

**DFE FINDS £5.4M
FOR OFSTED
APPREN VISITS**

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**GLA TELLS MAYOR:
72 AEB STAFF MAY
NOT BE ENOUGH**

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3AAA TO STOP
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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2018
EDITION 254



48 HOURS TO RESCUE COLLEGE

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- › Desperate times as 'partial sale' of BKSB software company to raise funds falls through
- › FE Commissioner called in and former finance director blasts college for strategic decisions




Exclusive

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MEET THE TEAM


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AELP calls for March 2020 end to non-levy transition period

JUDE BURKE
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Any transition period for moving small employers onto the apprenticeship service should only last until March 2020 to avoid another “unnecessary procurement exercise”, the Association of Employment and Learning Providers has said.

It’s one of a number of proposals the AELP has put forward for the non-levy transition period and creating a sustainable apprenticeship system, announced Friday (September 21).

Other recommendations include a more streamlined apprenticeship service, designed to work for smaller employers, a more robust register of apprenticeship training providers, and a guaranteed £1 billion in funding for small employers.

“There may be levy funds unspent now, but the demand for higher and degree level apprenticeships among levy paying employers points to the bulk of the levy soon being used up,” said Mark Dawe, AELP chief executive.

“This is why AELP is articulating solutions that should give both smaller and large employers a fair chance of gaining access to apprenticeship funding over the long term.”

Small employers had been due to start using the apprenticeship service to access apprenticeship funding from April 2019, but last month the Education and Skills Funding Agency announced this would be delayed and would instead extend existing contracts for a further year.

A week later it launched a survey asking for feedback on what any transition period might look like, which could include apprenticeships with non-levy employers being funded through contracts and directly through the service for a period of time.

The AELP proposed that this ‘dual running’ period should run for a year, from April 2019 to March 2020, when the current non-levy contracts run out.

As a result there would be “no need for a further unnecessary procurement exercise”.

This approach would be subject to the apprenticeship service being “modified and streamlined to support the wide breadth of needs and requirements for smaller employers”.

The current set-up for levy-paying

employers is “particularly arduous” and “time-consuming”, and would create a “sizeable barrier” for smaller employers that would lead them to “reject the opportunity to invest in apprenticeships”, the AELP warned.

It also said the ESFA’s register needed to be more “robust” if it was to become the gateway for providers to have direct access to funding, and proposed a number of ways in which it could be strengthened.

These included taking into consideration a provider’s previous delivery, and to “thoroughly test the competency and capacity of new providers”.

The AELP also reiterated its previous demand for a guaranteed £1 billion for non-levy payers, to ensure that funding for smaller employers isn’t limited as demand by levy-payers increases.

It warned that a system that culminates in a “stop-go approach” in which “demand of funding outstrips supply and a hard close is required” must be avoided at all costs.

“Any such system would have a catastrophic impact on providers’ ability to manage cash flow and staffing resource,” it said.



Mark Dawe

Bedford College joins Chartered Institute

Bedford College has become the 15th member of the Chartered Institution for Further Education.

Ian Pryce, principal of the grade two college, said he was “delighted” to “take our place among so many exceptional organisations”.

“We want to work with others to raise the profile of the further education sector, promote

its professionalism and raise standards further to give everyone in our community a better future and help individuals and employers achieve their ambition,” he said.

Dan Wright, the CIFE’s chief executive, said its newest member was a “shining example of excellence in FE”.

IfA launches standards content review

Twelve digital apprenticeships standards are under scrutiny in the Institute for Apprenticeships’ first statutory review.

It is inviting feedback from employers, apprentices and training providers on the standards, all of which pre-date the creation of the IfA in April 2017, through an online consultation that will run until

October 18.

“We’re asking industry experts to tell us if these digital standards produce apprentices that are occupationally competent,” said IfA chief executive Sir Gerry Berragan. “If they don’t, what do we need to address the shortfall?” The outcomes of the review will be published in the new year.

Colleges to march on parliament

Timings have been announced for the March for Further Education, planned as part of #LoveOurColleges week.

It will assemble at Waterloo Place, London SW1, at 12.15pm on October 17, before setting off for parliament at 12.45.

An hour-long rally will be held in Parliament Square from 1.30pm to 2.30pm, featuring a range of

speakers urging the government to invest more in FE.

A mass lobby of parliament is planned for the same day to invite MPs to #LoveOurColleges and support fair funding and better pay in FE.

Attendees can sign up for the march on the Love Our Colleges: march, rally and lobby for FE funding Facebook page.

Team UK all set for EuroSkills 2018 in Budapest

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Twenty two of the UK’s most highly skilled young people will fly to Budapest next week to compete in EuroSkills 2018.

The team will go up against the best Europe has to offer from 27 countries in disciplines ranging from mechatronics to cooking, heavy truck maintenance to floristry.

Each member of Team UK has swapped their evenings, weekends, and social life for dogged training regimes over the past year, ever since they won places at the UK’s Skills Show, now known as WorldSkills UK Live, last year.

Now the training is over, the team is raring to compete in what will be the first international competition for most of them.

“Prep has gone really well,” said WorldSkills UK chief executive Dr Neil Bentley. “Everyone in the team has

been hard at it, working on weekends and in holiday periods.

“What’s been really good is the sense of togetherness that you see at the boot camps and the camaraderie that they’ve got.”

He said the target was to finish in the top 10.

EuroSkills is the sister competition to WorldSkills, often referred to as the “Olympics of skills”, and takes place every two years.

On offer to competitors are gold, silver and bronze medals as well as medallions of excellence, achieved whenever a team member reaches the international standard in their discipline.

At the last EuroSkills in Gothenburg in 2016, Team UK won two gold medals, one silver, two bronzes and eight medallions of excellence.

Among the competitors this year is Shane Carpenter, who is employed by BAE Systems and will compete in IT network administration.

The 22-year-old is no stranger to the



Team UK at their parliamentary send-off

process and competed in WorldSkills Abu Dhabi last year where he achieved a medallion of excellence.

“I would like this time to get top three because I missed out slightly in Abu Dhabi after a few mistakes and that is what I’ve learnt from. I’m pretty confident,” he told FE Week.

Skills minister Anne Milton sang the praises of Team UK at a special

send-off event in Parliament earlier this month.

She told them life today is “no longer about what you know, it is about what skills you have got as well”.

“You will be going out to Budapest representing your country and doing us proud.”

Speaking to FE Week after the event she added: “It is going to

take endurance, fortitude and determination to show the rest of Europe what they can do. Good luck to them all.”

Team UK flies to Hungary on September 24, and will take part in three days of intense competition between September 26 and 28.

FE Week is media partner and will be reporting every step of the way.

London mayor warned 72 administrators may not be enough when AEB devolved

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Exclusive

London's mayor has been warned that his current adult education budget team of 72 administrators may not be enough to handle the fund when devolution kicks in next year.

The Greater London Authority has calculated a "risk" that the number of contracts and grants to be dished out from the annual £311 million budget will be "greater than can be reasonably managed by the current team".

In order to mitigate the threat, Sadiq Khan has been told that the authority will either need to recruit more personnel to its current AEB team, and pay them using funds in the budget, or risk "potential negative impact on quality".

FE Week revealed earlier this year that the GLA is having to recruit a huge team of new bureaucrats to hand out the budget to London's training providers from 2019, with most of their wages paid every year by taking £3 million from the AEB.

Despite the AEB unit now totalling 72 officials, the authority is anticipating

the workforce might not be enough and it could need to apply a greater top-slice to the AEB to recruit and pay more staff – taking yet more cash away from frontline learning.

"Even with the minimum contract value, the final risk is that there will be insufficient resources to manage the contracts awarded," said a GLA briefing document published ahead of a board meeting about the AEB that took place this week.

"There remains a low risk that the number of contracts and grants will be greater than can be reasonably managed by the current team, applying the proposed project management approaches."

If this risk arises, there are two "potential mitigations: additional internal or external project management resources may need to be identified, with a consequent cost to the AEB and ESF budgets; or the current project management approach may need to be amended to require less resources, with a potential negative impact on the quality".

The GLA has always maintained that the Department for Education is forcing it to make the top-slice because it refuses to offer any funding to cover operational costs.

However, a letter sent by the DfE to the authority in March, seen by FE Week, has revealed that it was the department's own recommendation to take cash from the budget to pay the administrators.

It says that when the AEB is delegated, the authority will be able to "retain underspends generated within the AEB" and goes on to suggest that 3 per cent of the £311 million annual budget "may be a useful indicator" for what can be used as a top-slice.

In other words, the GLA could have £9.3 million to cover staff costs from underspend.

Mary Vine-Morris, area director (London) for the Association of Colleges, said as much money as possible should go directly on teaching and training and any additional funding for support functions should be found elsewhere.

The GLA briefing document noted another of its "top three" issues was that there is still no agreed position with the ESFA on audits.

If the authority is made to audit the AEB then its team of bureaucrats could grow even larger and incur more costly top-slices.

A decision on the audits was supposed to be made by mid-August



but the DfE failed to meet this deadline. This issue is still unresolved, according to the GLA.

The authority's interim head of paid service, David Lunts, wrote to the DfE's permanent secretary, Jonathan Slater, last month to pursue the issue.

"We have proposed to your officials that audit should continue to be conducted by the DfE so that providers are not subject to additional burdensome audits from us," the letter

said.

"I also understand that the ESFA will soon be refreshing its current contract/ agreement for its audit services. Given the timing for this, it presents a good opportunity to reach agreement on this issue as soon as possible."

The GLA told FE Week that because the audit approach has still not been agreed it does not have a figure for the cost if it ends up being the authority which has to carry them out.

Mixed reactions to Association of Colleges senior pay code

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Exclusive

Principals have welcomed new guidance from the Association of Colleges for setting senior pay in colleges, but unions have warned the voluntary code will not be enough to tackle excessive rewards.

FE Week revealed last week that refreshed remuneration guidance was being developed by the association as top level pay across the education sector continues to come under heavy scrutiny.

The government has clamped down on chief executive salaries in multi-academy trusts and vice-chancellor wages in universities which often exceed £150,000, but left colleges untouched despite many bosses

receiving more than £200,000.

A consultation for the AoC's new code, which encompasses "three core principles: fairness, independence and transparency" and is an amendment to existing guidance created in 2015, was launched to tackle this.

