

FE Week

**MISSING STUDENTS
COST MILLIONS**

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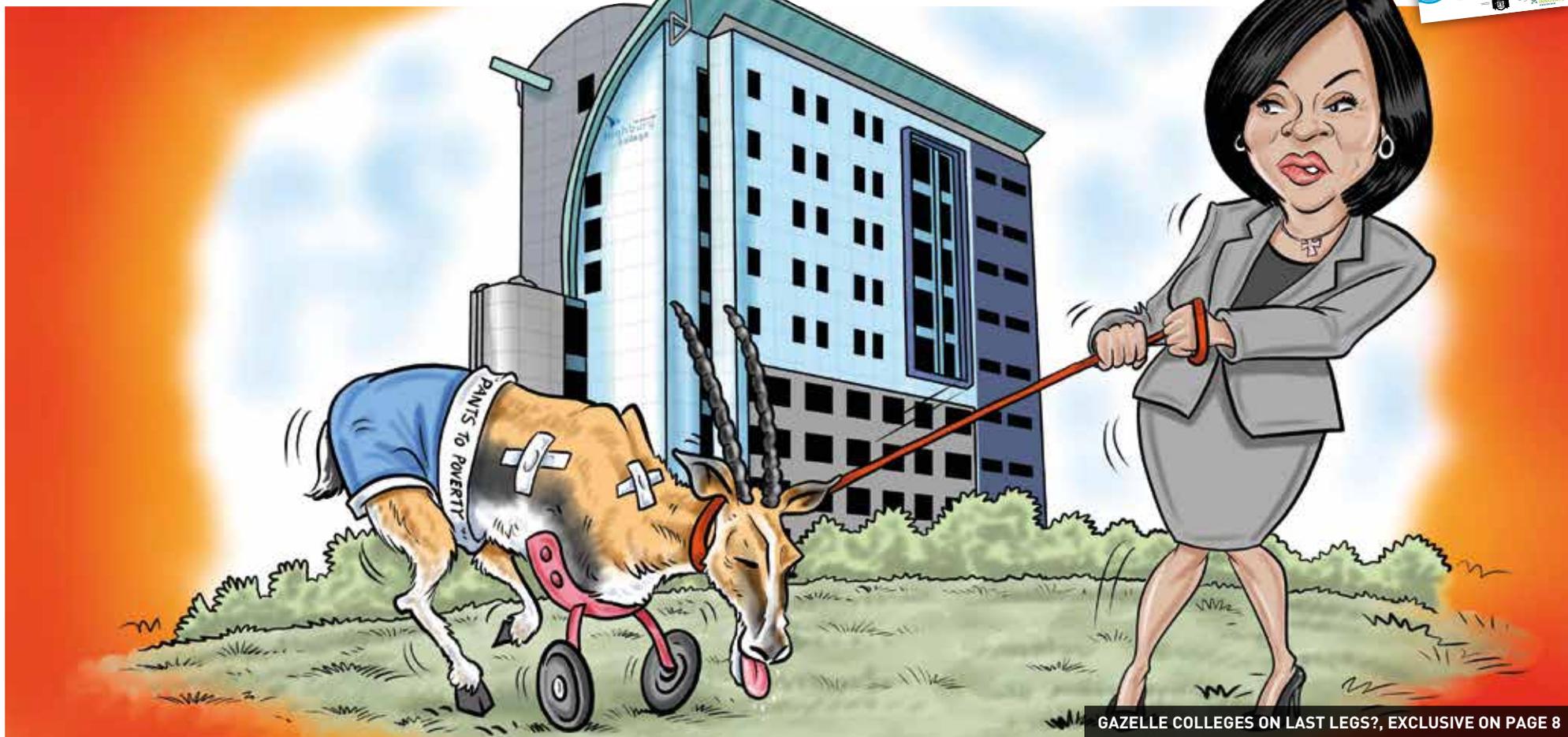
**WHO GOT WHAT IN NEW
YEAR'S HONOURS?**

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**SUPPLEMENT TO
HELP NAVIGATE 2017**

FREE WITH ISSUE



GAZELLE COLLEGES ON LAST LEGS?, EXCLUSIVE ON PAGE 8

EMPLOYERS TURN BACKS ON YOUNG

- **Leading provider describes chilling impact of reforms**
- **Falls of “up to two thirds” in 16-18 apprenticeships**
- **“So-called incentive simply doesn’t work”**



“It’s a major concern”

PAUL OFFORD @PAULOFFORD SEE PAGE 7



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Outstanding colleges might now expect a visit from Ofsted

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Ofsted seems to be heading for a U-turn on a controversial policy that exempts providers rated 'outstanding' from routine inspection.

FE Week revealed in November that two colleges – Bridgwater and Taunton College in Somerset, and Hills Road Sixth Form College in Cambridgeshire – had not been inspected for a decade.

Since then, another college – Cirencester College in Gloucester – has been added to the 10-year list, and 14 other FE institutions are now in their ninth year of non-inspection.

All were graded 'outstanding' during their last visits from Ofsted, but significant changes in how the sector is monitored have occurred over the last decade – raising serious questions about the wait.

However, FE Week understands that Ofsted is now looking to change its policy, which currently states providers judged 'outstanding' at their most recent inspection are "not normally subject to routine inspection".

It is understood the policy may change so that 'outstanding' providers join the same routine procedure as others, such as being subjected to two-day short inspections the way 'good' institutions are, or to give them their own procedure.

If given the go-ahead, the move would be a statement of intent for radical change at the

education watchdog by new chief inspector Amanda Spielman, who took the reins from Sir Michael Wilshaw this month.

A spokesperson for the watchdog, however, said this week that it had "no plans at the moment to change this policy" and noted that it had been the government, not the inspectorate, that created it in the first place.

The previous government introduced the policy in the Education Act 2011, with the aim of allowing Ofsted the best opportunity to "focus its resources on underperforming providers".

A Department for Education spokesperson said that while 'outstanding' providers are exempt from routine inspection, they are still subject to accountability through Ofsted's risk assessments.

Risk assessments consider factors such as academic performance and student attendance, but there are fears the procedure does not reveal the full truth about all aspects of a provider, such as safeguarding.

FE Week asked Sir Michael about the 10-year gaps at the launch of Ofsted's annual report last month.

The former chief inspector said: "Where the data shows a college is doing well, we obviously don't do an inspection. We go into those institutions where the data is not very good, or there are concerns."

But unions want the policy reviewed, arguing that it is dangerous for providers to go so long without a full inspection.

Malcolm Trobe, the interim general secretary at the Association of School and



Amanda Spielman

College Leaders, said: "Ofsted does have to prioritise what they are doing but 10 years is way too long for them not to have picked up on a reinspection.

"The risk assessment procedure will not necessarily cover everything that is going on within the provider."

The controversy of Ofsted's inspection policy will also bring into question whether the 'outstanding' grade should be dropped altogether.

Ms Spielman said she would look to scrap the grade during a parliamentary hearing last year but because the government wrote the exemption for outstanding providers into law in 2011, parliament would need to repeal this law before the top grade could be removed.

Mr Trobe said he is hoping Ms Spielman will "open up the debate" on the matter now she is in post.

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Grade one college	College type	First day of last inspection
Hills Road Sixth Form College	Sixth form college	03/11/2006
Bridgwater and Taunton College	General FE college	17/11/2006
Cirencester College	Sixth form college	04/12/2006
Woodhouse College	Sixth form college	24/01/2007
Bury College	General FE college	05/02/2007
Holy Cross College	Sixth form college	26/02/2007
Priestley College	Sixth form college	12/03/2007
The Sixth Form College Farnborough	Sixth form college	01/05/2007
The Isle of Wight College	General FE college	30/04/2007
Carmel College	Sixth form college	03/07/2007
The South Downs College	General FE college	02/10/2007
Richard Huish College	Sixth form college	02/10/2007
Selby College	General FE college	01/10/2007
St Charles Catholic Sixth Form College	Sixth form college	09/10/2007
Winstanley College	Sixth form college	23/10/2007
Blackburn College	General FE college	12/11/2007
Greenhead College	Sixth form college	21/11/2007

FE Week confirmed as media partner for AoC Sport National Championships

FE Week has been confirmed as the AoC Sport National Championships 2017 media partner for the second year running.

Throughout the autumn term students across the country have been battling away in regional heats to qualify for the 39th annual championships.

Being held across five venues at the University of Nottingham from 21 to 23 April, students will compete in 13 different sports, including badminton, seven-a-side football, squash and volleyball.

FE Week headed to Tyne and Wear for the 2016 National Championships last April and will once again be there for the full weekend this year.

Shane Mann, managing director of Lsect, publishers of FE Week, said: "Last year I was fortunate to attend my first national championships and was overwhelmed by the dedication and achievements of all those involved.

"These championships deserve national coverage. FE Week as media partner will once again provide the sector with all the exciting developments and results."

