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**LARGEST COLLEGE  
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AFTER TOUGH YEAR**

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**SKILLS MINISTER :  
'COLLEGES ARE  
SIMPLY THE BEST'**

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# FE WEEK

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2018  
EDITION 257



Colleges Week, 15-19 October

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# 3AAA GOES BUST AS DFE CALLS IN FRAUD POLICE

- › Second DfE investigation results in contract termination and referral to fraud police
- › Financier calls in the administrator and nearly 500 employees made redundant
- › 3,000 16-18 and 1,500 adult apprentices at 33 sites across England left in limbo
- › 3aaa co-owner, Peter Marples, remains chairman of academy trust with 17 schools

Exclusive

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What are you going to do about this?

PETER MUCKLOW  
Director for Adult Education Budget

Chief Early Apprenticeship Monitoring Visit Report

EXCLUSIVE: Will DfE ban new apprenticeship providers with poor AEB in monitoring visits?

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The government must consult apprentices to improve training

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Colleges need a new vision for the fourth industrial revolution

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Three cheers for the Institute for Apprenticeships - job well done!

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# Recipients of Taking Teaching Further funding revealed

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The first colleges to train 80 industry experts as teachers as part of the £5 million Taking Teaching Further scheme have been announced.

The programme seeks to recruit specialists and retrain them to work in the FE workforce. Each provider will receive up to £20,000 to train up “experienced industry professionals” in a level-five diploma in education and training.

This first round focuses on “priority sectors”, including the T-levels fields of education and childcare, digital and construction, as well as engineering and manufacturing and other STEM subjects.

On Friday, skills minister Anne Milton revealed 23 providers to participate in the programme and recruit 80 “expert” teachers, comprising 20 colleges, a council and two independent learning providers.

Also announced were 20 providers who will split £900,000 and run “innovative projects” exploring how industry and FE can work together.

Some institutions appear on both lists, and will be receiving money for both strands of the programme, including Calderdale College, East Kent College, Northampton College, Petroc College, Walsall College and the Learning Skills Partnership.

“We are transforming technical education in this country with the introduction of new T-levels,” Ms Milton said. “We want staff with industry skills to pass on their expertise to the next generation.

“I’m thrilled that we have a chance to bring industry to colleges and it will be exciting to see the differences they can make to their colleges and the students they teach.”

David Russell, chief executive of the Education and Training Foundation, which is managing the programme, said it will “set a new benchmark for bringing in talent and expertise to improve technical teaching and support the development of our brilliant FE workforce.”

The next round of the Taking Teaching Further programme will open for applications in December. For the full list of successful providers see fewek.co.uk.

# NCG boss Joe Docherty quits following turbulent year

BILLY CAMDEN  
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Exclusive

The boss of the largest college group in the country has quit.

Joe Docherty left NCG with immediate effect this week. He became the third high-profile and highly paid college boss to resign in recent weeks.

His decision follows a turbulent year for the college group which has been rated poorly by Ofsted, seen its achievement rates fall, made mass redundancies, and suffered with staff strikes.

“After five years in post, Joe Docherty has decided to resign from his post as chief executive with immediate effect,” a spokesperson for NCG said.

“The board has accepted his resignation and will immediately begin the search for a successor.

“Chris Payne, executive director partnerships and assurance, will temporarily take over responsibilities of the chief executive as recruitment of a new chief executive starts immediately.”

NCG comprises Newcastle College, Newcastle Sixth Form College, Lewisham College, Southwark College, Carlisle College, Kidderminster College,



Joe Docherty

West Lancashire College, Rathbone Training and InTraining.

In June, Ofsted downgraded the group from a grade two to a three in the face of poor achievement rates, which sit at around 10 points lower than the national average of 677 per cent, and lower than the minimum threshold of 62 per cent.

Redundancies at the group’s private training providers Intraining and Rathbone Training followed, where staff numbers were cut by up to a fifth in an effort to save £3 million.

The group was further shaken when staff at the recently decoupled Lewisham Southwark College, a long-distance merger partner, went on strike over pay.

On top of this, a free school that NCG sponsors, the Discovery School, was forced to close down by the government.

FE Week also understands that the group will be dropped from the government’s final bidding round for Institutes of Technology after Ofsted hit it with a grade three.

Mr Docherty was paid a £227,000 salary in 2016-17, along with £33,000 in pension contributions and £21,000 from benefits in kind.

He is the third boss of a mega college to resign in recent weeks. He’s followed

Andrew Cleaves leaving Birmingham Metropolitan College, and Dame Asha Khemka quitting her role at West Nottinghamshire College.

Mr Cleaves earned a massive £266,000 in 2016-17 despite BMet owing almost £14 million in exceptional financial support cash – more than any other college.

Dame Asha resigned a month after FE Week revealed that her college requested a £2.1 million government bailout just 48 hours before it would have run out of cash.

A spokesperson for the University and College Union said: “These resignations offer a chance for a fresh start. The focus for these colleges now must be on engaging with trade unions to address staff concerns and ensuring strong leadership for the future.”

Julian Gravatt, deputy chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said: “Colleges are held to high standards while lacking the funding they need to meet student demand.

“A college leader can make a real difference to success. It’s often a shame when a leader resigns but what really matters is that colleges – and everyone who works in them – have the tools to do the job they need to do for their students and communities.”

# Northumberland College faces cash crisis

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Northumberland College has suffered a “cash flow crisis” and could see its finances plummet further, according to an intervention report from the FE Commissioner.

The report, published on Thursday, also revealed declining learner recruitment, inadequate apprenticeships, low achievement and “last minute negotiations” to defer loan repayments, and warned it may need to request exceptional financial support.

“After several years of growth, the college faces a substantial shortfall in income for 2017-18, which is forecast to fall short of the budget target,” it said.

“Inflationary pressures coupled with a drop in 16 to 19 classroom-based funding next academic year present a major challenge to get the budget back into balance by 2018-19 and generate sufficient cash to service the college’s debt.

“The best-case scenario for the college’s financial health is to remain satisfactory in 2017-18 and 2018-19. There is a real prospect that financial health will fall to inadequate in 2017-18.”

Although the report acknowledged

the “significant progress” made by the new senior team, after principal Ian Clinton took up his position in April, it heavily criticised previous leadership for a “major failing in financial management and oversight” and not “formally or sufficiently” challenging funding deficiencies.

This included “wholly unrealistic targets” for new levy apprenticeships, “over-optimistic” income targets and a lack of oversight about new commercial initiatives, including a recruitment agency, MOT and service centre and leisure learning courses, which it said “compounded an already declining financial position”.

“The college failed to identify a looming cash shortfall until January 2018, which resulted in last minute negotiations with the local authority to defer contractual repayments of loan principal and interest,” it added.

“It is not possible at this stage to rule out a requirement by the college for exceptional financial support, particularly if income forecasts fall short, cost arising from the staff restructure escalate or the college is unable to agree terms with the council and Barclays.”

The report warned that income is set to decline further at the college in

2018-19, and the best it can hope for is to break even. In July, the Northumberland Chronicle reported that 42 staff took voluntary redundancy after the college reduced the number of courses on offer.

FE Commissioner Richard Atkins’ report noted that quality of provision at Northumberland College, which is rated ‘good’ by Ofsted, has been “deteriorating”, and “approximately 50 per cent of apprenticeship provision falls below minimum standards.”

The college was said to have “largely ‘rolled over’ the previous year’s curriculum” each year, and the average size of its classes is just 10 learners. One level three engineering class had just one learner.

Money issues were identified as stemming from a shortfall in the adult education budget, apprenticeships, the European Social Fund and trading activities.

Northumberland College was placed in early intervention by the Education and Skills Funding Agency following an assessment of the college’s financial plan in July 2017. The report follows a diagnostic assessment visit to the college in April 2018 and a formal intervention assessment on July 18, and was sent to the college last month.

It recommended that



Jacqui Henderson

Northumberland considered the case for a merger, and told it to improve financial forecasts and quality assurance of apprenticeships.

And in a letter to the college chair, Jacqui Henderson (pictured), the Skills Minister Anne Milton said: “I have accepted all of the recommendations of the Commissioner.”

In September, Northumberland College announced it would merge with Sunderland College by March 2019.

Northumberland College was contacted for comment.



# Colleges to march on parliament in funding protest

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From front

Up to 3,000 people are expected to march on parliament on Wednesday to demand more funding for colleges.

The march for FE, organised by the University and College Union in partnership with the National Union of Students and the Association of Colleges, is the main event taking place during Colleges Week, from October 15 to 19.

The week of action, led by the AoC, aims to “make a lot more noise” about the funding issues affecting the sector.

The UCU estimates that between 2,000 and 3,000 people will show their support for FE that day, with colleges around the country laying on coaches to get protestors to the march.

Two London colleges are even cancelling classes that day so their teachers and learners can attend.

Matt Waddup, the UCU’s head of policy and campaigns, said that staff, learners and college leaders will “march together on Wednesday because colleges are getting a raw deal on funding”.

“Colleges are increasingly unable to



compete with schools and universities to retain staff, and budget cuts have led to fewer local learning opportunities for people to upskill and retrain,” he said.

“We need urgent public investment in our colleges and their staff – without it, we risk squandering the potential of millions of people.”

The march will start out from Waterloo Place at 12.45pm, before heading to a rally in Parliament Square from 1.30pm.

Speakers will include shadow education secretary Angela Rayner, AoC chief executive David Hughes and NUS president Shakira Martin.

New City College is closing its four

campuses, at Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Redbridge and Epping Forest, that day, its group principal Gerry McDonald said.

“Staff will be free to lobby, march, write to their MPs and meet with stakeholders to really explain the value of what we do and how much we need the years of underinvestment to end,” he said.

Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College is also understood to be closing for the day.

Emily Chapman, NUS vice president for FE, said the union was working to “make sure all colleges are represented in this crucial week for the future of FE”.

This included working with the AoC to ensure student unions were represented, and with principals to provide coaches to Westminster on the day.

As well as the march on parliament, college leaders, staff and students will lobby MPs that day to plead the case for more funding for FE.

Throughout the week, colleges across the country will be putting on their own events and “inviting the local community to celebrate the impact that colleges have”, an AoC spokesperson said.

