

# FE Week

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LISTEN TO LEARNERS'

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## OFSTED TO WIN MONEY AND POWER

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- Inspectors now to decide who gets kicked off delivery register

Exclusive

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# AoC's new president wants to give learners their voice

**BILLY CAMDEN**  
@BILLYCAMDEN

**EXCLUSIVE**

The new president-elect of the Association of Colleges will campaign to get his fellow principals to involve learners far more in FE decision-making over the course of his tenure.

In an exclusive interview with FE Week, Steve Frampton, who is also the principal of Portsmouth College, revealed that he wants to focus his year in post on encouraging AoC members to listen more to the “student voice” – and act upon their recommendations.

“Learners are much more important than just our clients, they can offer great solutions to issues,” Mr Frampton said.

This would build on campaigning by the National Union of Students, through its president Shakira Martin’s #FEunplugged campaign, and the ‘Students shaping the post-16 skills plan’ document she wrote with Liberal Democrat leader Vince Cable.

“I’m very keen to map out with Shakira how we make their voice heard,” Mr Frampton added.

He has over 39 years’ experience in FE,

and will devote his full attention to the presidency after stepping down as boss at Portsmouth’s grade two sixth-form college in the summer.

As well as lobbying colleges on his travels as AoC president, he will try to convince Ofsted to make the learner voice a “central focus” in its new framework, which is due out next year.

“I don’t think Ofsted is adverse to the idea, but it is finding how we might do that, and the how really is the challenge,” he said.

Mr Frampton claims to have learnt “nearly everything” he knows from listening to young people.

“My college changed the timetable to a more compact day, to mirror top institutions all over the world after listening to learners,” he pointed out.

“We invested in digital technology by giving each student an apple iPad to use throughout their course which drove up the quality of teaching and learning, attendance, achievement, and progression”.

This cost around £280,000, but won the college an AoC Beacon award last year.

“The more we

listen to learners the more we will get it right, and that is from my own personal experience,” he concluded.

After taking over from current president Dr Alison Birkinshaw on August 1, Mr Frampton also wants to focus on curriculum issues. This will include helping to shape prestigious new T-levels ahead of their expected launch in 2020.

“Specifically we need to get the transition year right for T-levels and the three-month work placements, which will be the most challenging aspect of the qualifications,” he said.

He is concerned about “what the future of applied general qualifications is going to be in the structure” with T-levels and the reformed A-levels, however. “There are a million students in our sector on applied generals so we can’t afford to leave them out,” he said. “There is quite a lot of



Steve Frampton

uncertainty around them at the moment and uncertainty is never a good place to be.”

He believes students are “over-assessed” and there “have to be smarter ways of finding out how talented our young people are than just putting them through pressurised exams”.

He doesn’t claim to have the solution, but he wants to use his presidency to come up with a more “sophisticated” answer.

He admitted to having “big shoes to fill” following on from the previous two presidents – Dr Birkinshaw, who focused on fair funding and maths and English GCSE resits, and Ian Ashman, who concentrated on mental health.

Aside from working in colleges since the 1980s, he has been the director of several local community charities, including Business South and PiTC – the community arm of Portsmouth Football Club.

His extensive career earned him an MBE for services to education in the New Year’s honours list in 2017.

David Hughes, the AoC’s chief executive, said Mr Frampton will be a “great advocate and help us to amplify the importance of colleges to the health and prosperity of our communities and the economy”.

## London colleges hit with strikes – but exams go on

**JUDE BURKE**  
@JUDEBURKE77

London has been a hotbed of industrial unrest this week – but the Association of Colleges is claiming that strikes at colleges across the capital have had no negative impact on learners sitting exams.

Members of the University and College Union took action at Lambeth College, Lewisham Southwark College and the Capital City College Group, timed for the start of exam season.

Mary Vine-Morris, the AoC’s London director, was relieved that the strikes hadn’t had “any negative impact on students turning up – and hopefully being successful – in their exams”.

Elsewhere in the country, a two-day strike over planned job cuts at Bradford College was called off at the last minute on Tuesday after it agreed to reopen its voluntary redundancy scheme.

“The strikes this week have made it absolutely clear that staff won’t simply stand by and see their pay continue to be eroded,” said Andrew Harden, the UCU’s head of FE.

“Our message to college leaders is simple – if they want to avoid further disruption to students they need to make a pay offer which addresses members’ concerns.”

Shakira Martin, the president of the National Union of Students, joined staff on the picket line at her former college,



Shakira Martin

Lewisham Southwark, on May 23.

She urged colleges to “work immediately” to negotiate a deal over pay.

“Teachers and staff in FE colleges are the backbone of the sector and deserve adequate and fair pay and conditions,” she said.

This week’s action is the latest in an ongoing dispute over a below-inflation pay offer of one per cent in 2017/18 made by the Association of Colleges in September.

Staff at Lambeth and the three Capital City College Group members – City and Islington College, Westminster Kingsway College, and the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London – have walked out twice already this year over the offer, which the UCU described as “disappointing”.

And Lewisham Southwark staff joined them for the first time this week, in protest at being told by their paymasters at NCG in the north that they won’t be getting any pay



A picket line in Westminster

rise at all this year.

A Capital City Group spokesperson said all maths exams at its three colleges had “gone ahead without disruption”, while a spokesperson for Lewisham Southwark confirmed that “no exams were cancelled this week”.

There is some proof that strikes can work: last week, staff and leaders at Sandwell College agreed a “sector-leading” pay deal, amounting to more than six per cent over three years.

AoC boss David Hughes said he was “pleased” that the college had been able to reach a deal, which he said was a “positive sign that where colleges can afford to pay more than the one-per-cent recommendation they are prepared to do so”.

“Unfortunately, some colleges simply don’t have the funding and that is what the handful of outstanding disputes will

hopefully soon recognise,” he said.

The AoC is refusing to negotiate with the FE unions, which include GMB, Unison, Unite and the National Education Union as well as UCU, over next year’s pay claim while action over the 2017/18 offer is ongoing.

Mr Hughes is “keen” for discussions to get underway “as planned in July”, as are the unions.

“With good will and reasonableness on both sides I am optimistic that will happen,” he said.

Staff at Bradford College were due to strike for two days in protest at plans to slash up to 75 jobs.

But the college agreed to reopen its voluntary redundancy scheme at the eleventh hour, a move it said would “avoid the need for compulsory redundancies for lecturers”.



NEWS

Windrush scandal official made Cabinet Office apprenticeships chief

PAUL OFFORD  
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The immigration enforcement official blamed for the downfall of the former home secretary Amber Rudd has been moved from the Home Office to the Cabinet Office to lead on apprenticeships strategy.

The Home Office announced that Hugh Ind “is moving to work at the Cabinet Office where he will take forward the public sector apprenticeships strategy”.

The Sun reported earlier this month that fuming conservatives had blamed him for costing Amber Rudd her job over a disastrous briefing at the peak of the scandal over the wrongful deportation of Windrush immigrants and their family members.

Ms Rudd is said to have been wrongly told that the Home Office had no official targets for deporting illegal immigrants before her fateful home affairs select committee appearance.

She had to resign when it was subsequently claimed she had misled Parliament.


Mr Ind will be replaced as director general of immigration enforcement, a post which involves overseeing more than 5,000 staff “responsible for cross-government actions to reduce immigration abuse”, by Tyson Hepple.

It is understood Mr Ind will start in his new post within three weeks.

An Association of Employment and Learning Providers spokesperson welcomed the arrival of a senior figure.

“The civil service has come a long way in understanding the advantages of apprenticeships at all levels since some fear and trepidation greeted the public sector target announcement in January 2016 and this is further evidence of how seriously the government is about ensuring that new programmes are successfully delivered,” they said.

Permanent secretary Sir Philip Rutnam thanked Mr Ind for his “huge contribution to the Home Office” and wished him “every possible success going forward”.



Trouble brewing at NCG as Ofsted inspectors stay an extra day

BILLY CAMDEN  
@BILLYCAMDEN

EXCLUSIVE

Ofsted took the highly unusual decision to extend its inspection of NCG, suggesting that not all is well at the nation’s largest college group.

Two teams of inspectors were sent into England’s largest college group on May 14 amid achievement rate concerns, and they had been due to wrap their investigations up by the end of that week.

However, inspectors controversially returned for one last day on May 21.

It is understood that the visit did not go well, and that NCG’s current grade two rating is in danger of downgrade. Its apprenticeship provision is understood to be of most concern.

The group, which is currently consulting on significant redundancies, will be desperate to avoid a disastrous ‘inadequate’ rating for apprenticeships, which would see it booted off of the government’s register of apprenticeship training providers and banned from offering them.

Intraining, NCG’s troubled private training provider arm, also had a visit from Ofsted

the same week. This inspection ended on schedule and it is understood to have resulted in a grade three for apprenticeships.

If the worst happens and NCG is taken off of RoATP, it will be down to the Department for Education to decide whether to stop the group from using Intraining as the sole provider of the group’s apprenticeship provision, as happened similarly at Learndirect last year.