Last year saw nearly 1,800 athletes from 137 different colleges compete in 15 different sports.

In third place was the West Midlands, in second was the South East, and for the third year in a row the South West were crowned champions.

NEWS

DfE writes off another £3m from failed UTCs over pupil numbers

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Over £3 million of taxpayers' money has been lost by the Department for Education, through unrecovered payments to failed university technical colleges for students who never enrolled.

The DfE was unable to recover a total of £3,384,512 in pupil number adjustment clawbacks from the unsuccessful Royal Greenwich, Central Bedfordshire and Hackney UTCs, according to the DfE's annual report and accounts for the year ended March 31, 2016.

This is money that the department should be able to reclaim from institutions that have failed to recruit their forecasted number of students.

However, in these cases the cash had to be written off due to financial difficulties at the three UTCs.

The greatest loss was recorded by Royal Greenwich UTC, which failed to meet its forecast student numbers in 2014/15 and 2015/16 resulting in a PNA bill of £1,884,303 for the financial year.

Between them, the three bodies failed to fill around 700 places between 2013/14 and 2015/16.

According to the DfE report, Royal Greenwich was "financially unsustainable",



An expensive failure: Royal Greenwich UTC

a situation which eventually led to its absorption into the forthcoming University Multi Academy Trust in February 2016.

It was decided that passing the debt on would "place severe financial pressures" on it and put "its financial future at risk", so the DfE elected to abandon its claim.

Greenwich Council is now forking out £13 million to convert the UTC into a secondary school.

Similarly, Central Bedfordshire UTC fell short of forecast pupil numbers in 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 – resulting in a PNA clawback of £768,209.

It was shut down and had its funding

agreement terminated on August 31, 2016.

A deficit of £184,000 was taken on by Bedford College in September 2016, along with remaining pupils and staff.

But in order to close Central Bedfordshire UTC in "a solvent position", the DfE chose to again abandon the PNA claim.

Hackney UTC, one of the first of an increasing number of UTC closures, did not meet forecast pupil numbers for 2013/14, resulting in a PNA clawback of £817,000.

It went into liquidation in August 2015, with financial assets estimated at £85,000, which the DfE report states resulted in a loss of £732,000.

Charles Parker, chief executive of the Baker

Dearing Trust, which develops and promotes UTCs, said he regretted the cost of the closed UTCs.

"The decision to close any UTC is only ever taken when there is no realistic alternative," he said.

"Baker Dearing is aware of the cost of the UTC closures referred to in the DfE accounts for 2015-16 and regrets this, but notes that at the time it was felt to be in taxpayers' interests to recognise the loss on closure rather than incur further costs."

A DfE spokesperson said: "We are not complacent, which is why we are strengthening the UTC programme through a number of reforms to make it more sustainable.

"This includes partnerships with successful secondary schools, establishing more UTCs as part of multi-academy trusts, funding intensive support from a teaching school, and doing more to raise parent and pupil awareness of UTCs."

Julian Gravatt, assistant chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said: "Hopefully the DfE will have learned lessons from the early years of the UTC programme.

"AoC's recommendation is that DfE should instigate a review of UTCs and school sixth forms using the same tests of viability that it used in the college area review programme."

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Institute for Apprenticeships consultation launched

JUDE BURKE
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The long-awaited consultation into the key functions for the new Institute for Apprenticeships has finally been launched.

The Department for Education published its draft strategic guidance on Wednesday (January 4), which sets out what it sees as the Institute's remit, and put out a call for feedback from the sector.

Key functions for the new body, which will launch in April, include standards development and approval, quality assurance of apprenticeship assessments, funding advice, and policing the system.

But the DfE has only allowed until January 31 for responses, a window which the shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden has described as an "absurdly short deadline", especially considering that the strategic guidance was originally supposed to be unveiled before Christmas.

The draft guidance suggests that the IfA should take over responsibility for developing and approving standards from the government "to ensure as swift a process for approving standards as possible".

It will also play a role in checking quality and consistency across different assessment organisations against the same standard, so that "all options will ensure consistent assessment and require a high standard from all apprentices".

The IfA will also be expected to advise

the government on apprenticeship funding, including allocating standards and frameworks to funding bands.

Other key functions for the new body include reviewing existing standards, quality oversight of the registers of apprenticeship training providers and assessment organisations, and assuming a "leadership role in the context of apprenticeships" with key partners including Ofsted, Ofqual and the SFA.

The institute will also be tasked with "overseeing a fair and open system", and expected to "discourage behaviour seeking to make a profit by delivering services that are not necessary and do not add value, and work to ensure the system as a whole is fair and consistent".

Apprenticeships and skills Minister Robert Halfon said: "We know apprenticeships work – 90 per cent of apprentices go on to secure a job and nobody understands the skills employers need better than employers themselves.

"That is why we are introducing the Institute for Apprenticeships.

"With employers at its heart, it will be charged with approving standards to ensure they are the highest quality."

Mr Marsden has been pushing for publication of more information on how the IfA will operate for months.

In a Public Bill Committee hearing on November 22, Peter Lauener, the shadow chief executive of the IfA, suggested to

him that information – including a draft of the government's strategic guidance for the institute, an operational plan and the successful candidates for senior posts at the institute – would be revealed before Christmas.

But a Trailblazer Times newsletter, sent by the DfE to apprenticeship employer groups on December 22, said these would be delayed until "early in the New Year".

Mr Marsden said this week: "It paints a picture of a department not on top of its timetable or the resources it needs to carry them through."

Mr Marsden added questions remained,

despite publication of the draft strategic guidance, over "how arms-length or genuinely independent of judgment the new institute will be".

He also complained that "we still don't know" who will be on the board running the IfA, despite Mr Lauener's previous assurances.

The sector is also still awaiting the draft operational plan.

Teresa Frith, senior skills policy manager at the Association of Colleges, said she was pleased that the government was "allowing time for this consultation, despite a tight deadline".

Key planned IfA responsibilities

Details

Standards development and approval

Take on government's current role of quality assurance of standards; ensure standards and assessment plans examined by 'independent third party' before approved; proactive support to employers developing standards and assessment plans

Assessment

Operate as the external quality assurance organisation; play a role in checking quality and consistency of assessments offered by different AOs against the same standard

Funding

Advise education secretary on apprenticeship funding bands; allocate individual apprenticeship standards to funding bands, both for new standards and in context of technical education route reviews

Overseeing a fair and open system

Discourage those seeking to make a profit by delivering services that are not necessary and do not add value

Working with key partners

Assume a leadership role in context of apprenticeships with partners including Ofsted, Ofqual, SFA, HEFCE, QAA and, in future, Office for Students

Engaging apprentices

Establish mechanisms to allow apprentices to have their say, possibly through an 'Apprenticeship Panel' which reports directly to the institute board

Other functions

Annual reporting and success criteria; review of apprenticeship standards, including checking against the relevant occupational standards and assessing how well the system as a whole is responding to the skills need

Funding agency to keep assessment register and certification role

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The Skills Funding Agency will stay in charge of the new register of apprentice assessment organisations, despite its slow start, and even though it is not related to funding.

The government's Draft Strategic Guidance to the IfA, unveiled on January 4, controversially confirmed that the SFA would "maintain responsibility for administration" of the register.

This will be a source of dismay to many in the sector who have been frustrated with the agency's slow progress with approval of AOs.

Exclusive FE Week analysis showed in December that there were still 78 approved apprenticeship standards without a single AO, amounting to just over 50 per cent of the total approved for delivery.

In January, the SFA assumed responsibility for issuing certificates for completed apprenticeship standards, taking over from the Federation of Industry Sector Skills and Standards.

And the IfA's strategic guidance indicated the agency and not the institute, which is supposed to be the new policing body for

apprenticeships, will retain the certification responsibility long-term.

Graham Hasting-Evans, managing director of awarding organisation NOCN, said dividing such key responsibilities between the SFA and the IfA was likely to "result in duplication".

"In our view, we need to have in place one organisation which is accountable for implementation, quality assurance and delivery of the most fundamental change to our skills system in a decade – and we need to start putting it in place now," he said.

"We had hoped that the consultation would set out clearly the government's vision and plans for the structure of the institute in April 2018 with the roadmap of how it plans to get to that point.

"Sadly we are very disappointed. So little progress has been made in the eight months since the Enterprise Act was passed. One wonders if anything meaningful will be in place for April 2017?"

Stephen Wright, chief executive of the Federation of Awarding Bodies, meanwhile complained that the proposed arrangement "seems to be fragmented across a number of agencies and would benefit from consolidation".

"What doesn't seem to come through clearly in the strategic guidance is the

critical role of assessment professionals," he added.

The decision to pass the certification process over to the SFA means that apprenticeship end-point assessment organisations must now request apprenticeship certificates from the SFA, which will contact them directly with details of the process.

However, for apprentices completing an apprenticeship framework, providers will still need to apply to FISSS for certificates, with the last ones expected to be issued in 2021/2022.