The skills minister Anne Milton is backing the week and has branded

colleges as “simply the best” in her monthly opinion piece for FE Week (see page 16).

Colleges Week was prompted by the Department for Education’s decision to fund a 3.5 per cent pay rise for school teachers while ignoring college lecturers – an announcement that left AoC boss David Hughes “angry” and “frustrated”.

“The issue is we are in a very tight funding financial constraint position with government so we have to make a lot more noise and get a lot more students, staff, parents, employers, stakeholders, partners to advocate for colleges,” he told FE Week last month.

# We need more core funding not ‘initiative mania’, sector leaders tell select committee

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Sector leaders have made an impassioned plea to MPs for the government to “stop the initiative mania” and focus on core funding ahead of Budget day later this month.

Representatives from the Sixth Form Colleges Association, the Association of Colleges and the National Union of Students were giving evidence to the education select committee’s hearing on college funding on Wednesday.

Dr Alison Birkinshaw, principal of York College and last year’s AoC president, told MPs that any new funding being offered to the sector was being “channelled into the revolutionary aspects of FE”, while “core funding is being kept at an all-time low, and that means we can’t do our job”.

“We’re in permanent change but the core, the sustainability of the funding, is

just not there,” she said.

James Kewin, deputy chief executive of the SFCA, urged the government to “stop the initiative mania”.

“We see all kinds of eye-catching initiatives like uplifts for maths, or

particular qualifications, but the much more mundane reality is we just need higher core funding,” he said.

Furthermore, these initiatives can “do more harm than good”, he said, because “when we say there’s not enough

money in 16 to 18”, the Department for Education and the Treasury “will say, we’ve just given you some money to increase maths, we’ve given you money for T-levels”.

FE Week reported on Monday that the SFCA is set to launch a campaign to call for the base funding rate for all 16- to 18-year-old learners to be increased to £4,760 in the next spending review.

Mr Kewin described this as a “modest ask” at today’s hearing, and said it was “actually half of what we’ve lost since 2010”.

When asked by committee member William Wragg where the money would come from to pay for this increase, both

Mr Kewin and Dr Birkinshaw suggested it could come – at least in part – from the current underspend, which Mr Kewin said was around £100 million a year.

“We’re not talking about the need to cut, we’re talking about the need to use the funding properly,” Dr Birkinshaw argued.

Education funding “needs to be linked to the actual cost of delivery”, Mr Kewin said.

The current rate is “entirely arbitrary” and “based on a settlement the DfE gets” divided by the number of students, he said.

“The reality is they don’t know if the funding is sufficient, because they’ve never asked.”

Dr Birkinshaw said that any longer-term planning should start with “envisioning what an education system should look like post-16, including adults, and then we have to work out what it would cost to fund it”.

Other issues raised during the hearing included English and maths GCSE resits, staff pay and teacher pensions, which Mr Kewin described as a “time bomb waiting for us” and one that “needs to be addressed”.

“What the government can’t do is what it’s indefensibly done on the teacher pay grant and say we’ll pick up the tab for schools or academies, but not for colleges. It has to be the same for everyone,” he said.



From left: James Kewin, Emily Chapman, and Dr Alison Birkinshaw

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Sir Gerry Berragan, Chief Executive, Institute for Apprenticeships

David Hughes, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges

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News

# 3aaa goes bust as DfE calls in fraud police

BILLY CAMDEN  
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Exclusive

Crisis-hit Aspire Achieve Advance has been referred to the police and gone into administration – putting 500 jobs and the future of 4,500 apprentices at risk.

The company, better known as 3aaa and one of the biggest apprenticeship providers in the country, came to the end of its sale process this week and multiple bids were made.

However, a suitable deal could not be reached and, as a result, 3aaa was put into administration.

The training provider, which made a £2.5 million post-tax loss in the 18 months to January 2018, has been subject to an investigation by the ESFA for a second time following claims of inflated success rates.

The DfE has referred their findings

to the police, and the case will be dealt with by Action Fraud – the UK’s national reporting centre for fraud and cybercrime.

Following administration, the ESFA will become responsible for 3aaa’s 3,000-odd 16- to 18-year-olds and 1,500 adult apprentices, and tasked with finding them new training providers.

Around 500 jobs could be lost. Employees worked across 33 sites with 1,600 employers.

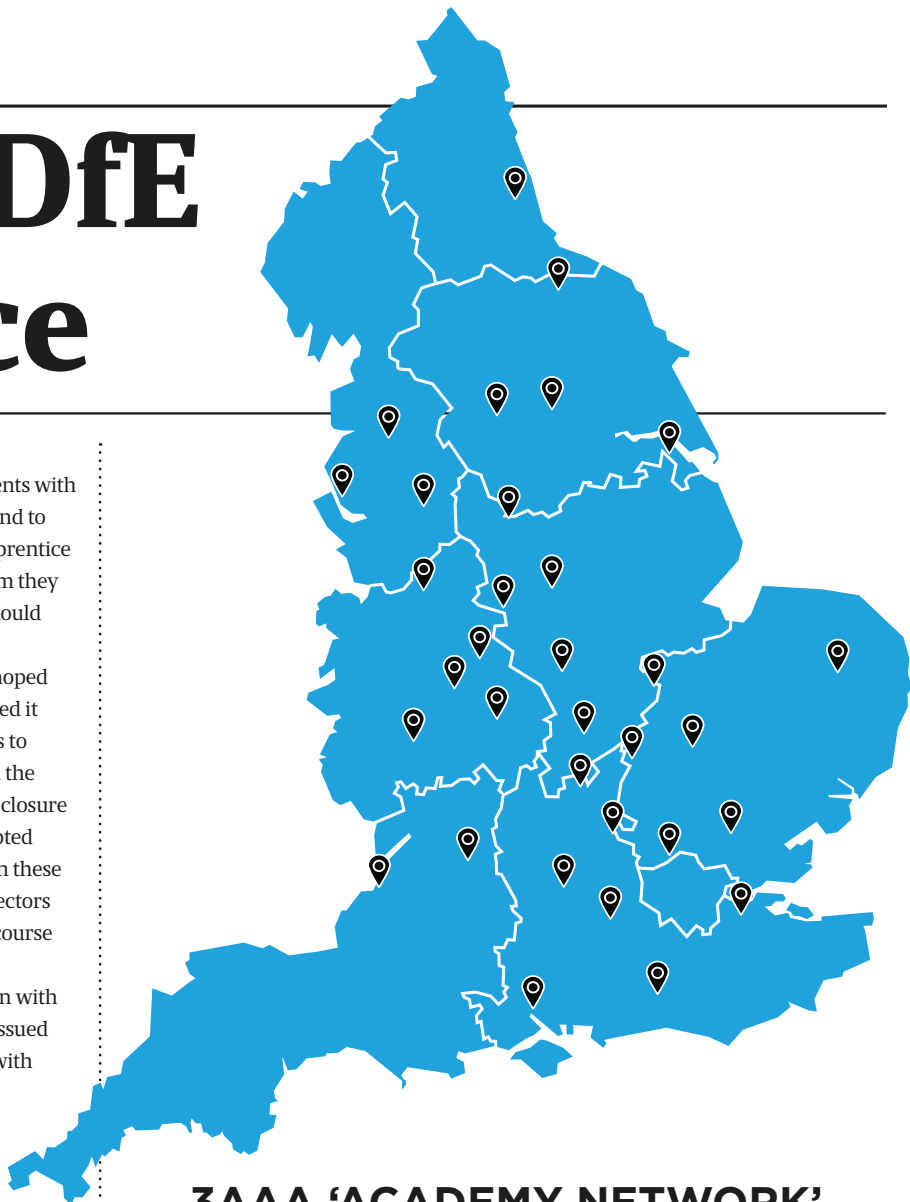
“The directors of 3aaa have today requested receivership to administer the business arrangements of the company with immediate effect,” a statement from 3aaa said on Thursday.

“This follows a meeting with the ESFA on Wednesday 10th October at which the ESFA confirmed there would be no further progress payments for learners on programme. This immediately removes the ability for the company to continue to operate.”

It continued: “This affects the employees, apprentices and clients with whom 3aaa has a relationship and to whom each employer of the apprentice must now determine with whom they wish the apprentice learning should take place in the future.

“The new management had hoped that the ESFA would have allowed it to have transferred the business to another qualified operator or in the worst case arranged an orderly closure of the business. The ESFA has opted not to allow that to happen so, in these extreme circumstances, the directors have no option but to take this course following this ESFA decision.”

The ESFA said: “In conjunction with recent investigations, we have issued notices to terminate contracts with 3aaa. The notices will bring the contracts to an end in a three month period, in January 2019.



## 3AAA ‘ACADEMY NETWORK’

- > 33 ‘academies’ across England
- > 3,000 16-18 and 1,500 19+ apprentices
- > Nearly 500 employees
- > Working with 1500 employers
- > More than £30m ESFA funding per year
- > At time of going into administration, 3aaa owned by: Peter and Sarah Marples (42.5%), Di and Patrick McEvoy-Robinson (42.5%), Derek Mapp (10%) and Richard Irons (5%)

## ACADEMY TRUST BACKS MARPLES DESPITE 3AAA SCANDAL

An expanding academy trust is backing its chair Peter Marples despite the government referring Aspire Achieve Advance to the police following its second investigation.

Mr Marples, a multi-millionaire businessman who co-founded 3aaa in 2008, joined the Spencer Academies Trust in December 2015 as a trustee and became its chair in the 2016/17 academic year.

He also heads the trust’s resources and remuneration committees.

Since launching in 2011, the trust has grown to sponsoring 12 schools. This month it took on four more and will take on another one next month following a “merger” with the Trent Academies Group.

Mr Marples resigned from his position at 3aaa last month in the midst of the second ESFA investigation, but continued to be its joint majority shareholder with co-founder Di McEvoy-

Robinson.

Despite the 3aaa scandal, the Spencer Academies Trust appears to be fully supportive of Mr Marples.

“Peter is a highly respected, valued and effective chairman of our trust,” a spokesperson for the trust said. “We do not comment on matters outside of the trust.”

A DfE spokesperson said: “Appointments to positions within academy trusts are the responsibility of the trusts themselves; academy trusts must make sure they comply with the terms set out in both their funding agreement and the articles of association, both of which consider suitability tests for key personnel.”

