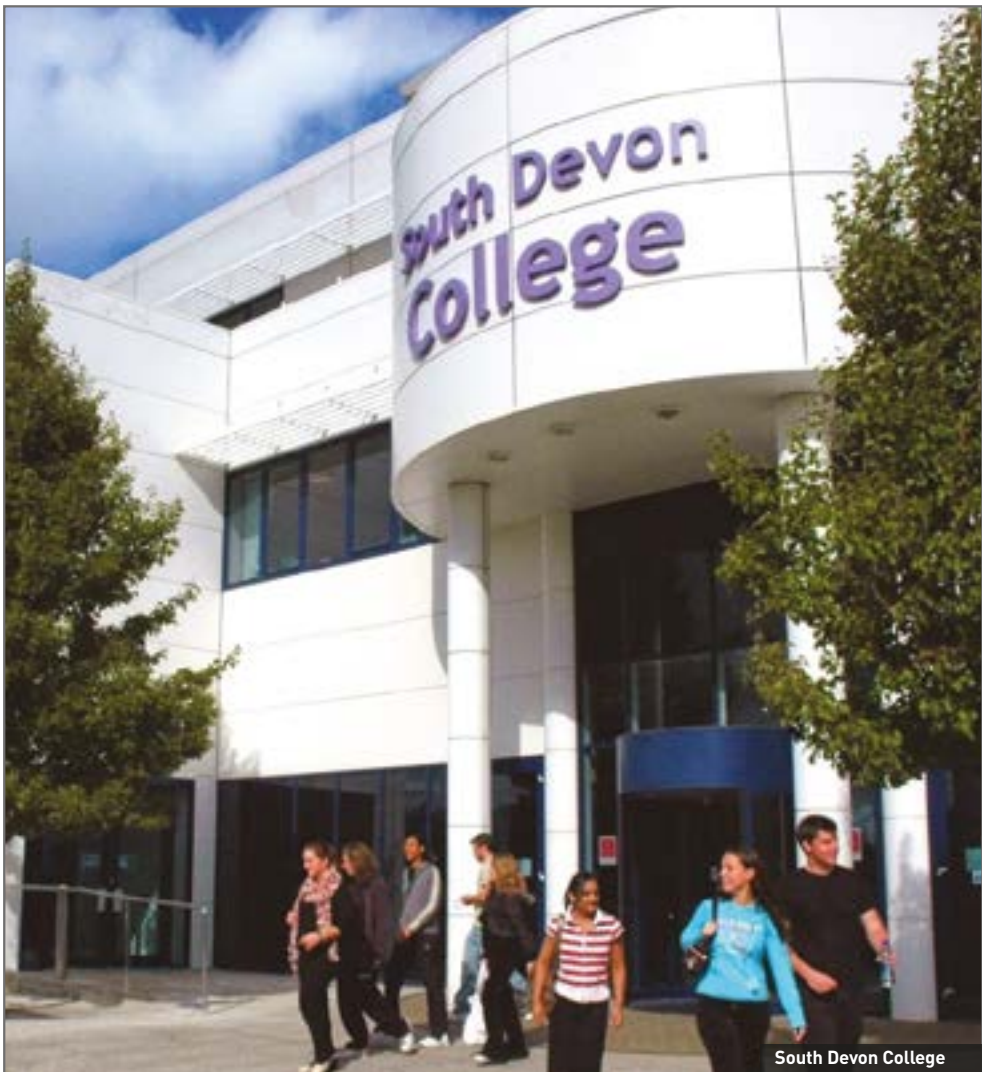
Last month the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London pulled out of a planned three-way merger with Barnet and Southgate College and Waltham Forest College, citing different approaches to governance and management as a sticking point.

Meanwhile, the remaining two colleges announced that they would soon be consulting on proposals for a two-way merger, with a planned merge date of August 1, 2017.

Consultation on a proposed link-up between City College Brighton and Hove and Northbrook College Sussex also opened last month.



East Kent College



South Devon College

EDITORIAL

What are colleges waiting for?



Colleges are sadly still proving themselves to be out of step with the seismic shift in funding priorities towards apprenticeships.

Nick Boles asked a year ago at AoC Conference why they were still letting independent training providers steal their lunch.

Little has changed since. In fact, the situation has worsened.

I get it that colleges should offer broader training opportunities than just apprenticeships.

There's little doubt also that it takes more than 12 months to transform priorities and working practices at what are often huge institutions.

But the truth is, colleges have form on this.

We recalled in our front page story this week that then economic secretary to the treasury, John Healey, urged them at AoC conference in 2003 to be "more active" in forging training links with business.

It isn't good enough that many are still not listening.

There's a huge amount of extra money available to colleges that are able to evolve quickly.

The stark reality could, I fear, be economic oblivion for those that aren't.

Nick Linford, editor
news@feweek.co.uk

TWEETS ABOUT IPPR RERORT

- Graham Howe @GrahamDavidHowe
@FEWeek @IPPR can't see what's progressive (as they title themselves) about the suggestion courses delivered only by Colleges/Not for Profit
- Adam Barnes @adambarnes1983
@GrahamDavidHowe @FEWeek @IPPR If only colleges and non-profit-making are allowed to deliver isn't this a step backwards away from choice?
- James Stockdale @StockdaleJ
Doesn't work for sectors like the automotive sector, bulk of apprentices at L2 - and out in the workplace because that's what employers need

Noel Johnson @NoelcJohnson
- @FEWeek @AELPUK an excellent response by Mark Dawe. We have enough work to do without creating problems to solve!!
- Marches SPN@marches_skills
@FEWeek These are linked - as Ashley said last week, 'get at the parents'



AOC AND AELP BOSSES BATTLE OVER INDEPENDENT PROVIDER QUALITY

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

The bosses of FE's two biggest associations have traded verbal blows over the quality of apprenticeships that are delivered by private training providers.

David Hughes, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, has claimed that independent providers offer apprentices "not very much" training, mostly assessing them "on the job".

But his comments sparked a war of words with Mark Dawe, boss of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, who challenged the AoC chief to "produce the evidence" to back up his allegation.

Mr Hughes' criticism of independent training providers was made during an interview with FE Week in which he defended colleges' poor take-up of apprenticeships over the past year.

The former skills minister Nick Boles had challenged colleges to stop letting private providers "nick your lunch" (see page 8) at the 2015 AoC annual conference – something that the figures show they haven't really managed.

Pressed on why some colleges haven't been expanding their apprenticeship provision

ahead of the levy, Mr Hughes said: "Colleges are big organisations and there's always going to be a degree of cautiousness about suddenly shifting your business into new areas.

"If you're an independent provider and you're doing most of that work assessment on the job, there's a lot of evidence that many apprentices get no-off-the job training, even at level four and five, even at degree-level apprenticeships. It's much easier to suddenly switch your business and grow your business and get big numbers."

Mr Dawe hit back at Mr Hughes, labelling his claim "disappointing and plain wrong".

He told FE Week: "I challenge David to produce the evidence he refers to, given that Ofsted believes that 79 per cent of independent provider provision is good or outstanding, and the latest FE Choices and CBI data shows that by far the average highest satisfaction ratings among employers and learners are for independent providers.

"Is he really saying that an apprentice has to leave the employer's premises to get access to the necessary facilities and kit?

"Off-the-job training for the technical certificate, and improving English and maths, can and does frequently takes place

in training rooms on site or at the provider's facilities.

"David may be inferring, and it may be the case that many colleges are not suited to certain types of delivery.

"Therefore they should focus on what they are good at rather than trying to turn everything into classroom education."

Just days after the exchange, the left-leaning think-tank IPPR called on the government to phase out level two apprenticeships for 16- to 18-year-olds, and replace them with a programme only offered by colleges (see page 6).

It is also likely that the government's skills plan will favour colleges if classroom-based facilities are required to deliver its 15 new technical professional education routes.