A DfE spokesperson said: "Giving the SFA the responsibility for issuing certificates for apprenticeship standards will streamline the process and we have been working with FISSS through the transition.

"The SFA has also contacted all organisations on the register of apprentice assessment organisations to inform them of the change."

Mark Froud, managing director of FISSS, said: "We wish the SFA well with this important service and hope they exceed the high service standards we deliver for framework certification."



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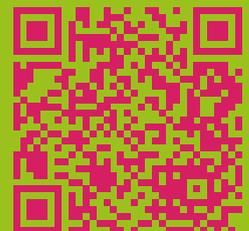
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INVESTIGATES

Government snubs FE with just 12 honours in Queen's list

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The government has been accused of "fluffing" the chance to prove its commitment to FE and social mobility, after only 12 sector figures won awards in the Queen's 2017 New Year's honours list.

Among them in the first list of commendations under Theresa May's government were just three FE principals.

It's also the first time in nearly 10 years that the Department for Education had sole responsibility for education picks since it took over FE and skills from the erstwhile business department this summer.

Shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden told FE Week that the sector's "poor showing" was "deeply disappointing and worrying".

He said: "Given that it's the first since FE and skills were transferred to DfE, it's hardly an advert for ministerial commitment to social mobility and celebrating the wide range of dedication and innovation there is in the sector."

"Theresa May and her ministers had an opportunity to live up to their words about social mobility and valuing the sector with this honours list and they fluffed it."

Mike Robbins, the principal of Bridgwater and Taunton College, received an OBE and

two sixth form college principals, Steve Frampton at Portsmouth Sixth Form College and Mary Quinn at Stourport High School and Sixth Form College, earned MBEs in the list.

Mark Malcomson, who has led the adult education provider City Lit since May 2011, came out on top with a CBE for his work – but sadly the sector saw no knighthoods or damehoods at all.

Five awards went to governing body members, including an OBE for former governor at Tyne Metropolitan College, Professor Mary Elizabeth Dunning.

The meagre collection of FE leaders echoed the outcome of the Queen's birthday honours in June, which saw no general FE college principals in England named in the list and no top awards for the sector.

In contrast, 2015's birthday honours saw the principal of City and Islington College, Frank McLoughlin, receive a knighthood.

And last year's New Year's honours brought a knighthood for the former FE commissioner Dr David Collins and a CBE for former Association of Colleges chief executive Martin Doel.

Overall, this time last year more than 20 sector-related figures received awards – compared with just 12 for 2017, despite the number of people being honoured overall (nearly 1,200) remaining unchanged.

Dr Sue Pember told FE Week when the list was released that more must be done to ensure the best from the sector are put forward for future recognition.

"We should try to ensure that more are nominated," she said. "We have many fantastic and worthy staff whose work should be acknowledged and it is on us to encourage senior staff and governors to put forward names of those who go way past the call of duty."

James Kewin, deputy chief executive of the

Sixth Form College Association, agreed. "To increase the number of honours in the sector, it is probably necessary to increase the number of nominations – particularly for teaching and support staff," he said.

David Hughes, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, commended those who were successful this year, saying:

"I would like to congratulate all those in colleges and the wider FE sector who have rightly earned their place on the New Year honours list."

Former WordSkills champion scoops MBE

Shayne Hadland, MBE

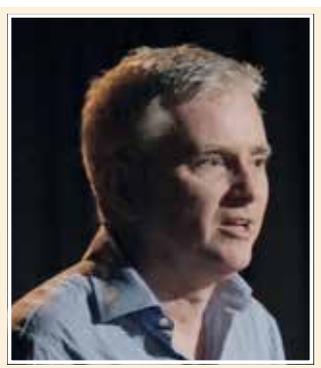
Senior aircraftman Shayne Hadland, an engineer from Royal Air Force Benson and former WorldSkills champion, was recognised



in the Queen's 2017 New Year's honours list with a military division MBE.

In August 2015, Mr Hadland was chosen to represent the UK at the WorldSkills competition held in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The then 24 year old competed in the aircraft engineering category and was given a silver medal for his outstanding performance, alongside being named Best of Nation for the United Kingdom.

He has worked on both Merlin and Puma helicopters and completed two operational deployments to Afghanistan.



Mark Malcomson
Principal and chief executive, City Lit.

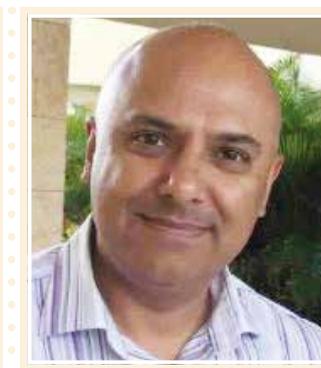
CBE, for services to adult education



Professor Mary Elizabeth Dunning
Lately governor, Tyne Metropolitan College.
OBE, for services to further and higher education and the community in the North-East of England



The Reverend Jennifer Susan Mullis
Assistant director, Further education commercial and legal unit, DfE.
OBE, for services to further education and to the community in Yorkshire



Avtar Singh Purewal
Regional head of learning and skills, HM Prison service Yorkshire.
OBE, for services to prisoners



Michael Leonard Robbins
Principal, Bridgwater and Taunton College.
OBE, for services to further education



Kenneth Andrew John Barrass
Lately chair, Rotherham and North Nottinghamshire College.
MBE, for services to further education



Jennifer Ann Foote
Company secretary and general counsel/chair, The Manchester College/National Clerks Network.
MBE, for services to further education



Stephen Dale Frampton
Principal, Portsmouth sixth form college.
MBE, for services to education



Sara Regina Kibel
Governor, Westminster Adult Education Service.
MBE, for services to adult education



Mary Elizabeth Quinn
Education consultant and lately executive principal, Stourport High School and Sixth Form College.
MBE, for services to education



Lesille Ratcliffe, TD
Head of community relations, Jaguar Land Rover.
MBE, for services to business, education and the community



George Vernon Wells
Chair, Selby College Corporation.
MBE, for services to further education

Funding reform will see 16-18 apprenticeships “drop by two thirds”

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

FROM FRONT

The government has been urged to make a “clear and unambiguous” commitment to 16-to-18 apprenticeships, after a major provider warned that funding changes will cause its starts for that age group to plummet by two thirds.

The claim was made by Jon Graham, chief executive of JTL, which specialises in training for the building services engineering sector, in an exclusive piece for FE Week on page 11.

“Unbelievably,” he wrote, “the government may be about to chop away that first rung with its new funding system for apprenticeships,” referencing the skills minister Robert Halfon’s new ‘ladder of opportunity’ slogan.

Mark Dawe, the boss of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, backed the claim, and told FE Week that JTL was “one of many providers” which had made it clear that 16-to-18 engagement would tumble once the apprenticeship levy launches.

Under the pre-levy standards funding regime, which will be in place until the end of April, financial incentives offered by the

government for taking on 16- to 18-year-old apprentices can be worth up to £5,400.

But the incentive will fall to just £1,000 per apprentice from May, which Mr Graham warned would cause a “complete change-around in its provision” away from 16-to-18s at JTL.

The provider was allocated £15,149,256 for younger apprenticeships by the Skills Funding Agency for 2016/17, and currently has over 6,300 electrical, plumbing, heating and ventilating, and engineering maintenance services apprentices.

Three quarters of these are aged 16 to 18 – but Mr Graham expects that number to drop to around 25 per cent once the levy comes in.

He wrote: “Our employers say when the traditional age differentials in funding rates are removed, they would sooner employ people aged 19 and over.”

Mr Graham explained that while present funding incentives made it worthwhile taking on younger apprentices, who have less established work habits and lack skills like driving licenses, £1,000 wouldn’t be enough to entice employers to take them on.

“Our level three apprenticeships typically last four years. That equates to £5 a week,” he wrote.

Mr Dawe said: “We really need now a clear and unambiguous statement from

the government that it’s fully committed to supporting apprenticeship opportunities for 16- to 18-year-olds, with appropriate levels of incentives kept in place.”

Teresa Frith, senior skills policy manager at the Association of Colleges, said: “We share the concern that the funding changes might reduce demand from employers for younger apprentices.”

A DfE spokesperson said it wants “to encourage employers to take on young people”.

She continued: “Our research indicates that the proposed £1,000 incentive to employers and providers is likely to cover additional costs faced by both [employers and providers], irrespective of subject or length of apprenticeship.

“We have also increased funding for STEM apprenticeship routes by 40 per cent at level two to encourage more young people to undertake training in these vital subjects and increase quality.”

Analysis by FE Week carried out last summer showed with the new £1,000 incentive, combined with wider ‘upper limit’ apprenticeship funding levels – overall funding stood to drop by up to half in many deprived areas.

Our findings sparked mass outrage, which was channelled through our

#SaveOurApprenticeships campaign, and helped convince the skills minister Robert Halfon to announce plans to pay an extra 20 per cent on funding band limits for the age group.