Last year, just before Learndirect received a grade four of its own, it set up a separate company – Learndirect Apprenticeships Ltd – to deliver apprenticeships separately to its sister company.

Last week’s visits to NCG and Intraining were both full inspections, which suggests Ofsted’s alarm bells are ringing.

In more usual times, the inspectorate would only be expected to carry out a short inspection, especially if there were no concerns.

The group was rated ‘good’ in September 2016, following a five-month standoff during which it successfully overturned a lower grade. Intraining was also given a grade two that June.

However, overall achievement rates at NCG are well below the national average.

In 2016/17, the combined overall

apprenticeship achievement rate for NCG’s colleges was just 55.6 per cent, while Intraining’s was 58 per cent.

Both are around 10 points lower than the national average of 67.7 per cent, and lower than the minimum threshold of 62 per cent, according to the latest government data.

And for the all-important 16-to-18 study programmes, NCG was 4.4 points below the national average of 81.5 per cent.

It is understood that Ofsted wanted to reinspect NCG last year, but was unable to analyse the group’s achievement rates because “data glitches” absented it from the 2015/16 tables.

“This is the largest and most complex FE inspection Ofsted has had to undertake, involving six colleges and a training organisation,” said an NCG spokesperson.

“Given the volume of information, it’s not surprising it has taken longer than a standard inspection and a request from Ofsted to extend by one day was agreed amicably.”

She said the group would not “pre-empt” the results of an inspection report “by commenting on what it might say”.

At the same time as these inspections, NCG is cutting staff numbers by up to a fifth at Intraining and its other private provider Rathbone Training in an effort to save £3 million.

The group was further shaken last month when staff at Lewisham Southwark College, a long-distance merger partner, voted to strike over pay.

Staff held their walk out on May 22 and 23.

Government accepts PAC recommendations on Learndirect

BILLY CAMDEN  
@BILLYCAMDEN

The government did not have proper oversight of Learndirect, it has accepted, and ministers have agreed to act on every recommendation made in a report from a powerful committee of MPs on the saga.

The public accounts committee made five recommendations to ensure history doesn’t repeat itself, which have now all been accepted by the Treasury in an official response.

Members of the committee grilled the organisations which have been closest to the debacle surrounding the nation’s biggest FE provider at a hearing in January, which was followed by a report in March.

England’s largest training provider was sensationally hit with an ‘inadequate’ rating from Ofsted in August.

It then received considerable special treatment from the DfE, which allowed it to retain its contracts for almost a year, far longer than the usual three-month termination period.

The first recommendation is to keep power from concentrating in the hands of private giants.

“The government recognises the need to better understand its contractual relationship with suppliers, and is taking a number of steps to improve this information,” the Treasury said.

It is developing a tool to provide

departments with “spend and contract data on suppliers across central government”.

Officials are also introducing commercial contract management for “high-risk arrangements directly under professional commercial governance”, as well as a commercial assurance questionnaire.

The PAC recommended a new framework for identifying providers which are “too big to fail”.

“The Cabinet Office has developed, with departments and a number of industry experts, a best practice guide and toolkit for departmental strategic supplier relationship management,” The government claimed.

“The Cabinet Office recognises the need to develop a comprehensive risk framework for large and essential suppliers and will report on progress by December 2018.”

The ESFA was told that it should publish its expectations on management fees.

“The funding agency will work with providers to determine the services that should be offered to subcontractors and the corresponding fees that it is reasonable for providers to retain,” the government said.

“It will publish these expectations in advance of the next academic year and providers will be required to comply with them as a requirement of maintaining their funding agreement with ESFA.”

The agency will publish subcontracting fees for providers across the country in June.

Rules used to dictate that providers publish this information on their own websites every year, but many did not obey. Some, like

Learndirect, had charged “unusually high” top-slices of 40 per cent to its subcontractors for years.

New rules now require individual providers to inform the ESFA of their management fee figures, which should then be published centrally.

PAC also told Ofsted that it must “urgently review” its plans for assessing risks of private provider failures.

The government said the inspectorate is taking account of the size of a provider in terms of its learner numbers and the complexity of provision by “actively putting greater emphasis on these factors”.

While Ofsted already plans “well in advance” for inspections, it is now taking “special steps” to do this for particularly large providers.

There will be a new inspection deferral policy required for commercial providers. Work on this is already underway and Ofsted is “reviewing the current deferral policy and will give specific consideration to its approach to commercial providers”.

An updated policy is expected to be published this month.

Where there are “imminent” plans for closure or major change at a provider, Ofsted is “dependent on receiving clear and regularly updated information from other parties”.

“To this end, Ofsted is working closely with ESFA to progressively improve the accuracy and reliability of the information which it receives to inform deferral decisions.”

# Hinds overrules top civil servant to keep to T-levels timetable

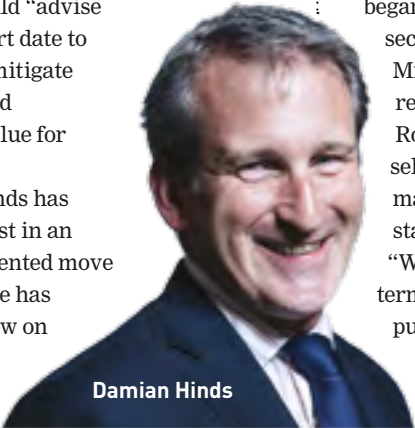
JUDE BURKE  
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The education secretary has sensationally refused a written request from one of his top civil servants to delay T-levels until 2021.

“It will clearly be very challenging to ensure that the first three T-levels are ready to be taught from 2020, and beyond, to a consistently high standard,” wrote the Department for Education’s permanent secretary Jonathan Slater in a letter to his boss Damian Hinds. As the DfE’s accounting officer, Mr Slater is required to consider the “regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility” of public spending.

If these were his only considerations, he wrote, he would “advise deferring the start date to 2021 in order to mitigate the feasibility and consequential value for money risks”.

However, Mr Hinds has denied the request in an almost unprecedented move – claiming that he has been “able to draw on a wider range of



Damian Hinds

considerations” and is “convinced of the case to press ahead.”

None of the advice he has received had “indicated that teaching from 2020 cannot be achieved”, he wrote in his formal reply, in which he urged the department to put its “collective weight” behind delivering on time. Ministerial directions instruct a government department to continue with a spending proposal despite objections from its permanent secretary, who is normally accountable for how departmental money is spent.

It means that Mr Hinds is now accountable for the decision to proceed with T-levels as planned, rather than Mr Slater. According to the Institute for Government think-tank, 63 ministerial directions have been issued since 1990, when its records began – but this is the first by an education secretary.

Mr Hinds’ decision has caused a mixed reaction in the FE community. Robert Halfon, the chair of the education select committee, said Mr Hinds had made “absolutely the right decision to stand firm”.

“We are way behind other countries in terms of skills, we need to get moving and push on,” he said.

But Gordon Marsden, the shadow skills minister, said the decision

“shows what a shambles the whole process is in”.

David Hughes, the chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said the soon-to-be published T-level implementation plans “show that it is feasible for the programme to be carried out successfully, but it is clear that there are risks”.

Meanwhile his counterpart at the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, Mark Dawe, is “not surprised that the permanent secretary thinks that the timescales are too tight”.

Matthew Fell of the Confederation of British Industry urged the government to keep the decision “under review” as “the worst possible outcome would be an inadequate product.”

And Tom Bewick, the boss of the Federation of Awarding Bodies, said awarding organisations were “four-square” behind the aims of the reforms.

“Recent history tells us too many well-meaning initiatives have floundered because ministers have overridden expert advice,” he said. “We need hard-headed assessment of what is deliverable.”

T-levels have been designed to increase the



Jonathan Slater

prestige of technical qualifications. Originally set to start in 2019, the commencement was last year pushed back to 2020.

In October, the government revealed that “pathways” in just three subject areas would go live in the first year, with the remaining subject routes launched by 2022. Consultation on the proposals ran from November until February.

FE Week understands the T-level implementation plan, including the government response to the consultation, is imminent.

Sir Gerry Berragan, chief executive of the Institute for Apprenticeships, voiced concerns of his own about the “worryingly tight” delivery timeline for the first three routes at an Ofqual conference in March.

“The last thing we should do is start the first three on the wrong footing and give them a bad reputation,” he said.

His views are particularly significant as the IfA will take over responsibility for administering T-levels later this year – although an exact date has yet to be set.

“The Institute fully supports the technical education reforms and is working closely with employers, the DfE and Ofqual to ensure they are a success,” a spokesperson said

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# Ofsted to win apprenticeship money and power

JUDE BURKE  
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FROM FRONT

EXCLUSIVE

Ofsted will have its powers and budget for FE inspections boosted after the government was embarrassed over apprenticeship accountability, FE Week can reveal.

