

FE Week

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EMPLOYER SKILLS SURVEY**

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CHAOS AS DFE BUNGLES 16-18 GROWTH FUNDING REQUESTS

- Over-allocated 'discretionary funding' now stalling apprenticeship decisions
- College describes 'negative impact' as FE leader calls lack of info 'crazy'

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EXCLUSIVE

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NEWS

Chaos as DfE bungles 16-18 growth funding requests

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CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The delay in confirming growth requests for 16 to 18 apprenticeships and traineeships is the result of the Department for Education (DfE) over-allocating funding, *FE Week* can reveal.

Providers who submitted growth requests to help fund apprenticeships and traineeships in 2015/16 are still desperately waiting for news – despite the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) setting a deadline of 8 January to respond.

A DfE spokesperson said of the pending growth requests: “It’s not clear when we will be able to confirm it because we have over-allocated our discretionary funding for 2015/16 and have to get permission to release the funds for these growth bids.”

Asked when the issue would be resolved, they described it as “really unclear”, adding: “Officials say they’re hopeful the situation could change as early as tomorrow.”

Jerry White, the deputy principal of City College Norwich, warned: “This uncertainty could have a negative impact on prospective apprentices and their employers.”

Colleges and training organisations can submit growth requests to receive additional funding for 16 to 18 apprenticeships or traineeships if their existing money does not go far enough, or if they think it would allow them to deliver extra services.

Mr White added: “The uncertainty caused by this unexplained delay will affect colleges’ basic financial control function of ensuring that we have the funding in place to cover our expenditure on delivery.

“The SFA’s failure to provide this funding

announcement to their own published timetable hinders the ability of senior management teams to have well-informed discussions with governors about their plans for expanding 16-18 apprenticeship provision.”

Stewart Segal, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said he found the delay “surprising” in his weekly update to members.

“As far as I know we haven’t heard anything on 16 to 18 traineeships and apprenticeships, which is crazy.

“I just can’t think of any reason why that’s been delayed and it has highlighted what we’ve said all along — the biggest barrier to apprenticeship growth will be the contracting process,” he said.

we have over-allocated our discretionary funding for 2015/16 and have to get permission to release the funds for these growth bids

The over-allocated discretionary funding is the responsibility of the Education Funding Agency, bringing it under the remit of the DfE.

When asked about the growth case delay the DfE said: “We have already created 2.4m apprenticeships and are committed to creating a further 3m more by 2020. We have already been able to meet growth requests for adult apprenticeships and will confirm the position on 16-18 apprenticeships as soon as possible.”

First EFA subcontracting data published

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The Department for Education (DfE) has unveiled a detailed report spelling out Education Funding Agency (EFA) 16 to 19 subcontracting arrangements for the first time.

The Skills Funding Agency has published its subcontracting data for years, but yesterday (January 28) was the first time the EFA followed suit.

Publication of the 2014/15 report, for example showing how many subcontractors each lead provider dealt with and the number of learners involved, was only made possible because the EFA collected the information for the first time last academic year.

A spokesperson for the DfE told *FE Week* the publication was “part of the government’s ongoing commitment to greater transparency”.

It featured 184 lead providers, dealing with 467 subcontractors who taught 21,000 learners.

Each lead contractor dealt with an average of three subcontractors.

The largest lead providers by student numbers subcontracted were Central College Nottingham (930), South Essex College of Further and Higher Education (835), Weston College of Further and Higher Education (797), NCG (730), and Greater Merseyside Learning Providers’ Federation (516).

When asked why it subcontracts the provision, deputy principal and chief executive

of South Essex College Anthony McGarel said: “We work with skilled collaborative partners that are specialists in their field, these partnerships have been extremely successful for many years.

“Working alongside the best local providers, on targeted curriculum areas, reduces unnecessary course duplication and provides more choice for young people in Essex.”

One of its subcontractors was Surrey-based SCL Education and Training Ltd.

SCL, which had the most learners among all subcontractors, dealt with four lead providers — South Essex College (633 learners), Jancett Childcare and Jace Training (38 learners), Access to Music (344 learners) and Bromley College (39 learners).

Lewis Field, director at SCL, said they ran courses from level one to level three in sports and active leisure, and also provided GCSE maths and English as well as Functional Skills.