FE Week subsequently proved that this inadequate measure would still result in smaller – but still huge – funding cuts.

Labour’s former skills minister David Lammy, an outspoken #SaveOurApprenticeships backer, called this week on the government to “come clean” about how badly the cuts will still affect younger apprentices.

Mr Halfon has previously told FE Week that he “absolutely” doesn’t accept that starts will fall, “because we’re giving the incentives to the employers and providers. We’re doing everything we can to encourage them to employ young apprentices”.

Calls for extra funding for this age group gained prominence in 2011, through the influential ‘Review of Vocational Education’ published by Professor Alison Wolf, who was unavailable for comment this week.

It recommended employers who take on 16- to 18-year-old apprentices “should be eligible for payments (direct or indirect) [...] when they bear some of the cost of education for an age-group with a right to free full-time participation”.

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EDITORIAL

If DfE is listening it must act now



Employers are telling a large and successful provider of 16-18 engineering apprentices they will switch to adults once the funding reforms kick in.

Most 16-18 frameworks see a significant rate cut from May, and for the first time employers with 50 or more staff will have to pay for them.

Then there are the new replacement apprenticeship standards, which offer no age-specific incentive to the provider.

Plus, according to Jon Graham at JTL, the £1,000 16-18 employer incentive is proving nowhere near enough to persuade them to take a young person over an adult.

As I suggested to Robert Halfon last year, the loss of a ring-fenced 16-18 budget means there is little the government can do to stop the funding switch to adults.

The minister, who has so far proved to be a good listener to sector concerns, needs to take action quickly.

He should remember too that the Conservative Party stressed in its 2015 manifesto it was committing to the creation of 3 million starts by 2020, so "young people acquire the skills to succeed".

We can't wait for a Technical Education reform magic pill from 2019.

The DfE must step in and take back some control now, else there will be tens of thousands of disappointed young people in just a few months from now.

To put it bluntly, employer ownership alone simply isn't compatible with social justice.

Nick Linford, editor
news@feweek.co.uk

TWEETS ON ROBERT HALFON'S EXPERT PIECE LOOKING TO 2017:

Kat Healey @Kat_healey

Encouraging to see such passion for apprenticeship programmes and acknowledgement that there needs to be a better careers service

Andrew_1910 @andrew_1910

@FEWeek @EdSacredProfane @halfon4harlowMP Always good for a minister to have a plan. Should have a word with the Brexit team.

Peter Ford @EdSacredProfane

@andrew_1910 @FEWeek @halfon4harlowMP Thing that worries me is that the plan, T and FE Bill, seems to mostly be about insolvency

James Stockdale @StockdaleJ

I really like the tone of this piece for @FEWeek by @halfon4harlowMP & mention of quality and careers!



Gazelle Group on its last legs after its director and most members quit

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

The Gazelle Colleges Group is on life support following a precipitous drop in membership, months of inactivity and the departure of its executive director.

At its peak, the group, formed in 2011 to promote enterprise in colleges, had 23 members – each of which paid many thousands of pounds in annual membership fees.

But FE Week investigations have found that just six members now remain – City College Norwich, Activate Learning, Barking and Dagenham College, Highbury College, Glasgow Kelvin College, and South West College.

Significantly, the group's former executive director Carolyn Chapman-Lees left the group in June – a fact which FE Week discovered when we attempted to email her, as the Gazelle website still lists her as its main contact.

The group, which is registered at Highbury College Portsmouth, was subject to an FE Week investigation in 2014.

This revealed that the five founding member colleges had each paid more than £530,000 to the group since it was launched.

This included a payment of £120,000 for the "purchase of educational concept" by Gateshead College. Among Gazelle's activities

was the Pantpreneurship Challenge, run by the fair-trade underwear brand Pants to Poverty in partnership with the group.

However, the underwear company was dissolved in October, as reported in FE Week.

Despite heavy criticism about the waste of public money, no return-on-investment analysis was ever published.

FE Week this week asked Stella Mbubaegbu, the principal of Highbury College and one of Gazelle's two remaining directors, to justify the huge sums of public money paid to the group. She declined to comment.

However, Gazelle's other director, Alan Sherry, principal of Glasgow Kelvin College, said the group is now operating on a collective basis to "share best practice and skills across the member colleges" with no paid leader.

He added the group was not actively seeking new members and that its website, which has not been updated since April, should have been taken down. Its Twitter account has also been dormant since December 2015.

Policy expert Mick Fletcher, who voiced his skepticism about the group in FE Week as early as March 2012, said Gazelle was "not the first example of unwise investment by FE colleges and probably won't be the last".

He added: "Two things stand out: one is the scale of the sums gambled by the founding

members, but perhaps even more significant is the sheer credulousness of a few leaders who built a business fantasy on the back of some interesting but unremarkable approaches to curriculum innovation."

City College Norwich is the only founding member that is still be part of the group.

Warwickshire College Group left last May, New College Nottingham quit in July 2015 and North Hertfordshire College pulled out in May 2015, while Gateshead College also left in 2015.

The current Gazelle Colleges Group company was formed in February 2016, following the liquidation of its predecessors, Gazelle Global and the Gazelle Foundation.

These had "ceased trading" by May last year, when Ms Chapman-Lees told FE Week Gazelle Colleges Group was the "new legal entity".

Ms Mbubaegbu and Mr Sherry are its only two directors, according to Companies House, after a third – Margaret Constantine – resigned in July.

Membership fees were initially £35,000 a year, but these were slashed to £15,000 in September 2015 following a membership review.

Former Gazelle executive chair Fintan Donohue retired at the end of 2015 after more than four years at the helm.

Founding Gazelle College member	Upfront minimum investment	Principal at the time	Month principal left college	Current job
Gateshead College	£530,000	Richard Thorold	Aug-13	Management consultant
Warwickshire College	£530,000	Mariane Cavalli	Aug-14	Consultant
City College Norwich	£530,000	Dick Palmer	Oct-13	Group chief executive, TEN Group (which includes City College Norwich)
New College Nottingham	£530,000	Amarjit Basi	Jul-13	Unknown - was principal of Cornwall College until July 2016
North Hertfordshire College	£530,000	Fintan Donohue	Aug-13	Retired - was chief executive of Gazelle Group until December 2015
Total minimum upfront investment	£2,650,000			

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Fabienne Bailey, Stockton Learning and Skills Service
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Image: BBC broadcaster & journalist Kirsty Wark chairing AAC Conference in 2015. Kirsty will return as conference chair in 2017.



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NEWS

Sign language accepted as alternative to GCSE English

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

British Sign Language qualifications will be accepted instead of English functional skills for apprenticeships, in a move to encourage more participation amongst deaf people.

The Department for Education announced the change, which will come into effect from April, on Thursday (January 5).

A spokesperson explained BSL will become a formal alternative qualification to English functional skills for people who use it as their primary language.

She told FE Week: "This means that if an apprentice has already achieved the prescribed level of BSL prior to starting

their apprenticeship, they no longer have to undertake GCSE or functional skills training in English.

"If they haven't already achieved the minimum requirements, they can elect to undertake BSL level one and/or two."

There are around nine million people in the UK who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

Max Buxton, an 18-year-old engineering apprentice at an electrical company from Nottinghamshire, uses BSL.

His family had campaigned with the National Deaf Children's Society for BSL to be formally recognised with apprenticeships.

He said: "Being deaf and dyslexic, I find English tests really hard. It's very difficult to translate BSL into English and for it all to make sense.

"It's an unfair, unnecessary rule that has

created a lot of stress, so I'm very pleased things are changing now."

Brian Gale OBE, the policy and campaigns director at the National Deaf Children's Society, welcomed the move.

"We're delighted that the government has committed to these changes, because it was making it very challenging for some deaf young people to complete their courses," he said.

"BSL is a totally different language, so for users to meet this kind of academic standard is a much bigger challenge than it would be for a native English speaker."

In 2015/16, 50,640 of those starting an apprenticeship declared a disability or learning disability, which the DfE said represented an increase of 14.8 per cent on 2014/15.

Skills and apprenticeships Minister Robert Halfon said: "I am committed to



breaking down barriers to ensure people of all ages and all backgrounds get on the ladder of opportunity through an apprenticeship.

"For those whose first language is BSL, this simple change will allow them to achieve their full potential."

Dear Dr Sue

Dr Sue, director of policy and external relations at Hoxe, answers your questions, backed by her experience as principal of Canterbury College and in senior civil service posts in education and skills.



Q1: TIME OFF WORK

AS A SCHOOL GOVERNOR I WAS GIVEN TIME OFF WORK. DOES THE SAME APPLY TO COLLEGE GOVERNORS?

Answer:

Governors frequently ask about their entitlement to time off work to carry out their functions. Under employment law, employers are required to give 'reasonable time off' to allow employees to be a member of the managing or governing body of an educational establishment, which includes colleges.