FE Week made multiple attempts to contact Mr Marples but he did not respond.

The Trent Academies Group will now operate under the Spencer Academies Trust name following the “merger”, and will be “led by” chief executive Paul West and Mr Marples.

The enlarged group will comprise 18 schools which will teach 17,000 students across Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire.

Peter Marples

“During the notice period, the suspension on apprenticeship enrolments remains in place. Our investigations will continue until all concerns have been addressed.

“Our priority is to protect the apprentices and to ensure minimum disruption to their learning. We will source high quality alternative provision as quickly as possible and support apprentices and employers to enable them to continue with their apprenticeship programme. We will write to all apprentices and employers to explain the next steps.”

A DfE spokesperson added: “We have put a specialist team in place to identify new providers and help learners with as little disruption as possible. Following our investigation we have referred our findings to the police, through Action Fraud.

“We will look very carefully at what lessons can be learned as a result of this investigation.”

3aaa’s managing director, Richard Irons, who took over running the company when its directors Peter Marples and Di McEvoy-Robinson quit last month, emailed clients earlier this week to say he was taking the provider forward as “new management”.

This is despite Mr Irons having been 3aaa’s chief operating officer for over two years.

In his email to customers he said any “historic data issues or previous investigations into the business” are “categorically not part of our current dialogue with the ESFA and precede new management”.

The first ESFA investigation into 3aaa,

carried out in 2016 by auditing firm KPMG, found dozens of success rate “overclaims”.

KPMG “primarily” held discussions with the owners Mr Marples and Ms McEvoy-Robinson as well as the provider’s resources director at the time, Lee Marples, during the investigation.

Peter Marples is also chair of a multi-academy trust, which has come out backing him despite the 3aaa scandal (see box out).

In June FE Week revealed that the training provider’s latest Ofsted inspection, which was expected to result in another ‘outstanding’ rating, had been declared “incomplete” following intervention from the ESFA after claims were made by a whistleblower.

The agency subsequently launched its second investigation into the provider regarding its achievement rates.

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

It was subsequently suspended from recruiting apprentices but “instructed” staff to not date any paperwork for “planned enrolments”.

The provider received over £31 million in government funding last year and had the largest allocation for non-levy apprenticeships – standing at nearly £22 million.

Last week, an FE Week investigation found that Ofsted delayed inspecting the beleaguered provider for years despite its achievement rates plummeting when apprentice numbers nearly quadrupled and severe safeguarding concerns were brought forward by a whistleblower.

The chair of the influential Public Accounts Committee, Meg Hillier, criticised the serious failing by the education watchdog and expressed fear that the situation mirrors the Learndirect scandal.

Concerned apprentices, parents, or employers can contact the ESFA on a dedicated e-mail: 3.AAA@education.gov.uk.



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News

# Scrap UTC 14-19 model, says former schools minister in damning report

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Former schools minister David Laws has called for the admission age at university technical colleges to change to 16, after new research faulted their academic progress and ability to recruit and retain learners.

The latest report from the Education Policy Institute has laid bare the major issues at the 14-19 providers, including high drop-out rates and severely low Ofsted grades.

It follows years of FE Week investigations into the troubled UTCs, whose problems have included dramatic decreases in learners, providers dropping the brand and being forced to hand back money because of low pupil numbers,

David Laws



plans to switch to recruiting from age 13, and even UTC architect Michael Gove admitting the programme had failed.

Mr Laws, who was schools minister when the institutions began rolling out under both Mr Gove and Nicky Morgan between 2012 and 2015, is now executive chairman of the EPI and said the government should stop funding new UTCs until a review is undertaken into how best to deliver a “sustainable and effective” programme.

However, Lord Baker, head of the Baker Dearing Educational Trust, which supports the small, technical-focused institutions, said UTCs should not be compared to a “normal” school and insisted many were “oversubscribed”.

Since 2011, the Department for Education has allocated almost £330 million of capital spending to the UTC programme.

In this time, 59 UTCs have been

established, although eight of these have since closed and one converted to an academy. Another, UTC@harbourside, will close in August 2019.

UTCs have struggled with falling student numbers, with the Institute for Public Policy Research reporting that 13 failed to fill half or more of their Year 10 places in 2015-16, with 39 per cent of all Year 10 places at UTCs remaining vacant that year. In 2018, 20 open UTCs had fewer students than in the previous year.

“The reality is England has a pre- and post-16 system,” the report said. “This means that admission at age 14 is not the norm and has failed to convince enough students, parents, carers and schools of its benefits, and there is no evidence that participation in UTCs at age 14 is likely to rise

significantly without more fundamental changes to the education system.”

It noted that over half of UTC students drop out from key stage four to key stage five in the same institution, and criticised the “overall poor performance” in academic qualifications at the UTCs.

On average, students at UTCs attained almost one grade lower in academic qualifications than those in other institutions, according to the report.

However, UTCs do well in technical and vocational qualifications. Those studying level-three technical qualifications achieve higher grades than learners elsewhere, but they are also more likely to drop out, with a retention rate of 79 per cent rather than over 90 per cent.

Learners at UTCs also do “substantially better than average” at progress in maths and English GCSE retakes.

Lord Kenneth Baker



But over half of UTCs inspected by Ofsted are rated “inadequate” or “requires improvement”, compared with less than a quarter of all institutions. Four per cent are “outstanding”, compared with 22 per cent of secondary schools.

Mr Laws said the “poor performance” is “about the quality of learning and the engagement of students.

“The government should not fund further UTC expansion until a review is undertaken and steps are put in place to deliver a sustainable and effective programme.”

However, Lord Baker said UTCs have a “challenging” intake, and “Baker Dearing is proud that UTCs transform their students’ life chances.”

Julian Gravatt, deputy chief executive of the Association of Colleges, urged a cautious reaction to the EPI’s recommendations, describing the 16-to-18 sector as “already a chaotic and underfunded market”.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said it was “worth examining” changing the admissions age.

A DfE spokesperson said: “We have a diverse education system and university technical colleges are an important part of that, with the best providers teaching people the skills and knowledge that will help them secure good jobs in specialist technical sectors.”

## £2.3m wasted on unopened UTCs

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Exclusive

The Department for Education has wasted more than £2.3 million over the last five years on studio schools, UTCs and post-16 free schools that never even opened.

Figures obtained by FE Week’s sister paper Schools Week reveal a staggering £2,331,888 has been written off for nine planned providers cancelled between May 2013 and January 2018.

The biggest loss was from the Powerlist Post 16 Leadership College, which was expected to open in London in September 2015 but was scrapped that month instead.

A joint venture between The Powerlist Foundation and the Aspirations Academy Trust, the cancelled college cost the DfE more than £467,000, including over £200,000 in capital losses.

Four university technical colleges also make the list, costing over £1 million

between them.

Dr Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said: “The way taxpayers’ money is awarded to education projects should be transparent and above board, yet these examples raise questions about the level of scrutiny being applied to applications when the recipient schools are well-connected within government circles.”

But Mark Lehain interim director of the New Schools Network, a charity which supports the setup of free schools,

said establishing a school is “a big challenge”, and it is “only right” the DfE cancels the “small proportion” of cases that don’t develop as planned.

Burton and South Derbyshire UTC, developed in partnership with Burton and South Derbyshire College, was given over £8 million of government funding before being scrapped in May 2016.

This year the abandoned campus became a sixth form centre for the de Ferrers academy trust, but the DfE still accrued a loss of over £400,000 on the project.

UTC Guildford was supposed to open this year, but was scrapped in March 2017 at a cost of £408,000. Its trustees, which included Royal Holloway University and Surrey County Council, said at the time the DfE was “no longer supportive of the project”.

Planned engineering specialist Birkenhead UTC was backed by local employers including shipbuilder Cammell Laird, but was cancelled in May 2013 at a cost of almost £11,000. Liverpool Engineering and Logistics UTC, which counted City of Liverpool College, Liverpool John Moores University and engineering company Laing O’Rourke within its trustees, cost over £245,000 when it was scrapped in August 2014.

Two studio schools – Digital Studio College Derby and London’s Aldridge Centre for Entrepreneurship – cost over £560,000 when they were scrapped.

The most recent free school to have its plans rejected was the North West Leeds Sixth Form Centre, which was cancelled in January this year – eight months before it was due to open – at a cost of £121,864.

The scrapped projects were only identified by the department in the last academic year as a result of “improved financial management” and had not been previously reported, despite some dating back to 2013.

A DfE spokesperson said all free school projects “go through a robust approval process”.

Project name	Revenue losses to be declared	Capital losses to be declared	Value of loss (£'000)	Date project cancelled
Birkenhead UTC	£10,900		£10,900	29/05/2013
Digital Studio College Derby	£260,640		£260,640	01/05/2014
Liverpool Engineering & Logistics UTC (previously Liverpool Low Carbob & SuperPort UTC)	£245,868		£245,868	01/08/2014
STEM Academy Croydon Gateway	£115,045		£115,045	02/09/2015
Powerlist Post 16 Leadership College	£260,000	£207,532	£467,532	11/09/2015
Aldridge Centre For Entrepreneurship	£273,555	£26,894	£300,449	20/10/2015
Burton and South Derbyshire UTC	£400,937		£400,937	23/05/2016
UTC Guildford	£92,204	£316,449	£408,653	03/03/2017
North West Leeds Sixth Form Centre	£4,517	£117,347	£121,864	05/01/2018
Total	£1,663,666	£668,222	£2,331,888	



# Major subcontractor heavily criticised in ‘insufficient’ Ofsted monitoring visit report

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A major subcontractor has been heavily criticised in a new apprenticeship provider Ofsted monitoring visit report that found it to be making ‘insufficient progress’ in all areas under review.

Cumbria-based NC Training started delivering levy-funded apprenticeships in July 2017, but also held eight subcontracts worth £1.6 million last year.

The verdict means it can expect to be barred from taking on new apprentices – and it could face losing its place on the register of apprenticeship training providers, according to Education and Skills Funding Agency rules.

NC Training’s managing director Nicola Cassley told FE Week she was “deeply disheartened by the comments made” but did not indicate whether she felt they were fair.

“We would like to focus on the future, which means providing our stakeholders with the best possible

training and ensuring we receive a good grading at our full inspection.”

“Leaders and managers are not complying with the levy-funded apprenticeship requirements,” the report said.