He said they were in discussion with the EFA about becoming a lead provider, when asked why they operated as a subcontractor.

A South Essex College spokesperson told *FE Week* it had subcontracted with SCL for three years.

She said that “the work they’ve done has been amazing”.

FE INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF SUBCONTRACTORS	TOTAL STUDENTS
CENTRAL COLLEGE NOTTINGHAM	5	930
SOUTH ESSEX COLLEGE OF FE AND HE	10	835
WESTON COLLEGE OF FE AND HE	17	797
NCG (FORMERLY NEWCASTLE COLLEGE)	18	730
GREATER MERSEYSIDE LEARNING PROVIDERS' FEDERATION	12	516

Top five EFA funded lead providers by total student numbers, in 2014/15

FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

Researchers call to boost FE cash

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) this week published a 108-page report called *Building Skills for All, A Review of England*.

It found that “an estimated 9m adults of working age in England have low basic skills” and “there are surprisingly many young people among the low-skilled in England.”

The report’s authors also said: “Those with low basic skills should not normally enter three-year undergraduate programmes, which are both costly and unsuited to the educational needs of those involved, while graduates with poor basic skills undermine the currency of an English university degree.”

It recommended: “Resources [be] diverted from university provision should be redeployed, particularly in the FE sector, to support this.”

Missed deadline just ‘placeholder’

The government is set to miss another apprenticeship reform ‘deadline’.

The consultation on a public sector target was launched on Monday (January 25), a month late.

Now it seems the launch of the ‘improved’ Find an Apprentice service will also be delayed.

A spokesperson from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills told *FE Week*: “January 2016 was a draft placeholder date.

“Following work to scope and plan the project, the date for delivering the provider journey (where learning providers will be able to use the new service to post vacancies and manage their applications) is now planned for March.

“Once we have launched the functionality, we will focus on delivering features that enable employers, if they choose, to take ownership of their recruitment process.”

A spokesperson for NCG, which worked with 18 subcontractors, said “the vast majority of [our] subcontracting of EFA funding is via NCG’s charitable training provider Rathbone Training, which works with disadvantaged young people via many centres in many communities, not a single college”.

“When NCG acquired the Charitable Training Provider, Rathbone Training, Rathbone had a number of areas where it held what were ‘Managing Agent’ contracts for 16-18 youth engagement provision.

“This involved managing a supply chain of smaller niche providers to ensure that full coverage of the geographical area was maintained in order to work with learners who are not in education, employment or training.

“In many areas, these networks continue to work well, ensure quality provision in many communities and were cited very positively by Ofsted in Rathbone Training’s last inspection.”

NEWS

Government urged to act over SEND travel cuts

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The government has been urged to review transport arrangements for post-16 special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) students, after it emerged that councils in the north east want learners to start paying towards their college travel costs.

FE Week has found the planned changes, called “outrageous” by the National Union of Students, are awaiting final approval by Sunderland City Council, Newcastle City Council, and Gateshead Council.

A spokesperson for the Association of Colleges (AoC) called on the government to review the situation, after suggesting that more cash-strapped local authorities could be doing the same thing.

She said: “Everyone must now stay in education or training until their 18th birthday.

“But unfortunately because transport for 16 to 18-year-olds, including those with a learning difficulty or disability, is not a statutory priority for local councils, it is one of the areas which gets cut. The government needs to review this situation.”

Maddy Kirkman, disabled students’ officer for the NUS, which has made improving FE learner transport a key aim of its new #FEunplugged campaign, said: “It is outrageous that councils are considering taking this step. Decision-makers should be ashamed of themselves for once again making SEND learners the target of regressive policies.”

A report approved by Sunderland City

Council’s cabinet on January 13 said it “currently procures taxis for 245 students with SEND [aged 16 and above]”.

“It is proposed the council would continue to arrange and provide the taxi transport, but parents/ learners would contribute an amount of money towards this,” the document reads.

“It is proposed that consultation take place on a contribution level [£651 per year].”

A spokesperson for Newcastle City Council, which declined to say how many learners would be affected, said: “As part of our 2015/16 budget consultation process, the council consulted on proposals to introduce a charge for a proportion of the cost of transport for post-16 learners with SEND.