The amount of time off should be agreed between the employee and employer beforehand, based on:

- how long the duties might take;
- the amount of time the employee has already had off for public duties;
- how the time off will affect the business.

The employer can refuse a request for time off if they think it's unreasonable. It should be noted that this leave of absence can be with or without pay. This is at the employer's own discretion. What constitutes 'reasonable time off' is not defined in law and is an area for negotiation between the employer and employee. It may also be helpful to prepare your case before you approach your employer and be ready to explain the benefits to the business, such as you would be helping shape the workforce of tomorrow as well as your own continual professional development.

Leave of absence can be with or without pay

Q2: PERSONAL LIABILITY

AS A BOARD MEMBER OF A COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY AM I PERSONALLY LIABLE IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG? WE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO TAKE DECISIONS ABOUT MERGER AND TO SET A DEFICIT BUDGET FOR LARGE BUILDING PROJECTS. WE'VE DONE DUE DILIGENCE BUT I'M NERVOUS.

Answer:

Governors are often concerned that they may be held personally liable for decisions they take in relation to their role as a college governor, particularly in respect of decisions around procurement and setting budgets.

Since 1992, governing bodies have been incorporated. As a corporate body, protection is afforded to individual members provided that they act reasonably, in accordance with procedures. As charity trustees, governors have a duty to act with skill and care to safeguard the assets of the college. The duty to act with good faith imposes a high standard of care and means that a governor must act honestly and transparently at all times.

Governors should take reasonable care when discharging their duties, should take advice where appropriate and should be mindful of any decision that could be seen as benefiting themselves, their business or close family members.

To reassure you, I am not aware of any case of negligence being brought in relation to individual governors. Where governors act reasonably, in accordance with the corporation's powers and their instruments and articles, the likelihood of negligence being proved is small. But you are right to be on your guard.

You are right to be on your guard

Q3: OFSTED

I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO READING THE CHIEF INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT BUT THERE WAS NO OBVIOUS SECTION ON COLLEGE GOVERNANCE. AM I MISSING SOMETHING?

Answer:

You are right, there is no separate section on college governance and this year the report does not go into any depth on governance matters.

However, what is there does explain the issue in no uncertain terms: "All of the colleges judged inadequate this year were characterised by systemic weaknesses in leadership and/or governance. Strengthening leadership capacity within the sector remains a priority."

This builds on a statement that was in the 2014/15 report which explained that in weaker colleges governors should increase rigour by challenging leaders.

Recent annual reports, through case studies and the individual college reports, do give indications of what Ofsted sees as good governance, with the main emphasis being on challenge, for example:

- "Although governors know the challenges facing the college to ensure learners develop their mathematical and English skills, they have not sufficiently held leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all subjects to improve achievement."
- "Governors have a good understanding of the main features of the college's educational and financial performance. In a few key respects, however, they have been less effective in holding leaders to account. For example, they have not ensured that leaders' vision for the college is clearly articulated and shared."
- "The governing body left no stone unturned in its scrutiny of progress against agreed targets for improvement. All staff had responded well to the more stringent performance management scheme that had a direct impact on improving the quality of teaching in all subject areas."

Governors should increase rigour by challenging leaders

EXPERTS

Unbelievably, the government may be about to chop away the first rung on the ladder with its new funding system for apprenticeships, says Jon Graham

On the face of it, the combination of the apprenticeship levy's start, the well-publicised industrial strategy and the government's social justice agenda promise great things for a provider like JTL in 2017.

After all, we tick all the right boxes in that we offer virtually all of our apprenticeships to young people, we are a good STEM provider, and we're meeting employer demand in traditional sectors where the unlimited but vital supply of migrant labour may be subject to future control.

So why are my trustees, colleagues and I looking forward to the new year with such real trepidation?

The permanent secretary needs to start listening fast

JTL is a national, not-for-profit training provider specialising in the building services engineering sector, with over 6,300 apprentices training each year in electrical, plumbing, heating and ventilating, and engineering maintenance services.

Seventy-five per cent of these apprentices are aged between 16 and 18, and borrowing



JON GRAHAM

CEO of JTL Training

16-18 apprenticeships are set to plummet

the theme from this year's 10th anniversary of National Apprenticeship Week, we offer them the first step onto the 'ladder of opportunity'.

Unbelievably, the government may be about to chop away that first rung with its new funding system for apprenticeships.

Our employers say that under the new system when the traditional age differentials in funding rates are removed, they would sooner employ young people aged 19 and over. Some 16- and 17-year-olds aren't allowed on site due to health and safety rules, and many of them have yet to pass their driving test, but the present funding makes it still worthwhile to take them on.

Remove the incentive and employers will switch back to recruiting older apprentices.

The so-called £1,000 incentive for

employers to recruit 16- to 18-year-olds simply doesn't work for STEM sectors. Our level three apprenticeships typically last four years, meaning the incentive equates to a mere £5 per week, which is of no interest to employers given the additional challenges of younger employees.

If the government increased the incentive to, say, £1,000 per annum, then the switch might be avoided but right now, JTL is expecting a complete change-around in its provision; at present 75 per cent of our apprentices are aged 16-to-18, but this might fall to 25 per cent, leaving far fewer opportunities for that age group than we can offer now.

Whether the number of apprentices to which we will see that new age split being

applied will remain over 6,000 is another major concern. JTL has 3,500 employers on its books and the proportion which are levy-payers is tiny, perhaps one per cent.

We serve a few large companies such as Balfour Beatty, Kier and Carillion, but 85 per cent of our employers have seven operatives or fewer; they're your typical 'men-and-van', but ones with excellent skills, high in demand. There is a growing and strong body of evidence that by the end of the second year, levy-payers may be consuming nearly all of the levy pot themselves, leaving little funding for the thousands of SMEs who offer apprenticeships in our sector.

Unless the government puts an indicative annual budget in place for non-levy payers, the cry of "you can't find a good plumber anywhere these days" will become even louder, especially in post-Brexit Britain.

The Skills Funding Agency is telling providers like us to change our business model and focus our efforts on the levy-payers. But this is ludicrous because such a strategy in no way responds to employment patterns in STEM industries. JTL receives over 20,000 applications a year from young people seeking an apprenticeship. What are these young people going to do if we have nowhere to place them?

I read over the holiday that the permanent secretary at the Department for Education has committed the department to formulate policy only after listening. If he wants to make an effective contribution to the industrial strategy, he needs to start listening fast.



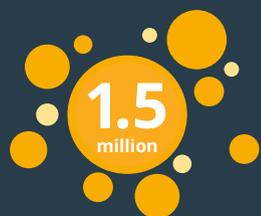
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EXPERTS



CAROLE STOTT

Chair of WorldSkills UK and the Association of Colleges

FE holds the key to 2017's global skills challenges

Building a world-class skills training system is entirely within our grasp if it is properly supported and prioritised, says Carole Stott

To say that 2016 was an eventful year is an understatement. There can scarcely be a person whose life will not be touched in some way by its momentous events. There is little that feels stable and people, businesses and sectors the world over are wondering what 2017 will bring and are trying to plan for the unknown and the unpredictable.

Last year was testing for FE. Many of us struggled to deal with issues such as English and maths requirements, an inspection regime that appears to take little account of the context in which we operate, area-based reviews requiring fundamental long-term strategic decisions in the midst of chronic uncertainty, the need to build partnerships and alliances requiring trust and cooperation in a context where people are feeling threatened and often suspicious, a new apprenticeship policy and system which is not yet fully formed but which will be a number one priority for many, and all of this in a context of continued austerity and funding challenges.

Not all of these challenges will disappear in 2017. Implementing the decisions of area-based reviews will bring fresh challenges, and alongside this we will see further development of the Skills Plan and technical and professional routes, continued devolution, and reforms in curriculum and higher education. So it is not surprising if people feel beleaguered.

But ours is not a downhearted sector. We have an educational and social mission that drives us forward. Every day in our work we see the positive benefits and outcomes as people's lives are genuinely transformed.

The recent changes in the political landscape in the UK have made the educational and social purpose of FE ever more important.

Recent voting in Europe and the USA reveals a growing sense of exclusion and inequality felt by many in our communities. The decision to leave the European Union will have many unknown consequences, but one thing is very clear. If our economy is to thrive as a free-trading nation outside of the EU, we must invest in skills.

If we really want a society that works for everyone then we have to invest in

developing everyone's talents and careers.

This is a global challenge but the responses and the solutions will need to emerge locally. Our colleges and our FE system are essential to this endeavour.

We have the knowledge and expertise to make this work. Colleges in particular are essential stakeholders in their local communities. They have the relationships, the understanding and the professional expertise to help in this shared endeavour. The importance of FE is perhaps more clearly understood now.

But if this is to be achieved we need a renewed focus on world-class standards.

Ours is not a downhearted sector

We have the wherewithal and the experience and expertise to deliver this.

Success at the recent EuroSkills and WorldSkills events, where the UK was placed seventh in both competitions, was a great start.