"AELP has nearly 50 college members, some of which are very large, who offer high quality work-based learning and I would be surprised if many of them agreed with David," added Mr Dawe.

"I am puzzled why the size of an institution should prevent it from entering the apprenticeship market – it is all about willingness to seize the opportunities that the levy offers and getting better at employer engagement."

COMMENTS

- Influential think tank calls for college-only route to replace the level 2 apprenticeship**

For some young learners college is not for them and Prefer working and completing work based apprenticeship, from my experience as a college lecture and a work based trainer the confidence this gives the learner working in a work environment is the way forward. For me it only benefits the college and not the learner - again funding and money comes first before the learner!

Julie

Much of these recommendations are sound. They are however fundamentally undermined by the institutional bias reflected in the recommendation that the majority of private training providers should be excluded from supporting these learners. These are the very organisations that have the expertise, energy, innovation and employer facing engagement to make them a success!

Blueboy
- Outstanding Ofsted for Fashion Retail Academy**

Starting from the base assumption that Ofsted grades are a fair and even handed barometer of quality free from political wind changes. Might it be worth some analysis on grades versus size of organisation across the last 10 years or so?

It feels to me that the larger the organisation the greater reliance there is on systems to hold it together and the 'human' factor gets diluted. But I have no data to begin to substantiate that, would be interesting to see some.

Phil Hatton

Big congratulations to the Academy on an impressive inspection result. Retail has always been an area that was a bit of a Cinderella, and this report presents a very positive picture of what can be done in making it a desirable career path. It is a good example of engaging with industry for the benefit of learners.

Geoff
- Consultation sparks hope for early years educator apprenticeships u-turn**

As a tutor of Early Years students I know the heartache that trying to gain a GCSE in Maths is, for some excellent young practitioners. We have always said they need English however Maths is not needed in order to be an effective and excellent Early years practitioner. The maths that is needed for young children is quite adequately covered if a practitioner has functional skills, key skills or a D in GCSE. I hope common sense will prevail in this, as we run the risk of losing excellent practitioners in the future.

Mrs Sue Harrison

Carmichael backs more FE investment as he rejects new grammars

Neil has been a governor of a local grammar school and of a local FE College in Stroud so he knows what he is talking about.

Michael Farmer



Vice Principal Quality & Standards

£Competitive plus benefits

This is a career defining opportunity to join a newly created major college in the role of Vice Principal Quality and Standards.

You will be working in one of the largest colleges – the newly formed London South East Colleges which came about by a merger of Greenwich and Bexley with Bromley College, creating an organisation of around £50 million. The role involves working as part of the college executive team to ensure that all aspects of teaching and learning and the student experience are on track to become outstanding.

This role combines the best of strategic visioning and leadership with the crucial operational aspects of ensuring everything we do is of a consistently high standard. The role will provide the right person with an opportunity to create a compelling vision for outstanding teaching and learning across all aspects of the college's work whilst working within a very complex and multisite environment to drive forward quality improvement.

As the senior leader who sits on top of quality across the whole organisation you will be given a high degree of autonomy to develop strategies and to make decisions whilst being the guardian of culture, behaviour and standards across this newly created organisation.

We are looking for the best fit for our team; someone with real professional credibility who can command the respect of everyone in the organisation. A resilient individual with fresh ideas to move us forward, with excellent and compelling communication skills and a very clear focus of what excellent teaching and learning looks like. In addition you will be able to thrive in a multisite London environment, will have a strong appreciation of the challenges facing us and will be a champion for equality and diversity.

Key Dates:

Closing date for applications: Monday 5th December 2016 at noon

Longlisting Interviews: Thursday 8th December 2016 at LSEC

Shortlisting: Thursday 8th December 2016

Final interviews: Friday 13th January 2017 at LSEC

Please send your CV and covering letter to LSELeadership@fea.co.uk.

NB: FEA has been retained by LSEC on an exclusive basis.
All 3rd party or direct CV's will be forwarded directly to FEA

FEA



ASKHAM BRYAN COLLEGE

Executive Director - Students, Quality & Standards
circa £75k

Askham Bryan College is seeking to appoint a passionate Executive Director of Students, Quality & Standards.

The Role

Reporting to the Chief Executive and working alongside the college's two Campus Principals and the Chief Finance Officer, the successful candidate will be key to enhancing the College's ethos of scholarship, high expectations and individual personal achievement. The appointee will be the College's Ofsted Nominee and responsible for the preparation and implementation of a Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement Plan.

The Person

In addition to possessing strong leadership skills the successful candidate will have experience of a successful Ofsted inspection along with a track record of quality improvement and expertise in modern teaching and statutory funding methodologies.

The College

Askham Bryan College is the largest provider of specialist land-based further and higher education in England. This role will be based at the college's main York site but with a requirement for travel to all other sites.

Closing Date: 9.00am on Monday 28th November

Assessment & interview day: Wed 14th December

To download the application pack visit www.protocol.co.uk/askham
For a confidential discussion about the role contact Ian Sackree: 07795 271559 or David Beynon: 07970 042334

Protocol | Excellence in FE

Director of External Funding

Salary: Competitive including PRP

We have an excellent opportunity for an experienced Director of External Funding. In this exciting and high profile role you will lead and manage the External Funding Unit and the Skills Hub to successfully achieve our growth ambitions. You will have full accountability for the financial and operational performance of the Unit as well as being a part of the College's Leadership and Management Team.

To be successful you will have a proven track record of winning and delivering to large scale funding bids across a number of areas as well as evidence of creating business plans and achieving objectives in a similar role or environment. Experience of ESF and major funding streams is also essential, together with effective and successful leadership and management experience.

Qualified to degree level or possessing the relevant senior level experience you will have highly developed communication, interpersonal and networking skills. You will also have the ability to develop strong partnerships with a range of key stakeholders as well as knowledge of external funding streams and the requirements of different funding bodies including audit.

For an informal discussion please contact Denise Cheng-Carter on 01422 357357.

Applications close at 12 noon on the 21st November 2016 and interviews will be held on the 30th November 2016.



Deputy Apprenticeship Manager
Kempston (Bedford) based. Full time.
Salary to £35k plus benefits.

This is a new role which would suit a candidate with excellent attention to detail, and experience in either the apprenticeship sector or professional qualification delivery.

You will be responsible for safeguarding and under the direction of the Apprenticeship Manager, ensuring funding and quality assurance compliance requirements are met.

You will have line management experience or be able to demonstrate the ability to manage professional staff under the guidance of the Apprenticeship Manager.

Strong IT skills are essential.

Apprenticeship Manager
Kempston (Bedford) based. Full time.
Salary to £50k plus benefits.

This is an exciting position for someone to manage our apprenticeship provision and delivery to the legal sector.

You will be responsible for ensuring that teaching and assessing meet quality standard requirements, and will be a point of contact for our clients and other strategic partners.

The ideal candidate will be an experienced manager of apprenticeships in the professional qualification sector. You will have current knowledge and experience of dealing with quality assurance and funding requirements.

You will have demonstrable leadership and team work skills, and be prepared to manage and develop your team to achieve continual improvement. Strong IT skills are essential.

Some travel within the UK will be necessary so a clean driving licence is required.



CILEx Law School is the largest provider of legal apprenticeships in England and Wales. In anticipation of the apprenticeship levy, we're expanding our team with two new posts.

Conditions of employment for both posts are excellent with generous pension contributions, holiday entitlements, and training opportunities.

For further information or to apply for these positions please download a job description and application form from http://www.cilexlawschool.ac.uk/about_us/working_with_us or telephone Jill Culbert, HR Officer on (01234) 844374.

Please indicate which job you are applying for.

CILEx Law School welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

No agencies please.

Closing date for applications for both positions is 21 Nov 16.