“The proposals were approved, but no charges have yet been introduced. We have been in discussion with other local authorities in the region about introducing such charges.”

Gateshead Council, which currently has around 80 post-16 SEND learners, also confirmed it planned to introduce charging from September if the proposals were cleared by cabinet, but declined to comment further.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: “We want all children, regardless of their circumstances, to have access to the best possible education. Transport to education and training for learners with special educational needs and disabilities is a matter for local authorities.

“We expect them to put appropriate arrangements in place and make reasonable decisions that are best suited to local circumstances.”

UCL LAUNCHES EDUCATION CENTRE

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More than 120 people attended the official launch of a new Centre for Post-14 Education and Work by the UCL Institute of Education.

The event at the Institute in London, on Wednesday, featured a speech by Andy Wilson, principal of Westminster Kingsway College, who told guests: “There are so many issues for FE at the moment where the politicians are saying that FE is a problem, but we know here tonight that we are the solution.”

He told *FE Week* later that night: “I really hope the centre helps to prove what I said about the benefits that FE brings to so many people.”

Other special guests included Neil Carmichael MP (pictured), chair of the education select committee, Martin Doel, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, and Ayub Khan, interim chief executive at the Further Education Trust for Leadership (Fetl).

Paul Grainger, co-director of the centre, told *FE Week*: “I’m absolutely delighted with the support we’ve been shown tonight.

“There are at least 120 people here who have come from all over the country, with many staying overnight in hotels. It shows commitment to what we are trying to achieve.”

Jo Shah, a member of the Centre, said: “It was great to see so much support for what we are doing. Hopefully the centre will make a real difference.”

The centre will undertake research in a number of areas, including technical and vocational education and training, and adult skills, community and lifelong learning.

Mr Grainger said in October that it would “look at the relationship of all education to work, including vocational, academic and baccalaureate qualifications, and adult education, to promote a more inclusive curriculum post-14 and in lifetime learning”.



PEARSON CONTRACT DOUBTS AFTER INADEQUATE OFSTED

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Pearson is in danger of having its contract with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) terminated after Ofsted slammed its apprenticeship provision.

The global education business, which provides apprenticeships for around 80 members of staff through its subcontractor Pearson TQ, has dropped two grades to be ranked “inadequate” across the board by the education watchdog.

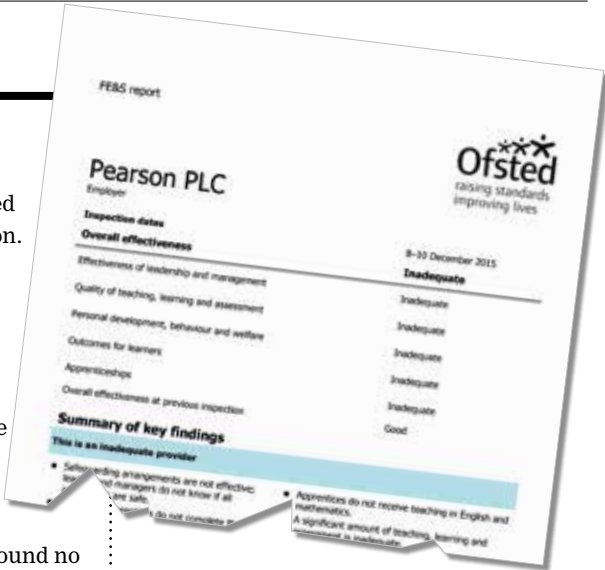
In their damning report, published Wednesday (January 27), the inspection team said they had “found no key strengths”.

“Senior leaders have allowed the quality of the provision to decline significantly since the last inspection,” the report said.

“Too many apprentices drop out of learning or do not make sufficient progress to complete their programmes within the agreed timescale,” it said, with the result that “too many apprentices do not complete their programmes successfully”.

A Pearson spokesperson said the subcontractor, Pearson TQ, had started implementing an action plan after taking over the service in summer 2015.

“We take this report very seriously and



are making further improvements in our programme so that our apprentices receive the highest possible standard of learning and support.

“We are disappointed with this report and will be challenging some of the comments, which we feel do not accurately reflect the improvements that have already been made since Pearson TQ took over management of the service.”