The watchdog will now be given potentially as much as £7 million to visit every new apprenticeship provider. Critically, it will also have the final say over quality.

The decision been dubbed “a victory for common sense, but more importantly it’s a victory for apprenticeships,” by education select committee chair Robert Halfon.

The number of apprenticeship providers which are in scope for inspection has shot up since last year’s reforms, even while Ofsted’s FE and skills budget has fallen, despite many requests for more money [see boxout].

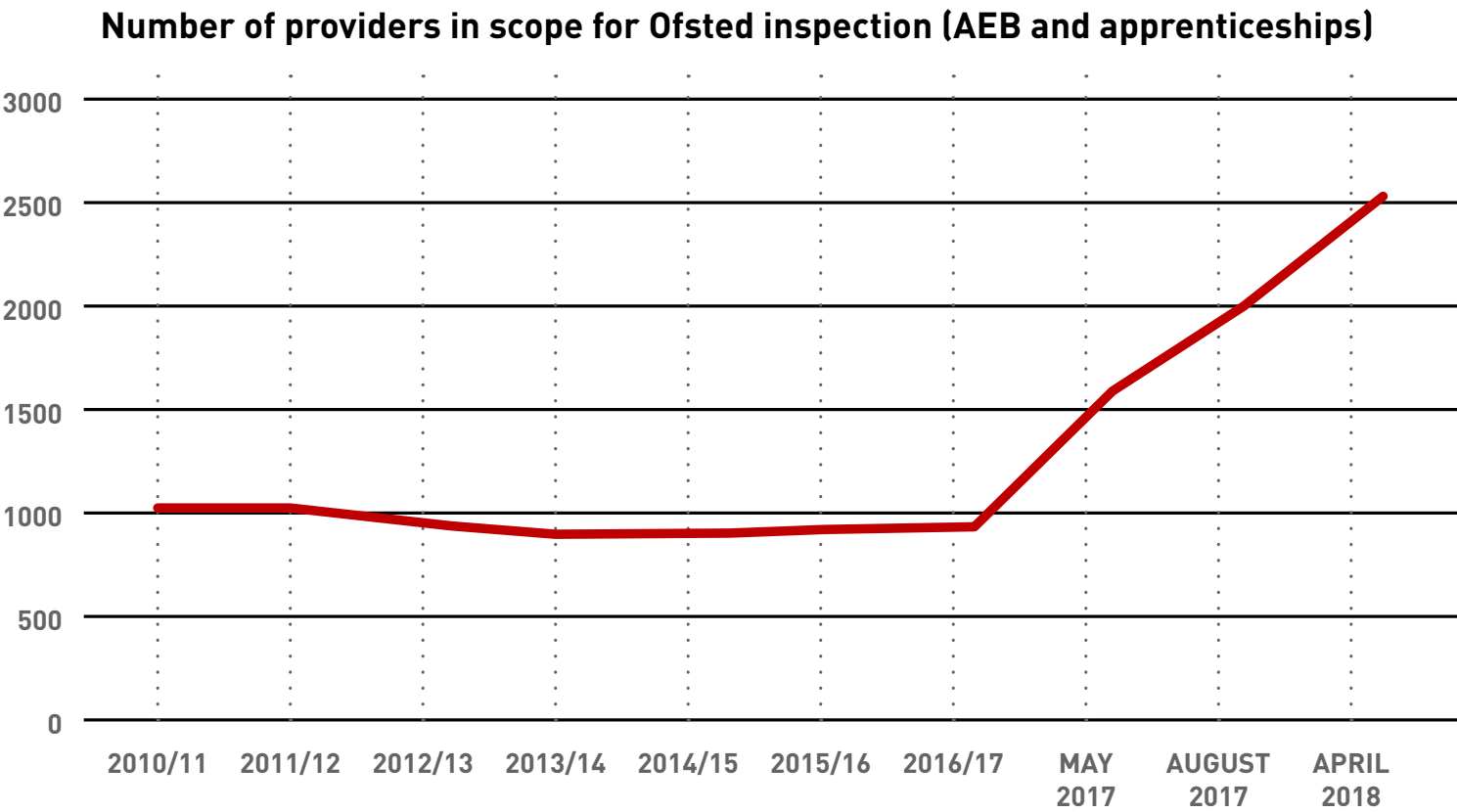
As a result, it has only been able to carry out early monitoring visits at a handful of these new providers.

And skills minister Anne Milton admitted last week to the education select committee that it wasn’t clear who was accountable for quality at these new providers.

There has lately been considerable dismay at mixed messages from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, which recently permitted a provider to recruit apprentices once more – just two months after Ofsted branded its provision “not fit for purpose”.

The final word will now rest with Ofsted: if a monitoring visit results in an ‘insufficient progress’ verdict, a provider will be taken off the ESFA’s register of apprenticeship training providers.

Neither the Department for Education nor Ofsted would comment on the new policy, which is understood to have come directly



from the education secretary Damian Hinds. No one would say how much extra cash is involved.

Mr Halfon wants Ofsted to “do the inspections and decide whether providers are good quality or are failing their apprentices”, while the ESFA should focus on “procurement and audit and looking at the finances of the providers”.

“If Ofsted decides that a provider is not fit for purpose then they should be thrown off the register pretty quickly, and they shouldn’t then be allowed to continue by the ESFA,” he continued.

Mark Dawe, boss of the Association of

Employment and Learning Providers, described it as “an extremely positive development, especially if a judgement of ‘insufficient progress’ means an automatic ban on new starts”.

The move follows last week’s education committee hearings, which left the government red-faced after ministers admitted they were confused about who had ultimate responsibility for policing apprenticeship quality.

Officials from the ESFA and Ofsted, along with Ms Milton, faced a barrage of questions from committee members about the ESFA’s decision to lift Key6 Group’s suspension.

Mr Halfon believes this undermined Ofsted. “I think the relationship between the ESFA and Ofsted over quality is quite difficult to define and I think we need to define that more clearly,” Ms Milton admitted.

At the same hearing Paul Joyce, Ofsted’s deputy director for FE and skills, revealed the watchdog was still waiting to hear if it would be given extra resources to tackle the massive increase in providers it will have to inspect.

He told MPs the issue had been “raised for several months now”, and although the DfE was “very receptive” it had yet to provide Ofsted with any more resources.

FE Week understands the inspectorate has asked the department for an additional £7 million, which – if granted – would be a significant increase on its current FE and skills spend.

According to a report published by the National Audit Office on Thursday, looking at Ofsted’s inspections of schools, the watchdog spent £10 million on inspecting FE and skills providers in the 2017-18 financial year.

That’s a drop of £4 million, or almost 30 per cent, since 2010-11.

The number of providers Ofsted can now investigate has shot up since last May, when the apprenticeship reforms came into effect,

## Number of providers within scope of Ofsted inspection since 2010

2010/11	1,043
2011/12	1,041
2012/13	971
2013/14	922
2014/15	923
2015/16	947
2016/17	950
May 2017	1,589
August 2017	2,022
April 2018	2,543

after remaining steady at around 1,000 for the seven previous years.

The figure now stands at 2,543, including all those on the register of apprenticeship training providers and those with an adult education budget allocation but not on the register.

A spokesperson for the DfE said it is “in active discussions with Ofsted about their resources and potential extra inspection demands arising from the increase in the number of registered providers of apprenticeships”.

Ofsted’s early monitoring visits, announced by chief inspector Amanda Spielman last November, were intended to sniff out “scandalous” attempts to waste public money.

Their introduction is believed to be a result of growing concerns around the number of untested training providers that had made it onto the register, and which therefore had access to huge sums of public money.

## Same money, more problems: The provider explosion

The number of providers who can now be visited by Ofsted has increased dramatically since the apprenticeship reforms last year.

But the education watchdog’s resources haven’t kept pace with the soaring numbers.

Before the register of apprenticeship training providers was first published, in March 2017, provider numbers had remained at around 1,000 for seven years.

By May last year, that number had risen to 1,589 – including all main or employer-providers on the register, and those with an adult education budget allocation but not on RoATP.

Just three months later it topped 2,000, and the figure now stands at a whopping 2,543.

Meanwhile, Ofsted’s budget for FE and skills actually fell during that time.

According to a National Audit Office report into Ofsted’s inspections of schools it spent £12 million on inspecting the FE sector in 2015-16, £11 million in 2016-17 and £10 million in 2017-18.

And, according to Ofsted’s own accounts, by 2019/20 its overall resourcing budget will have shrunk by 30 per cent since 2010.

This cuts were made in spite of concerns at the highest levels that its resources didn’t match the providers it was being asked to inspect

FE Week reported in January that Ofsted chief inspector Amanda Spielman had discussed the issue of resources with DfE permanent secretary Jonathan Slater last year.

And Paul Joyce, the inspectorate’s deputy director for FE and skills, told MPs at last week’s select committee hearing that he’d been in discussions with the DfE for “several months” but had yet to secure a commitment for extra cash.