Apprentices were not being recruited to programmes that “help them to develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours, or support their career advancement”.

“Too many apprentices reported to inspectors that they had been in their job roles for a number of years and that they were not learning anything new,” the report said.

Some were found to be “completing a second apprenticeship at a lower level than the first”.

Most apprentices – “particularly the most able” – were making “slow progress”, the report said.

Many were not receiving their full entitlement to off-the-job training, and “in a few instances” did not even know what it was.

Safeguarding at the provider was “not sufficiently effective”.

A “very newly appointed”



safeguarding officer had “recognised quickly the need to implement more robust safeguarding arrangements” but had not yet had time to put these into place.

NC Training, founded in 2016, held subcontractors with eight prime providers in 2017/18, according to the ESFA’s most recent listed of declared subcontractors.

These were worth a combined total of £1.6 million, with the largest – for

£488,091 – with college group NCG.

The ESFA confirmed in August that Ofsted would have the final say over poor-performing apprenticeship providers, following confusion over which agency was accountable for quality.

A provider found to be making ‘insufficient progress’ in one or more themes under review would be barred from taking on any new apprentices, until they have been rated at least

‘requires improvement’ following a full inspection.

Ofsted later clarified that this would take place within a year of the monitoring visit.

However, if monitoring visit uncovers concerns about safeguarding, the ESFA “reserves the right to remove an organisation from the register” – although this is only in cases where the inspectorate has “identified a significant risk to apprentices”.



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# Kick poor-performing new providers off RoATP, education committee urges

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Underperforming apprenticeship providers should be removed from the government's register – not just barred from taking on new starts – the education select committee has urged.

It made the call in its new report, *The apprenticeships ladder of opportunity: quality not quantity*, published on Monday, based on the findings of its recent inquiry.

The report outlines a series of recommendations aimed at improving the quality of apprenticeships and making them more accessible to people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

"We recommend that new providers judged by Ofsted to be making insufficient progress should be removed from the register of apprenticeship training providers," it said.

"A provider whose only mark of distinction is a failing grade from Ofsted has no business providing

government-funded training."

In August the education watchdog was given greater powers to stop new providers found to be making "insufficient progress" in a monitoring visit from taking on new apprentices.

The move followed embarrassment for the government at an inquiry hearing in May, in which skills minister Anne Milton admitted there was a lack of clarity over who was responsible for apprenticeship quality – Ofsted or the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

"While we welcome this greater clarity, we do not think it goes far enough," the report said.

"There has been an explosion in the number of training providers in recent years but neither employers nor apprentices can have genuine confidence that quality training is being provided by these new entrants," said Robert Halfon, chair of the education committee.

The report also pressed the government to do more to ensure all the agencies responsible for the apprenticeship system have enough

cash to do their job properly, after hearing that "several" of these bodies – including the ESFA, the Institute for Apprenticeships and Ofsted – lacked capacity.

Other recommendations include a cap on the number of starts a new provider can have until Ofsted has deemed it to be making at least "reasonable progress" in all areas.

It also called for greater flexibility in the 20 per cent off-the-job training requirement, tighter controls on subcontracting – including a cap on management fees and more Ofsted inspections of subcontractors – and the creation of a social-justice fund to support organisations that help disadvantaged young people become apprentices.

The report criticised the IfA, which it said had "at times appeared more successful at uniting stakeholders in opposition than anything else".

The IfA is tasked with ensuring that apprenticeships offer value for money, but "our concern is that value for money is becoming a synonym for cheaper," the report added.

Mark Dawe, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said he was "particularly heartened" by this observation.

"As the MPs say, high-quality provision costs, and setting funding bands so low as to reduce the quality of training or dissuade employers from recruiting apprentices is a false economy," he said.

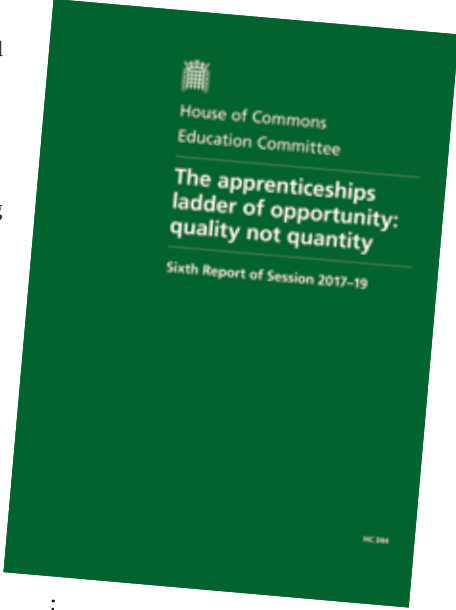
Julian Gravatt, deputy chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said the report "raises a lot of interesting and valid points" but that "more needs to be done".

Doubling the amount of time that employers have to spend their levy funds – another recommendation from the report – "does not fix the problem; it just kicks it into the long grass", he added.

"It is essential that apprenticeship training is of high quality. We have given Ofsted additional funding so it can hold the rising numbers of training providers to account. Of those registered providers that have been

inspected, 83 per cent were rated as 'good' or 'outstanding'. Any provider that falls short of the required standards will be removed from our register and stopped from taking on new apprentices until they have improved," Ms Milton said.

"We will respond to the report in full in the near future," she added.



## GORDON MARSDEN

Shadow minister for higher education, further education and skills



# The government must consult apprentices to improve training

**A shake-up of the system is essential to engage young people at an earlier age and increase social mobility, as well as encourage post-24 apprenticeships, argues Gordon Marsden**

This week the education select committee published a wide-ranging report on the government's apprenticeship record. It highlighted failings in apprenticeship policy, process and delivery that we, along with sector bodies, have articulated for months – often in this newspaper.

But what needs highlighting from this report is the importance not just of the apprenticeship but of the apprentice.

This is a priority that's long overdue for this government. What is the point of the skills minister waxing lyrical about our young people's success in world skills competitions if her department takes little notice of young apprentices? My Labour colleagues and I have repeatedly held the government to account for failing to utilise the Panel

of Apprentices.

The select committee touched on the government's consistent failure to support underrepresented groups adequately. That is why we have long-standing pledges to set targets to increase apprenticeships for people with disabilities, care leavers and veterans, and ensure greater representation of women, BAME, LGBT and people with disabilities – and tried to get them included in the Institute for Apprenticeships' priorities when it was set up.

Improving access and participation are fine words, but how do we give them sharp edges? The report references witnesses, as diverse as the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and Central YMCA, on what might be done by way of pre-apprenticeship support – establishing an apprenticeship access fund is one possibility.

That could be a useful start, but what's equally important is encouraging young

people to see the potential for their futures at a much earlier age. I have been saying we need to be engaging young people as early as nine and 10 in school about the options available via apprenticeships. That also needs hard wiring into careers advice, to go beyond the Baker clause into a more sustained

**“Establishing an apprenticeship access fund is one possibility”**

holistic strategy, giving young people a taster of the variety and excitement that the apprentice route can offer.

Here again, utilising the talents of the IfA apprentices panel, alongside the National Society of Apprentices, the Industry Apprentice Council and the expanding WorldSkills champions

programme, is the right way to cut through and promote the social mobility we need. In the world of the 2020s, where bespoke skills and enabling ones will have to combine in people's lives with more traditional qualifications, that sort of early exposure will be critical.

Traineeships, or pre-apprentice training, remains the great potential lever to expand that social mobility by getting more young people to the starting line for top-quality apprenticeships. Since traineeships were announced, the government has failed miserably to put the incentives, the marketing or the resources into them, and to remove the barriers in regulations between the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Education that stymie them for many young people. It is good to see the committee and its witnesses, including the EEF (the manufacturers' organisation), raising these issues again.

The report mentions the Care to

Learn scheme, which gives financial support to parents under the ages of 20 who are their child's primary carer. But what about the same cohort of people who are the primary carers for a parent or sibling? This is a huge, under-recognised issue – in my own constituency in Blackpool we have nearly a thousand teenage carers, some of whom I met recently, in that category. Don't they deserve a chance to be supported to get on the apprenticeship ladder, to be recognised for their service as carers with aspirations too?

We also need a far stronger definition of what role there is for post-24 apprenticeships in the daunting task of retraining and reskilling millions of adults. Why can't the money, lost in poor take-up of the government's failing advanced-learning loans policy, stay in the DfE to fund and support some of the initiatives talked about here? Labour's new National Education Service, along with our lifelong learning commission, will be focusing sharply on this.



# Concerns raised about the quality of maths centres of excellence

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Exclusive

The government has insisted “quality” was a factor in choosing 21 colleges to share £40 million funding as maths centres of excellence after concerns over their achievement rates.

The centres for excellence will test and disseminate new ways to improve the teaching of maths to learners who are resitting maths GCSEs, and will share the cash over five years.

The chosen colleges were revealed last week, but eyebrows have been raised over some pass rates at the selected institutions.

According to the Department for Education’s official data for 2016-17, the average A\*-C pass rate for general FE colleges was 24.8 per cent, and 39.4 per cent for sixth-form colleges.

However, four colleges and two sixth-form colleges that have been selected as centres for excellence have pass rates below the average.

All six had an A\*-C pass rate of less than 25 per cent, with Leyton Sixth Form College in east London at the bottom of the table at just 12.8 per cent.

It is followed by Leeds City College on 17.3 per cent, Tameside College on

18.4 per cent and Christ the King Sixth Form College in south London on 19.2 per cent.

Two college groups – Greater Brighton Metropolitan College and Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group – also came in below average, at 24.2 and 24.3 per cent respectively.

A DfE spokesperson said all colleges picked for the programme “passed the necessary eligibility criteria and were selected based on their leadership qualities, networks in the sector and the quality of their proposed approach”.

FE Week was told the eligibility criteria included the quality of proposed teaching approaches, student support, maths “credibility and capacity”, leadership and networks.

Gill Burbridge, principal of Leyton Sixth Form College, said the A\*-C pass rate was so low because they enter all learners for GCSE resits “regardless of their prior achievement”, and pointed to their high progress rates.

“We still have work to do to get more students on higher grades, but that’s part of a national issue and that is what this funding is part of addressing,” she said.