The main proposals include only giving seniors a pay rise if all staff also receive one, removing top college bosses from remuneration committees, separate publication of principal salaries and a requirement to justify any income seniors receive from outside organisations.

Ian Pryce, principal of Bedford College, told FE Week the AoC should be "applauded for being ahead of the curve".

"We don't have an issue with senior pay in colleges," he claimed. "Governors behave very responsibly. The code sets out good practice that I'm sure is already largely followed."

NCG, the country's biggest college group, agreed with Mr Pryce.

"NCG welcomes the senior pay code for colleges," a spokesperson said. "As a leading further education group invested in its staff we already operate by these principles."

But unions expressed concern that the code is not statutory.

"Whilst UNISON welcomes the AoC's admission that more checks and balances are needed in relation to senior staff pay in colleges, a voluntary code will not be enough to tackle excessive pay awards," said Leigh Powell, the union's FE lead officer.

"This code has been in existence for three years and yet we continue to see principals being awarded pay rises other staff in colleges can only dream about."

"It is difficult to see exactly how adding a few words to a document that has been proven to have little effect to

date is going to lead to the necessary changes in practice."

University and College Union head of further education Andrew Harden agreed.

"Whilst we agree that principals shouldn't be on remunerations committees, we have concerns that the proposed code is only voluntary," he said.

"We hope that the final version will have real teeth and not allow colleges to get out of proper transparency when it comes to leaders' pay, especially at a time when staff have suffered pay cuts of 25 per cent over the last decade."

Mr Pryce pointed out that colleges are independent charities so the code "should be guidance".

He added: "Senior pay is a low multiple of median salaries. The multiples are higher in the civil service and NHS because median pay is lower, so the code might lead to or justify

higher CEO pay.

"Colleges might also concentrate good rises on those staff around the median, rather than the low paid."

The refreshed senior pay code has been developed at a frustrating time for college staff, after the DfE decided to fund a 3.5 per cent pay rise for school teachers while ignoring FE lecturers. UCU has since launched a ballot for strike action to take place later this year.

"This shouldn't really need saying but the increasing differentials between senior level pay and that of lecturers and other FE staff is simply inexcusable," said Kevin Courtney, joint general secretary of the National Education Union.

"The NEU firmly supports the effort by AoC to encourage colleges to sign up to and honour a code of conduct that could potentially bring greater fairness into pay settlements."

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Ofsted top duo tour London college and answer questions on T-levels, funding, mergers and research spending

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Exclusive

London South East Colleges has hosted the highest echelons of Ofsted after the inspectorate’s chair chose its Bromley Campus for his landmark lecture.

Amanda Spielman, the education watchdog’s chief inspector, and chair of its board Professor Julius Weinberg were given a tour of the college before Professor Weinberg gave a speech reflecting on his first year at the helm.

FE Week took the opportunity to sit down with Ms Spielman to talk about the some of the biggest issues currently facing FE.

As the introduction of T-levels looms ever nearer on the horizon, with the first pathways due to be introduced in 2020, the chief inspector admitted that the inspectorate is still unsure how performance of the new qualification will be measured.

“First of all, the government has got to get clear on what T-levels are really going to be, and get them to the point of being ready for teaching. It will be a bit later in the process that we really start to think about what it is that we will be able to look at and how,” she said.

“Essentially, T-levels themselves – their shape and form and implementation – has to be clear before we can design how we inspect.”

She also didn’t rule out that Ofsted’s role in ensuring quality T-levels could include directly inspecting workplaces, but said it was “too early to say”.

“The government has got to get clear on what T-levels are really going to be”

At a time of squeezed budgets, Ms Spielman also defended the inspectorate’s increased focus and spend on research, and said one of the regulator’s main reasons for conducting so much research was to “look at the validity and reliability of its own processes” and to draw together “insights that we get from our birds eye view” from inspecting thousands of providers every year.

“It makes people grumpy and we’re criticised if we don’t draw together the insight from that and put it out in

a form that’s useful for the sector,” she said.

“What we’ve done over the last year and a half is really just to reinstate some of the capacity that we used to have that had been stripped out over the last few years, to get us back to a sensible level of research team of a scale that fits the operation we have.”

Professor Weinberg insisted that a “small proportion of the budget” was spent on research, and denied suggestions of a board disagreement over the matter. Board minutes from last November showed questions being raised about “what, if anything, regional directors would need to stop doing” in order to carry out the research programme and how much such a programme would cost over two years.

Professor Weinberg said: “One of our roles as a board is challenge and scrutiny. So when Amanda [Spielman] proposes a spend, because we are not flush with money, every spend has an opportunity cost. So if we spend on one thing, it does mean we have less to spend elsewhere, although we’ve been extraordinarily good at maintaining our level of activity and finding ways of saving money.

“The board did exactly what it should do. It’s in the minutes because we scrutinised and we challenged and we



Professor Julius Weinberg

were convinced. We absolutely support the research money.”

The Ofsted bosses appearance at a college came in the same week that a damning report from the Institute of Fiscal Studies warned that FE has been hit the hardest in the education sector by cuts to government funding. The IFS report found that spending per student had fallen eight per cent in real terms since 2010-11, and Ms Spielman acknowledged that a “decline in quality” in FE “may” be linked to the lower funding.

“We’ve seen and acknowledged previously that funding for FE has declined a lot relative to schools, and it’s got a tough job to do with all the technical and vocational education. And we’ve also seen a decline in quality in the sector. They may be related.

“What I can’t do is definitively attribute, because the work we do doesn’t investigate to the point of being able to say ‘this is because of that’, but we have seen a decline in quality in the sector in recent years which is a concern to us.”

When asked whether a possible link between a drop in quality in FE and lower funding should be investigated, Ms Spielman suggested this was not a job for Ofsted. “The ESFA is the funding agency which has the direct line into what colleges are spending money on,”

she said.

“Pulling together the information in the system to get a clear picture is generally good news.”

She also said it was too early to say whether college mergers were successful in raising quality, as there have only been three inspections of institutions after “area review driven mergers” so far.

“We have seen a decline in quality in the sector in recent years which is a concern to us”

“I don’t think you can draw very much from that small an evidence base,” Ms Spielman said. “I think in the coming years we’ll start to see a little more coming through.

“The profile of inspection outcomes will shed some light on it, but one of the difficult things about mergers is it takes quite some time after them happening before you know if they’ve worked or not.”



Amanda Spielman and Professor Julius Weinberg on their tour around London South East Colleges' Bromley campus

3aaa banned from recruiting apprentices following ESFA investigation

BILLY CAMDEN

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Exclusive

Apprenticeship heavyweight Aspire Achieve Advance has been blocked by the government from taking on any new apprentices.

The dramatic decision has been taken at a time of crisis for the provider, more commonly known as 3aaa, which this week had its co-founders resign in the midst of an ongoing Education and Skills Funding Agency investigation.

"3aaa has agreed with ESFA to temporarily suspend apprentice enrolments while the new management team take this opportunity to undertake a deep review of our operations alongside working with Ofsted to conclude its review of our services," a spokesperson for the company told FE Week.

It is understood that the pause will not be lifted at least until Ofsted's inspection of the provider has been completed.

A spokesperson for 3aaa said the ban is likely to be lifted in November.

The block on starts will have a huge impact on the business, one of the biggest apprenticeship training providers in England.

It had the largest allocation for non-levy apprenticeships last year at nearly £22 million.

3aaa is also the biggest provider of 16-18 apprenticeships. In 2016/17 it had 1,720 16-18s leave or finish their apprenticeships, and 810 19-23s, according to national achievement rate data.

Its total allocations last year totalled more than £31 million. It operated from 38 locations with "3,000+ apprentices" and "20+ programmes", according to 3aaa's website.

The ban follows the resignations of chief executive Peter Marples and

director Di McEvoy-Robinson (pictured) who have run the provider since they co-founded it in 2008.

In a joint statement they said: "We are tremendously proud of what we have built together with the support of both the management and all of the staff that are currently employed in the business. We are grateful to the staff who have worked with us over the last ten years.

"We feel it is now time for us to stand down together, ten years after jointly founding the business. Moving forward, we will now take the opportunity to focus on our health and families."

Richard Irons, the current chief operating officer at the company, will become 3aaa's new managing director.

In June FE Week revealed that 3aaa's latest Ofsted inspection, which was expected to result in another "outstanding" rating, had been declared incomplete following intervention from the Education and Skills Funding Agency after claims by a whistleblower.



A month later it was revealed that an independent auditor, Alyson Gerner, had been called in by the Department for Education to investigate its own funding agency over their contract management of 3aaa.

The investigation is ongoing and the ESFA has refused to comment on its findings.

In a new statement made to FE Week, Ofsted said: "We are now considering whether or not we need to return to the provider to gather more evidence while we await new information from the Education and Skills Funding Agency. We will do this using the gathering additional evidence to secure an incomplete inspection protocol."

Damning Ofsted visit finds huge employer provider forced staff onto apprenticeships

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A large employer provider in the security sector has stopped recruiting new apprentices after a damning Ofsted early monitoring visit found they were forcing workers onto apprenticeships.

Securitas UK had a heavily critical inspection report published this week which said the company was making 'insufficient progress' in two of the three themes judged.

The provider has 650 apprentices but Ofsted worryingly found that not enough assessors were on the books to meet their needs, and a lack of resource led to some apprentices not having a progress review for five months.

Most concerning was that Securitas gave most apprentices no choice about enrolling onto the programmes.

"As a result of this compulsory training, apprentices do not enjoy their learning or understand its nature," inspectors said.

Under new rules from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, any provider with an 'insufficient' rating will be banned from taking on any new apprentices until the grade improves.

"We will not progress any new

enrolments, in order to prioritise the actions required and focus on current employees undergoing the training," a spokesperson for Securitas UK said.

The employer has around 11,500 staff and provides protective services across the UK. Apprentices enrol initially as security officers and on successful completion of the apprenticeship can progress to the role of protective services officer.

"Leaders and managers do not have sufficient resources in place to support the apprenticeships that they offer," Ofsted said.

"Securitas has too few assessors to meet the needs of its apprentices. Those apprentices who should complete their programme in September are making slow progress and are unlikely to succeed.

"Too many apprentices are unaware of their entitlement and do not receive sufficient time allocated to off-the-job training. As a result of this, the vast majority are behind schedule with their apprenticeship programme and lack motivation."