“At the moment, the single biggest thing that worries me is the monitoring of the new provider base that we are seeing and our capacity to do so,” he told MPs.

# Euroskills 2018: Team UK selects 22 hopefuls

BILLY CAMDEN  
@BILLYCAMDEN

A team of 22 immensely skilled young people, including apprentices from BAE Systems, Toyota and a Michelin star restaurant, will battle to retain the UK’s international top-10 position at this year’s EuroSkills competition.

Team UK will fly to Budapest to take on Europe’s best between September 26 and 28, in a broad spectrum of disciplines including mechanical engineering, beauty therapy, web design and cooking.

Dr Neil Bentley, the chief executive of WorldSkills UK – the organisation that selects and trains Team UK – said the competition will act as a “benchmark” for

Britain as the country approaches Brexit.

Success for Team UK would be another top-10 finish –as was achieved at WorldSkills Abu Dhabi last year and EuroSkills Gothenburg in 2016.

“Everybody is talking about Brexit and this competition is not just about showcasing that we have skills and talent in the UK, which is great to attract inward investment and trade, but also for us to learn how we benchmark ourselves against other countries skills systems,” he told FE Week.

Twenty-seven other countries will compete in Budapest in over 30 different disciplines. Around 80,000 spectators are expected to attend.

To win a place on the team, learners battled through an exhaustive selection process after excelling in the prestigious

WorldSkills UK national competitions, the finals of which are held at WorldSkills UK LIVE – which used to be known as The Skills Show.

“We’ve taken a judgement on who can deal with the pressure and level of EuroSkills and who is going to benefit the most from it,” said Ben Blackledge, the director for skills at WorldSkills UK.

“The message is: you’re not there yet. The hard work starts now.”

Members of Team UK include a mechatronics duo from car-manufacturing giant Toyota – Jack Dakin, aged 23, and Danny Slater, 24 – who will benefit from the expertise offered by a very recent former WorldSkills competitor.

Sam Hillier, who won bronze in the discipline in EuroSkills Gothenburg and a medallion of excellence at WorldSkills Abu

Dhabi with his partner Thomas Revell, is training the pair.

The Toyota worker got promoted from being a facilities maintenance technician to a trainee specialist soon after Abu Dhabi.

“I’ve worked with the new guys quite a lot and I’m very impressed,” he told FE Week. “From now I’ll train with them every week, which might not always be in work time.”

He predicts the duo will “definitely” win a medallion of excellence and “push” for a top-three finish.

WorldSkills UK held a parliamentary on May 22 to celebrate Team UK’s achievement so far.

“Visiting Abu Dhabi for WorldSkills last year was the most inspirational moment of my life,” the skills minister Anne Milton told competitors. “Well done to all of you for getting this far and good luck in Budapest.”



**Collette Gorvett, 19**  
Restaurant Services

**Employer:**  
The Grill House  
**Provider:**  
Gower College, Swansea

## Blood, sweat and tears: Collette Gorvett

It took “blood, sweat and tears” to win a national skills competition that got one restaurant services competitor into the team.

Collette Gorvett spoke passionately about all the hard work she has already put in, and how she is gearing up to compete in her first international contest.

The 19-year-old told FE Week that she burst out in tears when

hearing the news she got a place on the team, so much so that her mum had to sit her down to prevent a panic attack.

“I didn’t expect it,” she said. “The other competitors were a lot more experience than I so it was a real shock.”

Collette, who is from Swansea, has vowed to “give it my all” in Budapest.



**Holly-Mae Cotterall, 19**  
Beauty Therapy

**Employer:**  
Reds Hair Company  
**Provider:**  
Reds Hair Company

## Age is just a number: Holly-Mae Cotterall

One of the UK’s youngest competitors never expected to be selected for EuroSkills because of her age, but proved herself wrong.

“I’ve been told loads of time that it doesn’t matter about my age, but there were other competitors in the squad who were older and much more

experienced so I didn’t expect it,” said 19-year-old beauty therapist Holly-Mae Cotterall.

She knew she wanted to pursue a career in beauty from the age of 13, and hasn’t let anything get in her way.

Holly describes Team UK as a “little family” and says she “can’t wait” to compete in Hungary.



**Thomas Pennicott, 19**  
Cabinet Making

**Employer:**  
n/a  
**Provider:**  
Chichester College



**Elliott Dawson, 20**  
CNC Milling

**Employer:**  
Fort Vale  
**Provider:**  
Training 2000 Limited



**Nicolle Finnie, 20**  
Cooking

**Employer:**  
Andrew Fairlie at Gleneagles  
**Provider:**  
City of Glasgow College



**Thomas Lewis, 21**  
Electrical Installation

**Employer:**  
Blues Electrical  
**Provider:**  
Cardiff and the Vale College



**Elizabeth Newcombe, 21**  
Floristry

**Employer:**  
Rhubarb and Bramley  
**Provider:**  
Guildford College



**Gavin Jon Kyte, 19**  
Hairdressing

**Employer:**  
Reds Hair Company  
**Provider:**  
Reds Hair Company



**Kieran Leyland, 21**  
Heavy Truck Maintenance

**Employer:**  
Ryder Ltd  
**Provider:**  
Ryder Ltd



**Cameron Barr, 20**  
IT Network Administration

**Employer:**  
n/a  
**Provider:**  
Nescot



**Shane Carpenter, 22**  
IT Network Administration

**Employer:**  
BAE Systems  
**Provider:**  
Nescot



**Christopher Caine, 20**  
Joinery

**Employer:**  
DH Carpentry & Joinery  
**Provider:**  
Pembrokeshire College



**Shea McFerran, 19**  
Landscape Gardening

**Employer:**  
n/a  
**Provider:**  
CAFRE



**Sam Taylor, 18**  
Landscape Gardening

**Employer:**  
Garden TLC  
**Provider:**  
n/a



**Ross Megahy, 21**  
Mechanical Engineering: CAD

**Employer:**  
n/a  
**Provider:**  
New College Lanarkshire



**Jack Dakin, 23**  
Mechatronics

**Employer:**  
Toyota Manufacturing Ltd  
**Provider:**  
Toyota Manufacturing Ltd



**Danny Slater, 24**  
Mechatronics

**Employer:**  
Toyota Manufacturing Ltd  
**Provider:**  
Toyota Manufacturing Ltd



**Callum Bonner, 20**  
Painting and Decorating

**Employer:**  
Clackmannanshire Council  
**Provider:**  
Forth Valley College



**Matthew Barton, 20**  
Plumbing and Heating

**Employer:**  
WE Barton  
**Provider:**  
Kendal College



**Mark Scott, 20**  
Wall and Floor Tiling

**Employer:**  
McGoldrick & Sons  
**Provider:**  
City of Glasgow College



**Lewis Newton, 18**  
Web Design

**Employer:**  
n/a  
**Provider:**  
Highbury College, Portsmouth



**Scott Kerr, 21**  
Welding

**Employer:**  
PFS  
**Provider:**  
Coleg Menai



# IfA infuriates universities with degree

**BILLY CAMDEN**  
**@BILLYCAMDEN**

**FROM FRONT** **EXCLUSIVE**

Universities are butting heads with the Institute for Apprenticeships over funding-rate reductions – and many may even stop offering degree-level standards if they go ahead.

The body that polices apprenticeships announced a funding-band review of 31 standards this week.

This included some of the most popular, including the chartered management degree apprenticeship.

This particular standard is already at the maximum band of £27,000, and any change will mean universities receive less cash to deliver training – a prospect at which they are furious.

“I worry the degree apprenticeship will become unaffordable for universities to deliver,” said Sarah Tudor from the University of Staffordshire, one which offers the chartered management course.

She claimed the IfA does not yet understand the higher education market, particularly that “our staff cost more”.

“Is this the thin end of the wedge in relation to pushing funding bands down without a real understanding of the cost of delivery?” she asked.

Adrian Anderson, the chief executive of the University Vocational Awards Council, thought it “strange” to review the rate while the chartered management degree standard is “working well”.

He said that universities had invested “substantially” in apprenticeships, and would prefer the IfA to review its overall methodology on funding bands.

It currently uses “historic data predominantly concerning apprenticeships at lower levels”.

“I fear this rocks the boat and could undermine apprenticeships’ role in raising management skills,” Mr Anderson continued.

The IfA is carrying out the review on behalf the Department for Education, which revealed last week that 30 funding bands are now available – up from the current 15.

Both bodies argue that a reduction in bands will be welcomed by employers, who have felt unable to negotiate with providers on the price of standards, and will provide greater value for money.

John Lanham, from the University of the West of England, “understands the need for value for money” but said the IfA must realise that £27,000 is the cost of a degree apprenticeship.

At a recent education select committee, the chair Robert Halfon said it was a “tragedy” that universities are coming up against road blocks.



The funding rate review is likely to spark a war of words between the IfA and universities

The IfA’s boss Sir Gerry Berragan took a combative stance with universities, and insisted that the apprenticeship reforms should be led by employers.