“We are really thrilled to have been given this opportunity. At a time when we are significantly underfunded in terms of base funding, to be able to

access some additional funding to work on a priority area like GCSE maths is really good, and a real opportunity for the young people here and in the organisations we work with.”

Louise Turner, director of academic support at Leeds City College, also said their focus was “progression”, and added: “We focus on liberating students from the pressures of believing that only high grades count.”

Progress scores do not always fully reflect the achievements of learners

at FE providers, as those who cannot sit exams are automatically given a negative score.

Paul James, deputy principal for curriculum and quality at New College Swindon, said he was concerned about institutions without strong outcomes getting the badge of “centre for excellence”, and said the sector must “commit to clarity about our own performances”.

“I wonder how long it will be before the successful colleges start branding

themselves as centres for excellence for maths in marketing materials,” he said.

“The title is value-laden and has the potential to significantly miscommunicate the institution’s position in respect of the challenges they are facing.

“Many applicants will rely on word of mouth, local marketing and reputation to make judgements, and in this respect I worry the centre for excellence may mislead.”

Institution Name	UKPRN	Type	Total cohort	Aims passed A*-C	A*-C Pass rate	Aims passed D-G	D-G Pass rate	Total Aims passed	Total pass rate
Cambridge Regional College	10001116	General FE	370	190	49.6	160	42.1	340	91.7
New College Stamford	10004303	General FE	280	120	44	150	54.2	270	98.2
Leicester College	10003867	General FE	720	270	36.8	320	44.3	580	81.1
East Kent College	10006570	General FE	520	190	36.7	240	47.4	430	84.1
City College Plymouth	10005128	General FE	520	180	35.6	310	60.5	500	96.1
Weston College of Further and Higher Education	10007459	General FE	660	210	31.6	430	64.3	640	95.9
Lakes College West Cumbria	10003753	General FE	140	40	31.4	80	58.6	130	90
Wilberforce College	10007503	General FE	320	100	30.6	220	66.7	320	97.2
Harlow College	10002899	General FE	390	120	30.5	240	62.3	360	92.8
Gateshead College	10002638	General FE	410	120	29	290	69.3	410	98.3
Warwickshire College Group	10007859	General FE	880	250	28.6	560	63.7	810	92.3
Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education	10007938	General FE	970	280	28.5	630	65.1	910	93.6
Nelson and Colne College	10004552	General FE	330	90	28	230	69.8	320	97.9
Fareham College	10007928	General FE	400	110	27.3	270	67.4	380	94.7
Newham College of FE	10004608	Sixth Form College	530	140	25.3	370	68.7	500	94
Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group	10004603	General FE	1100	270	24.3	790	72.2	1060	96.5
Greater Brighton Metropolitan College	10004736	General FE	860	210	24.2	580	67.3	780	91.5
Christ the King Sixth Form College	10001416	Sixth Form College	430	80	19.2	330	76.4	410	95.6
Tameside College	10006494	General FE	860	160	18.4	640	73.6	790	92
Leeds City College	10024962	General FE	2790	480	17.3	2000	71.8	2490	89.2
Leyton Sixth Form College	10003899	Sixth Form College	510	70	12.8	380	75.5	450	88.4

Advertorial

## Delivering education into prisons – a new landscape

There’s no doubt of the scale of the challenge when it comes to delivering education effectively into prisons. Many individuals within prisons struggle to engage with learning, having had negative experiences of education in their past.

A government target of 50% of prisoners engaged in learning set at the foundation of OLASS contracts back in 2004 is far from being met, with only 23% of prisoner reportedly engaged in learning in 2014. The Coates Review in 2016 identified some significant changes to support an uplift in performance when it comes to prison education. Prison governors should become responsible for the commissioning and performance of education contracts in their establishment, prison performance should be directly linked to OFSTED outcome and every prisoner must have a Personal Learning Plan.

As a result, the process of delivering education into prisons is going through considerable changes and we understand that providers are now navigating a completely different landscape when it comes to how they might work with prisons.

Prison Education Framework (PEF) is replacing the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) contracts and these new contracts will commence in April of next year with a prime provider appointed per region. The core PEF contracts will be supplemented by a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) allowing governors to directly procure local and niche services.

The DPS allows smaller organisations to contract directly with prison governors through the MoJ, providing education services directly in prisons. Preparing a compelling offer for prison governors is the next crucial step for organisations bidding to be approved on the DPS and offering qualifications that learners in custody can achieve is an invaluable part of any offer.

At NCFE, we understand that it’s difficult to find learning



solutions which improve the prospect of real job outcomes whilst meeting a wide range of learning and regional needs. With this in mind, NCFE is able to offer an end-to-end learning solution providing the foundation for a pathway to sustainable employment and helping learners to reintegrate into society.

NCFE has extensive experience of delivering educational solutions into prison over many years, working with prime providers of OLASS contracts in over 95 prisons and flexing to meet the changing needs of learners.

We offer a range of qualifications such as creative qualifications, employability skills and Occupational Studies, and qualifications to support wellbeing, personal and social interaction as well as life skills. We also offer unregulated

qualifications through our Accreditation and Employer Services which can be written and owned by you to make the programme of learning bespoke to a prison environment.

What’s more, we offer a collaborative approach, a high level of quality assurance and a personalised and dedicated account management service.

We believe in the importance of preparing those in custody for life in the community and for the world of work. Our core purpose as an organisation is to create opportunities for success to enrich society, and by equipping individuals with the tools they need to succeed, we’re doing just that.

You can find out more about NCFE and our offer for prisons on our website here: <https://www.ncfe.org.uk/delivering-education-into-prisons>



Investigates

# Have hopes for the new nation

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Nearly three years ago the government pledged to create five national colleges that would train more than 20,000 students between them by 2020. Over the weekend one of these, the National College for High Speed Rail, hit the headlines after it emerged it had just 93 learners last year. That prompted *FE Week* to take a closer look at all the national colleges – uncovering inadequate financial health, special treatment and below-target learner numbers.

Almost a year ago to the day, the National College for High Speed Rail (NCHSR) was opened with great fanfare.

Justine Greening, then education secretary, was all smiles as she cut the ribbon at the college's Doncaster campus, declaring it a "win-win for everyone".

But behind the positive front, a funding battle was raging that threatened to derail the college's very future – and that is still affecting it now.

Although extreme, this isn't the only case of a national college struggling.

But, as *FE Week* discovered, none of them will suffer the usual penalties for weak financial performance due to their "unique position" – even though most are in debt and under-recruiting.

Plans for the five colleges were

first confirmed in the 2015 spending review, which said they would "train an estimated 21,000 students by 2020 in industries central to the productivity agenda such as digital and high-speed rail".

The following May, the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills announced £80 million of government investment for the colleges, of which half would go to the NCHSR.

## “The college was hit hard by the Institute for Apprenticeships’ funding cap”

Two colleges, the National College for Digital Skills, known as Ada, based in London, and the National College Creative Industries (NCCI), in Essex, both opened their doors in 2016/17.

NCHSR, which has campuses in Birmingham and Doncaster, started in 2017/18, as did the National College for Nuclear, based in two hubs, at Bridgwater and Taunton College and Lakes College.

A fifth, the National College for Onshore Oil and Gas, was supposed to open in the same year, but has yet to get off the ground.

### NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR ONSHORE OIL AND GAS

The National College for Onshore Oil and Gas (NCOOG) was allocated £5.6 million in 2016 by BIS, along with equipment donations from industry.

It was set to open in September 2017, but has yet to materialise.

Martin York, the college's managing director, said the onshore oil and gas industry – otherwise known as fracking – was in development and as yet was still "identifying its future workforce requirements".

"NCOOG will launch and develop in partnership with industry," he said.

"When NCOOG is confident of the industry's requirements, delivery of the colleges funding and support package will be progressed; until we reach this stage I am pleased to confirm that NCOOG does not require or is seeking any third-party funding."

A DfE spokesperson confirmed that development of the college had been paused.

NCCI was in "inadequate" financial health in 2016/17, according to its financial statements, and Ada is projected to fall to the same financial rating this academic year.



Minutes from a July board meeting at Ada acknowledged that "under normal circumstances an 'inadequate' financial health rating would result in intervention measures in the sector

but it was acknowledged that the national colleges were in a unique position during start-up".

"This was recognised nationally and had been confirmed by Department

## NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR HIGH SPEED RAIL

Despite receiving more than £55 million in capital funding from BIS, local authorities and industry, the NCHSR had just 93 students enrolled in its first year, according to board minutes.

This was less than half the 226 learners it had forecast to have on board, it was acknowledged in its 2016/17 financial statements.

Nonetheless, it still set itself an ambitious target of 639 learners for this September, according to minutes from a board meeting in May: so ambitious that it prompted a team from the Education and Skills Funding Agency to remark that "they had never seen such growth".

The driver behind this rapid expansion in learner numbers was simple: money.

The college was hit hard by the Institute for Apprenticeships' decision in 2017 to award the level-four high-speed rail and infrastructure standard a funding cap of £21,000, rather than

£27,000 as anticipated and budgeted for by the college.

The standard has seven pathways and represents half of the college's current provision.

Minutes from an October 2017 board meeting, just days after Ms Greening's visit, reveal that the college "would not be viable" at that level of funding, "as for every £1,000 below the level of the higher band it would lose £1 million over five years".

"The college's costs had been built based on the quality of its provision that could not be delivered if the funding band was £21,000," the minutes said.

Despite attempting to enlist the support of Ms Greening to fight their cause, and an appeal by the employer group that developed the standard, the IfA's decision stood.

According to the college's 2016/17 financial statements, the impact of this on the college's income "will be significant over the medium to

long term".

College leaders met with officials from the Department for Education, Department for Transport and HS2 in December to discuss the college's financial situation, according to board minutes from that month.

"It was clear the departments will not let the college fail, and that they will develop a package to support it," the minutes said.

Earlier this year the college was forced to renegotiate repayments on a loan it had taken out from HS2, worth millions.

Minutes from a May board meeting show the college to be in discussions with the DfE about further support, although this was contingent on the college "being seen to help itself".

This included a suggestion that the college "broaden its scope" as it was "underselling itself by restricting its remit to high-speed rail".

Of the 14 courses the college currently offers, nine are focused on high-speed rail.

The remainder are in management or rail engineering, and it has plans to introduce five new courses – including one in train driving.