We can build from this: grow our expertise in training to world-class standards from this base so that these standards permeate our system. This is entirely within our grasp if it is properly supported and prioritised.

I have the great privilege and pleasure of meeting many of our WorldSkills competitors. They are, of course, highly skilled young people.

But I'm even more impressed by their other qualities: their clear focus on their end goal, their absolute determination, perseverance and ability to repeatedly overcome setbacks, their constant hard work and belief that they can learn more and do better.

What employer, what country would not want these qualities in their people?

Those of us working in further education also need to nurture these qualities and these characteristics.

If we do, and like these young people, develop and use our talents wisely, then we can play our part in building the education and skills system to support a thriving economy and society in a fast-changing world.



JEREMY RABINOVITCH

Workplace co-ordinator, Tolent Construction Ltd

Apprentice targets should cross administrative boundaries

We are failing to meet apprenticeship targets in construction due to some ridiculous barriers that should simply be removed, says Jeremy Rabinovitch

Apprentices are the lifeblood of the economy. These are people who want to work yet don't want to spend years learning something without being guaranteed a job.

Apprenticeships can provide fantastic opportunities both from a financial and career progression point of view – not to mention filling the skills gaps of the future.

I work as a workplace coordinator in the construction sector and as such I am responsible for ensuring our developments have local labour and apprentices working on them. However, local boroughs, especially in London, make it hard to ensure this happens.

We need to use the people in the industry to promote it and get the next generation into apprenticeships

Nowadays most councils insist that around a fifth of the workforce comes from within the boundary walls; in some boroughs, apprentices can only come from within that borough. We are limiting the success of the apprenticeships initiative by setting up boundaries where they are not necessary.

Here's an example: the company I work for is developing a large hotel and the local borough has stipulated we need to employ around 20 apprentices during construction.

At first glance that may seem fairly reasonable, however there are conditions that can make this simple target unachievable in practice.

First, we are told that all apprentices must be living in the local borough: a fantastic aspiration, but by the borough's own admission unrealistic, given there aren't 20 people on their books interested in construction. In practice, this means out of two people who went to the same school and want to do the same job, one will be afforded

fewer opportunities with our subcontractors because they live on the opposite side of the road to their friend, who lives within the boundary of the borough.

The second issue, and possibly the bigger, is the fact that many boroughs require evidence only of someone starting an apprenticeship to count towards a company's targets. This means if we have 20 apprenticeships to fill, we can have 20 young people who all leave after their first day, but these are counted as apprenticeships.

This is scandalous – it's not even work experience. Yet if we place someone on site for two years, who completes an apprenticeship but lives in a different borough, this may not meet our target and we could be fined.

We have to change the way we approach apprenticeships. When the government is so determined to make apprenticeships a vital cog in the financial wheel of the country, why are such ridiculous rules allowed to exist?

Schools are yet another battlefield. I would love the chance to go into schools and promote the available opportunities but despite contacting as many schools as possible, I find it very difficult to get invited. It is easy to surmise from this that schools are more interested in promoting their own sixth form than considering what their students may actually want or benefit from.

The young people get it. More and more want to do apprenticeships but encouragement from schools and even parents is often sadly lacking. So how do we get round this? Unless attitudes in parents and schools change it's not going to change and the government's three-million target will have been just another pipe dream.

We have to work together. The CITB offers a shared apprenticeship programme, which is a fantastic way of helping apprentices acquire the relevant work experience by moving from site to site – bearing in mind subcontractors are there only for a small percentage of the actual development.

There are some good initiatives out there, but we have to do more. We need to use the people in the industry to promote it and get the next generation into apprenticeships before we lose them to the same tired revolving door that insists on sixth form then university.

Times are changing, so we have to move with them. Let's get the boroughs and councils working together to make the practicalities more achievable and let's get the schools to invite more companies and training providers in to talk not just to the pupils, but to teachers and parents as well.

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Alongside our interim leadership and management services we offer permanent recruitment solutions from middle management roles through to senior executive level roles. Commencing with assessing and advising on a suitable candidate profile to fit requirements, we support our clients throughout the entire recruitment life-cycle. During the resourcing phase we will rely on our unrivalled network in addition to utilising relevant advertising media and executive search, to identify and propose the most appropriate talent in the marketplace for you.

For more information contact [Samantha Bunn](#) on **01454 617 707** or samantha.bunn@fea.co.uk



*Terms and Conditions - For all exclusive engagements made in January 2017.

English or Maths Subject Team Leader



Salary: Packages up to £45,000

Hours: Various Opportunities, Full Time & Part Time (Including Maternity Cover)

We have an exciting opportunity for talented, highly motivated and enthusiastic GCSE English and Maths Subject Team Leaders, to contribute to the delivery of our ambitious vision. The successful candidate will have the ability and drive to inspire diverse groups of young people to achieve their full potential.

We are seeking values based staff, who are committed to our ethos of working in partnership with individual students to ensure each achieves their full potential. In support of this you will plan and deliver inspirational, engaging lessons to ensure our students participate and develop their skills to enable them to progress and achieve.

Candidates should have a relevant professional qualification and experience of teaching in a classroom setting. You will be able to demonstrate the ability to motivate students through the use of varied teaching and learning strategies with an emphasis on student progression and differentiation.

If you would like to have a confidential discussion about this role, then please contact Karen Brown on **01908 637006** or by email Karen.Brown@mkcollege.ac.uk

Website:
<http://www.mkcollege.ac.uk/joblist/campus-based-vacancies>

Email:
recruitment@mkcollege.ac.uk

Successful candidates will have the following;

- A strong track record of good or better teaching and learning delivery across a range of levels, attaining high quality student outcomes
- A degree or equivalent qualification in related subject
- A recognised higher level teaching qualification
- Strong curriculum knowledge, subject leadership and team working that delivers multiple and diverse teaching methods
- An ability to engage and motivate students to deliver high performance outcomes in a further education environment

Milton Keynes College is a general further education and training provider with Campuses at Chaffron Way, Bletchley and Central Milton Keynes. The college is the largest provider of further education and training in Milton Keynes, offering a varied mix of vocational and academic courses to a diverse set of students. The College has a number of commercial outlets which are open to the public including an award winning restaurant, Hair & Beauty Salon, Personal Training Studio, Nursery and Gallery space. Milton Keynes College also has an offender learning contract, providing education within 28 prisons across the country.

We also offer a wide range of benefits to our employees, including: Childcare vouchers, a multitude of training opportunities, Car Salary Sacrifice, Cycle to Work, a number of local discounts in Milton Keynes, LGPS and TPS pensions, free parking at our main campus sites and discount at our onsite Brasserie restaurant and The Graduate Salon.

Milton Keynes College is values led organisation: Integrity, Excellence, Inspire, Respect, Innovate.

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

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



MIS ANALYST/PROGRAMMER (2 POSTS)

£23,847 TO £27,624 (FULL-TIME/FULL YEAR)

The MIS team at the College plays a crucial role in providing relevant and accurate management information in a user friendly format. The College uses a SQL based Student Records System (EBS) as well as a number of other applications used for reporting to both internal and external stakeholders.

There is an opportunity for an enthusiastic programmer/analyst to join the busy MIS team. The ideal candidate will have high level IT and numeracy skills to include a sound knowledge of relational database systems, knowledge of SQL, advanced skills in MS Access and MS Excel, MS SQL Reporting Services or similar IT tools. They should also have strong analytical and time management skills and the ability to work to deadlines with the minimum of supervision. The role will involve a high degree of problem solving and attention to detail and will suit a team

player with the ability to communicate clearly and effectively at all levels within the organisation.

Experience of the FE sector, student record systems and ILR datasets is highly desirable or a general Business Intelligence/Management Information reporting environment would be advantageous.

Closing date: Monday 23rd January 2017 (by noon) with interviews in early February.

For further details and to complete an online application form, please visit our website www.sussexdowns.ac.uk/about/vacancies, or phone our recruitment line on 030 300 38222, or email LewesHR@sussexdowns.ac.uk

No agencies please.

Sussex Downs College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We welcome applicants from ethnic minorities as they are under-represented in this institution.



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Purchase your package for 2017 before January 31 to make big savings. Rates displayed are per school or college. Group and MAT rates are available.

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Unlimited online listings for your organisation during 2017. Basic listing includes your company logo, unlimited text, attachments and are emailed to relevant job seekers.

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Ensure your advert stands out! Unlimited featured online listings for your organisation during 2017. Featured listings include, enhanced visibility on our website, posted via our social media accounts, included within our weekly jobs email sent to over 16,000 education professionals and all the benefits of a basic listing: your company logo, unlimited text, attachments and emailed to relevant job seekers.



Ruskin College
Oxford

Programme Co-ordinator/ Tutor Mathematics

Salary Point 30 £31,665 Permanent, Full Time Ruskin College Oxford

Ruskin College Oxford wishes to appoint a Programme Co-ordinator/Tutor for Mathematics to teach on its highly popular and successful FE programme from January 2017.