Ofsted added that the majority of apprentices and Securitas site managers are "unsure about the range of activities that they should record" and most learners "do not have sufficient

preparation for their end-point assessment".

Inspectors slammed Securitas' line managers for not taking enough "responsibility for progress reviews".

"Targets for apprentices are not specific enough to help them improve. As a result, most apprentices fall behind with their work and make slow progress towards completing their apprenticeship."

Meanwhile, arrangements for recruitment "lack integrity", according to Ofsted.

"Leaders, managers and staff do not give enough guidance to apprenticeship applicants."

The planning and delivery of training to develop apprentices' English and maths skills is also "poor".

The only positive in the report was to do with safeguarding, which the provider is making 'reasonable progress' in.

"Leaders and senior managers ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective, and apprentices stay safe."

A spokesperson for Securitas said: "Securitas UK is working closely with an independent consultant to address the Ofsted report findings. Securitas UK is committed to ensuring employees receive the highest levels of training."



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ESFA given two days' notice to bailout West Notts College

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From front Exclusive

A college in financial crisis requested a multi-million pound government bailout just 48 hours before it would have run out of cash, *FE Week* understands.

West Nottinghamshire College, whose principal Dame Asha Khemka is one of the highest paid college bosses in England, received a £2.1 million exceptional financial support loan from the Education and Skills Funding Agency in July.

The ESFA published a financial health notice to improve this week, which triggers a formal review from the intervention team and the FE Commissioner.

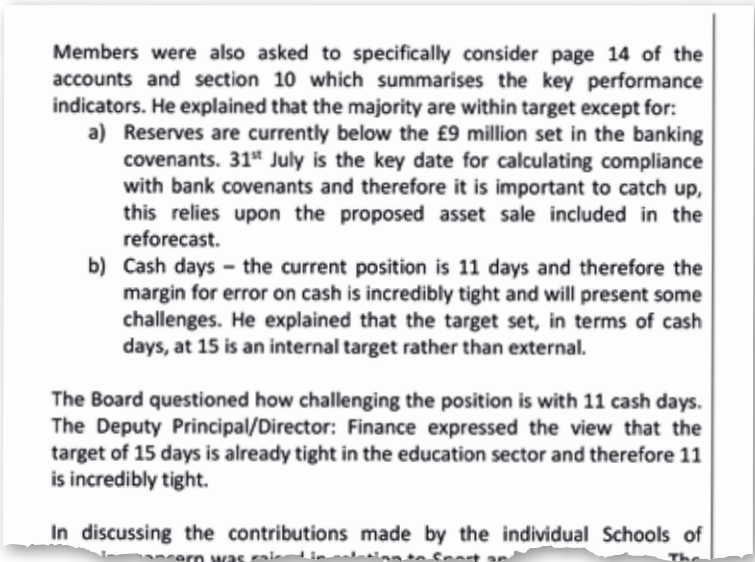
FE Week can now reveal that the last-minute loan was requested after the “partial” sale of its software company was pulled at the eleventh hour.

A spokesperson for WNC told *FE Week*: “Part of the college’s plan for financial recovery was the partial sale of its highly successful and profitable subsidiary company bksb.

“Until late June/early July, the college understood this sale was proceeding well and would address the short-term cash flow issues at the end of 2017/18.



From left: former WNC finance director Andrew Martin, principal Dame Asha Khemka, Lloyds area director Dene Jones and relationship director Jeremy Prentice



WNC board minutes published April 2018

“However, as the terms of that deal became apparent, it was clear that it did not represent good value for the college or bksb and as a result the board took the decision not to proceed.

“Consequently, the college found itself in the position of needing to approach the ESFA for exceptional financial support at short notice.”

Bksb, which is wholly owned by WNC and claims to be the UK’s “most popular eLearning solution for functional skills and GCSE”, has a turnover of £3.4 million and made £1.5 million pre-tax profits for the college in 2016/17.

WNC’s former deputy principal and finance director Alastair Thomson told *FE Week* that he took on the sale when he joined in April this year and negotiated a value “well in excess of the amount the college had initially sought” before leaving for an overseas holiday.

When he returned the principal and governing body “without consulting me decided not to pursue the plan”, he claimed.

“I asked to meet with governors on several occasions following my return from leave to discuss a range of issues and they have steadfastly refused to meet with me and explain the basis for their decisions in this and a number of other matters,” he said.

Mr Thomson left the college on July 20, four months after his arrival. The terms of his departure are unknown.

Board minutes from April say the college was running low on reserves which were below the £9 million set in its banking covenants. The college has a £15 million loan outstanding with Lloyds Bank, which was negotiated in 2012 to pay for redevelopment and has another 20 years to run (pictured left).

The minutes also reveal the college’s worryingly low cash days – the number of days an organisation can continue to pay its operating expenses given the amount of cash available.

For colleges these are benchmarked by the FE Commissioner at 25.

“The current position is 11 days and



therefore the margin for error on cash is incredibly tight and will present some challenges,” the minutes say.

The financial crisis is said to have been brewing for years because of decisions made by the principal and governing body, according to Mr Thomson.

“What I can say is that the college’s current financial challenges had very little to do with the sort of cash management issues that I, or any other finance director, would have been able to manage as they were the natural consequences of a number of strategic decisions made by the principal and governing body,” he claimed.

“Part of the college’s plan for financial recovery was the partial sale of bksb”

The college’s 2015/16 accounts make reference to investing £6.5 million along with cash from the Local Enterprise Partnership to build a higher skills centre (pictured above).

And board minutes from as long ago as July 2016 note that “one member of the board challenged the senior team and asked whether the college generally has an over-optimistic view of its ability to take on new projects”.

The college’s accounts for 2016/17 have yet to be published.

A spokesperson said the aim was to publish them in October, 10 months late.

Dame Asha’s £262,000 remuneration package has meanwhile been confirmed.

Earlier this year WNC blamed changes in apprenticeship subcontracting rules, which reduced their income from management fees, for having to cut more than 100 jobs in an effort to make £2.7 million in savings.

The 2015/16 accounts also describe the college missing its adult skills budget target by £700,000 and board minutes from April 2018 suggest under-delivery continues to be a problem.

Leigh Powell, UNISON’s national officer for FE, claims the college has repeatedly refused to heed financial warnings.

“It’s a disgrace that financial troubles have escalated to this level,” she said.

“Senior managers at the college have played fast and loose with public money to the detriment of students’ education and the future of the dedicated staff who work there.

“Staff are now left wondering who will be leading the financial recovery plan and how future changes will affect them.”

The WNC spokesperson said he was “unable to provide any further comment on matters relating to the FE Commissioner’s recommendations but would be willing to do so on their publication.”

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- ◆ CIH Level 3 in Supporting Homeless People
- ◆ RHS Level 4 Diploma in Horticultural Practice (DHP)
- ◆ Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mental Health & Well-being
- ◆ Quallsafe Level 3 Certificate in First Response Emergency Care (RQF)

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- ◆ Quallsafe collaboration with Medipro to produce registered Paramedic programme
- ◆ Sports Leaders UK collaboration with Health Education and Youth Sports Trust to create a pathway to employment opportunities in the NHS
- ◆ STA collaboration with experts from the world open water swimming to create specialist coaching qualification



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Education minister abroad in search

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Education secretary Damian Hinds this week followed in the footsteps of many a government minister before him and jetted off for a fact-finding mission to our neighbours on the continent.

His visit to Germany and the Netherlands was intended to “discover how they educate their young people to have the practical and technical skills needed for a highly productive economy”, according to an article in the Times newspaper on Monday.

A similar trip by former skills minister Nick Boles to Norway in August 2015 (pictured) came just months before the launch of the Sainsbury review, which resulted in proposals to develop T-level qualifications.

Those plans bear a certain resemblance to Norway’s post-16 education system, so what new developments can we expect to see as a result of Mr Hinds’ visit this week?

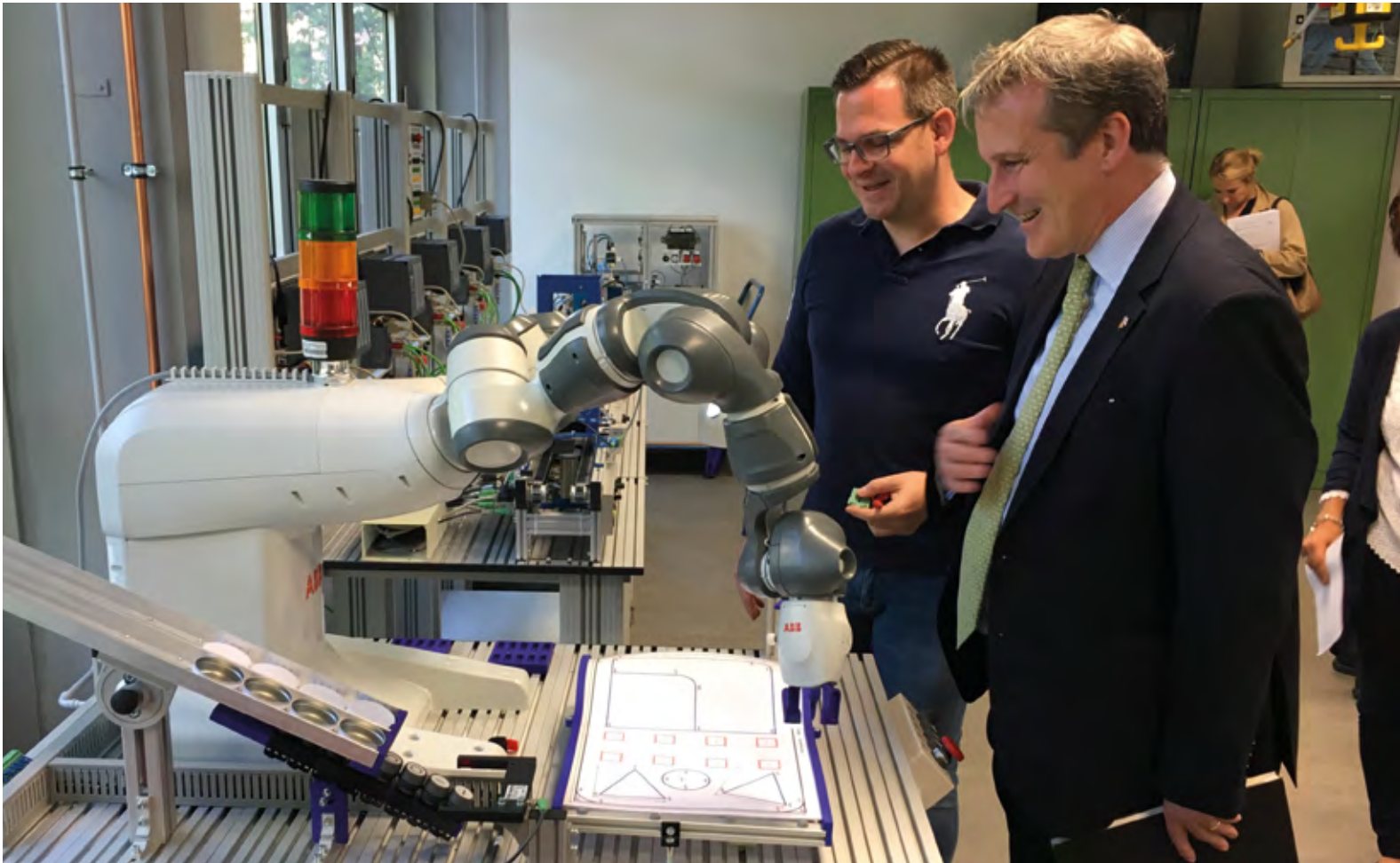
Speaking to FE Week from Dresden Airport on the third day of his trip, where he was about to catch a plane to Amsterdam, the education secretary was either unwilling or unable to say.