"Recognising the transferability of the skills gained at the college and how they can be applied in transport and infrastructure is key to matching the aspirations of our learners and businesses that come to the college, and is a focus of our ongoing discussions with DfE and our wider network of industry partners," said Martin Owen, the college's commercial finance director.

"We are proud of what we have achieved in launching the world's first dedicated high-speed rail college," he added.

No further funding support for the college has been agreed at this time, confirmed the DfE.

An IfA spokesperson said: "The Institute strives to make recommendations that support high-quality training whilst delivering value for money for employers and government."



# onal colleges been derailed?



Justine Greening at the launch of the National College of High Speed Rail

for Education officials,” they said. Furthermore, at least three are in receipt of “working capital loan” funding, described by one college as cash to “ensure liquidity and provide

short-term funding during the early years of the college’s operations until learner volumes increase”. Ada has received at least £420,000, according to its 2016/17 financial

## NATIONAL COLLEGE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The NCCI was allocated £5.5 million from the public purse and opened at the same time as Ada with just 16 students. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it had already fallen into “inadequate” fiscal health in 2016/17, according to its financial statements. They show it had an operating deficit of £165,020 for the year, and were forecasting further deficits over the following three years. The college had agreed a £650,000 working-capital loan with the DfE in July 2017, and a further £263,000 from Creative and Cultural Skills, the sector skills council. But as it had revised down its initial student forecasts “because of the risks associated with the original recruitment profile”, the

college was therefore “seeking to renegotiate the repayment terms”. An NCCI spokesperson said that the college’s original plans had been “out of kilter” with the needs of industry and the “start-up nature” of the college. Its revised plans “more closely align to the needs of the industry for higher level work-based training” and had led to its level-two classroom-based provision being scrapped, she said. It currently has 27 learners and 59 apprentices enrolled – although the spokesperson insisted it was “confident it was on track to recruit over 450” students altogether in 2018/19. Achieving this would be represent a “four-fold increase on the previous year”, she said.

## NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR DIGITAL SKILLS

Ada received £18.2 million from the London local-enterprise partnership’s further education capital fund, and £13.4 million from the government, and had 56 students when it opened in September 2016. Those numbers are now up to 130 learners in its sixth form, and 125 apprentices working for companies including Google, Siemens and Deloitte, a spokesperson told *FE Week*. She admitted that its enrolment was lower than forecast, but said the college had been forced to “constrain our numbers” as the larger premises it was due to move into this year were not yet ready. The college is also under considerable financial strain. Minutes from meetings in February and May reveal concerns from board members about its reliance on fundraising to cover core costs, with question raised over “whether Ada will ever break even purely with government funding”. Its 2016/17 financial statements show that it received £140,000 in working-capital-loan funding from the

Department for Education that year, with a further £280,000 expected in 2017/18 – although its financial health was “satisfactory”. The cash was to “ensure liquidity and provide short-term funding during the early years of the college’s operations until learner volumes increase”, according to the accounts. Board minutes from February indicate that the college was in discussions with the DfE about “whether we can delay the repayments” on this loan. An Ada spokesperson said the college was on track to break even in 2018/19, and go into surplus next year. “Breaking even within three years of operation exceeds expectations,” she said. Fundraising was essential to enable the college to “go beyond what is possible in many education environments”, she added, and referred to “the high levels of industry support” it received. She said the college was “doing really well. We have had some fantastic successes and are incredibly proud of what we’re achieving here”.

statements: £140,000 that year, with a further £280,000 expected in 2017/18 – even though its financial health was “satisfactory”. NCCI’s accounts for the same year show it to have received £650,000 in working-capital-loan funding in July 2017, while the NCSHR received a massive £4.7 million in 2016/17. *FE Week* asked the DfE to confirm this special treatment for the national colleges. In response, a spokesperson said it was “only right that we work with them during their set-up phase while they establish themselves and work towards financial stability”. All the colleges were offered working-capital loans “to assist in their start-up costs”, she said.

## NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR NUCLEAR

The National College for Nuclear has a different set-up from the other existing national colleges, in that it isn’t a college in its own right. Instead, it operates out of two hubs: its northern hub, based at Lakes College in Cumbria, and its southern hub, based at Bridgwater and Taunton College in Somerset, through which the college’s learners and apprentices are enrolled. The DfE provided £15 million to cover the cost of new buildings and equipment, while the Heart of

the South West local-enterprise partnership contributed a further £3 million to the southern hub, and Bridgwater and Taunton put in £4.5 million. It opened in September 2017, when it had 111 learners enrolled. A further 357 learners have started courses across the two hubs in 2018/19, bringing the total to 468. A spokesperson said the college was “pleased with our start-up progress in a challenging environment for education and skills”.



Robert Halfon





# Will DfE ban new apprenticeship providers with poor AEB provision in monitoring visits?

**BILLY CAMDEN**  
**BILLY@FEWEEK.CO.UK**

Exclusive

Ofsted is rating adult education in their monitoring visits of new apprenticeship providers – but the government doesn’t know if they’ll ban a provider if they’re making ‘insufficient progress’ in that theme alone.

In August the Education and Skills Funding Agency confirmed that any poor-performing provider with the rating in at least one of the themes under review will be barred from taking on any new apprentices – either directly or through a subcontracting arrangement.

These restrictions, applied unless there is an “exceptional extenuating circumstance”, will remain in place until the provider has received a full inspection and been awarded at least

a grade three for its apprenticeship provision.

The vast majority of the monitoring visits only judge new providers on three fields – leadership of apprenticeship provision, apprenticeship training quality and safeguarding.

But a fourth category has appeared in some reports – for adult education.

Ofsted’s FE and skills handbook has a section dedicated to these early monitoring visits for new apprenticeship providers and states: “Should the provider have other types of provision (e.g. 16 to 19 study programme provision or funding for learners with high needs) that type of provision will be covered each with a separate theme.”

Other newly funded provision, such as advanced learner loans, will also be in scope for inspection.

The DfE’s rules about banning providers who are rated ‘insufficient’ in the early monitoring visit reports

explicitly say it will suspend them from taking on “apprentices” but doesn’t mention what ramifications there are for adult learning, study programmes, or loans provision.

## “It doesn’t look like as if the government’s policy has been fully thought through”

FE Week asked the department if it would ban an apprenticeship provider from taking on new learners if they were making insufficient progress just for their loans or adult education, but it couldn’t provide a clear answer.

“When an adult learning provider

is found to be providing inadequate training or not making the expected progress we will not hesitate to take appropriate action,” a spokesperson said.

“This includes requiring that a provider put together a plan that will improve the quality of the education or training within a reasonable timeframe.”

Mark Dawe, boss of the AELP, criticised the government’s lack of clarity.

“It doesn’t look like as if the government’s policy has been fully thought through,” he told FE Week.

“Our view is that if a provider has made insufficient progress in adult education, then a stop on new adult education starts may be appropriate but not across all its programmes.”

There have been four early monitoring visit reports published by Ofsted so far that have judged adult education.

Northwest Education and Training Limited and Sccu Ltd both received ‘reasonable progress’ judgments in all themes, and N A College Trust received ‘significant progress’ ratings in two themes and ‘reasonable’ in the other two – including adult education.

The Education and Skills Partnership Limited was found to be making ‘insufficient progress’ in two themes, but ‘reasonable’ in the other two, again including for adult education.

As revealed by FE Week last month, the government has coughed up the full £5.4 million Ofsted requested to visit all new apprenticeship providers as it cracks down on poor provision continues.

Potentially as many as 1,200 providers could now be in scope for a two-day monitoring visit.

FE Week understands that around 30 of those have newly funded adult education funding, which will be in scope for inspection.





## Deputy Principal, Curriculum and Quality Vice Principal, Finance and Resources

Attractive remuneration package  
Swindon

New College Swindon is a highly successful College based in the heart of Swindon, one of the fastest growing towns in the UK. With over 10,000 learners, a 'Good' Ofsted outcome and strong finances, we are well placed to develop our offer beyond our highly successful 16-18 year-old A-level and vocational market and grow our provision to the communities of Swindon and beyond. With a new Principal and newly formed executive leadership team, this is an ideal opportunity to join the College and help us accelerate our journey to excellence.

New College is now seeking to appoint a Deputy Principal who will be responsible for a full review of our curriculum to meet the needs of a broader range of learners, partners and stakeholders. An experienced senior leader, you'll bring a sophisticated understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Further Education colleges. You should have a proven track record as a strategic leader who can execute high quality curriculum innovation and delivery across the college.

The College is also looking to appoint a Vice Principal who will be responsible for leading corporate services as well as having responsibility for the finances of the College. An experienced senior leader, you will have a proven track record in financial strategy and leading teams through periods of development and

change. You do not have to have a background in further education but will need highly developed communication skills, an understanding of complex funding structures, a commercial outlook and be committed to the values of the College.

Both positions are part of the Executive Leadership team, and will play a crucial role in formulating the strategic direction of the College.

To find out more, please visit [www.newcollegeswindonappointments.com](http://www.newcollegeswindonappointments.com)  
For an informal and confidential discussion, please contact our advising consultants at GatenbySanderson: Paul Aristides on 020 7426 3987 or Victoria Wakerley on 020 7426 3977.

Closing date is Monday 5 November 2018.



## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT – ACADEMIC STUDIES £35,809 - £37,993

We are looking to appoint a Head of Department where you will be responsible for the leadership and management of the Academic Studies (A Levels and Access to HE) department with oversight for securing and sustaining improvements in all aspects of curriculum and quality. You will be required:

- To work in partnership with employers, the University Centre and Universities to effectively align current and future curriculum and qualifications to employer expectations and labour market demands
- To lead the development of a high quality student experience, creating partnerships between academic and professional service teams
- To work across the whole College as a member of the College Leadership Team

promoting and actively demonstrating the College's values of *integrity, respect, ambition and pride*, fostering a culture of high expectations for staff and students

The post holder will be qualified to degree level or hold an equivalent professional qualification. You will also hold a teaching and / or assessing qualification in further education. You will have experience of leading and managing provision up to level 6 and of successfully working with awarding organisation and / or university validating partners.

City of Bristol College offers generous holiday entitlement of 51 holiday days (including bank holiday and College Closure Days). In addition, we offer membership to the Teachers' Pension Scheme as well as a range of other benefits including a supportive package of continuous professional development.