6 x Development Manager Positions

Fixed term until 31st July 2018

Salary: £33,187

The External Funding Unit at Calderdale College in Halifax currently operates a Fund Management model to deliver a number of extensive European Social Fund (ESF) projects. These are sub contracted through a network of sub-contractors across the North of England.

Posts will be based in and responsible for activities in the York, North Yorkshire, East Riding LEP area, the Black Country LEP area and the Leicester and Leicestershire LEP area. In addition, travel to national events, other LEP areas and Calderdale College Halifax is expected.

Please state in your application which you are applying for.

Key activities will include being the key contact for the LEP and strategic stakeholders in respect of the College's ESF funded programme.

The post holder will be responsible for establishing and continually developing links with external stakeholders and other strategic partners in the relevant LEP area to maximise project performance, developing and maintaining relationships with other key stakeholders and other delivery agents to ensure effective linkages are made between them and partners to maximise progressions from initiative to initiative.

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is
12 noon on the 28th November 2016.

Please apply at the following link:

<http://www.calderdale.ac.uk/content/view/jobs/current-vacancies>



Do you want to join a company where 96% of colleagues say they are proud to work?*

www.qube-learning.co.uk

We are an Ofsted grade 2 training provider experiencing considerable growth, partnering with organisations including the NHS, Servest, TC Facilities Management and Hitachi Capital.

We are looking for:

Qualified Assessors / Trainers, permanent and freelance, to join us at this very exciting time. Drawing on your own expertise, knowledge and experience you will support learners in the work-place through their Apprenticeship in Hospitality, Business Services, Facilities Management, Cleaning, Health & Social and Clinical Care.

You will receive:

A competitive salary, Perkbox, RAC cover, competitive mileage rate, a supportive and friendly working environment, a generous bonus and more. Competitive Freelance rates for those that are self-employed.

Requirements:

An Assessing Qualification (A1/PTLLS/TAQA/CAVA) and confidence in the delivery of functional skills maths, English up to Level 2.

Interested? Email your CV to joinus@qube-learning.co.uk.

*Based on our 2016 Employee Survey.

We are levy ready and excited about the opportunities next year.

FE Week

Bridget is your go-to person for everything jobs-related.

She will advise you on the best formats and channels to get your recruitment opportunities out to the sector.

Having worked in sales since she was 18, Bridget is passionate about connecting with clients and will always go the extra mile to make sure you are satisfied.

Our specialist readership means your print and online job adverts will be seen by highly influential and talented individuals across the world of further education. Searching for the right candidate with the right calibre, can be both challenging and time consuming, alongside trying to work towards a budget.

FE Week offers cost effective approaches through proven advertising mediums, which are tailor-made to work in line with your budget and more importantly your expectations.

Speak to Bridget to find out how FE Week can support your recruitment needs.

Tel: 020 3740 1577

Email: bridget.stockdale@feweek.co.uk

**I'm here to make
recruitment that bit easier**

Curriculum Development Manager Wanted



Interserve Learning & Employment is on the lookout for an experienced professional to join its expanding team as a Curriculum Development Manager, reporting into the Director of Quality and Curriculum. The successful candidate will hold responsibility over the quality of the curriculum for learners and employers, ensuring it's of a high standard. This includes managing our transition from apprenticeship frameworks to standards, as well as understanding the complex needs of medium and large employers whilst ensuring that the content, processes and assurance needed is in place to meet these needs to the highest standard.

The Skills

The successful applicant will desirably hold a teaching qualification, knowledge of a range of online learning technologies, an understanding and experience of ISO 9000 Quality Assurance Systems and Procedures, experience of Ofsted, Matrix and Merlin inspections, experience of leading, managing and developing a range of subject areas and qualifications across a large organisation, extensive knowledge of functional skills delivery and highly developed analytical report writing skills. Working for us, you'll need to be a people person and you will be representing and promoting our values each and every day; taking pride in your work, ensuring everyone has a voice, bringing better to life and doing the right thing.

Equal Opportunities

We are committed to providing services which embrace diversity and which promote equality of opportunity. We also offer a guaranteed interview scheme for applicants with a disability who meet our minimum selection criteria.

The Company

Interserve Learning & Employment has a strong position in the education, skills and employability markets, with a significant share of the Work Programme and delivery across the country as one of the largest private sector suppliers of Apprenticeships. Our ever-expanding team, of over 800 dedicated people, provides tailored support to help individuals in a range of situations: including young people leaving school and looking for the first step in their career, people in work who need help to progress through in-work training, people who have an illness which has prevented them from completing their journey into employment, and people who are ex-offenders wanting to turn their lives around, get back to work and re-join society. Whatever challenges someone faces, when they come to us, they receive flexible support to make sure they get the right help for them.

The Benefits

Working for Interserve Learning & Employment comes with a variety of benefits, equating to between £1300 and £2400 per annum, such as: a company pension scheme, a healthcare scheme, enhanced maternity and paternity pay, childcare vouchers, a share incentive plan scheme, an employee assistance programme and life assurance. At Interserve you'll also have access to an online retail discount service called MyInterserve, allowing you to save £1000s on everything from holidays to your weekly shop. Not only will you access all of the above, you'll be working for an organisation that prides itself on redefining the future for people and places.

To express an interest in this role, contact our Recruitment team at ile.recruitment@interserve.com.

Marketing Coordinator 0.5 fte £22,284 - £24,267 pro rata

We are looking for an excellent communicator and innovator with outstanding organisation skills able to deliver information with energy and impact. You will be actively involved in the creation, coordination and evaluation of a community focused marketing campaign and materials, making full use of the website and social media.

This post is part time - 18 hours x 52 weeks. Occasional evening and weekend work will be required to support events and outreach activity. Maximum salary £24,267 pro rata (£11,142 - £12,133 for this post).



The full advert is on FE Week Online.

For further information and an application form please visit our website
www.redbridge-iae.ac.uk

Applications must be emailed to
staffing@redbridge-iae.ac.uk or posted to:

Staffing,
Redbridge Institute,
Gaysham Avenue,
Ilford
IG2 6TD

to be received by
**5.00pm Wednesday 30th
November 2016.**

CPD and Teaching & Learning Adviser 0.5 fte £26,000 pro rata

This role will support teaching staff towards achieving outstanding teaching and learning, developing a flexible, responsive CPD programme and working with tutors to support the embedding of basic skills, British values, employability skills and the innovative use of new technologies.

This post is part time - 18 hours flexibly across the week. There is potential to combine this role with a teaching commitment. The salary is £26,000 pro rata (£13,000 for this post).



Be: The Difference

Teaching advisors urgently needed in Rwanda

We're about to launch our biggest education project in Rwanda that could drastically improve the quality of learning for millions of children. We urgently need 25 educational professionals to help meet the challenge.

Use your skills to change lives. Volunteer overseas with VSO.

Find out more at vsointernational.org/VolunteerRwanda



FE Week

Award-winning journalism from the only newspaper dedicated to further education and skills

Have you subscribed yet?

THE SECTOR'S PREMIER SOURCE FOR NEWS, COMMENT AND RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING IS FE WEEK

- FE Week is the only dedicated newspaper for the FE and skills sector
- FE Week continues to be the 'go to' news source, publishing lively, engaging, and challenging FE news
- Weekly expert insight and interpretation of complex issues and policies
- have won its expert journalists plaudits and national awards
- From the onset FE Week has never been afraid to ask difficult questions and is determined to get past the bluster and explain the facts

CONTINUOUSLY PROVIDING YOU WITH THE NEWS THAT MATTERS SINCE 2011

For only £75 a year, subscribers to FE Week receive a printed (20+ pages) newspaper every Monday during term-time (36 editions a year), a digital PDF edition emailed directly to their inbox on a Friday morning, access to the digital FE Week archive, weekly email updates and more. If you really like in-depth, investigative further education journalism, determined to get past the bluster and explain the facts, then FE Week is your newspaper.