“I’ve been here 72 hours and I’m going to assimilate what I’ve heard here with other points of learning,” he said.

However, he indicated this was unlikely to be involve importing systems wholesale or cherry-picking individual elements.

“You can’t copy en masse a system from one country into any other, given that the traditions are different, the industrial structures are different, the ways of working are different,” he said.

“They rely on years, decades,



“As we go on our ambitious reform programme it’s right we seek to learn from systems like Germany”

sometimes even centuries of development.”

At the same time, “I don’t think you can take individual little elements and say I have learned that one thing, and copy that across,” he said.

Mr Hinds’ research mission came at a critical time for the reform programme in this country’s technical education system – 16 months after the introduction of the apprenticeship levy and the associated changes to the system, and 24 months before the first T-level courses will be taught.

It was “right as we go on our

ambitious reform programme we also seek to learn from systems like Germany and others”, he said.

Germany, where Hinds spent the first three days of his trip, is “world famous” for its technical education system and “has a very high reputation,” he said.

The policy, established for nearly 50 years, is known as the ‘dual system’ in reference to the two training locations – vocational school and the workplace.

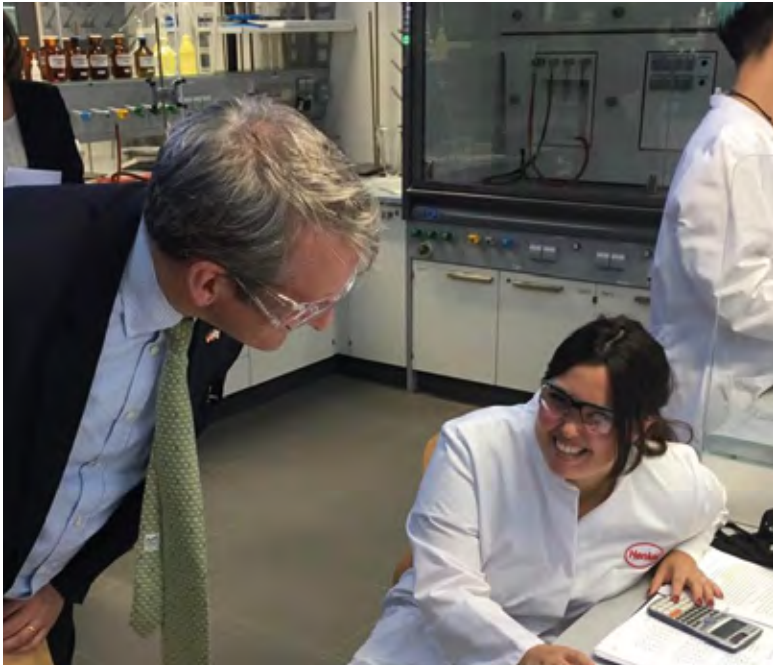
An apprenticeship in this ‘dual system’ is considered to be the main route into employment for young Germans. It is well-recognised and

highly valued by employers, and by the young people themselves.

The “parity of esteem” between technical and academic education, which the government is aiming to achieve through its reforms, “comes across very clearly here,” he said.

“The technical system, the apprenticeships, the professions that people are learning in, that’s a very well-established system which has great respect across society and is very well-entrenched,” Mr Hinds said.

He spoke about the central role that employers had in making the ‘dual



GERMAN TECHNICAL EDUCATION EXPLAINED

Germany’s long-established system of technical education is the envy of many countries, linked as it is with high productivity and low unemployment.

Just over half of young people in Germany go through the ‘dual system’ – a proportion that has fallen in recent years.

For the majority this is likely to be an apprenticeship lasting two or three years, beginning at the age of 16. A transition year is an option for those who can’t find a company to train with or need further education or training before they can start an apprenticeship.

Apprentices spend one or two days a week or several weeks at once in vocational school, called Berufsschule, with the remainder of their time spent learning on the job.

The German apprenticeship system is strictly

regulated and any company taking on an apprentice must ensure they are trained up to specific standards – and there are around 350 of them.

These are set by the relevant Chambers of Commerce, which play a central role in the ‘dual system’ – in effect managing the system on behalf of the national government.

All German companies must be a member of a Chambers of Commerce, and must pay a levy that goes towards the cost of running the training system.

Costs for the vocational school element of apprenticeship training are paid for by the state, while the employer pays for on-the-job training.

Around 20 per cent of German companies are involved in the apprenticeship system, according to the Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung.

n of inspiration

EDUCATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

Vocational education can begin as early as aged 12 in the Netherlands.

Dutch children are split into three different types of secondary school, only one of which gives direct access to an academic university.

The other two types are more vocationally focused, of which the 'pre-vocational education' route, called VMBO, is the most popular and is chosen by more than half of Dutch children.

It involves a mix of vocational training and general education, and runs from the age of 12 to 16.

After the VMBO, young people can then move onto the MBO, or middle-level applied education. This can last between

one and four years, and can be either classroom-based or an apprenticeship – although both options include some time spent learning on-the-job.

Graduates of the four-year middle-level training can progress onto higher professional education at the equivalent of what were once polytechnics in this country.

Employer involvement in the Dutch vocational system is much less well-developed than in Germany, and was only formalised in the 1990s.

The 1996 Educational and Vocational Training Act gave businesses more influence on the content of vocational and skills programmes.

“The technical system here is very well-established and has great respect across society”

system' work.

Businesses in Germany had a “deep commitment” to “every side and at every level to apprenticeships”, he said.

This was driven “partly from their own interest to bring on talent, and to identify who's going to bring them

further on and help them grow”.

But it was also because “it's part of what people do, what businesses do in society”, he said.

The Netherlands, where Mr Hinds was due to spend the rest of his fact-finding trip, is “another system that is useful to look at”, he said.

One of the key features of its education system, which is perhaps less well-known than that of its neighbour, is that children can choose a vocational route from the age of 12.

Employer involvement in the Dutch system is less well-established than in Germany, and only became formalised in 1996.

The system is “in terms of industrial structures, in some ways more similar to our own,” Mr Hinds said.

PROFESSOR EWART KEEP

Director of SKOPE,
Oxford University



What might Hinds learn from the German system?

As the Education Secretary tours the German technical education system, what might he learn that would be relevant to the UK? Ewart Keep explains

England has been worrying about the superior performance of overseas vocational education and training (VET) systems since the Great Exhibition of 1851. Overseas study visits have been one device used to explore what we could learn from abroad. Switzerland and its apprenticeship system have recently been popular, but now we are back with Germany as a source of envy and angst.

What might such visits achieve? National education systems operate as such – as a set of interconnected and mutually supportive institutions, incentives, and attitudes. Trying to copy isolated elements of a system and transpose them to another country mean that the copied element lacks the wider supportive infrastructure that allowed it to thrive back home. The key is to think in terms of policy learning, not policy borrowing. In essence, what makes the German set-up tick so successfully and can we

levy-paying firms' apprenticeship, and another for non-levy firms.

The German system is stable, and is sometimes criticised for being too slow to adapt to new skill requirements. Our apprenticeship marketplace is, and has been since the mid-1990s, subject to ceaseless, rapid change, all of which has been engineered by government rather than employers and their representatives, and/or the social partners. As a result, our apprenticeships have been seen by many firms as a government scheme.

In Germany, apprenticeship is an exercise in co-production between government, vocational schooling, and employers and trade unions. This system belongs to its stakeholders, not to government. Reform must be negotiated and agreed by all parties. The change by ministerial fiat that has marked UK VET reform for the last 35 years is not merely alien to the German system, it is impossible within it.

The German VET system, besides covering vocational colleges and dual apprenticeship provision, also incorporates a supportive institutional infrastructure. One key element are the chambers of commerce and handicrafts, membership of which is compulsory for firms; and another is the large, long-established and well-resourced federal vocational education and training institute (BiBB).

Unlike here, German apprenticeship is genuinely employer-led, in that firms or employer organisations undertake the vast bulk of the on-the-job training, and firms need to have an appropriately qualified trainer on their staff and to have been approved as a trainer by the local chamber of commerce. They take quality control seriously.

In England, employers are used to heavy subsidy from the state, with many firms in the past not paying anything for apprenticeships beyond

the apprentices' wages. In Germany, the only direct state support is for the off-the-job element of the training. For the rest, the employer pays. Germans would also be puzzled by the large proportion of adult apprentices

“The German system is stable, and is sometimes criticised for being too slow”

that we have and the idea that an employee of several years standing could become an adult apprentice. In Germany, apprenticeship is for relatively young entrants to the workforce, including some for recent graduates, rather than experienced and established adult workers.

Finally, German apprenticeships aim to create a broad occupational identity, contain an element of enterprise education (equipping people to become self-employed or to set up their own business one day), have a healthy chunk of general education, and are normally set at the equivalent of our level 3. Germans would be perplexed by some of our entry level job-specific apprenticeships (e.g. dual fuel smart reader installer).

Besides the emphasis on a system-led approach, the main point to take away from Germany is that finding ways to help and support employers to act collectively in relation to the co-design of, co-investment in, and co-production of VET is critical to success. Given our recent policy history, this is not an easy lesson for us to learn.