Mr Lanham claimed that Sir Gerry is “choosing not to listen”.

“Employers want a quality product; they want the skills, and the expertise that a degree brings and are prepared to invest in it,” he said. “Employers are telling him this but he’s choosing not to listen.”

He insisted that if the IfA does lower the cost of the standard, then the number of universities offering the chartered management apprenticeship will tumble.

“The last thing that anyone needs is a reduction in resource, which is exactly what a cut in the fee cap will provide,” added a spokesperson for De Montfort University.

“A cut to our costing model will only damage the brand of apprenticeships and drive down quality, which cannot be what the government wants.”

Employers are far from happy either.

“This appears to be a counterintuitive approach by threatening to destabilise what’s working well,” said Petra Wilton, the director of strategy at the Chartered

Management Institute, the lead employer trailblazer for three of the standards being reviewed.

“Focusing on the most successful apprenticeships which have seen the highest number of starts, including three management and leadership apprenticeships, is puzzling when the

## AELP comment: The IfA must ‘go the whole way’

The Institute for Apprenticeships’ funding rate review has proved that its experiment with negotiated apprenticeship prices has failed, according to the boss of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers.

Mark Dawe believes that the announcement looks like a “first step” towards moving to a “fixed rate” and is urging the institute to “go the whole way”.

Ever since the apprenticeship reforms kicked in last year, employers have been expected to negotiate with providers on the price of every apprenticeship standard and framework, which are now allocated a funding band of between £1,500 and £27,000.

This represents the maximum funding, either from the government or the apprenticeship levy, that an apprenticeship can attract.

Providers have been kicking against the bands, and it emerged two months ago that almost every single negotiation (95 per cent) is currently being agreed at full cost.

Despite this, the government revealed this month that the negotiation rule will stay in place for 2018/19.

“We expect employers to negotiate a price for their apprentices’ training and assessment, in the knowledge that the funding band sets the maximum that government is prepared to contribute towards off-the-job training and assessment for each apprenticeship,” it said in a document called ‘apprenticeship funding in England from August 2018’.

Mr Dawe hopes that in its review the IfA will “take notice of Ofsted’s recent observation that lowering the price too far will inevitably have an adverse impact on the quality of provision”.

“Most importantly, AELP wants to see real transparency in how the IfA arrives at its conclusions and, in cases where the bands have been lowered, we should see the reasons why the Institute believed that the previous ones had been set too high,” he added.

government is already struggling to meet its three million target.”

The review isn’t all doom and gloom, however, and some groups have welcomed it.

“We support the government’s review on funding bands to ensure there is consistency and alignment across levels and within sectors,” said Charles Beddington, a stores finance manager at retailer Boots – the lead trailblazer for the professional accounting taxation technician standard.

People 1st, an employment and learning consultancy, said the hospitality and retail

trailblazers “welcome opportunities to ensure apprenticeship standards stay fit for purpose”.

And Teresa Frith, the senior policy manager at the Association of Colleges, claimed it is “right and proper” that the IfA reviews the bands.

“We would hope they will listen carefully to provider concerns about the actual cost of delivery,” she added.

The IfA said it will work “collaboratively with trailblazers to carry out the review in an open and fair way”.



Sarah Tudor



# Free apprenticeship funding cut review

The Institute for Apprenticeships will review the funding rate for 31 standards. FE Week’s analysis shows that 21 of the 30 standards with the most starts this academic year are involved. These 31 represent 64 per cent of all starts on standards in the first half of 2017/18 (45,900 out of 71,720).

Popularity position based on starts in first half of 2017/18 on all standards	Standard with funding band under review	Level	Current funding band	Typical duration	Maximum funding per month of typical duration	Starts Aug 2017 - Feb 2018
1	Team leader / supervisor	3	£5,000	12	£417	6,860
2	Installation electrician / maintenance electrician	3	£18,000	42	£429	4,220
3	Customer service practitioner	2	£4,000	12	£333	3,880
4	Hair Professional	2	£9,000	24	£375	3,590
6	Assistant accountant	3	£9,000	18	£500	3,100
7	Operations / departmental manager	5	£9,000	30	£300	2,950
8	Hospitality team member	2	£5,000	12	£417	2,500
9	Engineering technician	3	£27,000	42	£643	2,410
10	Professional accounting taxation technician	4	£9,000	18	£500	2,010
12	Retailer	2	£5,000	12	£417	1,780
14	Motor vehicle service and maintenance technician (light vehicle)	3	£18,000	36	£500	1,590
17	Digital marketer	3	£12,000	18	£667	1,260
19	Chartered manager (degree)	6	£27,000	48	£563	1,070
20	Commis chef	2	£9,000	12	£750	1,070
21	Dental nurse	3	£9,000	18	£500	1,070
23	Senior healthcare support worker	3	£3,000	18	£167	920
24	Maintenance and operations engineering technician	3	£27,000	36	£750	780
25	Healthcare assistant practitioner	5	£12,000	18	£667	760
27	Digital and technology solutions professional (degree)	6	£27,000	36	£750	720
29	Associate project manager	4	£9,000	24	£375	610
30	Chartered surveyor (degree)	6	£27,000	60	£450	610
33	Insurance practitioner	3	£9,000	12	£750	440
35	Paralegal	3	£9,000	24	£375	400
37	Rail engineering technician	3	£27,000	36	£750	390
39	Software developer	4	£18,000	24	£750	320
47	Power network craftsperson	3	£27,000	30	£900	250
48	Network engineer	4	£18,000	24	£750	240
104	Dual fuel smart meter installer	2	£12,000	14	£857	60
121	Aviation ground specialist	3	£3,000	18	£167	40
-	Bespoke tailor and cutter	5	£15,000	24	£625	0
-	Infrastructure Technician	3	£4,000	14	£286	0

Analysis by FE Week



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EDITORIAL



### Is the T-level gamble fair on young people?

The top civil servant at the DfE, responsible for the “feasibility of public spending” has concluded that T-levels need delaying for a second year.

Jonathan Slater’s formal “ministerial direction” means the civil service feels the need to tell the National Audit Office, the Treasury and the Public Accounts Committee there are “feasibility and consequential value-for-money risks”.

This astonishing procedural first at the DfE has arisen because the education secretary wrote back to disagree, saying “none of the advice has indicated that teaching from 2020 cannot be achieved”.

None of the advice? Did I read that right!?

In truth, the minister has probably looked at the rushed implementation of apprenticeship standards and concluded that teaching can begin at 30 to 50 colleges even before awarding organisations are in place.

A lack of awarding organisations in time for course starts is a real risk because there will be a winner takes all competition and the DfE has a record of tender delays and legal challenge.

But wait, it is the Institute for Apprenticeships which has to do the hard work – and it’s not like they aren’t busy at present – rather than the DfE.


Farming out complex and controversial jobs to a quango will look awfully convenient when the DfE distances itself from the chaos, and now Jonathan Slater also has his “I did try to warn you” letter.

So my prediction is that teaching is indeed feasible from 2020, but based on the current state of play, would I encourage a 16-year-old to enrol in September 2020?

No.

Nick Linford, Editor

news@feweek.co.uk

 IFA FUNDING REVIEW TWEETS:

Neil Crimes

@neilcrimes

We will have the bizarre situation of the government deciding that £27k is too expensive for a degree apprenticeships but fine for standard degrees.

Marches SPN

@marches\_skills

How to win friends and influence people!

Rob Brooks

@RobBrooks2

They are absolutely desperate for employers to prop up their AEB aren't they?

Conor Moss

@conmossy

The employers we're working with want value for money but ultimately they want high-quality and transformational apprenticeships

Rebecca Plant

@plant\_rebecca

Again most of the employers I work with are requesting training providers to add more training in that maps to the standard so they get even higher-quality outcomes. I'm baffled employers are commercially focused and see the opportunity...

# London mayor defends his £3m AEB top-slice plan

PAUL OFFORD  
@PAULOFFORD

EXCLUSIVE

The Greater London Authority is locked in a war of words with the government over Sadiq Khan’s plan to top-slice £3 million from the adult education budget to cover the costs of devolution.

The Department for Education insisted it had awarded the GLA “sufficient funds to prepare”, having provided £235,139 in “implementation funding” between September 2017 and the end of March – more than any other local authority.

But there will be no further cash to cover ongoing administrative costs after the London authority and seven other mayoral combined authorities take over responsibility from next year.

However, there’s no legal restriction on how much a combined authority will be able to take from the AEB funding pot to use instead.

FE Week exclusively revealed last week that the GLA will top-slice slightly under one per cent of the capital’s annual AEB budget to cover the wages of around 50 administrators.

The London mayor’s plan brought an angry reaction from a few London college principals, stinging his deputy for planning, regeneration and skills into writing an expert piece for this week’s paper.

His deputy Jules Pipe said the move had

been forced on the GLA.

“It is no use simply giving the mayor notional control over these funds,” he wrote in an exclusive expert piece for FE Week (see page 13).