**SUBSCRIBE
TODAY TO ENSURE
YOU ARE ALWAYS
IN CONTROL**





MidKent College

Careers



English & Maths Lecturers Required

The City of Bristol College welcome CVs from English & Maths Lecturers (GCSE/A level) who would like to be part of our 'bank staff' and will be available to cover short term.

Please send CVs to
human.resources@cityofbristol.ac.uk



For further details visit <http://www.cityofbristol.ac.uk/jobs/vacancies/>



Adult Community Learning

Part Time Sessional Tutors required to plan, prepare, teach and assess the following courses:

English GCSE South Essex
5-10 hours per week £19.57 – £22.70 per hour
Hours will be variable according to curriculum needs and may include daytimes, evenings and/or Saturdays.

Requirements:

- DTLLS/PGCE or subject specialism equivalent.
- Experience in delivering English FS/English GCSE to adults preferred.
- Experience of supporting individuals to achieve accreditation and knowledge of assessment processes.
- L3 required for GCSE English

To apply please email ACLrecruitment@essex.gov.uk quoting reference JL8457 or call Donna Ashton on 033301 38369.

Closing date 22nd November 2016

Essex County Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment. Our aim is to be an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, age or religion or belief. All applications will be considered solely on merit. As part of employment with Essex County Council should you role require a DBS check you will be required to register with the DBS Update Service.

The DBS update service ensures all registered DBS certificates are kept up to date and allows authorised parties to view the status of your certificate. This is an annual subscription and you will be responsible for ensuring this is maintained. For further information on the DBS update service please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service>

Full time Functional Skills Tutor

Location: West Midlands

Salary: £25k - £30k

(depending on qualifications and experience)

We are a well-established, expanding training provider looking for an outstanding, dynamic and self-motivated individual to deliver Functional Skills in English, Maths and ICT to individuals working towards vocational programmes from Entry level 1 to Level 2 within our work based learning provision. High achievement rates, learner satisfaction and progression are key responsibilities of this role. The successful applicant will understand the Functional Skills programmes and how to best enable our learners to achieve well. You will be sensitive to your learners' needs and enable and encourage them to express and reach their true potential. You'll also know how to monitor each step of their progress through development of their learning plan and the review process and celebrate their successes.

If you can help to inspire and support our learners to progress and achieve their qualifications, and want to be part of our successful team please submit your CV to Sarbjit Bahia, HR Manager, email address: sarb.bahia@gbtraining.org.uk or post, to be received by 5.00pm Friday 9th December 2016. This post will require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. We strive to achieve diversity in our staff to reflect the community we serve.



GB Training (UK) Ltd, Wynner House, Birmingham, B5 6RG
T: 0121 622 4218 E: info@gbtraining.org.uk
www.gbtraining.org.uk

Developing Excellence

Jobs in schools, colleges

Search our

UPGRADE COMPLETE.

**New jobs board. New approach.
More choice for you...**

Jobs in schools, colleges and education;
leadership, management, teaching
and administration | educationweekjobs.co.uk

**We've made finding your new colleague
that little bit easier.**

Email jobs@feweek.co.uk for more information.



Apprentice Assessments

READY FOR THE LEVY?

nocn
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

NOCN is appointed to provide End Point Assessments (EPA) for the following apprenticeship standards, with more in process:

- Financial Services Customer Adviser - Level 2
- Property Maintenance Operative - Level 2
- Engineering Design and Draughtsperson - Level 3
- Public Service Operational Delivery Officer - Level 3
- Senior Financial Services Customer Adviser - Level 3

Assessment services for employers and training providers:

- Assessment centres
- Workplace testing
- Online resources
- Formative assessments
- Vocational qualifications
- Functional Skills
- Consultancy support

Plus, SASE apprenticeship standards, Functional Skills and vocational qualifications.



If you're a Levy paying employer or a provider on RoATP, get in touch today for expert assessment services and advice. Call 0114 227 0500 Email business-enquiries@nocn.org.uk Click www.nocn.org.uk/enquiry



@nocn1



nocn1



nocn



OUT NOW!

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO FUNDING APPRENTICESHIPS

NICK LINFORD

AN **ESSENTIAL GUIDE**
TO THE FUNDING FOR
EVERY **APPRENTICESHIP**
FRAMEWORK AND
STANDARD IN ENGLAND



ORDER COPIES FROM

VISIT: WWW.LSECT.CO.UK/FUNDING-GUIDE
CALL: 020 8123 4778
EMAIL: GUIDE@LSECT.COM

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

LSECT
LEARNING & SKILLS
EVENTS, CONSULTANCY & TRAINING

nocn
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

EXPERTS

With the government attempting to hide or downplay the scale of their funding cuts, there is a huge gulf between rhetoric and reality on apprenticeships, says David Lammy

During the course of the parliamentary debate on apprenticeship funding cuts on November 1, I mentioned cuts 30 times. I brought up local figures and evidence from the College of North East London in my own constituency of Tottenham and I quoted national averages and presented figures for worst- and best-case scenarios. I even referred to calculations that had been presented to the Department for Education a few days previously, showing how nine out of the 10 most popular apprenticeships still face cuts ranging from 14 to 51 per cent – despite the government’s U-turn.

I will not stand by as the government presses ahead with cuts on this scale

But answer came there none. I was stonewalled. The apprenticeships and skills minister did not see fit even to mention



Labour MP for Tottenham

Dear minister, it’s time to come clean on apprenticeships cuts

“cuts” once in his speech. I accused him of hoodwinking the House – and this is not an accusation I make lightly – but given the nature of what is at stake, I repeat again that the minister is misleading us and the young people of this country deserve better.

The minister told us that “we are moving into a new world”. The fact of the matter is that – according to his government’s own latest statistics – less than one per cent of all apprenticeship starts are on the new standards, with 99 per cent still on the existing apprenticeship frameworks that are being cut. The government has a target of three million apprenticeships starts by 2020, but in 2015/16 only 3,800 of 503,700 starts are on the standards. The new world we are promised is a long way off.

Mr Halfon told us that “huge amounts of money are going into support for

disadvantaged apprentices”, yet back in August the government quietly scrapped the “disadvantage uplift” in its entirety. The recent U-turn guaranteed support for only 12 months, and during the minister’s remarks in parliament no guarantees were made about what the government plans to do after this initial grace period has passed.

I do not doubt the minister’s commitment to apprenticeships, but if we are to believe the government’s rhetoric about “transforming the country into an apprenticeship nation”, why was parliament not given the opportunity to debate and vote on these cuts?

Why did it take a determined backbench campaign by 55 members of parliament for this issue even to be discussed in parliament in the first place?

I acknowledge that the recent U-turn goes some way to mitigating the worst effects of

the reductions, but I will not stand by as the government presses ahead with cuts on this scale without even having the guts to come to parliament and come clean about their magnitude.

Across nine out of the 10 most popular apprenticeships, we are now staring down the barrel of average cuts of between 27 per cent and 43 per cent. These cuts won’t affect young people lucky enough to have been born into wealthy families, or those who are lucky enough to be educated at our best schools.

They will hit young people in constituencies like mine, where youth unemployment is high, skilled jobs are hard to come by and buzzwords like “life chances” and “social mobility” couldn’t be further removed from the reality of everyday life.

My message is clear: the fight goes on

The government publishes statements saying that “apprenticeships transform lives and are vital in making this a country that works for everyone” while simultaneously dismantling apprenticeships funding.

There is a huge gulf between rhetoric and reality, and it is always working class young people who lose out. My message is clear: the fight goes on.