“Unlike here, German apprenticeship is genuinely employer-led”

learn from these design principles?

The starting point is that Germany has a system. It is conceived of and understood as such by all who contribute to it. We have created a set of VET marketplaces, including one for



DfE agrees to £5.4m investment in

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Exclusive

The government has coughed up the full £5.4 million Ofsted requested to visit all new apprenticeship providers as its crackdown on poor provision continues.

In an exclusive interview with FE Week, Paul Joyce (pictured), the inspectorate's deputy director for FE and skills, said the amount was nothing less than what was requested and will be provided from now until the end of March 2020.

However, he could not say how many more inspections or inspectors the money was likely to fund to carry out the mammoth task.

Potentially as many as 1,200 providers could now be in scope for a two-day monitoring visit. The Education and Skills Funding Agency confirmed last month that any apprenticeship provider which Ofsted deems to have made insufficient progress in one or more themes under review would be stopped from taking on new apprentices.

These restrictions will stay in place until the provider has received a full inspection and been awarded at least a grade three for its apprenticeship provision. Full inspections for providers which receive an "insufficient" rating will now take place within six to 12 months.

At the time of going to print the inspectorate had so far published

59 early monitoring visit reports of apprenticeship providers and deemed 12 of them – 20 per cent – to be making insufficient progress in one or more themes. Two of these – Key 6 Group and Training Solutions – have been rated as insufficient in every category.

Half of the insufficient-rated providers are currently barred from taking on new apprentices, according to the register of apprenticeship training providers, but the fate of the other six is not yet known.

“Monitoring visits will be useful to the ESFA and help them inform their processes”

Of the providers which have been inspected so far, 42 have either previously been a subcontractor or are still subcontracting alongside delivering their own provision. Seven of the subcontractors, 16 per cent, have been deemed insufficient. However, almost a third of those who have not subcontracted have been deemed insufficient, with five falling foul of the inspectors.

September has also seen a surge in the number of reports, including



“insufficient” reports, being published. So far this month 14 early monitoring visit reports have been published, of which five had an insufficient rating. In comparison, just 17 reports were published across the whole of August and just two of these were deemed insufficient.

Mr Joyce said that Ofsted would be analysing the results of the reports, but added that “no specific pattern” was

currently emerging.

“I think it’s the nature of the new providers that we’ve got out there,” he said. “In many cases we know very little about them in terms of their previous history, so we send inspectors out and their job is really to report as they find. The reports that have been published reflect what we have seen.”

Mr Joyce would not be drawn on whether the Education and Skills

Funding Agency could do more to crack down on rogue apprenticeship providers, including by limiting how quickly new providers can grow.

“That’s a question and a matter for the ESFA to deal with,” he said. “I would hope, and I’m sure, that our monitoring visits will be useful to them and help inform their processes.

“But again – their policies, their decisions.”

WHAT DOES ‘INSUFFICIENT PROGRESS’ LOOK LIKE?

The “insufficient” reports have thrown up several common issues between the providers, including poor governance, low quality teaching and a lack of off-the-job training.

Apprentices at Care Training Solutions, which was rated insufficient across the board by inspectors, were said to be not making enough progress, with inspectors warning that “too many apprentices are behind on every element of their apprenticeship”.

Leaders at Unique Training Solutions were criticised for not holding employers “sufficiently to account when they do not play their part in helping meet the expected requirements of the apprenticeships programmes,” meaning that “too many” apprentices did not receive enough off-the-job training within working hours.

Not enough off-the-job training was also said to be an issue at the Education and Skills Partnership, and at the Mitre Group where inspectors found that “most of the training [apprentices]

complete in their own time and not during their working hours”.

At Peacocks, senior management were described as being “too slow to respond to significant weaknesses that exist in the apprentices’ programmes and the quality of the education and training that apprentices receive”, while apprentices at Mooreskills complained to inspectors that “they are not developing new skills or enhancing their existing knowledge”.

Watertrain was criticised for “using the apprenticeship programme to enable employees to gain qualifications in existing skills and knowledge”, and inspectors noted that some apprentices “reported that they did not want to be an apprentice and did not see how they are gaining anything from the programme”.

Safeguarding was criticised at N-Gaged Training and Recruitment, and the report said no safeguarding arrangements existed for their few apprentices aged under 18 when they

attended residential training. At Entrust, governance and oversight of the apprenticeship programme was described as “insufficiently thorough”.

Key 6 Group’s apprenticeship provision was described as “not fit for purpose” and its governance called “poor” in a report that saw it rated “insufficient” across the board. “The board of directors do not hold the managing director and the director of education to account for the poor teaching, learning and assessment and weak progress that apprentices make,” inspectors reported.

Leaders at Securitas were also slammed by inspectors, who said their “self-evaluation of the quality of provision lacks realism and reflective analysis” and noted that most apprentices “do not have a choice about enrolling for the apprenticeship training programme.

“As a result of this compulsory training, apprentices do not enjoy their learning or understand its nature,” the report said.

Ofsted monitoring visits until 2020

Provider name	Provider type	Last date of inspection	Apprentices	Subcontracted before?	How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?	What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from highquality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices?	How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place?
Mears Learning Limited	ITP	12/04/2018	53	No	Insufficient progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Peacocks Stores Ltd	EP	10/05/2018	144	No	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress	Reasonable progress
Key6 Group Limited	ITP	15/02/2018	208	no	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress
Securitas Security Services (Uk) Limited	EP	17/08/2018	650	No	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress	Reasonable progress
Management Academy Ltd	ITP	19/07/2018	10	No	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Halifax Opportunities Trust	ITP	20/07/2018	22	No	Significant progress	Significant progress	Reasonable progress
Norse Commercial Services Limited	ITP	03/05/2018	61	No	Significant progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Nuffield Health	ITP	26/07/2018	80	No	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Virgin Trains Sales Limited	EP	25/04/2018	96	No	Significant progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust	ITP	26/09/2018	107	No	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Flight Centre (UK) Limited	EP	12/07/2018	136	No	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust	EP	13/04/2018	169	No	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Rentokil Initial (1986) Ltd	EP	18/07/2018	178	No	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
KnowledgeBrief Limited	ITP	26/07/2018	180	No	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust	EP	26/07/2018	308	No	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Unique Training Solutions Limited	ITP	01/08/2018	147	No	Insufficient progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Fuel Learning Limited	ITP	02/08/2018	270	No	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Watertrain	ITP	19/04/2018	192	Yes	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress	Reasonable progress
Deere Apprenticeships Ltd	ITP	12/07/2018	91	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Utilities Academy Limited	ITP	18/07/2018	96	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Group Horizon Limited	ITP	24/05/2018	97	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
ABM Training (UK) Limited	ITP	23/08/2018	100	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	EP	02/07/2018	119	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Bauer Radio Limited	ITP	26/06/2018	120	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Corndel Limited	ITP	12/07/2018	980	Yes	Reasonable progress	Significant progress	Reasonable progress
Learndirect Apprenticeships	ITP	26/04/2018	3900	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Moy Park Limited	EP	02/08/2018	Doesn't say	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
University of Suffolk	HE	11/07/2018	Doesn't say	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
N-Gaged Training and Recruitment Ltd	ITP	02/08/2018	101	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Insufficient progress
Mooreskills Ltd	ITP	12/04/2018	223	Yes	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress	Reasonable progress
Care Training Solutions Limited	ITP	09/08/2018	13	Yes	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress
Mitre Group Limited	ITP	09/08/2018	89	Yes	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress	Reasonable progress
Entrust Support Services Limited	ITP	09/08/2018	137	Yes	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress	Reasonable progress
The Education and Skills Partnership Limited	ITP	16/07/2018	175	Yes	Insufficient progress	Insufficient progress	Reasonable progress
Apprentice Team Ltd	ITP	12/04/2018	176	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
SIGTA Limited	ITP	21/06/2018	26	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Knights Training Academy Limited	ITP	15/08/2018	37	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Sccu Ltd	ITP	07/06/2018	87	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Ginger Nut Media Ltd	ITP	26/04/2018	98	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
National Logistics Academy Ltd	ITP	11/07/2018	107	Yes	Significant progress	Significant progress	Significant progress
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	ITP	19/07/2018	114	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Let Me Play Limited	ITP	23/05/2018	119	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Northwest Education and Training Limited	ITP	26/06/2018	129	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Youth Force Limited	ITP	06/06/2018	130	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
GLP Training	ITP	03/05/2018	150	Yes	Significant progress	Significant progress	Reasonable progress
Impact Futures Training Limited	ITP	06/06/2018	161	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Quest Vocational Training Ltd	ITP	19/04/2018	172	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Firebrand Training Limited	ITP	02/08/2018	180	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
A R C Academy UK Limited	ITP	12/04/2018	221	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Jigsaw Training (J&S Blackhurst Ltd)	ITP	15/03/2018	281	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
CQM Training and Consultancy Limited	ITP	10/05/2018	298	Yes	Reasonable progress	Significant progress	Reasonable progress
Buttercups Training Limited	ITP	06/07/2018	344	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
London College of Apprenticeship Training	ITP	28/02/2018	360	Yes	Significant progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
KPMG Limited Liability Partnership	ITP	12/07/2018	366	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
Lean Education and Development Ltd	ITP	25/04/2018	475	Yes	Significant progress	Significant progress	Reasonable progress
N A College Trust	ITP	13/07/2018	485	Yes	Significant progress	Significant progress	Reasonable progress
Estio Training Limited	ITP	08/08/2018	592	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
FWD Training and Consultancy	ITP	06/06/2018	650	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress
University College Of Estate Management	HE	09/08/2018	100	Yes	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress	Reasonable progress

News



Hinds quick to show IfA support but fails to name employers in agreement

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The education secretary was unable to name a single employer who supported the Institute for Apprenticeships in an interview with FE Week editor Nick Linford this week.

Damian Hinds had arranged the interview while on his fact-finding trip to Germany and the Netherlands.

He was asked if the English version of employer ownership was working, given the well-documented frustration among employers towards the IfA.

The IfA was set up by the DfE last April and is an “employer-led” non-departmental public body of approximately 80 staff, according to the DfE.

Mr Hinds was quick to insist the IfA was doing a “really important job” and that there was “a lot of enthusiasm” from employers about apprenticeships.