You will hold a good honours degree and a professional qualification relating to the relevant subject area. You will have extensive teaching experience, good communication (oral and written) and interpersonal skills with an ability to work effectively as part of a team. Details of the programme can be found on the website www.ruskin.ac.uk

Please contact Laura Cozier for an application form and job details lcozier@ruskin.ac.uk
Closing date: 13th January 2016

English and Maths Non-Leadership Teaching Roles

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

Get in touch with Bridget for more details.

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



Tutor: Maths (Part-time, permanent role)

This is a great opportunity for a dynamic, professional individual qualified in an appropriate discipline, to join a forward thinking college to develop and teach GCSE maths to groups of learners from across college.

It is essential you are qualified to minimum of Level 3 in maths, and possess a teaching qualification. Candidates should have experience of successfully delivering GCSE maths within a college or school environment.

It is essential that you have the ability to build positive relationships, displaying excellent communication, organisational and administrative skills, and demonstrate a flexible and professional attitude.

You will be a highly self-motivated, energetic and driven individual, encompassing a strong sense of autonomy. You will possess excellent presentation and communication skills and be able to demonstrate achievement of targets.

This post is a **0.5 role** working **18.5 hours per week**

The salary will be within the qualified delivery scale **£25,128 - £36,979** pro rata for part time

The role will require you to take on and work to the college's values; working with **professionalism**, taking **responsibility** for your actions, and giving **respect** to clients and colleagues alike.

For further information and to complete an online application form please visit www.wnc.ac.uk/vacancies

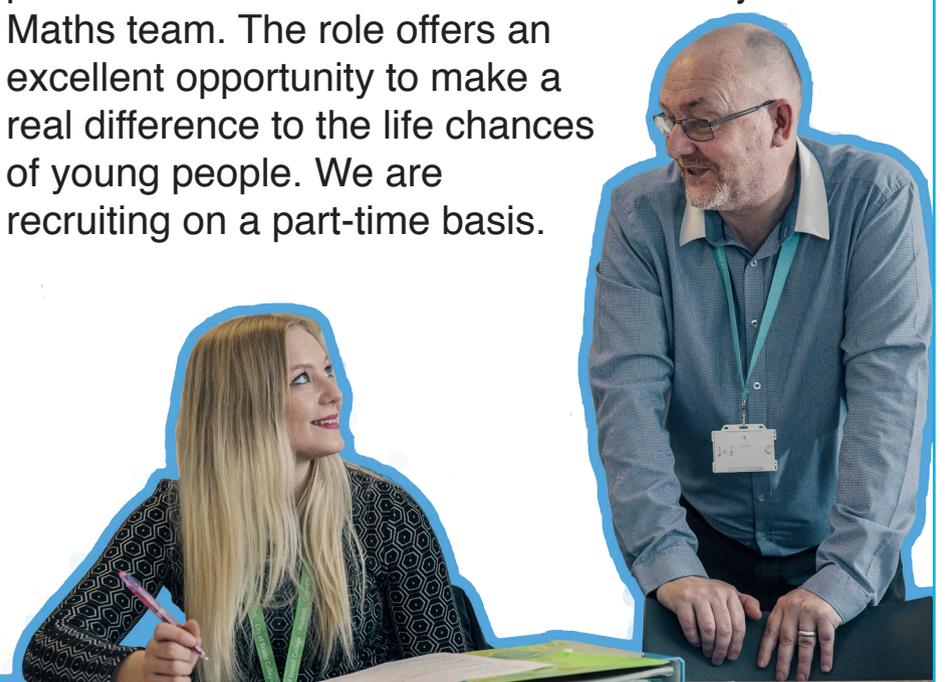


Careers



Maths Lecturer

The City of Bristol College is looking to appoint a professional and enthusiastic Lecturer to join our Maths team. The role offers an excellent opportunity to make a real difference to the life chances of young people. We are recruiting on a part-time basis.



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

Improving staff wellbeing is not only vital to college success, it's our moral duty as FE leaders, says Stuart Rimmer

At the recent AOC annual conference, its president Ian Ashman declared 2016/17 the year of mental health in FE. This was an important, welcome and long overdue step that has been superbly received by the sector.

At the conference I was invited to deliver sessions on the broader topic of wellbeing, including launching the AOC Eastern Region Further Education Wellbeing Guide. It was great to see a rebalancing of the conference sessions away from an exclusive focus on skills and involving a more holistic approach to post-16 education.

At my college we have made huge gains in supporting wellbeing and mental health for students, but I admit we need to do much more to increase support for staff.

If we are to be effective in tackling and improving wellbeing in our students, our staff must be sufficiently equipped, both in terms of personal resilience and wellbeing and with the tools and knowledge to pass onto others. We must begin to look after ourselves from the inside out.

We have introduced a 'happy balance' programme, initially with a focus on learners: being in an area of deprivation and with many of our students struggling with basic physical and mental needs, it was imperative that we implemented our student programme quickly.

It was relatively easy to introduce via our



STUART RIMMER

Principal/CEO at Great Yarmouth College

2017 a year for staff wellbeing?

tutorial programmes and we partnered with Action for Happiness; adopting its '10 keys to happiness for students.

It has become apparent that in an ideal

We must begin to look after ourselves from the inside out

world staff should have come first: our staff teams are in need of more coaching, tools and knowledge, both for themselves and others.

So we are extending the programme, addressing the three elements of social, mental and physical wellbeing, to our staff.

Developing a prescription for how we can improve conditions for our teams is more challenging than for students.

At times talking to staff about their wellness can be uncomfortable and risk being perceived as a nanny-state intervention, or just one more thing to do in a busy institutional schedule of requests.

How we practically and, in some respects, philosophically approach who is responsible for improving wellbeing in the workplace is worthy of discussion. Is improving wellbeing the duty of a paternalistic college or should the individual use opportunities to help themselves? The answer is both.

We have developed activities and resources and offer a practical guide, including hints, tips and reading for self-

help plus supportive intervention where needed. The importance of training and knowledge, myth-busting, meditation, counselling support, exercise, getting outside, eating well and socialising are all addressed to encourage staff to proactively improve and maintain their wellbeing.

Having recently completed the Health and Safety Executive's stress survey, our FE staff are clearly experiencing some difficult times both inside and outside of work.

We have a long way to go. Last year we established that every member of staff would be given a wellbeing target as part of their appraisal. The targets were self-determined and ranged from running marathons through to simply setting aside time for a lunch break; from training in understanding anxiety through to yoga and mindfulness sessions.

In a sector of constant change, with mergers, area-based reviews, curriculum upheaval through Sainsbury and apprenticeship reform, performance tables and the ubiquitous pressure of Ofsted, spending time and resource improving staff wellbeing is both vital to college success and our moral duty as FE leaders.

We should want our staff to come to work happy and lead positive, flourishing lives. Increased happiness also leads quickly to improved performance too, which soon begins to feel like a win-win.

I'm hoping that 2017 can also be FE's year of staff wellbeing and one in which we all, including principals, begin to find our 'happy balance'.



Is your e-portfolio working for you?

Laser e-portfolio and interactive learning resources

The screenshot displays the Laser Systems e-portfolio interface for a user named Matt Eaton. The interface includes a navigation menu on the left with options like Home, Lessons, My Portfolio, and My Profile. The main content area shows a 'Welcome, Matt Eaton' message, followed by sections for 'Your Details', 'Your Progress', and 'Your Organisation'. The 'Your Progress' section features two progress bars: one for 'Your Course' (48.2%) and another for 'Week Progress' (73.2%). At the bottom, there are four large tiles with numbers: 0, 0, 1 (highlighted in orange), and 0.

"Using Laser couldn't be easier; it's quick, clear to follow and has the most professional support team who always answer the phone quickly if one has an enquiry." - Olivia, Trainee Assessor

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CAMPUS ROUND-UP *with Sam King*

Frostbite survivor shares chilling story with students



Nigel Vardy, nicknamed Mr Frostbite following his ordeal

Students at Trent College received an inspiring talk on resilience from mountaineer Nigel Vardy, who lost his fingers, toes and part of his nose to frostbite.

In 1999, Vardy suffered severe frostbite in temperatures of minus 60 degrees Celsius on Mount McKinley in Alaska, but has since gone on to climb some of the world's toughest mountains.

Vardy's message was one of resilience, recovery and adversity against the odds, inspiring students to apply the same values both academically and outside of the college gates, telling them "never give up, however many challenges you may face".

The talk came as part of the college's Arts and Speakers programme, which invites guests from the world of sport, the arts, politics, industry and beyond to pay a visit to the Nottingham-based campus and share their stories with students.

David Tidy, the college's assistant head of curriculum, who coordinates the Arts and Speakers programme, said: "Nigel's talk was incredibly inspiring and showed the true resilience of the human spirit under exceptionally difficult circumstances.

"He helped the students realise that a setback does not have to mean the end of their dreams."