“He also needs the resource to allow him to spend the funds swiftly and effectively to meet the needs of Londoners and London’s economy.

“So far, the mayor’s request to government for an ongoing and sensible budget to administer this funding has been denied.”

He claimed that the “implementation funding” was “significantly less than the cost of implementing devolution”.

Costs include procurement, audit, contract management, direct access to data, and changes to the individualised learner record systems “to incorporate local funding requirements”.

“Should the government continue to refuse to devolve the associated administrative costs of delivering the AEB to London, the mayor will be forced to fund devolution using a combination of his own budgets and a small part of the AEB itself,” he added.

The DfE would not comment on the claim that it is effectively using AEB devolution to pass on administrative costs.

“The devolution of the AEB is giving local areas more control over the services that they offer their communities,” a spokesperson said. “We are giving the GLA sufficient funds to prepare and we will

continue to work with them on this.

“Once the AEB has been devolved, it will be for the mayoral authority to determine how it spends the funding to help learners.”

The GLA’s 53-strong team will form a skills and employment unit to dish out the capital’s AEB budget from 2019/20, which will amount to around £311 million per year.

However, some of the tasks this unit will carry out will simply duplicate the work that the Education and Skills Funding Agency already does.

The DfE insisted it is providing each of the eight mayoral combined authorities with “significant” implementation funds prior to them actually taking on the budget.

Each area submitted a business case for implementation funding, and they were analysed by DfE under the “same methodology”. Any costs that were deemed to not be appropriate “were removed”.

The principal of the capital’s third largest college group, London South East Colleges, has criticised the move.

“Shocking and hugely disappointing that this has been allowed to happen and divert £3 million from this underfunded sector to pay for administrative officers,” said Sam Parrett.

“It was always a concern, and is no surprise, that devolution will require an extra layer of bureaucracy and administration,” added Andy Wilson, principal of Capital City College Group.

COMMENTS

### Trouble brewing at NCG as Ofsted inspectors stay an extra day

I cannot see how a grade two could ever be justified given the outcomes last year – a grade four could even be on the cards depending on where the problems lie and the volumes involved. The provisional grades cannot be encouraging as the CEO has instructed that even staff should be informed until the report is about to be published in five to six weeks – let’s just hope months don’t pass by again with drawn out appeals and resort to “data glitches”.

It’s time for some real openness, transparency and honesty from NCG. These quality and finance difficulties have rightly been highlighted at Lewisham Southwark College – who have yet to see any delivery of pre-merger promises of investment in front-line FE provision, much needed in the boroughs – flogging more MBAs in London is like taking coals to Newcastle.

Matt

### Most popular apprenticeships face rate cuts in Ifa ‘funding band review’

Speaking as a company that delivers 100+ electrical apprenticeships a year it would be very disappointing, not to say difficult if they cut the rate on this apprenticeship again. When introduced it was first banded at £27k, since then it has reduced to £18k, another cut would mean it was back at the funding level of the old framework.

I thought the idea of replacing frameworks with standards was to improve quality? Is it going to turn out that we are supposed to improve quality, but do it for the same cost as we did before?

Let’s hope sense prevails.

JR





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**Closing date:** 5.00 pm Monday 18 June 2018

**Interviews:** Friday 29 June 2018 at Robins Wood House, Robins Wood Road, Aspley, Nottingham, NG8 3NH.

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*The Skills and Education Group is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion.*

*Please note we do not accept late applications and CVs submitted without a formal application form will not be accepted for consideration. No agencies please.*



achievement through experience

# PRINCIPAL

**Homefield College Trust, Leicestershire**

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**Closing date** for applications – 8th June 2018

**Shortlisted applicants** must be available to attend a two day interview on 10th & 11th July

For an application pack please telephone **01509 815696** or contact us by email [linda.crump@homefieldcollege.ac.uk](mailto:linda.crump@homefieldcollege.ac.uk) or [emma.collin@homefieldcollege.ac.uk](mailto:emma.collin@homefieldcollege.ac.uk)

42 St Mary's Road, Sileby, Leicestershire, LE12 7TL [www.homefieldcollege.ac.uk](http://www.homefieldcollege.ac.uk)



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Interested candidates are advised to make contact with us for an initial conversation. Please contact **Samantha Bunn** on **01454 617 707** or [Samantha.Bunn@fea.co.uk](mailto:Samantha.Bunn@fea.co.uk).

**Closing date for applications: Monday 25th June 2018 at noon.**

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**Closing Date:** 10 June 2018





Queen Alexandra College

Harborne, Birmingham

# Principal & Chief Executive

Salary Circa £90,000 p.a.



Queen Alexandra College is an independent specialist college and registered charity offering inclusive educational provision and residential facilities for young people. The College has specialisms in Visual Impairment and Autism and many of our students have complex needs. Our mission is to create challenging learning opportunities for our students to realise their potential to work and to live independently.

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For more information please visit <http://www.qac.ac.uk/college/principal-and-chief-executive-vacancy/314.htm>

For more information or to arrange an initial visit to the College please contact **Alison Lydon** on **07821 790768** or [governance@qac.ac.uk](mailto:governance@qac.ac.uk)

**Applications close mid-day 8th June.** Shortlisted candidates will be informed 11th June. Assessment day 18th June. Second interviews, for successful candidates, on 19th June.

# DIRECTOR OF QUALITY



## Executive Summary

WS Training Ltd is a privately-owned provider of vocational skills training, delivering across the East of England, led by Chief Executive, Jane Wood, who founded the business in 1995. With the Head Office based in Great Barton, near Bury St Edmunds, the business has five centres - primarily based in Suffolk, with one in Colchester, Essex.

The business delivers a wide range of government funded programmes and commercial training courses. These include apprenticeship and study programmes specifically supporting SEN and disabled learners.

The appointment of a Director of Quality is to spearhead and further develop the company's quality operations. We are seeking an Ofsted nominee who will be a key driver to the ongoing success of WS Training.

For more information on WS Training, please visit <http://www.wstraining.co.uk/>

## Principal Responsibilities

- Include:
- Development and growth
  - Ofsted Nominated Lead
  - Provide leadership and strategy for the overall solution, including mobilization of new business
  - Achieve recognition for the company as the premier provider of professional apprenticeship services and study programmes to employers and learners
  - Recruit, establish on-boarding training, line manage, develop,

inspire and motivate a team of front line delivery staff

- Promote high standards of safeguarding and prevent strategies across the organisation

## Quality

- Act as primary points of contact for Ofsted inspections, must be able to properly represent and act on behalf of the organisation to drive continuous change
- Ensuring the leadership team and management stay fully conversant with Ofsted requirements, duties and responsibilities and ensure that the organisation's key documentation is maintained up-to-date and easily accessible at all times
- Ensuring our quality framework is utilised in line with industry requirements
- Ensuring at all times our delivery is in line with our quality framework
- Supporting the achievement of external quality certification processes such as Ofsted, Matrix

## Knowledge and Previous Experience

- Detailed understanding of apprenticeship delivery and quality procedures, including knowledge of key frameworks and standards in leadership, project management or other professional qualifications at Level 4, 5 (and potentially higher levels)
- Experience in managing a teaching and learning / training workforce
- Experience of being the accountable individual for the business with financial awareness and experience forecasting, business

casing and growing organisations

- Held responsibility for business growth strategies
- Experience in incubating and creating new businesses or implementing new contracts

## Qualifications

- Qualified (or previously qualified) in a relevant Ofsted leadership and management, project management or other qualification to NVQ Level 5 or equivalent
- Qualifications to a good standard in English and Maths (e.g. A-levels, or evidence of Degree level study or other)

## Remuneration Details

**Salary:** Competitive Salary plus benefits  
**Permanent/fulltime**

## How to Apply

Application is by way of CV and a supporting statement highlighting your experience in relation to the specific experience and attributes required for the role as outlined..

**Applications should be e-mailed to** [hr\\_recruitment@wstraining.co.uk](mailto:hr_recruitment@wstraining.co.uk) **Closing Date:** 6th June 2018

In your application, please confirm your salary expectation and availability should you be shortlisted or invited to attend the first and final interviews.



## Assistant Principal - Curriculum - Academic:

The ideal candidate will have a successful track record of leading outstanding academic provision, ideally across both A-Levels and the International Baccalaureate. The post holder will provide line management leadership to a number of academic faculties. The ideal candidate will come from either a sixth form college environment or a tertiary environment and will have a passion for student progress and success. They will also oversee our gifted and talented provision, building on this year's record of 24 Oxbridge Offers.

## Assistant Principal - Curriculum - Vocational and Technical:

The ideal candidate will have a passion for vocational and technical education and have a strong track record of success in leading effective and relevant vocational provision. With a key responsibility for our 16-18 vocational offer, the post holder will provide line management to a number of vocational and technical faculties and be the college lead on the implementation of 'T' Levels. In addition, the position will lead the college's strategy for Foundation English and Maths.