That begged the question whether Mr Hinds could name any – which he

couldn’t, despite being asked five times.

This failure by the education secretary followed a similar silence from the IfA itself last month.

More than 150 businesses joined forces with the Chartered Management Institute at the end of August to fight against the IfA’s proposals to slash the funding band for the popular chartered manager standard by £5,000.

FE Week asked the institute if it could name any employers that supported the recommendation, but was told “not at this time”.

The IfA’s chief executive, Sir Gerry Berragan, had earlier acknowledged employers’ unhappiness about the institute.

Its Faster and better programme, launched in December to speed up its processes and make its policies more transparent, had been prompted by employer feedback.

Skills minister Anne Milton has also spoken about the need to take a “big stick” to the institute to push it to being even faster and even better.

In contrast, Mr Hinds insisted in response to Mr Linford’s questions that the IfA was doing a “really important job in bringing together employers to create a quality assurance system”.

“I know you speak to many employers. I also speak to many employers”

“I think it’s a really important part of the architecture of the overall programme,” he said.

When asked why there was so much animosity towards the institute, Mr Hinds insisted that “what I hear from businesses is a lot of enthusiasm for the apprenticeship programme”.

“We know there’s a shift to higher level apprenticeships, there’s a shift from frameworks to standards, and

I think that’s much welcomed,” he continued.

This response prompted Mr Linford to ask him if he could name any employers that were “enthusiastic about the institute”, given that it is meant to be “representative of an employer-led system”.

The education secretary dodged the question, and said instead: “I know you speak to many employers. I also speak to many employers”.

“I know people want to see, and rightly so, the standards coming through, and it’s been good to see that process having gained pace, and I think that’s much to be welcomed,” he continued.

He was pressed again to answer the question, but again failed to name any – insisting he needed to board his plane, which was due to take him from Dresden to Amsterdam as part of a week-long fact-finding mission.

A further three attempts to ask the question met with the same response.

The exchange followed repeated criticism of the IfA’s handling of the

recent funding band review which launched in May.

That process looked at the funding caps allocated to 31 standards, including some of the more popular ones, to assess whether they offered good value for money.

The institute started communicating with the employer groups that developed the standards last month, and a number of them were unhappy with the outcome.

Of the nine recommendations that FE Week is aware of, six have resulted in a proposed funding cut.

Employers have hit out at the IfA, claiming that the process wasn’t fair or transparent, with proposed funding bands bearing no relation to the costs for delivery submitted as part of the review.

The letter to the employer group behind the level six chartered manager standard even said “you told us that a reduction to funding would lead to providers exiting the market and reduce provider ability to deliver high quality training provision.”

Barnsley College is rated outstanding by Ofsted and has over 8,000 students across a wide range of Vocational, Part-time and Higher Education courses as well as A-Levels and Apprenticeships.

We are looking for three exceptional people to join our high performing management team to help us continue to deliver an outstanding experience for our students in the following key roles:



Head of Department – C-Stem (Construction and Engineering) - £48,114 pa

Head of Department – Childcare and Health - £48,114 pa

Head of Department – Essential Skills (including English and Maths) –
Spot pointed in the range £40,310-£45,348 pa

The successful applicants will provide inspirational leadership to ensure outstanding teaching and learning, develop innovative curriculum design and delivery, and to deliver operational plans across their respective areas.

At Barnsley College, Heads of Department enjoy autonomy to deliver outcomes in their areas. The ability to initiate and manage change effectively and plan for growth and continuous improvement are essential requirements. Applicants should be able to clearly demonstrate how they would successfully manage departmental quality and budgets as well as establishing high levels of student and staff satisfaction.

Candidates for all posts will be, or have the potential to be, outstanding leaders with a thorough understanding of the key issues and opportunities facing the sector and their respective curriculum area.

Key benefits include 47 days’ annual leave entitlement (including public and directed holidays), access to the Teachers’ Pension Scheme and a commitment to support job related training and development.

For further information and to apply for any of the above positions please visit our website <http://www.barnsley.ac.uk/about-us/vacancies/>

Closing date for all posts is Monday 8 October 2018.

Interviews for the posts will take place between 15 and 26 October 2018.

Barnsley College is committed to creating a dynamic and diverse workforce and welcomes applications from all candidates regardless of their gender, disability, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation or faith. Disabled applicants who meet the minimum essential criteria will be guaranteed an interview.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS.

ACHIEVING MORE FOR

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Glasgow Clyde College is a welcoming, ambitious and innovative college committed to seeing potential, finding solutions and achieving more. Home to over 7,000 full time and 10,000 part time students, we are one of the largest further education institutions in Scotland offering a wide array of educational and career opportunities across three key campuses.

Post: Assistant Principal,
Access and Continuing Learning
Salary: £68,298 per annum

Post: Head of Curriculum,
Construction and Land-Based Industries
Salary: £49,603.50 per annum

The College is seeking to appoint a highly motivated, skilled Assistant Principal, who as a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for leading the Faculty of Access and Continuing Learning. The Faculty’s curriculum includes ESOL, General Education, Additional Support for Learning, Employability Skills and Community Learning and Development.

This is an exciting and challenging opportunity to contribute to the strategic development and overall operational effectiveness of the College. The successful applicant will be responsible for portfolio development and delivery, management of curriculum areas, learner experience, faculty budget control

and contributing to the community planning. The post holder will ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations, the Freedom of Information Act and all other rules and regulations that govern the work of the College.

The ideal candidate will meet the following criteria:
Direct relevant experience of strategic planning processes particularly in relation to the areas covered by this post
Proven ability to lead and initiate change
Substantial leadership and management experience at a senior promoted level
Evidence of contribution to academic development projects in the FE Sector.

Within the Faculty of Engineering, Computing and the Built Environment, the School of Construction and Land-Based Industries has an outstanding reputation for working with employers, delivering relevant and up to date qualifications, ranging from NPA to HN level, with articulation links with the university sector. Our unique, curriculum portfolio includes Construction, Carpentry and Joinery, Painting and Decorating, Horticulture, Floristry, and Landscaping.

As Head of Curriculum, the successful candidate will support the Assistant Principal in devising and implementing strategies to develop and effectively manage the curriculum area and the Faculty. You will maintain an up-to-date knowledge of sector and workplace developments, which affect the curriculum areas within the School in order to ensure the portfolio meets local, regional and national economic and social needs.

For further details on the role and person specification, please view the Job Description.

Location: Glasgow, Scotland. You will be required to travel and work within all Glasgow Clyde campuses

Relocation: a limited relocation allowance may be negotiable in certain circumstances

Closing Date: 7th October 2018

Interviews will be held on Wednesday 24th October 2018

If you meet the requirements of this post, please visit <https://www.glasgowclyde.ac.uk/workwithus> to complete the application form and an equal opportunities monitoring form and send to: humanresourcesrecruitment@glasgowclyde.ac.uk

Further information can be obtained from the College website at www.glasgowclyde.ac.uk or: **Human Resources Unit, Glasgow Clyde College, 690 Mosspark Drive, Glasgow, G52 3AY**

Telephone: **0141 272 3232** E Mail: humanresourcesrecruitment@glasgowclyde.ac.uk



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To find out further information, please visit www.edexcel.com/aa-recruitment or raise a query at associate.pearson.com



illustration by Lucy Vigrass



Executive Director of Finance and Resources

Salary: £54,242 up to £76,250

Are you a qualified accountant with a strong commercial skills set and board level experience? Are you interested in joining a dynamic and progressive organisation, with a clear vision to become the best College in the North East region? If the answer is yes, then Derwentside College would like to hear from you.

We are looking for an exceptional candidate to meet the expectations of this significant finance and resources role; a person with an unrelenting enthusiasm to improve the learner experience and, the knowledge, skills and experience to make a real impact from day one.

Why Derwentside College?

With a turnover of £13m, we are already one of the largest and most successful providers of apprenticeships in the country. Our track record of success and growth is impressive, and with a strong emphasis on success and achievement, we are well on our way to becoming an outstanding College.

The College's financial performance is strong and despite the challenges that lie ahead, we are well placed to continue to grow and expand the business over the coming years.

Our strategy is clear. We want to be an outstanding College. If you would like to join us on this journey, then please get in touch.

Application packs can be obtained by visiting our website www.derwentside.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can email HR@derwentside.ac.uk or telephone (01207) 585963 to request a pack.

For an informal discussion regarding the role, **please contact the Principal and Chief Executive (Chris Todd) on (01207) 585940.**

Closing Date: Sunday 30th September 2018



Be brilliant, deliver prosperity, live in Cornwall



Director of Cultural & Visitor Economy

We are seeking an outstanding curriculum leader with a track record for developing focused and ambitious strategic and operational plans. They will lead a broad curriculum area including 14-19, adult, employer and higher education provision. Curriculum areas covered by this role are hospitality and catering, tourism, hair and beauty and creative arts.

The ideal candidate will be able to demonstrate excellence in partnership working, people skills, innovation and will seek to further develop the quality of provision, alongside motivating a geographically dispersed team.

Reporting to the CEO, as a member of the executive leadership team, key measures of success are learner numbers; the quality of learning, teaching and assessment; the customer and learner experience and attainment of financial and budgetary targets.

For the opportunity to live in Cornwall and contribute to a regionally important curriculum area, with a competitive salary, please get in touch.

For an informal conversation please contact Jayne Ninnies, HR Director on 01209 616131.

For an information pack and application form please visit www.cornwall.ac.uk

Closing date: 14th October 2018

The Cornwall College Group is a disability confident employer

Charity by statute



Community Learning in Partnership (CLIP) is a well-established social enterprise which strives to widen participation in learning and support positive progressions by people in rural and coastal Lincolnshire. We have learning centres in Market Rasen, Gainsborough and Mablethorpe. With an Ofsted Grade 2 and provision for 16-18s, qualifications for adults, GCSEs, Access to HE, employability and an extensive community learning offer, we are seeking hard-working, talented and creative individuals who can make a significant impact on the further development of our organisation.

In return, we can provide great opportunities for career development, encouragement to get involved in new projects and tangible evidence that you are making a difference.

To support our steady growth and commitment to quality development, CLIP has created three new posts:

- Deputy Chief Executive – Business Performance and Innovation Manager **£30-32k**
- Deputy Chief Executive – Partnerships Manager **£30-32k**
- Careers Education and Aspiration Coordinator **£24-26k**

All posts are available as full-time or 0.8 fte.