**Closing date:** 21 October 2018 (midnight)  
**Interview date:** 07 November 2018 at College Green

Please refer to our website for further information  
and to apply - [www.cityofbristol.ac.uk](http://www.cityofbristol.ac.uk)

## Deputy Principal Salary: Circa £62,000 per annum



**An exciting opportunity has arisen for a key role in shaping the future of Queen Alexandra College. The College is an independent specialist college for the young people 16+ with learning difficulties and disabilities; we specialise in Visual Impairment and Autism providing both residential and daytime educational programmes.**

We are looking for an inspirational and experienced leader to join our team, taking responsibility for full student experience and 'journey' from marketing, admissions, quality, education and curriculum, including the multidisciplinary student services, through to transitions out and employment pathways.

You will play a major contribution in enabling the college to fulfil its mission in its drive towards excellence and being a provider of choice.

Applicants should be educated to degree level, along with a PGCE or equivalent teaching qualification. You will have successfully led curriculum and education improvements within a college, and have extensive knowledge of EHC plans and SEND code of practice.

You will need to be able to provide management to complex multi-functional teams and work collaboratively with external partnerships, to engage positively, ensuring a robust system of quality assurance.

An ability to manage a high volume workload, and to be able to work collaboratively with emotional intelligence and resilience, positively influencing managers and staff is essential.

QAC is committed to safeguarding; therefore this post is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Application.

**Closing Date:** 19th October 2018 at 12:00 noon

For further information on the position, please email [governance@qac.ac.uk](mailto:governance@qac.ac.uk).



# Education and Skills Competition Manager

**Salary:** £35,000 **Location:** London

A unique opportunity has arisen for an experienced, highly motivated and solutions focused manager with experience in vocational and technical education, to bring their unique skill set to contribute to the work of WorldSkills UK.

The role will provide management of key relationships and oversee the development of new competition content, alongside working within a team that has responsibility for developing systems and processes to improve our work flow.

The successful candidate, will possess good organisational skills, taking a planned approach to managing their portfolio of skill sectors and the relationships with our partners and stakeholders. You will have experience and knowledge of vocational and technical education and this could be as a practitioner or an assessor.

**Closing Date:** 20 October 2018

It is intended that interviews will be held in London; short listed candidate will be advised of the process.

WorldSkills UK is committed to making appointments on merit by fair and open processes, taking account of equality and diversity.



## How to apply

Applications should be submitted no later than Saturday 20 October 2018 and should include:

- A curriculum vitae detailing your full career history; and
- A supporting statement with evidence of your suitability for the role, taking into account the points listed in the role description and person specification (throughout the recruitment process we will be looking for examples and evidence of your experience, knowledge and skills).

Applications should be submitted by email or post (marked 'Private and Confidential') to: **Meryem Ozbiloglu**, Senior HR Manager [jobs@worldskillsuk.org](mailto:jobs@worldskillsuk.org) WorldSkills UK, 151 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SZ



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illustration by Lucy Vigrass





## Be part of something new...

At Peterborough Regional College we are embarking on an ambitious and exciting new chapter and are looking for a number of new and inspiring senior managers to enable us to get there.

The College offers education and training to over 9,000 students and businesses every year providing a huge range of courses to suit everyone – GCSEs, vocational career focused courses, part-time adult courses, apprenticeships and higher education and professional training. We are a medium sized college of £28.5m in good financial health and are seeking a swift improvement in our Ofsted grade back to "Good".

This is an exciting time for PRC as we are placing more responsibility and autonomy in the hands of our curriculum managers

### Assistant Principal Curriculum Salary c. £55k

Will hold a roving brief to actively and vigorously promote improvements in curriculum wherever they are required. You will be a confident capable dynamic leader who is passionate about standards and has a track record of delivering success.

### x6 Heads of Faculty Salary c. £45k

We are looking for six highly motivated and capable FE managers to provide a learning experience that allows students to achieve their full potential. Heads of Faculty will control their own staff budgets and have no teaching commitment, giving them the authority, control and capacity to make a success of the role and innovate. We are looking for leaders who may not be a subject specialist but have the drive, experience and passion to take individual faculties on the next step of the college journey.

#### Faculties:

1. Hair, Beauty, Hospitality, Business & Travel
2. Engineering & IT
3. Construction
4. Early Years, Health & Social Care, ESOL, Inclusive Learning and Learner Engagement
5. Arts
6. Science, Sport, Public Services, & Animal Care

Closing date: 5pm on Wednesday 17th October 2018

Interviews will be held w/c 29th October 2018



For an informal and confidential discussion about any of the roles contact David Beynon 07970 042334 or Ben Wood 0115 911 1134

For more information and to apply, visit:  
[www.protocol.co.uk/peterborough](http://www.protocol.co.uk/peterborough)



# 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.

# FIND YOUR NEXT JOB

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EDITORIAL



Colleges Week should be a celebration with three messages for the chancellor

Having spent more than seven happy years working for a large college in South East London I have seen first-hand the vital role they play in the education ecosystem.

So the Association of Colleges is to be applauded for rallying the further education sector at short notice to celebrate the work of colleges.

It was a brave decision to announce the plan for a whole week of activities with just a month's notice, but coming days before the budget the timing is critical.

The message to the Chancellor and everyone around him should be three-fold:

Firstly, look at the amazing things colleges do in their communities to enhance the lives of young people and adults.

Secondly, the government's own researchers consistently find that investing in colleges is good for businesses and the economy.

Thirdly, leaving funding rates unchanged since 2013, as costs continue to rise, simply reduces the impact of the two points above. So the solution is simple and fair: Increase the funding rates.

So Colleges Week should be a big celebration, treading that fine line between showing off and highlighting the consequences of cuts.

It should not be angry, ugly or moany.

And calling it Colleges Week, focusing exclusively on colleges, is not to diminish the role of other FE sector providers, including local authority adult education services as well as private, third sector and not-for-profit providers. Diversity of provider type is a strength in the further education sector.

Colleges play a unique role as large education institutions routed in their communities, delivering the widest range of courses to the most diverse cohorts of learners. Writing this week in *FE Week*, the Skills Minister rightly says: "this is a

chance to celebrate the role colleges play in the country's education system and the fantastic work that they do."

So let's all get behind Colleges Week, and encourage everyone we know to contact their local MP and get on social media to share stories about colleges made a positive difference to

their lives.

*FE Week* will be producing a special College Weeks supplement, in partnership with NOCN, so be sure to send pictures and stories to [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk)

**Nick Linford, Editor**  
[news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk)




**15-19 October**

[www.collegesweek.co.uk](http://www.collegesweek.co.uk) | [#LoveOurColleges](https://twitter.com/LoveOurColleges)

Readers' reply


-   
EMAIL
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WEBSITE

SFCA to launch campaign calling for huge 16 to 18 funding increase

 The concentration on 16-18 needs thought. My experience is that many inner city young people have disrupted lives (or just need an extra year to qualify for entry to level 3); cut-off at 18 is bad for them and the colleges that serve them.


@Tregeare

Ofsted criticised for delaying 3aaa inspection despite multiple warning signs

 The irony of the position the organisation finds itself in cannot be overstated. The smug, self promoting, self congratulatory nonsense that has polluted social media, emanating from 3aaa owners and staff for the last few years, seems to be somewhat at odds with the reality. It is particularly offensive given the constant criticism of FE colleges and other providers from the upper echelons of this company.


Iron.pyrite


Scrap UTC 14-19 model, says former schools minister in latest damning report

 Scrap all these pointless schemes and fund education for all properly - IoT and Maths centres will produce new buildings (like CoVE's) that will have a short term benefit to a limited few before the emphasis changes.

@marches\_skills


Kick poor-performing new providers off RoATP, education committee urges

 The rules should be the same for ALL providers not just new. Look at 3AAA

 Same rules should apply for new and existing providers, shouldn't they?

@duncangotobed


Skills minister backs Trip Advisor-style rating of trainers

 Only if you're going to get all students to review; otherwise it will end up exactly like trip-advisor where the majority of


people taking the time to review are doing so following a negative experience.

Jess Short

NCG boss Joe Docherty quits following turbulent year

 I fully accept that people responsible for organisations of this size and complexity should be paid at a suitable level - BUT - is it acceptable that these individuals can just walk away when things go, badly wrong during their tenure? There's far too many people enjoying the benefits of the public purse without the accountability!


Noel Johnson

 I personally think staff satisfaction should be at the forefront of every business. With staff satisfaction comes consumer satisfaction which in turn increases income. Unfortunately NCG do not hold the same opinion, I see no bright future for the company.

Sophie Watson

REPLY OF THE WEEK

NCG boss Joe Docherty quits following turbulent year

 Is this the beginning of a worrying trend? Numerous mergers have taken place after the post-16 area reviews, with comments like 'too big to fail'. If enrolments, outcomes, Ofsted reports are all unsatisfactory then a large number of students have been sold short. Perhaps we should enter the age of performance related salaries for Principals, it seems scandalous that 'failing' colleges should be rewarding their leaders with high salaries, and they resign and walk away. Reading the list of the component colleges that form NCG is interesting, and one wonders how it could ever be successful - some bright spark will be suggesting that it is broken up into smaller, more manageable institutions!

Gerry Bennett

Experts



Beating the drum for further education in challenging times

Ahead of Colleges Week, Anne Milton stresses the importance of FE in enhancing lives and preparing people for the workforce, while acknowledging the financial pressures faced by the sector

Monday is the start of Colleges Week! This is a chance to celebrate the role colleges play in the country’s education system and the fantastic work that they do.

Colleges touch the lives of a huge cross-section of our communities – people of all ages, from a wide variety of backgrounds with exceptional and special needs.

They guide young people through qualifications, mentor and support them, give them the skills they need for the next step in their lives. They help build the skills of the workforce for the jobs of today and the cutting-edge jobs of the future.

I have met so many students and teachers from our colleges. Among them are apprentices showing me their

plastering skills; people learning English as a second language; food-science-degree apprentices; agriculture students in the lambing season; engineering apprentices; and digital marketing students, to name but a few. And they all have one thing in common: their passion, enthusiasm and commitment to what they are doing.