## Assistant Principal - Quality, Student Experience and Careers:

This new position will work closely with the Deputy Vice Principal - Engagement, People and Performance to ensure the core business of the college remains outstanding. The ideal candidate will either operate as an associate Ofsted Inspector, Ofsted inspector, or be involved in quality and the student experience in an outstanding college. Working closely with Governors and colleagues, this position will deliver 'exceptional', as well as ensure that all aspects of learner and learning support are of the highest standard. In addition, the position will provide leadership on quality, learner destinations and the college's careers strategy.



Following two promotions and continued growth, Exeter College now has three Assistant Principal vacancies on its high performing Senior Leadership Team. This is an exciting opportunity for three experienced and inspirational leaders to contribute to the strategic leadership of this progressive and successful college and to help us achieve our vision to become an exceptional college.

Exeter College is a £40m turnover, Ofsted outstanding tertiary college at the heart of the City of Exeter. The college is a Times Best Companies - Top 100 Employer. The college has an excellent local, regional and national reputation. The college enjoys good financial health and has ambitious plans for its estate, with a planned £70m investment over the next twenty years. The college is the 8th largest provider of Sixth Form education in England, has successful and growing apprenticeship provision, has just over 500 higher education students and is the adult education provider for the City of Exeter.

For these senior posts, the college offers an excellent salary in the range £65k - £80k, generous benefits and a vibrant working environment. The college is also prepared to contribute to moving expenses to attract the right candidate.

To apply: visit our website at  
<http://www.exe-coll.ac.uk/College/Jobs/>

**Closing date:** 28th May 2018.

The relevant one-day selection process will be held on one of the following dates  
13th, 19th, 22nd, 26th June or 4th July.



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EXPERTS



KIRSTIE  
DONNELLY

Managing director,  
City & Guilds

## Businesses have the right to set up MBA apprenticeships

**Apprenticeships at the top end are a legitimate and vital use of levy funds, argues Kirstie Donnelly**

Much has been made of claims that universities are set to make millions from the new MBA courses paid for by the apprenticeship levy, especially as many are launching programmes in partnership with businesses around the country. Some have decried this practice as a misuse of the new apprenticeship system.

However, I don't believe this to be the case – the introduction of apprenticeships for professional managers is not a loophole. It's policy working exactly as intended – and to the benefit of the UK.

The apprenticeship reforms were designed to facilitate workforce development across all professions, including leadership and management. Indeed, the government's 'English apprenticeships: Our 2020 vision' explains that employer-designed standards will "focus on exactly the skills, knowledge and behaviours that are required of the workforce of the future".

Employers have a responsibility to spend their levy funds where there are key skills gaps. So, while some organisations may decide to use part of their levy to develop more senior members of staff, providing them with higher-level training and an MBA qualification, most employers are using apprenticeships to recruit and retrain at all levels in line with their most critical business needs.

The scale of this issue has been significantly overstated. The amount of levy funds set aside for delivering MBA apprenticeships is a drop in the ocean compared to what's available; the latest research estimates suggest that less than one per cent of levy funds will be spent on such apprenticeships, leaving more than £2.3 billion per year for other types of training.

And it's important that this is the employers' decision to make: in giving them control to invest in talent, we shouldn't immediately be trying to critique their efforts.

Another myth has risen around the so-called "rebadging" of existing management programmes – whereby previous career development courses are being relabelled as apprenticeships in order to take advantage of the levy funding.

This is a misconception. In fact, a range of robust quality-assurance measures are in place to prevent this "lift-and-shift" approach. If an employer or training provider tried to do this, they would quickly find themselves in trouble.

Each apprenticeship standard has an employer-designed curriculum that is assessed by an independent, government-approved body before any apprentice can be certificated. Trying to deliver a training programme which does not align to this curriculum will ultimately end in failure and can lead to heavy penalties for employers and training providers alike.

Universities have a duty to innovate programmes with employers that create a workforce fit for the future. Since the introduction of the levy we have witnessed unprecedented levels of cooperation and collaboration between employers and higher education institutions. This is something we have aspired to for many years, and to stifle it now would be alarmingly retrospective.

“  
**The scale of this issue has been significantly overstated**

Government data consistently points to poor leadership and management as the main cause of our worsening productivity crisis. The latest employer skills survey shows that management skills are routinely cited as the main skills gaps across every type of organisation. People management, teamwork and complex analytical skills, for example, are all vital to employers but – due to a lack of investment in training – are also the skills most frequently in need.

The senior leader master's degree apprenticeship, the standard for which MBA pathways are being created, covers these areas in great detail. And this is because they have been designed by the very employers who desperately need these skills in their businesses in order to succeed. Investing in the right apprenticeship programmes to deliver on this is a good outcome all round.

The apprenticeship reforms were designed to transform the traditional model. It's important that we recognise MBA programmes as a natural part of this shift towards an apprenticeship system that engages with employers, encourages businesses to value skills development, and allows them to build a stronger and more productive workforce.



CHRIS  
MCLEAN

Deputy principal,  
Milton Keynes College

## Don't expect T-levels to bring 'parity of esteem' in overnight

**T-levels are possibly the best-designed new qualifications in decades, but it'll take hard work to promote them as a pathway, explains Chris McLean**

Frequently in education we feel justified in telling the government it doesn't understand what we need to improve teaching and learning. In FE in particular, we say that MPs don't get what we do because they see university as the only viable option for their own families, and regard our sector as for "other people's" children. Could T-levels go some way to redressing this uncomfortable imbalance?

It's a big hill to climb. Britain is a victim of its own success in higher education. Oxford was founded almost a thousand years ago and today there are about 130 universities in Britain, demonstrating how the sector continues to thrive. In fact, only one has ever closed down – the University of Northampton was shut in 1265 after four years in operation – not because it was inadequate but because the bishops warned the king it was becoming a threat to the primacy of Oxford. Against such a background, it's hardly surprising that other forms of learning bear the whiff of the second-rate in the minds of society's "elite".

Milton Keynes College is one of more than 200 waiting to hear if we've been selected for the pilot T-levels programme. Having seen the planned curriculum, it's very encouraging. The high levels of employer engagement, both in their original design and as a key element of successful delivery, signal a step-change.

The work experience component strikes a good balance with the main classroom elements and should make opportunities to progress into an apprenticeship more commonplace. T-levels are all set to be the best new qualifications we've had for some decades. The question is, how do we make them a first choice for the right candidates, rather than just another alternative to university for those who don't get the grades at school?

The answer is actually largely in our hands as educators. Yes, T-levels will only be a success if they are intelligently funded, if employers are sufficiently committed to structure them according to the needs of the workplace. In some cases it will be a struggle to find enough businesses willing to engage

in work experience. However, all of these are subsidiary concerns.

The responsibility lies with us, the further education sector. Tony Benn once argued that the best way to eradicate private education was to make the state sector so good that nobody in their right mind would ever be inclined to part with good money to go elsewhere. If FE is to encourage middle-class parents to see T-levels as the right option for their children they'll want to see proof that it is so.

Plenty of mothers and fathers steer their offspring towards A-levels, already knowing they are unsuited to the pure academic route, but assuming there is no valued or viable alternative. To change this great juggernaut of a perception will take time and it will take hard data – we will need to be able to prove that T-levels lead to more opportunities and to careers every bit as good as those enjoyed by A-level and apprenticeship achievers.

In other words, for the first few years at least there will be no mass awakening, no stampede among middle-class parents from the A towards the T. Before that can happen we need to be able to demonstrate the success of the qualification, to prove that it does exactly what it says on the tin. We will need to point to those first T-level recipients in excellent jobs with good prospects and say "see, it works".

“  
**We need to be able to prove that it does exactly what it says on the tin**

It will be a slow process and one wholly dependent on the ability of the sector to embrace and enhance the virtues of this new qualification. Will we ever see a time when aspirational parents try to steer their children towards this new vocational educational route in preference? Perhaps not; but if we can make them see that university is not the only way to a fulfilling and profitable career, we may take the first steps towards ending the stereotype.



## EXPERTS

**The office of the mayor of London responds to criticisms that it plans to top-slice £3 million from the adult education budget next year**

There is no doubt that how we educate and train people throughout their lives has a profound impact not only on their own chances in life but also on London's and the UK's economy and competitiveness.

The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and I are determined that all Londoners have the opportunity to fulfil their potential and are able to enjoy the capital's economic prosperity.

In the aftermath of Brexit, it is vital that London and the regions have more control so we can protect jobs and investment. Here in the capital, we have a bigger population than Wales and Scotland combined, but we have far less control over how taxes are spent and public services are run.

That is why the devolution of the adult education budget (AEB) to London and the regions will be such a landmark moment – ensuring we can tailor the capital's adult education system to put the needs of individual Londoners at its heart.

The devolved AEB will mean that the mayor is responsible for an additional £311 million a year – that is approximately 25 per cent of the national budget. But it is no use simply giving the mayor notional control over these funds. He also needs the resource to allow him to spend the funds swiftly and effectively to meet the needs of Londoners and London's economy.