Become a member of SET
Join the largest professional membership organisation for teachers and trainers in post-16 education and training

Enjoy a range of exciting member benefits:

- Professional recognition
- Career development
- CPD opportunities



For more information visit:

set.et-foundation.co.uk/joinnow

or call 0800 093 9111

SAVE THE DATE
JUNE 29-30, 2017

HEADLINE PARTNER

City & Guilds

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

**summerhouse
events**

FE Week



FESTIVAL OF

Capel Manor College

VITAL CPD WITH A FESTIVAL VIBE
FIND OUT MORE AT FESTIVALOFSKILLS.CO.UK



I have found the event very interesting. It has been well organised, I love the idea of being outside. I like the marquee events and it is a beautiful setting - I don't think we could have had a better one.

Nick Chandly, Central
Bedfordshire College



It's been a good event. I've been both days and it's been really informative. I have learnt so much. I'd definitely come back and would do both days again.

Helen Sanson, Shaftesbury
Young People



IDEAL FOR ORGANISATION
DEVELOPMENT DAYS

FOR ALL STAFF
IN FE & SKILLS

100'S OF WORKSHOPS
ACROSS TWO DAYS

The FE Week Festival of Skills is an inspiring two day CPD extravaganza for professionals working within the further education and skills sector.

Over two days the Festival of Skills brings together the best of the sector's most forward thinking advocates, practitioners of change, policy makers and educators, at one of the leading forums for thought leadership, CPD and debate in the FE and skills sector.



EXPERTS: POLICY REPORTS SPECIAL



MARK DAWE

CEO, Association of Employment and Learning Providers

Don't abolish level 2 16-18 apprenticeships!

IPPR is wrong – employers do want to give 16- to 18-year-olds apprenticeships. The real problem is that schools won't promote them and government won't fund them, says Mark Dawe.

A report has been published by an influential think tank (see page 6) that attempts to influence ministers based on a false premise: that employers aren't interested in offering 16- to 18-year-olds apprenticeship opportunities.

This has been presented in 'Earning and Learning', the latest report from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), as a reason for doing away with the programme altogether for this age group and replacing it with a predominantly classroom-based pre-apprenticeship programme.

So let's have a look at the hard data. It is true that the worst economic recession since the war had a negative impact on 16- to 18-year-old apprentice recruitment, but this was temporary. Businesses did look for young people with more work experience for a couple of years, but the number of apprenticeship starts recovered in 2014-15 (to 125,900) and, based on the first nine months' figures available for 2015-16, we would expect that number to increase again this year.

To add to that, employers are currently advertising over 25,000 vacancies on the Find an Apprenticeship website, with the vast majority open to the youngest age group, after legal requirements are taken into consideration.

Combine these numbers and you will really struggle to maintain that employers aren't interested. However, the reforms mean that from next April, apprenticeships will be the only Department for Education 16-18 education and training programme not completely funded by the government when, in our view, employers should be fully subsidised for taking on these young apprentices.

No, the problem is not employers but the need to make more young people aware of the apprenticeship opportunities available, and not allowing them to be persuaded that apprenticeships are the wrong choice even before they have had the chance to consider all of their options. Neil Carmichael and his committee of MPs have regularly covered the issues surrounding poor careers advice in many of our schools and I've written about them in this week's edition of Schools Week.

The IPPR report further argues that apprenticeships suffer from a lack of

progression at level two. In the past it has been a challenge to persuade employers to move their successful apprentices up further levels but again, this is rapidly becoming out of date when you look at the recent increased take-up of apprenticeships at higher and degree levels.

Judging by conversations between providers and large employers planning for the levy's start, we can anticipate a further boost in numbers at level four and above. Part of the problem is frameworks and standards just didn't exist; again, this is being dealt with.

AELP agrees with the IPPR that there is

What privileged and narrow world do these commentators come from?

much to commend in the Sainsbury Review but neither the review nor the government's accompanying Skills Plan recommended the abandoning of 16-18 apprenticeships or the introduction of a new pre-apprenticeship programme, when we already have traineeships. They probably recognised that it is not a good idea to force young people who have been disengaged and demotivated at school into a classroom for another two years.

Many industries need and want a level two starting point and therefore it would be a denial of social justice to disallow a 16-year-old the opportunity to gain knowledge and proper experience of work. Moreover, due to failings in the schools system, many 16-year-olds need to start at level two yet some opinion-formers seem bent on punishing them further. Some even argue that there are no skills developed moving from entry level or level one through to level two. What privileged and narrow world do these commentators come from?

We should be debating what is in the best interests of young people based on evidence rather than institutionally biased proposals. Brexit and likely controls on migration also mean that it would be madness to starve employers of young people who can earn while they learn. Instead we need to get on with implementing what has already been proposed by the government.



TOM RICHMOND

Sixth-form college teacher and former senior adviser to skills ministers
Nick Boles and Matt Hancock

How to fix the skills system

The recent apprenticeship reforms were well-intentioned but miscalculated, says Tom Richmond, co-author of the Policy Exchange report, 'The skills we need, and why we don't have them'.

“No matter who I speak with, when I mention apprenticeships people react warmly.” So said Doug Richard in his review of apprenticeships back in 2012. This warmth ensures that whenever a politician declares their commitment to supporting or expanding apprenticeships, they can be assured of an equally positive response.

But what if apprenticeships weren't always as beneficial as they might appear? What if apprenticeships were not always the dynamic and valuable choice for young people and adults that you assumed them to be? What if everything you knew about apprenticeships was wrong? The report that I have written today with the Policy Exchange think tank (see page 7) poses precisely these questions.

Since Doug Richard's review, the government has quietly but systematically been reforming our apprenticeship system.

In order to truly understand the impact of the government's actions, you have to stop fretting over the levy or subcontracting arrangements and instead take a long hard look under the bonnet of these reforms.

Our conclusion is that in too many areas, the laudable ambition of high-quality apprenticeships across the economy are not being met.

Some of the apprenticeships designed by trailblazers are excellent and promote the kind of training that embodies apprenticeships in this country and abroad. However, we found that the reform programme has been beset by weaknesses and miscalculations that have undermined its intentions.

To be clear, an 'apprenticeship' is not a synonym for 'training'. It is an education programme that focuses on systematic long-term training both on and off the job in a new and skilled occupation.

Our report has identified many of the new apprenticeship standards – perhaps as many as a third – that do not meet the definition of an apprenticeship used in other countries or historically in this country.

We found examples of standards where the content is insufficient to meet skills needs, or relates to a low-skill occupation – contrary to the government's stated intention that every new apprenticeship standard should be in a highly skilled role. We came across standards that we estimate require only a few weeks of training. We identified new standards that could more accurately be deemed professional

development courses for existing staff, and which do not help a learner into a new role or responsibility. What's more, several standards duplicated others, either across different areas, or between level two and level three.

Our report also demonstrates how the speed with which the government pushed through their reforms has lessened the opportunities to address these concerns over quality.

The reform programme has been beset by weaknesses and miscalculations

As FE Week has shown already, the arrangements for end-point assessments for apprentices have resulted in some organisations which lack any prior assessment experience being put in charge without any agency, regulator or government department monitoring them.

The government's requirement that new apprenticeships must contain 20 per cent off-the-job training is not consistently enforced, while previous commitments that the assessments used for new apprenticeships will be valid, reliable and judged independently ought to have received much more attention.

If you want to understand how such a well-intentioned set of reforms to a much-loved educational brand could have produced such mixed results, the report we have published today is required reading. Our estimate is that without change, £500 million a year by 2020 could be spent on apprenticeships which are, in fact, not apprenticeships at all. There is too much at stake, both educationally and financially, to allow these reforms to continue without changes.

Robert Halfon and the newly unified Department for Education have a real opportunity here but it will require relentlessly focussing on high-quality apprenticeships above all else, alongside reforming the way in which apprenticeships are designed, bringing Ofqual in to regulate all assessments and giving more power and true independence to the new Institute of Apprenticeships.

A skills system in a country that works for everyone, not just a privileged few, has the potential to do so much better. Our report sets out how it can be done.



BRITISH EDUCATIONAL
SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION

Looking for quality education products and services?