That attitude to their study comes directly from the teachers and support staff. Colleges are drivers for change, drivers of social mobility – building the confidence of the learners in their care.

“Colleges are drivers for change, drivers of social mobility”

They are simply the best.

Colleges educate and train over two million people a year – from basic skills to higher-education courses. Just over half a million adults took English courses and a similar number took maths.

Most of the higher-level technical education is taught in colleges, and their role is now changing with the teaching of the first T-levels in 2020.

I want colleges to be agile, dynamic educators and trainers, who are able to respond to the rapidly changing world of work we now face.

Once fully rolled out, we will be spending an additional £500 million each year on T-levels, and we have recently announced a further £38 million to help the first T-level providers invest in high-quality equipment and facilities.

We are supporting the Taking Teaching Further programme, which will add capacity to the existing brilliant FE workforce and give industry experts a chance to join this workforce and pass

“I will take every opportunity to always highlight the fantastic work that you do”

on their skills to the next generation. Helping people from some of the

most deprived areas pass exams and gain qualifications takes time and commitment.

Giving people with special needs a chance to acquire skills takes particular expertise.

Giving someone maybe a second, third or even fourth chance requires dedication. I know what colleges can do and I am very aware of the funding pressures they face.

My message today to those leading and working in colleges is that I will take every opportunity to always highlight the fantastic work that you do – in the words of this week’s slogan, I will “Love Our Colleges”.



IAIN MACKINNON

Secretary, Maritime Skills Alliance



Three cheers for the Institute for Apprenticeships - job well done!

Maritime Skills Alliance sticks up for the maligned IfA for creating two wholly new port operative apprenticeships in a complex and non-standardised industry

FE Week’s made quite a bit recently of the fact that neither Ministers, nor Sir Gerry Berragan, the Institute for Apprenticeships’ Chief Executive, can name any employers willing to offer the IfA any praise. I want to put my head over the parapet and do just that, on behalf of the Maritime Skills Alliance: we have an excellent relationship with the IfA.

Of course I’m going to qualify that, and move on to a more nuanced critique, balancing praise with criticism – but praise there certainly is. We have been well-served by the IfA.

Let me use the experience of the ports sector to illustrate what I mean. Two separate Trailblazer groups energetically and ably led by Associated British Ports (the country’s

largest ports group) have replaced a Level 2 apprenticeship for Port Operatives, and created two wholly new apprenticeships, Port Marine Operations Officer (Level 4) and Marine Pilot (Level 5).

The Marine Pilot work was the most complex of those three. Pilots are highly skilled, using their local knowledge to guide visiting ships in and out of ports.

Traditionally they are former Master Mariners with two decades or more experience behind them (and the authority that goes with it), and standards are set by each Competent Harbour Authority rather than nationally.

Translating that into an apprenticeship Standard, with its associated End-Point Assessment – the same approach across the whole country – was always going to be a challenge.

Our IfA Relationship Manager was with us throughout the journey. He

took a lot of trouble to understand the pilot’s role and to help us consider how to interpret it for Trailblazer purposes.

He was respectful of the traditional authority of pilots (some of whom hated the notion of using apprenticeships, and said so), and of

“IfA have helped us open new routes into these sought-after roles”

the Competent Harbour Authorities which employ them, listening to their concerns and looking for ways of adapting the IfA’s requirements for our particular circumstances.

He joined us in problem-solving

mode rather than merely telling us what the existing rules said (we can all read), and where he saw something that didn’t fit the rules, he went back, on our behalf, to seek a better interpretation. In my book, that’s exactly what you want from a public servant.

Numbers will always be small, but the IfA have worked with us to open up a new route into these sought-after roles, and that’s a good step forward for the maritime industry.

Has it all been plain sailing? (The maritime sector is a wonderfully rich source of apt phrases like that!). No, it hasn’t. Over the half dozen Trailblazer groups I’ve supported, working on a dozen or more Standards, we’ve certainly felt we’ve been sailing into some strong winds on occasion, and sometimes felt wholly becalmed (see what I mean?).

I was in two discussions in the early days when Trailblazers Chairs broke into the agenda to ask everyone if they

really wanted to carry on. A couple of the groups have been horrified by the initial funding cap they’ve been offered.

In one case, the offer was so low it would have killed the apprenticeship stone dead (both argued back successfully). And one group has been very frustrated by the nit-picking responses of a (different) relationship manager in a year-long battle (now also won) to get their EPA approved.

But the tide has turned and we now have a very good working relationship with the IfA. And, to be clear, this is not a grudging two cheers, with lots of caveats. I give them three cheers.

They have a difficult job. They’re on the front line, managing the simultaneous implementation of two quite complex changes, the Trailblazer reforms and the introduction of the Levy, with someone else making the rules. Of course they make mistakes – but so do we. The IfA are our allies in trying to make these changes work. Valued allies.



DAVID  
HUGHESChief executive, Association  
of CollegesColleges need a new vision for  
the fourth industrial revolution

**Colleges have a unique role to play in the new industrial revolution, ensuring that every citizen is able to thrive, says David Hughes**

I'm down under for the biannual world congress of the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics, in Melbourne, and it's clear that so many of the challenges and opportunities facing the further education sector in Australia resonate with those in the UK.

My keynote presentation today, *Scripting the future – exploring potential strategic leadership responses to the marketisation and privatisation of English FE provision*, is based on the research carried out by Oxford University's Professor Ewart Keep, in conjunction with AoC and supported by the Further Education Trust for Leadership.

That research, which involved interviews with key policymakers, college leaders and commentators, looked at the impact marketisation has

had on our post-16 landscape. It's well worth a read, both for context and the insightful scenarios.

Of course, my keynote will not simply present Professor Keep's research; he can do that better than I. Instead, I will use his findings to propose actions colleges can take to ensure that we script our own futures, rather than waiting for someone else to do it for us.

It will also draw on my 20 years' experience of working in this sector, on both "sides" – for the funding agency and now for colleges – as well as time leading a think-tank and research organisation.

My keynote will start by describing some of the manifestations of marketisation in England. I'll set out the mix of quasi-market measures and managed-systems approaches in the sector, a combination of "customer is king" and "minister is queen", and I will propose that there is a confusion at the heart of our policy about what success

looks like and about the purpose of colleges.

Our system has multiple funding streams with different priorities, rules, eligibility and qualifications, and is based on the notion that contestability

**"I want us to help colleges set out a new vision of their role"**

and competition will lead to more efficiency, better quality and customers getting what they want.

Not only do colleges have to negotiate multiple funding streams, they must also respond to multiple regulators and rule-makers (ESFA, DfE, Ofsted, banks, pension funds, OfS and

others) as well as many customers (the government, elected mayors, employers and students). I put students at the end of that list because in our system it often feels as if they are mere vessels to be filled with skills appropriate for the labour market. Colleges don't think like that: they have a grander ambition for their students – as agents, with lives to enrich.

This confusion of quasi-markets and government-led system combines badly with the 30 per cent funding cut colleges have had to cope with over the past decade. The result is a nightmarish environment in which institutions all too often have to focus on short-term, financially dominated decisions. A sector with an aggregate surplus of only 0.1 per cent must do that – it won't exist otherwise. What's impressive is how so many colleges can cope with the stresses they are under, all while helping 2.2 million people realise their abilities and ambitions.

I will end with an attempt to galvanise college leaders from around the world to seize this moment. The challenges of the fourth industrial revolution, with its new technologies, mean we must develop a new grand vision of colleges aiding our communities and economies. We need them to be the anchor organisations helping to ensure that every citizen thrives in exciting but daunting times.

In the mid-19th century, the state of Victoria (where I am now) established over 1,200 mechanics' institutes to help people cope with the changes then happening. Many of those institutes morphed into colleges, polytechnics and universities. Now, I want us to help colleges set out a clear vision of their role in this new industrial revolution.

I'll end with a pitch for colleagues from around the world to support our #LoveOurColleges campaign next week. I'll let you know how it goes down.

NOT TO BE MISSED

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News



**Emma Barrett-Peel**

**Head of apprenticeships, Working Links**

**Start date** September 2018

**Previous job**  
Director of vocational training, Catch-22

**Interesting fact**  
As a teenager, Emma spent five years in the air cadets, where she flew a two-seater plane twice, and learnt to strip down and reassemble different types of gun.



**Craig Tupling**

**Deputy chief executive, Bradford College**

**Start date** October 29 2018

**Previous job**  
Assistant principal, Kirklees College

**Interesting fact**  
Craig is passionate about volunteering: he's been a governor in secondary schools in Halifax and Huddersfield, and was a Games Maker at the London 2012 Olympics.



**Stewart Foster**

**Managing director, NCFE Awarding**

**Start date** October 1 2018

**Previous job**  
Director of quality assurance, NCFE

**Interesting fact**  
A car accident at the age of 18 curtailed Stewart's engineering apprenticeship at Rolls Royce, but did lead to his current career as he switched to the firm's training department.



**Paul Wakeling**

**Interim principal, Havering College**

**Start date** October 1 2018

**Previous job**  
Principal and chief executive, Havering SFC (he remains in post)

**Interesting fact**  
Paul's hobby is long distance walking: when he was 14, he convinced his parents to let him disappear for days, then weeks on end. It's been his thing ever since.

# Movers & Shakers

...

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



**Ben Robinson**

**Campus principal, Stockton Riverside College Bede Sixth Form**

**Start date** August 2018

**Previous job**  
Director of student guidance and support, Hartlepool SFC

**Interesting fact**  
Ben has been a keen golfer since he was a child. In 1989 he was in the Guinness Book of Records for being the youngest person in Britain to score a hole in one in a competition.

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](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk)

FEWEEK



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
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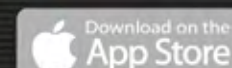
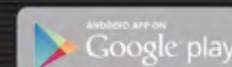
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» Mark Dawe, AELP

» Keith Smith, ESFA

» Claire Paul, BBC

» Kirstie Donnelly MBE, City & Guilds

» Simon Holmes, Department for Education

» Philip Augar, Head of Post 18 Funding Review

» Jonathan Ledger, Department for International Trade

» Lorraine Davies, The Northern Care Alliance

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FE Week Sudoku challenge

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

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

Difficulty: Easy

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

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: Julie Coverley

Solutions

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

Difficulty: Easy

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

Difficulty: Medium

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