# JULES PIPE

Deputy mayor of London for planning, regeneration and skills

## London needs proper control of its AEB spending powers

So far, the mayor's request to the government for an ongoing and sensible budget to administer this funding has been denied.

The mayor was awarded an implementation budget of £235,139 for 2017/18. This is significantly less than the cost of implementing devolution and from 2019/20 the Department for Education has said it will not be devolving the administration budget associated with AEB.

In addition, the Education and Skills Funding Agency has claimed that it does not intend to give the mayor's office or the mayoral combined authorities a "service offer" which would include procurement, audit, contract management, direct access to

data and changes to the individualised learner record systems to incorporate local funding requirements.

While the mayor and I warmly welcome devolution of the AEB, there is little point in the government giving us control on paper over this huge sum of money if it is not going to fund a model that will allow us to administer it effectively and allow us to deliver the best outcomes.

Should the government continue to refuse to devolve the associated administrative costs of delivering the AEB to London, the mayor will be forced to fund devolution using a combination of his own budgets and a small part of the AEB itself.

Sadiq is certainly not choosing to take

money from learners; this is being forced upon him by the actions of the government.

However, it is important to look at this in the context of the full budget. The staff costs associated with this will be less than one per cent of the £311 million a year being devolved.

The most important thing here is ensuring that this devolution delivers the maximum benefit for the maximum number of learners.

“**Sadiq is certainly not choosing to take money from learners; this is being forced upon him**

That is why we want to continue dialogue with the government in the hope that it accepts that the mayor and combined authorities need additional resource to make the most of this opportunity. So far, ministers have not been forthcoming about how much they are saving by passing on the responsibility for this budget – and it is not unreasonable to ask that whatever this saving is, it is passed to us for genuine management costs.

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CAMPUS ROUND-UP

with Samantha King



The American dream: Dave Saul ahead of the dinner

Beating cancer from the saddle

A five-course fundraising dinner has been put on by catering students at Stratford-upon-Avon College to help rehabilitate children fighting cancer.

Catering students and their lecturer, cycling enthusiast Dave Saul, themed the dinner around the Race Across America challenge, which sees cyclists ride through 12 states.

Dishes on offer at the event, hosted at the college's Academy Restaurant, were influenced by Virginia, California, Arizona and Maryland, all featured in the cycling challenge, which lecturer Mr Saul will take part in this year as a chef and driver for competitors.

Money raised from the meal will go to the charity Cyclists Fighting Cancer, which helps young cancer sufferers regain their physical fitness and confidence by providing them with bikes, adapted trikes and tandems.

"As a parent, I can't imagine anything worse than having one of your children diagnosed with cancer. I'm immensely proud of the students for getting behind the project with such enthusiasm and dedication," Mr Saul said.

It isn't the first time the college's catering team has teamed up with the charity, after they put on a Tour-De-France themed meal last year.



Carp diem: The winning pair collect their prize

First plaice in seafood challenge

Two aspiring chefs have taken home a gold medal in a regional heat of the UK's Young Seafood Chef of the Year competition.

The culinary skills learners from Warrington & Vale Royal College, Mikolaj Mozul and Daniel Jones, beat out competitors from other colleges and universities.

During the challenge, they all had to serve their own original recipes to judges, even though one team member was taken to hospital after cutting his finger halfway through the event.

Following their success, the pair will go

on to the national finals in Grimsby in June, where the winning team will take home £500 each, cooking equipment and a £1,000 voucher for catering suppliers Russums for their college.

"They have done such an amazing job and to come first and take home the gold medal when they had to compete against teams from professional catering colleges – it's just incredible," said Andy Macleod, the curriculum leader for hospitality and catering at the college.

The annual competition was founded in 1996 by the Grimsby Institute to encourage more young chefs to cook with seafood.

An object lesson in winning an Oscar



Oh Danny Boy-le: Speaking to students

Film director Danny Boyle has paid a visit to East Norfolk Sixth-Form College to discuss his illustrious career.

Over 600 staff members and students gathered to hear from the man whose movie credits include *Trainspotting*, *127 Hours* and *Steve Jobs* talk about his film industry career and the projects he's currently working on, including his new film, which is currently being shot in Norfolk.

The movie mogul, who coordinated the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympic Games, also took part in a Q&A with the audience, discussing everything from the #MeToo campaign, gender equality, the art of filmmaking and whether it's easier to direct a



With principal Catherine Richards

film based on a book, or work with original material.

"To have someone of Danny's stature come to the college is a real coup and I know this is one visit that will not be forgotten," said Dr Catherine Richards, the college's principal. "This was an amazing experience for everybody involved and the response to the visit has been overwhelming."

Rebuilding men's mental health

Leeds College of Building has become the first UK college to partner with the male suicide prevention support group, Andy's Man Club.

As a result of the new partnership, the college will run weekly, drop-in support sessions open to male students, staff and the wider public over the age of 18.

Andy's Man Club was launched by the former international rugby league player Luke Ambler as a safe space for men to open up about their emotions, after his brother-in-law committed suicide in 2016.

Mr Ambler has since visited the college to talk to students and staff about the importance of breaking down the barriers around mental health, and reducing the number of deaths by suicide.

"Members of the college's safeguarding team and Andy's Man Club have done a tremendous amount of work to help create this safe space to talk at Leeds College of Building," said Ian Billyard, principal and CEO of the college. "I am extremely proud to support such an important initiative, which I have no doubt will save many lives."



The venue



# Our people from Panama



Last week, the president of Panama paid a visit to Westminster Kingsway College to learn more about technical education, accompanied by ministers and business leaders, reports Samantha King.

The college, which is a member of the Capital City College Group, is part of a consortium working with the Panamanian government and the UK’s Department for International Trade to help set up and provide curriculum advice for a new vocational institute in Panama City, called the Instituto Técnico Superior Especializado (ITSE).

The new facility, which is currently under construction, will help boost the skills of Panamanians in engineering, technology, business, hospitality and tourism, and Westminster Kingsway is leading on curriculum development in culinary arts and hotel operations. It is the only FE college involved in the consortium.

During his visit, president Juan Carlos Varela and his delegation had a tour of the college’s kitchen facilities, speaking with staff and students about their experiences.

The president later tweeted that what he witnessed at the college was “an example of what we seek to achieve in our country”, in particular its “model of theoretical-practical



Handling the heat: A culinary student fields questions from the president of Panama

training”.  
“The students learn in a realistic teaching kitchen and create dishes for public restaurants which we run. They’re learning in, essentially, a commercial kitchen environment and it was that side of things that was particularly interesting to the president,” explained Neil Cox, the communications manager for Capital City College Group.  
Alumni from the college’s catering courses include a host of celebrity chefs, including

Jamie Oliver, Ainsley Harriott, Sophie Wright and Antony Worrall Thompson.  
“We were delighted and honoured to meet with senor Varela and members of his government,” said Andy Wilson, the group’s chief executive. “Our experience and expertise in culinary arts and hospitality, as well as our excellent links with the international hospitality industry, puts us in an ideal position to support the development of the new ITSE Institute. We’re delighted to



Meeting students



Juan Carlos Varela meets the SLT

be a part of that initiative and wish it every success.”

Do you want to be in Campus Round-up?

If you have a story you'd like to see featured in campus round-up, get in touch by emailing [samantha.king@feweek.co.uk](mailto:samantha.king@feweek.co.uk)

**Martin Hottass**  
Managing director, City & Guilds Institutes of Advanced Technology network  
Start date October 2018  
Previous job  
UK skills partner, Siemens  
Interesting fact  
Martin speaks four different languages.

**Paul Deane**  
Principal and chief executive, Grantham College  
Start date April 2018  
Previous job  
Principal, Grantham College  
Interesting fact  
Paul has a 9ft longboard off which he regularly falls into the North Sea surf.

**Justine Barlow**  
Principal, Notre Dame Catholic Sixth-Form College  
Start date April 2018  
Previous job  
Vice-principal for curriculum and quality, Cardinal Newman College  
Interesting fact  
Justine developed her love for teaching after volunteering at a local kindergarten during a gap year in Seattle.

**Rebecca Stratton**  
Deputy principal, Itchen Sixth Form College  
Start date May 2018  
Previous job  
Assistant principal, Woking College  
Interesting fact  
Rebecca loves skiing and snowboarding, and once hiked to the top of a volcano in New Zealand in order to snowboard down it.

**Angela Foulkes**  
Principal and CEO, the Sheffield College  
Start date May 2018  
Previous job  
Principal and acting chief executive, the Sheffield College  
Interesting fact  
Angela loves musical theatre, with *Singing in the rain* first sparking her passion for it. She recently enjoyed *Everybody's talking about Jamie*.

Movers & Shakers

...

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

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SCHOOLS WEEK

### 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

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

### Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

Solutions:  
Next edition

### 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](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk).  
Last Edition's winner: James Hennigan