Please visit our website www.cliplearning.com/jobs-volunteering for full details. The closing date is 24 September 2018.

City & Guilds Vacancies - Technical Qualifications



We currently have some exciting vacancies for Principal Moderator, Moderator, Assessment Development Consultant and Examiner roles for our Technical qualifications.

This is an excellent CPD opportunity, giving you the chance to learn about the City & Guilds Technicals, gain an in-depth knowledge of requirements and the moderation process and really get to grips with the marking of the synoptic practical assessment.

We would like to hear from you if you are interested in applying for the following roles:

Principal Moderator

Professional Cookery – Qualification No: **6100**

Moderator

Professional Cookery – Qualification No: **6100**

Food Preparation & Service – Qualification No: **7178**

Food & Beverage Service – Qualification No: **6103**

Cookery and Service for the Hospitality Industry – Qualification No: **6106**

Theatrical & Media Makeup – Qualification No: **6010**

Land & Wildlife – Qualification No: **0173**

Constructing the Built Environment – Qualification No: **6720**

Project – Qualification No: **2935**

Assessment Development Consultant and Examiner

Hospitality & Catering – Qualification Nos: **6100, 7178, 6103**

Construction – Qualification Nos: **6720, 7905, 7906, 7907, 7908**

Building Services Engineering – Qualification Nos: **8202**

Land Based Services – Qualification Nos: **0170, 0171, 0172, 0173, 0174, 0175, 7863**

How to apply

If you are interested in the Principal Moderator or Moderator role, please visit the below website for application details: <https://www.cityandguilds.com/techbac/technical-qualifications/moderator-vacancies>

If you are interested in the Assessment Development Consultant or Examiner role, please visit the below website for application details: <https://www.cityandguilds.com/delivering-our-qualifications/exams-and-admin/examiner-vacancies>



Careers Event – Teaching Opportunities

Location: Milton Keynes

Reference: SEP20186543

Salary: £18,015.00 - £32,232.00 Per Annum

Benefits: Excellent Benefits

Milton Keynes College are looking for professionals within the following curriculum areas - Care Professions, Business, Higher Education and Digital Technologies. We have exciting opportunities for lecturers as we see these schools developing and would love to be able to show you why Milton Keynes College should be the career choice for you.

We are welcoming candidates that are interested in both flexible working hours and full time hours as we will have a range of temporary and permanent opportunities.

You will have a background in Care Professions such as; Care, Nursing, Health, Childcare. Digital Technologies such as; Computer Science, Cloud Computing, Cyber Security and Internet of Things (IoT) Digital & Technology. Business such as; Retail & Logistics, AAT, Customer service and Business Administration. We also welcome candidates with degrees in Higher Education across all subject areas to support within our Access to Higher Education courses.

We are holding an open event to give you the chance to learn more about working for Milton Keynes College and how you can be a part of the students learning experience. This will be a 2 hour event where you will hear more about each curriculum area, have the opportunity to have a tour around the campus and spend time networking with other attendees and staff from the college.

Event details: Friday 16th November 2018 to be held at our Chaffron Way Campus

For more information, please visit <https://www.mkcollege.ac.uk/jobs/our-vacancies>

Closing date: Friday 2nd November 2018

Should this event be suitable for you we will go on to send further information nearer the date.

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EDITORIAL



DfE finds much needed Ofsted monitoring cash

When the ESFA published the list of providers on the apprenticeship register in March 2017 we reported that the entire sector was shocked.

Hundreds of companies, many never having filed a set of accounts, had successfully applied to a register that would give them unlimited access to apprenticeship funding.

In an interview with me the same month, Amanda Spielman, the chief inspector of Ofsted, expressed obvious concern.

Now, 18 months later and after some new providers have been found “not fit for purpose”, the Department

for Education has accepted Ofsted’s plea for more cash and ponied up £5.4m until 2020.

The money will be spent on monitoring visits to all new providers, followed by a full inspection within 12 months where insufficient progress has been found.

This is excellent news and shows a genuine commitment from the government to put quality above quantity.

However, it still leaves a series of important unanswered questions, and the National Audit Office is currently looking again into whether the DfE is “ensuring that the programme and

levy system are not abused by stakeholders.”

The NAO’s follow-up review is due for publication in early 2019, so here are four questions they might want to ask the DfE:

1. What will the early monitoring arrangements be for providers delivering levels 6 and 7? When we asked the Office for Students and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education they seemed less than sure.
2. Why do apprenticeship providers have unlimited access to levy funding? This allowed one

employer to recruit 650 apprentices before their Ofsted early monitoring visit exposed serious failings. Surely those with no track record should be limited until their quality is proven?

3. The provider register has officially been shut to entrants since last October and the rumour is the new version won’t be open this month as promised. So what is the plan to introduce quality thresholds and potentially remove some through a reapplication process?
4. Now Ofsted has received much needed additional resource, what about

the ESFA in terms of what’s needed to manage the fallout from their “market entry” policies? For example, many apprentices will need to be found new providers as part of their “market exit” intervention support.

The way the provider register was set up was deeply flawed, but with a well-resourced Ofsted and some sensible ESFA changes, things can only get better.

Nick Linford, Editor
news@feweek.co.uk

Readers' reply



Damning Ofsted visit finds huge employer provider forced staff onto apprenticeships

Oh look. Predictable and predicted. It’s “unintended consequences of policy” deja vu.

@smitajamdar

“Not enough assessors were on the books” - the EPA car crash is coming as number of learners on standards increase.

@AELPUK

Clearly just a scam which many apprenticeships have been for years.

@JHinkley24

Is this really a surprise?

Angela Hagans

EPA assessor capacity: Will England be able to cope in the long-term?

I've been saying this from the beginning. Most EPA's will be self employed and may only be

paid for the assessment they carry out. This excludes many people from applying for a role as an end Point assessor. Also, I foresee “traffic jams”, especially in the first 12 months as learners all complete as the same/similar time.

Jo Kitchen

West Notts College handed DfE warning after requesting £2.1m in exceptional financial support

One of the highest paid in UK and a recipient of OBE I recall. It's a joke!

Nev Loft

'He will be sorely missed': Warm tributes paid to AELP founder Frank McMahon

Frank has been a mainstay of our sector throughout my education career and always had the time to give me advice and point me in the right direction.

His commitment, dedication and determination to get the

best for the whole sector, and especially learners was instrumental in the success of AELP and of course being from Yorkshire he helped to balance the AELP Board!
RIP mate.

Noel Johnson

How to build a collaborative college culture

Listen listen listen
Value value value
Hear hear hear
Respect respect respect
Listen

Totally agree.
Sadly I don't see much of that behaviour amongst college leaders. I get the feeling they've seen Uni leaders wage rises and the green eyed monster is distracting them.

Doug

Some great advice for any academic or similar institution.

@SeanJon22089990

REPLY OF THE WEEK

Unlimited subcontracting fees to end under London adult education budget devolution plan

I'm no fan of subcontracting, but the article is a little one sided.
Bit lazy to just look at the income side of the finances! In an environment where the Primes top slice is capped to 20%, then lots of the back office work done by the prime will get shunted to the subcontractee and save the prime the costs associated with earning that top slice, with the costs of the subby going up.
Plus, what's likely to happen is that any subcontractor currently top slicing less than 20% will put theirs up to the new standard!
Still, it gives someone the opportunity to proclaim that unfair subcontracting fees have been slashed by more half, even if the reality is a less dramatic and still just as opaque.

David

Experts

JENNY
TAYLOR

Graduate, Apprentice and Student
Programme Leader, IBM UK



The challenges of T-level work
placements for employers

The T-level placement is an awkward
length and requires new thinking,
says Jenny Taylor, who is involved in
designing the new programme for IBM

The recent FE Week and Pearson-sponsored great debate in the House of Commons on T-levels – the incoming technical alternatives to A-levels – proved a lively and interesting event. From an employer perspective, my attention inevitably focused on the proposed work experience placement element, which will require students to undertake a placement lasting between 45 and 60 days, covering a minimum of 315 hours.

IBM is participating in T-level development as a leader of one of the digital panels defining the curriculum and we’ve volunteered to take our first T-level students in a pilot running in 2019. We already run successful graduate, intern, apprenticeship and traineeship programmes, so are tackling the challenge from a base of wide experience in this area.

We’ve started to consider the practical considerations to be taken into account for T-level student placements, asking questions such as: Is a bespoke project required? Should they have IBM employee status? Who will manage the programme and/or liaise with the learning provider? What are the productivity and infrastructure costs for IBM? Other concerns include:

- Safeguarding for under 18s
- Equipment (laptops/phones)
- Security
- Access to our systems
- Employability readiness of students
- Pastoral care
- Student travel

Our working environment is mobile, client-facing and agile. It’s not the traditional five days a week in a fixed office location with fixed equipment. Everyone uses IBM specifically set up laptops and mobiles: desk phones, equipment and permanent desks are a thing of the past. Systems access is

required for email and our intranet: the basic tools for doing any job-related task.

We’ve looked at our current programmes to see where we can

“Work
shadowing is
fine for a few
days, but not
for few weeks”

reuse intellectual capital and here we find some differences. All the work placements we offer (school leaver and undergraduate) are 12 months in duration because in that time, an intern can perform a full-time tangible role, add value to the business and gain significant business, technical and employability skills to take forward in their future careers.

We don’t offer short-term placements for a good reason: it’s hard to get up and running in a company like IBM and then make a tangible contribution in a short space of time. Work shadowing is fine as a taster for a few days, but not for few weeks.

Clearly, we want any T-level students to have a great experience and to assimilate valuable skills during their work placement. So how to achieve this?

To do this properly, we conclude that we need to set up another “programme” for T-levels. It needs a dedicated manager from our early professionals’ team, task managers who can both be on site and take time out from their day jobs to supervise the students, a bespoke induction, provision of IBM equipment to enable the students to operate in our working environment plus a support system of pastoral care.

Do we need to create a bespoke project for them to study or can we find tangible business-related work for them in what is such a relatively short

period of time? We want to help them actively build their skills and knowledge – how do we do this? How are they assessed and how do we contribute to this process? How do we know what level they are now in order to provide a placement which matches their needs? In fact, the list of requirements goes on and on, and that’s before the students set foot in the building.