**BESA members represent
the entirety of the UK
education suppliers sector
from EdTech to furniture.**

Use the BESA website to source
new suppliers and check whether
existing ones are BESA members

www.besa.org.uk

All BESA member companies
adhere to our Code of Practice,
so you can be confident you
are spending wisely from
companies you can trust.

Always look for the BESA logo
when buying for your organisation
to be assured of the best quality
and the highest value.

 @besatweet

EXPERTS



ALISON
MAYNARD

Principal of South Tyneside College's professional and vocational college

Is there a silver bullet for 14-16 recruitment?

Schools may see 14-16 recruitment as a threat, but there is a way to make it work, says Alison Maynard.

Since legislation was changed in 2014 to allow FE colleges to recruit mainstream 14-16 students, there has been mixed enthusiasm from the education world. And indeed, we are seeing mixed success in the implementation of this new option.

In our current economic climate, it certainly makes financial sense for colleges to expand their potential funding streams and introduce 14- to 16-year-olds. The hope is that these students will then move up onto higher level courses, thus creating a pipeline of loyal and dedicated students to boost current and future college recruitment.

For young people themselves, extra options at the age of 14 are also a great thing. As principal of a vocational college, I see first-hand the many students who thrive in a more practical and hands-on environment. With the national curriculum getting narrower, many 14-16 colleges provide an alternative route, offering subjects that increasingly are being scrapped by schools.

FE colleges will generally have much closer links with employers than schools do – and this real-world input is more important than ever if we are to make young people employable and to help plug the ever-growing skills gap.

It would therefore appear that 14-16 provision at FE colleges is a win-win for both the sector and the students. But why are so many colleges not keen on going down this road? And for those who have taken the plunge, why are so many of them finding recruitment such a challenge?

We launched our 14-16 provision in 2015 when we set up Career College North East – specialising in advanced manufacturing, engineering and computer science.

The biggest challenge for us, and I believe this is the case for many other FE colleges offering 14-16 provision, has been overcoming the reticence of some school leaders to embrace this pioneering education route. Considering the financial pressure being felt across the education sector, it is perhaps understandable that support from local schools has not always been forthcoming in the way we may have expected or hoped.

Recruiting and retaining students is obviously key to a school or college's success. Adequate funding is subject to enrolling the necessary numbers of students and then

ensuring they complete their studies. In essence, schools, sixth forms and colleges are all competing for the same students, and they must choose to go somewhere.

When an FE college sets up 14-16 provision, they are effectively giving young people an extra learning option and the opportunity to follow an alternative learning pathway.

Teachers owe it to their pupils to share all possible study options

For a local school, this is often viewed as competition and a potential threat to their student numbers and therefore their funding. But in reality, FE colleges will be offering something very different, which will suit some children more than others.

I feel strongly that heads and teachers owe it to their pupils to share with them all possible study options for their futures, even if these may lie at a different institution. They should not, even inadvertently and for what they may see as the overall good of their school, limit these options.

Many school heads already provide all relevant information and may baulk at the suggestion they do not put every learning option on the table. Perhaps they also truly believe that it is entirely in the best interests of their students to stay in mainstream education. But what is important is that they give their students high-quality and relevant information on each and every option and opportunity, including at age 14.

My college confronted this potential issue head on and chose to work together with a local secondary school. Instead of seeing us as a direct competitor, the school embraced our 14-16 Career College provision as a unique opportunity to further the education of some of its most progressively-minded pupils – by meeting their needs in a way the school by itself did not.

There is no silver bullet for recruiting students at the non-standard transfer age of 14. However, with greater collaborative working and a real desire to offer young people new and exciting learning options, I believe we can overcome the challenges and reap the benefits.



SALLY
ALEXANDER

Executive director of offender learning at Milton Keynes College

Prison learning needs more staff to succeed

While prison reform is to be welcomed, simply dealing with the staff shortages would solve many of the barriers to learning, says Sally Alexander.

Prison reform has been a hot topic of conversation since Michael Gove was appointed as justice minister back in May 2015. With his sudden exit earlier this year, the sector has been waiting to see how Liz Truss would take forward Dame Sally Coates' review of prison education, commissioned by Gove, as well as the wider and much needed overhaul of prisons. So the publication of the new white paper was welcomed.

It is key to note that this is a white paper on prison safety and reform, not just reform, and rightly so. Having worked with learners in custody for 25 years, I am well aware of the increase in violence and disruptions to our prison regimes over recent years and as Liz Truss says: "Without safety there can be no reform."

Liz Truss has committed to raising standards through four purposes that prisons need to deliver well: public protection; safety and order; reforming offenders; and preparing prisoners for life outside prison. These are to be welcomed and I am pleased to see the last two highlighted and not lost in the vital need to improve safety.

Reading more closely into plans for reforming education for offenders, it becomes more interesting.

Governors are given commissioning responsibilities for learning in their prisons, which is absolutely right: they should have both the autonomy and the accountability.

Assessing all learners' education needs on entry already happens across the estate, but I welcome the plan to link this formally to prison sentence plans, thereby raising the importance of and focus on this valuable piece of work.

The value of introducing a core common curriculum is less clear, as this seems to go against giving governors flexibility and autonomy to do what they feel best meets the needs of their prisoners. The jury is still out on this one.

I applaud governors working with local employers and linking learning programmes to labour market information. However this does already happen in a number of establishments – in fact, we deliver a range of

employer-centred programmes, placing over 100 offenders into work on release in the last year.

The challenge to all organisations working with prisoners, to offer opportunities for prisoners on release, is a good one. We work in a mentoring or support capacity with a number of ex-offenders who have set up their own companies and their expertise and experience is invaluable.

The focus on reform and preparation for life on release is welcome. However, some of this reform is already taking place and it is only not happening more widely due to cancelled or curtailed regimes caused by the staff shortages outlined in the white paper.

These shortages, as well as giving rise to safety concerns, have resulted in prisoners not being able to attend learning, learning being curtailed as they arrive late and leave early, or whole regimes being cancelled.

Staff shortages have resulted in whole regimes being cancelled

This is demotivating for learners and staff. Prisoners in custody mostly want to succeed and turn their lives around. Yes, they can be challenging, but most want to engage. And if they are engaging with learning, they are far less likely to be violent and disruptive.

As Paul, a learner working with RMF, one of our construction employers, recently said: "Once in education, life became positive. I started at college, developed skills and worked on site on day-release.

"I completed my qualifications and on release continued in the same job. I got on a course and I got a job".

Paul is now a supervisor at this company.

I welcome Liz Truss' plans to make prisons safer and to make them places of reform. Most of all, I hope they will enable the good programmes that are already in place in our prisons to be delivered, get prisoners out of their cells and into activities, and support offenders to resettle on release and not return to prison.

The link between area reviews and their original aim – of matching skills to labour market need – has been lost, says Caireen Mitchell

When BIS announced the area reviews in March, the process had at its core a complex but noble purpose: to deliver financially viable, resilient institutions, with strong reputations, delivering a high-quality offer to meet an area’s educational and economic needs.

We welcomed an area review process that sought to address the need to ensure that the supply of skills provided by those graduating from FE colleges matched the needs of the London labour market. However, as we await the review report, it appears it will read like a publication of marriage banns, with about as much chance of success as any partnership these days. Our concern is that the link between the area reviews and their original aims has been lost as the process has proceeded. Instead, it has prioritised the reorganisation of colleges to maintain local provision.

The WKCIC Group was created through the merger of Westminster Kingsway and City and Islington Colleges in August 2016 and is by some way the largest FE organisation in the capital. We were pioneers, embracing a merger ahead of the area review process, and we can already demonstrate how the colleges have continued to thrive.