Pupils get stuck into some animal organs

College uses animal organs to up STEM intake

A college looking to recruit more pupils to take STEM subjects held a gruesome day of live surgery for a group of local schools.

Blackpool and the Fylde College hosted the event to give prospective pupils hands-on experience of specialist careers, hosting a live surgery experience where they performed operations on animal organs.

It wasn't all blood and guts however, with other activities on offer including designing and building a rocket car and curriculum staff from engineering, computing and science areas giving skills presentations.

According to the Higher Education Funding Council, the college is the largest

provider of higher education STEM courses in England, training people for careers in a range of specialised fields including aerospace, automotive, maritime engineering, energy, and health.

Jane Mahon, partnerships and careers manager at the college, said: "STEM subjects are really important but are sometimes overlooked by pupils so it's good to show them the exciting career options available to those who study technical and professional subjects.

"These are the skills learned by innovators like Neil Armstrong or Steve Wozniak, who went on to change the face of the world as we know it."



[L-R] Davina Wright 18, Jake Sumner 18, Robson Summers 18, Isaac Mace 18, Thomas Crouch 20, Scott Richards 18

A week behind bars for public services students

Six students from City College Norwich are the first in the country to complete a week's work experience behind the walls of a prison.

The group, who are on the extended diploma level three public services course at the college, undertook the placement at HMP Norwich as part of a scheme aiming to engage young adults with careers in the prison service.

Students had the chance to work in the control room and offender management unit, and had an insight into processes such as visitation, education and rehabilitation. They also completed a fitness test required

of all prison staff, and witnessed the work of security sniffer dogs.

At the end of the placement, the students gave a presentation to justice secretary Elizabeth Truss, highlighting what they had learned, and talked about how they found the overall experience.

Patrick Setters, who worked at Norwich Prison before joining City College Norwich as a public services lecturer, said: "There is a recruitment shortage for prison staff and this is one way of helping to address that. I believe this scheme will help to recruit dedicated people who are aware of the challenges which will therefore retain staff."

Virtual technology suite will aid apprenticeship learning

The UK's first college of advanced technology has installed a virtual reality suite to enhance student learning.

Prospects College of Advanced Technology in Essex hopes the equipment will benefit its construction, utilities and infrastructure students, enabling them to test their skills without fear of failure or risk of injury.

The suite recreates a wide variety of scenarios enabling students to be virtually present on site, and allows for observation, evaluation and immediate feedback from tutors.

Ian Rist, an electrical instructor at

the college has already implemented the technology in his lesson plans, said: "The equipment will assist the students in electrical test circuits and installations without the hazards faced in real life.

"It is only when then the students become competent in a VR environment that they can progress to complete the test for real. This will teach learners to a high specification while maintaining health and safety."

PROCAT is a specialist college, focusing on developing its students to work in the science, technology, engineering and manufacturing industries, and meet industry needs.



A student demonstrating the new technology

College students take schoolchildren on Lapland adventure

FEATURED
CAMPUS
ROUND-UP

A trip to Lapland over the Christmas period is considered the ultimate festive holiday, and over 40 local schoolchildren had the chance to go there thanks to students at a North Lincolnshire college – with a bit of imagination, of course. Samantha King reports.

Pupils from St Bernadette's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy flew first class, prepared food for Rudolph and met Santa himself during a recent winter getaway – all without leaving the walls of North Lindsey college.

Organised by level two travel and tourism students, the imaginary Lapland trip was part of their assessment in events management for providing a service to the children.

Travel and tourism lecturer at the college and organiser of the annual trip, Angela Gillen, said: "We have three rooms going, the grotto, the aeroplane cabin and Santa's workshop. The students decide what they want to do in each of those rooms, how it's going to look and who's going to take which role.

They use leadership skills and build their confidence, all which goes to helping them in the future really, and also they're being assessed at the same time."

The primary school pupils were separated



Pupils strap in for the flight to Lapland



Santa (aka lecturer Angela Gillen)

into three groups of 15, with each

spending around half

an hour in each location. Accompanied by students from the college, they were asked what they wanted for Christmas and entertained through a variety of activities.

The trip began with a simulated flight on the college's real aeroplane cabin, with each pupil issued their own passport as they stepped on board and enjoyed refreshments.

An in-flight visual programme was also played during the journey, giving the young passengers a scenic view of a

winter landscape. There was even on-board entertainment, with one student dressing up as Elsa from 'Frozen' and performing a song.

Once at their destination, the children arrived at Santa's grotto, before enjoying a festive story and participating in Christmas crafts in the workshop room.

Jade Scott-Deeley, a student at the college, said: "All our hard work paid off with the grotto and preparing all the activities. It was really nice to see all the children today and seeing their excitement for Christmas."

Ms Gillen who played the role of Santa on the day, added: "The event has been going for a couple of years, and so far, we've had level three students running it. We thought

this year the level two students would benefit because they don't always get the opportunities that the higher-level students get. They've absolutely smashed it."

The annual event has a reputation amongst local schools, with many requesting the chance to undertake the imaginary trip themselves, and there's now quite the waiting list.

"The kids get lots out of it," said Ms Gillen. "Every year we try and make it bigger and better to the point where we have schools ringing us up asking if we'll put it on for them. There's a bit of a waiting list for schools to do it."



Students lead an activity with the schoolchildren

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

James Staniforth has been appointed principal and chief executive of the Shrewsbury Colleges Group.

The newly formed group, comprising Shrewsbury Sixth Form college and Shrewsbury college, has become Shropshire's largest combined A-level and vocational education provider since it completed its merger in July.

Mr Staniforth will take up the new role, leaving his current position as principal at Strode College in Somerset, and bring with him a wealth of experience from senior roles within sixth form and further education colleges.

In the role, he says he is "committed to making Shrewsbury Colleges Group a centre of academic and vocational excellence" and aims to develop a "regional and national reputation".

He added: "I am delighted to be joining Shrewsbury Colleges Group and to have the opportunity to work with the staff, governors and the community to move the college to the next stage post-merger."

Mr Staniforth will take over the role from

the current principal and CEO, Lyn Surgeon, after Easter 2017.

Satwant Deol has been appointed principal and CEO of the Henley College.

The college, which is based in Oxfordshire, achieved an Ofsted rating of 'good' in its most recent inspection, and teaches

nearly 2,000 full-time students from schools across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.

She will take up the role from her current position as managing director of the Technical, Creative, Academic and Professional (TCAP) Company at Highbury college, where she held responsibility for strategic direction, marketing and budgets of the learning company, as well as leadership of the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment.

Prior to this, she held senior roles across a number of London colleges, where, amongst other initiatives, she set up a mentoring scheme for under-achieving BAME students.

She began her career in software development, and became the first woman to lead an all-male development team in her role as head of department at Coventry University.

At The Henley, she hopes to put her experience of technology to good use, with plans to "get more young women into science, engineering and technology subjects" as well as establishing herself in the local community.

Joe Mulligan has been appointed principal of South Wiltshire University Technical College (UTC).

Mr Mulligan is currently assistant principal at Bristol Technology and Engineering Academy, and will take up the new principalship on the January 17.

In the role, he has ambitions to make the UTC the number-one choice for local students who have a passion for STEM subjects.

He claims he is most looking forward to "working with the students and teachers" and is "getting to know the city and employers linked with the UTC".

Mulligan, who grew up in Essex, left school at 16 to take an apprenticeship in aircraft maintenance, and even pursued a degree in mechanical engineering before eventually going into teaching.

Speaking of his decision to take up the role, he said: "Bristol is firmly established now, results are good and I wanted the opportunity to develop another UTC and make it my own."

"I really believe that Salisbury has so much potential."



JAMES STANIFORTH



SATWANT DEOL



JOE MULLIGAN

If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your college, training provider or awarding organisation please let us know by emailing news@feweek.co.uk

Apprenticeship Standards

High Quality End-point Assessment and Support



Innovate Awarding and Apprenticeship Standards

We are on the Skills Funding Agency register for apprenticeship assessment organisations and have a rolling programme of applications for 57 apprenticeship standards as soon as they become 'ready for delivery'.

We will be offering assessment services for apprenticeship standards in the following sectors:

- ▶ Adult Care
- ▶ Business
- ▶ Children, Young People and Families
- ▶ Community Sport
- ▶ Customer Service
- ▶ Early Years
- ▶ Education and Training
- ▶ Hair and Beauty
- ▶ Healthcare
- ▶ Hospitality
- ▶ Leadership and Management
- ▶ Public Service
- ▶ Retail
- ▶ Sports and Physical Activity

For more information, please contact John, Cathie or Andy on 0117 314 2800
businessdevelopment@innovateawarding.org
innovateawarding.org/apprenticeship-standards
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FE Week Sudoku challenge

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

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: Ian Taylor, New College Swindon.

Difficulty: **EASY**

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty: **EASY**

Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

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

Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

Solutions: Next edition

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

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