A recent CIPD report – Reforming technical education: Employers’ views of T-levels discovered that 40 per cent of the more than 2,000 employers questioned were unaware of T-levels prior to being surveyed. Employer participation is crucial to the success of the new programme, so bearing in mind all the preparation activities and investment needed before T-level students arrive on the doorstep, planning definitely needs to start now! This is the only way to provide them all with appropriate high-quality placements to kick start their careers and give them with the skills needed for the jobs of the future.

BEN
BLACKLEDGE

Director of education and skills
competitions, WorldSkills UK



Why we should learn from the
other EuroSkills countries

We still have some way to go before we
will be on a par with other European
countries – we must look past the
podium to see what we can learn
from their skills systems, says Ben
Blackledge

It’s no coincidence that Switzerland and Austria were in first and second place respectively at the last EuroSkills competition in Gothenburg, Sweden in 2016. Both countries have technical programmes that enable them to punch above their industrial weight and produce skilled competitors ready to deliver on the international stage. That is why it was hugely pleasing that in 2016, Team UK was able to compete so well against technical systems across Europe and place seventh in the WorldSkills Europe rankings.

There is always more to learn, however. As we look forward to this year’s EuroSkills in Budapest, we aim to retain a top ten place. We are also

hugely encouraged to see that – against the backdrop of the introduction of the apprenticeship levy and falling apprenticeship numbers – 64 per cent of Team UK will be apprentices. This has increased from Gothenburg 2016 (58 per cent) and is a good indicator that despite significant change in the apprenticeship programme, the quality of apprentices in the UK is really strong.

But we are the first to admit that we still have some way to go before we will be on a par with Switzerland and other European countries. This is not surprising, when you consider the value that is placed on apprenticeships in these countries, with its accompanying investment.

The vastly differing approaches to apprenticeships in Europe, is why EuroSkills is more than just a competition. Yes, medals are important, but we must also look past the podium to see what we can learn from our European neighbours. The event

provides us with the very tangible opportunity to re-visit the role skills competitions play in developing world-class apprenticeships and apprentices. This is a chance not only to raise the

“The levy
can be used
to offset the
costs of a skills
competition”

profile and prestige of apprenticeships in the UK, but also to bring back the learning from these international competitions to make the UK education system truly world class.

Employers have told us that WorldSkills UK competitions provide a form of accelerated development

in which apprentices achieve greater technical excellence in their skill. But more than that, the training they undertake to prepare for international competition develops high-level transferable skills. My counterparts across Europe tell me employers in their countries feel the same.

However, I am aware some organisations have been deterred from entering their apprentices because of a perceived time-cost and complexity. This may come as surprise to many, but because skills competitions have been recognised to contribute to that individual’s development in achieving their apprenticeship, the levy can be used to support their involvement.

The levy can be used by colleges and training providers in agreement with employers to offset the costs associated with taking part in a skills competition. One employer that has benefited from embedding skills competition activity in their internal apprenticeship training

programme is Toyota. The manufacturer has had significant presence in Team UK, with two apprentices in this year’s team and their apprentices winning the bronze medal in Mechatronics in 2016. For Toyota, being part of WorldSkills UK competitions is not a “nice to do”, but is central to them benchmarking and driving up the quality of skills.

Members of Team UK for Budapest 2018 will also play an important role as ambassadors for WorldSkills UK – and it is their personal stories that will inspire more young people to consider taking up an apprenticeship. With the support of colleges and training providers, we want employers to pledge to use part of their levy to support their apprentices in competition. It is this combination of inspiring role models and investment from the sector that will create greater access for the next generation of skilled apprentices, and it is those apprentices that will continue Team UK’s success in EuroSkills Graz 2020 and beyond.

LEE HUNT MBE

Director of Curriculum,
Havant & South Downs College



Applied general qualifications: should they stay or go?

What's the future of applied general qualifications - should they stay or go? Lee Hunt shares his thoughts on which ones, post-T-level, are doomed for the scrap heap

In the context of the new T-levels, there's a legitimate debate around the future of applied general qualifications. Rather than asking whether they will stay or go, however, I think the more relevant question is, 'Which ones should stay, and which should go?'

Like many in the sector, I have been studying the progression and development of T-levels. I have researched numerous government documents and policies, taken part in workshops, webinars and seminars – and discussed my thinking with colleagues, other providers, awarding bodies, employers and consultants as well as government officials. This has included working with AoC, DfE and

more recently, the Gatsby Foundation.

I believe the ethos of the new T-level is not to replace vocational pathways but to enhance them. It is to ensure that employers are clear on the skills, knowledge and attributes their future workforce are obtaining, and to give parents and children a clear perspective on what they can achieve outside of the classroom environment. It's an evolutionary process with a modern approach, and one that is for the good of us all. Based on this thinking, I believe there are AGQs that have life in them still, those that are in a grey area, and those that have run their course.

So what are you delivering that fits in the category of, stay, grey or go? I have taken three current BTECs that are flagship level 3 main qualifications at Havant & South Downs College and looked at their validity compared to a T-level. This is only a snapshot, but I believe it illustrates that not all AGQs are

fit for purpose and if we do not remove them, we undermine the T-level ethos.

HSDC BTEC level 3 extended diploma in sports science. This course is currently supporting learners who are looking for a pathway through a

“Not all AGQs are fit for purpose”

university programme – as shown by our 90 per cent HE destination rate from this course. There is currently no clear T-level route or pathway that offers an alternative.

HSDC BTEC level 3 extended diploma in public services. This course is currently supporting diverse learner aspirations, which include university,

as well as the armed and emergency services. Approximately 30 per cent move into a service and 40 per cent into HE. There is a planned protective service route (but only as an apprenticeship). Most uniformed public services support their own apprenticeship delivery and there is always the argument that leavers cannot really enter the police or fire service until they are mature enough to do so (normally 21) and therefore are more prone to look to universities to enhance their employability and life experience, alongside their academic attainment. Work experience is really challenging for this course due to the requirements of the sector and the potential hazards the learners may encounter within the working environment. It doesn't seem that this could easily be replaced by a T-level.

HSDC BTEC level 3 extended diploma in IT. At the end of last year, over 60 per cent of leavers from this course were

looking for employment, 18 per cent were unsure as to what they wanted to do, and the remainder moved onto HE. We have worked with several employers who support the work experience and outcome, all of whom are positive about accepting our students into the workplace and developing their career pathway from there. Apprenticeships are challenging in this sector and, despite our best efforts, hard to source and support. This qualification could be discontinued and replaced by the digital T-level route.

A statement was made by FE Week's editor at the recent T-levels debate in parliament, calling for the government to be honest about their plans for T-levels. I feel that we as a sector should also be honest, and the starting point is to admit which AGQs are no longer fit for purpose, in line with the government's industrial and career strategies.

NOT TO BE MISSED

UPCOMING EVENTS

ESSENTIAL UPDATE – APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING FOR 2018/19

BIRMINGHAM

26 SEPTEMBER 2018

NEWCASTLE

3 OCTOBER 2018

BRISTOL

10 OCTOBER 2018

LIVERPOOL

17 OCTOBER 2018

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Bulletin




Marion Plant

Deputy chair, WorldSkills UK

Start date: September 2018

Current job:
Principal, North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (she remains in post)

Interesting fact:
Marion grew up in Zambia and is a qualified midwife who loves cross-country skiing



Karen Heaney

Chief operating officer, NCG

Start date: September 2018


Previous job:
Director of regeneration, Home Group

Interesting Fact:
Karen has more hobbies than you can count including playing the violin and digital piano, crochet, yoga, watercolour painting, golf and horse riding

Movers & Shakers

...

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



Mike Wilmot

Chief finance officer, NCG

Start date: September 2018

Previous job:
Director of finance, Parkdean Resorts

Interesting fact:
Mike has been musical director for numerous musicals over many years working with both youth and adult groups



John Widdowson

Chair, Workers' Educational Association

Start date: July 2018

Previous job:
Principal, New College Durham

Interesting fact:
John had his heart set on a career in law. He fell into education by accident, after taking a teaching job at a college to earn some extra cash – and was hooked immediately

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



Got a story?

Get in touch.

Contact: news@feweek.co.uk
or call 020 81234 778

FEWEEK

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Tuesday, 30 October 2018 | The Principal, Manchester

Boosting UK Skills: Quality with Quantity

The AELP Autumn Conference 2018, sponsored by **City & Guilds**, takes place when the government is emphasising the importance of quality over quantity in taking forward the apprenticeship reforms. In AELP's view, achieving improvements in both is not necessarily a mutually exclusive outcome and the conference will debate how apprenticeship start numbers can be restored to at least previous levels while adequately funded provision for the new standards and end point assessment arrangements leads to even higher quality training than the vast majority of apprentices already receive.

Following the popular session at our summer conference, leading employers will again be present to share their experience of the apprenticeship programme. The ESFA will be ready to debate its proposals for the next transitional phase of the reforms which will see the non-levy paying employers join the Apprenticeship Service. In addition to apprenticeships, the wider skills agenda will be explored. This will cover another government manifesto commitment in the form of a National Retraining Scheme and DfE officials will bring delegates up to date with the latest plans.

We now have greater clarity on the timetable for devolving the Adult Education Budget and the Autumn Conference will debate how better value for money

can be delivered under the Mayoral Combined Authorities and the LEPs. In conjunction with the Department for International Trade, a session will look at the opportunities that are available for providers to export their expertise and experience abroad. Another highlight will be an update on how the Government's Review of Post-18 Education and Funding is progressing from the Review's Chair.

High quality skills provision is vital for a post-Brexit economy, the Industrial Strategy and social mobility. Throughout 2018, providers have demonstrated their incredible resilience in serving the needs of employers and learners extremely well despite an unprecedented set of challenges. Our Autumn Conference should help to navigate the next set without quality being endangered. You can't afford to miss it!

Price for AELP Members
First Delegate: £199.00 + VAT
Subsequent Delegate(s): £155.00 + VAT

Price for Non-Members
First Delegate: £399.00 + VAT
Subsequent Delegate(s): £355.00 + VAT

Although there has been an increase in the non-member rate, the member rate remains the same as 2017

0117 947 2097 | events@aelp.org.uk | www.aelpautumnconference.org.uk | #AELPAC18

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

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

Difficulty:
Easy

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

Difficulty:
Medium

Solutions: See right

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: Callum Perry



Solutions

Turn the paper around to check if your answers match - but no cheating!

Difficulty: Easy

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

Difficulty: Medium

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