When the area review process was announced, the two colleges were already at an advanced stage of discussion. Admittedly,



CAIREEN MITCHELL
Group director of planning and performance, WKCIC Group

Area reviews have lost their purpose

we were rather surprised to be so. Both City and Islington College and Westminster Kingsway College were very successful colleges in their own right: City and Islington with a reputation for educational excellence and Westminster Kingsway as a dynamic and employer-focused college. Both colleges had very strong recruitment and were financially healthy.

We came to the table to discuss some form of collaboration because of a common desire to diversify income and a concern that the comprehensive spending review would see further significant reductions for colleges. We felt collaboration would make us stronger, more ambitious, help us develop new income streams and better equip us to weather any storm.

However, the biggest enabler for our merger was not the willingness of people in the room to collaborate, but the significant shift in government policy on college mergers. Earlier government policy – despite the “freedoms

and flexibilities” provided by the then-skills minister John Hayes – favoured smaller local colleges, and numerous merger proposals were rejected. Mergers were encouraged only to solve quality and financial health problems and there was little incentive for colleges to spend time and resources on merger proposals that were unlikely to be agreed.

The direct central encouragement of merger occurred only when austerity measures pushed an increasing number of colleges into financial hardship and full government support of mergers came only with the area review proposals.

This prompts the question of whether area reviews were necessary across all colleges, or whether a policy change encouraging merger (and the austerity measures) may have sufficed. In London, several colleges announced intentions to explore merger prior to the review, which suggests that resources could have focused on those institutions in poor financial health or with quality problems.


Indeed, the area review process has caused a clamour and urgency to merge which could lead to failures.

We were pioneers

For years, as a sector, we’ve been told that we don’t meet employers’ skills needs. New initiatives are brought in (Train to Gain, Full level targets); we reform and respond yet employers’ skills needs are still not met.

The area reviews seemed to offer the opportunity to understand exactly what the skills gaps are and how they could better be met, though a comprehensive analysis of supply and demand. Admittedly, the complexity of the London labour market coupled with FE’s complex qualifications structure, means that any attempt to map supply and skills gaps would be very challenging. Perhaps this is why this aim seems to have been set aside, with the focus shifted to creating financially stable institutions.

Area reviews may have brought about mergers, and therefore hopefully greater financial stability across the sector. But it seems unlikely that it will lead directly to significant quality improvement, a narrowing of the skills gap and greater specialisation. Perhaps those tasks are being left to the LEPS.



We understand why Aristotle believed:

"The roots of education are bitter but the fruit is sweet"

...but in a modern age why can't those roots taste better?

We partner with colleges to create bespoke media-rich Further & Higher Education courses.

Together, we create courses that allow students to choose how, when and where they want to study.



Bespoke media-rich courses in partnership with colleges

Sponsor of the AoC Conference Celebration FiEsta

The ICC Birmingham	15-17 November	54 Stand
--------------------	----------------	----------

Learn more at mindful-education.co.uk

CAMPUS ROUND-UP

with Sam King

Students simulate injuries for staged firearms incident



Actors showcase their theatrical make-up

Students at City of Bristol College partnered with local police and rescue services to stage a major firearms incident as part of a police training exercise. Theatrical media make-up students used their skills to provide more than 200 actors with realistic-looking injuries, reflective of those experienced in a serious shooting incident. Actors were asked to play injured members of the public on a set in Bristol, as ‘gunmen’ took over a shopping centre. Kate Dowle, a theatrical and media make-up lecturer at the college, said: “Events like this require a large amount of preparation,

such as premade prosthetic limbs and wounds, something that would be required in the industry. The event highlighted what it’s like to work on a live brief on a hectic set, and the students all rose to the challenge.” Avon and Somerset Police, Avon Fire and Rescue service and South West Ambulance Service Trust were all involved in the event, staged by Black Rock Specialist Training Centre, which specialise in training officers in police firearms tactics. Rheia Roberts Budworth, a student at the college, said: “The actual exercise was scarily real and it was great to see our hard work in action.”

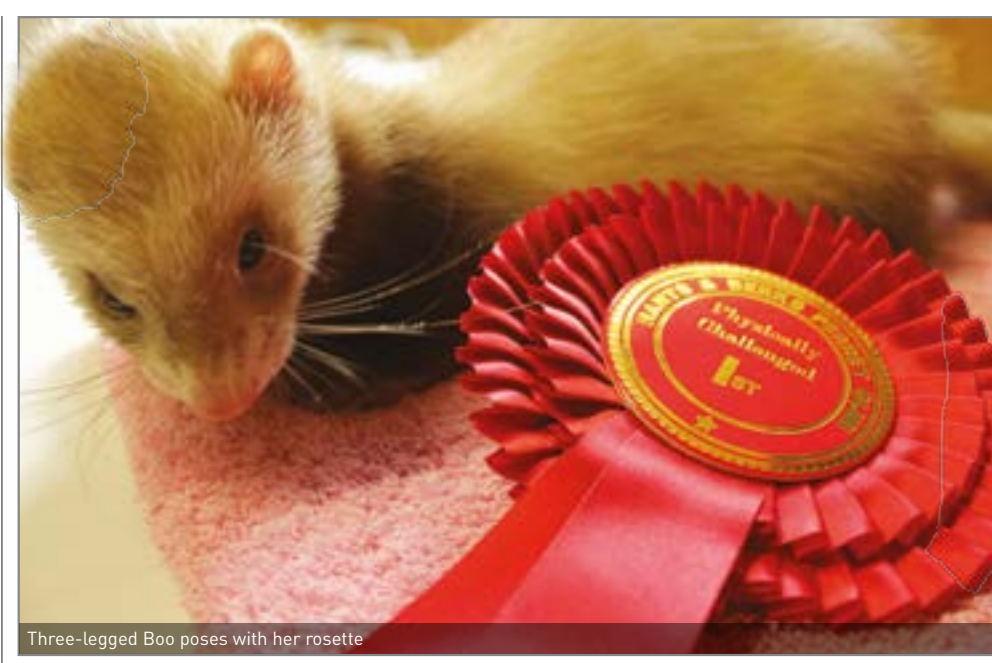


The new Job Zone on Winckley Square

New job zone will get students on the employment ladder

A college in Preston has opened a city-centre job shop to help local students secure employment. Preston’s College opened careers service ‘The Job Zone’ at its Fulwood campus last year, and due to its popularity with students, has now expanded to a building in the heart of the city. The new city-centre base on Winckley Square aims to match candidates with apprenticeships, and will support students seeking employment both during and post-study, with members of the general public also welcome. Preston’s College is one of the largest apprenticeship providers in the region, and its relationship with numerous employers

will mean a varied choice of vacancies year-round. Specialist careers advisors will be on-hand to provide advice on CV preparation, job searching, applications and interview preparation. Andrew Richardson, head of employer engagement and recruitment at Preston’s College, said: “Our candidates get a head start, as they benefit from our careers coaching and the strong links with key employers in the area. “School leavers and adult learners alike can significantly enhance their career prospects and gain nationally-recognised qualifications in their chosen industry, and we’re here to facilitate that.”



Three-legged Boo poses with her rosette

Three-legged ferret scoops top title

Four ferrets belonging to Berkshire College of Agriculture brought home a number of rosettes in a prestigious ferret show, with three-legged Boo scooping a top title. The college’s small-mammal team entered five of their ferrets into the Hants & Berks Ferret Club Show, with four: Boo, Josie, and brother-and-sister team Stig and Mouse, returning victorious. It was three-legged ferret Boo that achieved the highest accolade, scooping first place in the “physically challenged” category. Becky Stevens, a small-mammal technician at the college, said: “Boo was unfortunately trodden on when she was a baby. If she had

been fully grown, we would have been able to splint it, but as she was so tiny, it seemed fairer to take the leg off. “The show had the physically impaired group to give the ferrets a fair chance, as obviously they couldn’t walk as well as ferrets in the other groups.” Ferrets were judged on their appearance, ease of handling, temperament and movement. The college is currently home to 15 ferrets, with a recent renovation of their living quarters meaning they now live in a spacious barn, with indoor and outdoor play areas, and even their own ball pit.

Student takes on the BBC’s Rickshaw Challenge

A student at Derby College is taking part in The One Show’s Rickshaw Challenge to raise money for BBC Children in Need. Phoebe Kent, currently studying the level three extended diploma in horse management, was selected for the challenge following her involvement with Treetops Hospice Trust, a project part-funded by Children in Need. She got involved with the hospice following a close family bereavement, when the charity supported her to understand her feelings and start coming to terms with the loss. Phoebe will join five other riders during the televised challenge, which will involve pedalling a rickshaw 470 miles down Britain’s east coast, and which is now in its sixth year. The journey began on November 11, kicking off from the Scottish border town of Jedburgh, and will conclude in central London on the 18th, in time for the BBC Children in Need appeal show. Matt Baker, presenter of the One Show, said: “Every year I’m inspired by the young people who take on the Rickshaw Challenge, and this year is no different. The six young riders have faced major challenges in their lives already. Thanks to the charity they have been able to overcome so much; and now they feel ready to give back.”



Phoebe, centre, with One Show presenters Alex Jones and Matt Baker.

Viola Beach scholarship launched in band's memory



The death of the band Viola Beach and their manager in a car crash earlier this year shocked the nation. Now, the college they attended has set up a music scholarship in their name, which has just been awarded for the very first time. Samantha King reports.

Viola Beach band members Jack Dakin, Kris Leonard, Tomas Lowe, River Reeves and their manager Craig Tarry lost their lives in a tragic car crash in Sweden in February 2016.

The band members were all former students at Priestley College in Cheshire, which has now launched the Viola Beach Scholarship, aiming to reward musically talented students and enable them to develop their musical ability.

The scholarship will award one student a year the funds to pursue music, whether that's through paying for music lessons or even a slot in a recording studio.

Yi Chen Hock, a first-year student at the college, has become the first ever recipient of the scholarship, receiving £500 towards furthering her passion for music.

The accomplished musician began learning violin at the age of four, and is currently working towards a grade eight qualification in classical piano, as well as playing violin in a local youth orchestra.

With the scholarship money, she hopes to buy herself a new violin,



(L-R) Viola Beach: River Reeves, 19, Kris Leonard, 20, Tom Lowe, 27, Jack Dakin 19



Yi Chen Hock, the first recipient of the scholarship



Matthew Grant, principal at the college

upgrading from a faulty second-hand one her mum bought her.

Yi Chen, who studies electronics, further maths, physics and music at the college, said: "I currently borrow my friend's violin as it's a nicer one than I have myself. My mum bought it second-hand and the chin

rest keeps falling off, which I have to keep fixing, so I thought that it would be nice for me to actually get a better violin".

The scholarship is funded through the college's registered charity, the Priestley Education Training Trust. Set up four years ago after the education maintenance allowance was taken away, the Trust provides support for both disadvantaged young people, as well as outstanding students.

Matthew Grant, the principal at the college, said: "Each year we allocate around £6,000 to £10,000 a year to help students.

"Following the tragic deaths of Viola Beach, we got together – certainly the music and performing arts team that knew many of them

– and thought how we could do something that was a long term gesture in terms of marking the lives of those four young people.

"We decided to establish the scholarship for a young person or group of young people that needed some funds to help them fulfil their ambition in music."

Ben Dunne, the father of band member River Reeves, has given both Yi Chen and the Viola Beach scholarship his seal of approval.

"Yi Chen is a remarkable musician and a worthy first recipient of this wonderful scholarship.

"I'm sure the musical talent, potential and achievement of Viola Beach will be mirrored by Yi Chen and recipients of this scholarship for years to come."

Viola Beach were just launching their music career at the time of the accident; they had appeared on emerging music platform BBC Introducing and performed at Reading and Leeds Festivals in 2015.

Since the accident, their songs have achieved chart status, with Coldplay covering one of their tracks as a tribute during their headline set at Glastonbury music festival this year.

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

Prasanth Panicker has been appointed business development advisor at Truro and Penwith college.

The college, based in Truro, Cornwall, currently holds an 'outstanding' rating from its most recent Ofsted inspection.

Mr Panicker's role will involve engaging with Cornwall-based engineering and motor vehicle businesses, helping them benefit from the expertise and facilities available at the college through training and development solutions.

Prior to his role at the college, he spent 21 years in the Indian Navy, progressing from naval officer to the position of executive officer, where he took over a research and development establishment and turned it into a naval submarine training facility, training marine engineers, officers and apprentices.

After leaving the Navy in 2012, Mr Panicker joined a renewable energy company in Mumbai, before moving to the UK and working as a freelance business consultant.

He said: "The top-notch training facilities, such as the Seaton building specifically built for engineers, and in Penwith where you

have the incredible motor vehicle section, really are a class apart."

He added: "When you walk in, you feel the positivity all around. This is vital, especially for teenagers who can carry this positivity into the job market and well into their careers."

Jasbir Dhesi, current Principal of South Cheshire College, has been appointed as principal and chief executive designate of a proposed new FE college in Cheshire.



PRASANTH PANICKER



JASBIR DHESI



PETER NEWMAN

The Cheshire College will be a result of a merger between South Cheshire college and West Cheshire college, and is due to take place in January 2017 – when Mr Dhesi will take up the role.

The merger was announced in July 2016 following a review of further education provision across both Cheshire and Warrington.

Mr Dhesi has been principal at South Cheshire College since January 2014. Working in the further education sector since graduating university, he has experience in a range of senior management positions, including holding the title of both vice principal and principal at Yale college in Wrexham.

Speaking of the new college, he said: "We have just completed our public consultation on the merger and initial feedback indicates

overwhelming support for our proposals.

"This is both an exciting and important time as we continue to develop our plans to ensure we deliver high-quality training and learning for students, the community and employers."

Peter Newman has been appointed chair of Derby College's professional construction employment and skills academy.

The academy aims to ensure learners from the college are prepared to make the transition into employment, while also meeting the needs of employers.

In the role, Mr Newman will chair an advisory board of representatives from 10 local and regional companies specialising in construction, and provide feedback to the college on curriculum design and future education training requirements.

He hopes that his new role will help to tackle skills shortages in the professional construction industries.

"It is vital that employers work closely with education providers to bridge the gap between the skills provided and the reality of what is required in the workplace," he said.

"By bringing together professionals from across the industry, we are able to share the broader view on skills requirements and offer the learners a wide range of experience as part of their study programmes."

He takes up the role alongside his current position as an associate director at Morrison Design, an architectural firm in Derby,

Let's work together to raise awareness of mental health issues

Hallmark Education, a leading educational publisher, is proud to be working with a number of colleges and independent learning providers to support the delivery of mental health awareness training to staff and students. We have produced a set of highly engaging and thought-provoking learning resources with the aim of enhancing people's understanding of a range of mental health conditions and the steps that can be taken to protect mental well-being.

Features and benefits include:

- An excellent learning and development tool.
- Gives learners an insight into twelve different mental health conditions including depression, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, ADHD and a number of anxiety-based conditions.
- Learners explore the signs, symptoms, risk factors and support strategies for each condition.
- Leads to a nationally accredited level 2 qualification (learning aim ref. 601/3438/0) that is eligible for AEB funding.
- Resources officially endorsed by national awarding organisation NCFE.
- Free tutor guidance and consultancy to support internal delivery of the programme.

For more information or to request a sample of our resource, please contact us at: info@hallmarkeducation.org.uk or 01332 410067

Hallmark Education has published learning resources to support the flexible delivery of over 30 qualifications. To view our portfolio visit www.hallmarkeducation.org.uk



FE Week Sudoku challenge

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next edition

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

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

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: Richard Hodgson, New College Durham.