The SFA said: “We are currently considering the recently published Ofsted report in line with our approach to intervention.”

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NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP AWARDS CEREMONY

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The winners of the 2015 National Apprenticeship Awards were announced at a ceremony in Grosvenor House hotel on Tuesday.

The crowning glory of the event was the Apprenticeship Champion of the Year Award, which went to Neil Cain, aged 51, an operations director for grounds maintenance company John O’Conner. *See page 12 for a profile interview telling Neil’s story.*

Kathleen Sandford, a 20-year-old student of Kidderminster College and training administration apprentice for The Community Housing Group, won the award for the Intermediate Apprentice of the Year, and 24-year-old Joshua White, of Highbury College, was named Advanced Apprentice of the Year for his work as a business analyst with IBM UK.

For Higher Apprenticeships (levels 4-7), the winner was Jade Aspinall, 23, who studied with Alliance Learning, and is now working as a manufacturing engineer for MBDA UK.

“I wasn’t expecting to win at all,” she said. “As a woman in engineering I can use this to promote what I’m doing, to give back to young



people when I go into schools.”

The Skills Minister, Nick Boles (pictured) gave a speech at the event, saying: “Congratulations to each and every one of the National Apprenticeship Award winners.

“Apprenticeships truly are set to be one of the great success stories of the decade, and tonight’s winners and finalists are worthy ambassadors.”

Among the employers, award-winners were Adary Joiners for Small Employer of the Year; Genix Healthcare for Medium Employer of the Year; and Liebherr GB for Large Employer of the Year.

Buckinghamshire Care won Newcomer SME [small and medium-sized enterprise] of the Year and Be Wiser Insurance won Newcomer Large Employer of the Year. BAE

Systems gained the prize for Macro Employer of the Year.

The Prime Minister’s apprenticeship adviser Nadhim Zahawi, who presented the awards, said: “All this year’s winners should shout from the rooftops about what taking an apprenticeship has done for them or what hiring an apprentice has done for their business.”

HERE IS A FULL LIST OF WINNERS

AWARD NAME	WINNERS
The EAL Award for Advanced Apprentice of the Year	Joshua White, 24, Highbury College, business analyst, IBM UK
The Nuclear Decommissioning Site Licence Companies Award for the Higher Apprentice of the Year	Jade Aspinall, 23, Alliance Learning, manufacturing engineer, MBDA UK
The McDonald’s Award for the Intermediate Apprentice of the Year	Kathleen Sandford, 20, Kidderminster College, training administration apprentice, The Community Housing Group
The City & Guilds award for the Apprenticeship Champion of the Year Award	Neil Cain, 51, Operations Director, John O’Conner (Grounds Maintenance)
The Unilever Award for Small Employer of the Year	Adary Joiners
The E.ON in partnership with the National Skills Academy for Power Award for Medium Employer of the Year	Genix Healthcare
The BAE Systems Award for Large Employer of the Year	Leibherr GB
The BT Award for Macro Employer of the Year	BAE Systems
The EDF Energy Award for Newcomer SME of the Year	Buckinghamshire Care
The Rolls-Royce Award for Newcomer Large Employer of the Year	Be Wiser Insurance



From left: 1 – Stewart Segal, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, chats to guests; 2 - The audience were treated to a three course meal; 3 – Swing band Jivin’ Miss Daisy strut their stuff; 4 – Hosts Nadhim Zahawi, the Prime Minister’s apprenticeship adviser, and Elizabeth Moffatt, commercial apprentice at Vauxhall, discuss the importance of apprenticeships; 5 – Apprentice Champion of the Year Neil Cain (right) celebrates his success; 6 - Guests were greeted with a champagne reception; 7 - Kathleen Sandford, Intermediate Apprentice of the Year, joins Peter Lauener, chief executive, Skills Funding Agency, Claire Hall, senior vice president, chief people officer, McDonald’s Restaurants, and Elizabeth Moffatt on stage

NEWS

Student’s prize-winning Chartered Status logo dropped

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A student’s competition-winning logo intended to be the sign of Chartered Status for FE providers has been dumped by the sector body.

Lisa Cassidy, who studied a foundation degree in graphic design and advertising at The Manchester College, was given the award for her winning design by the then Skills Minister Matthew Hancock in March 2013.

The competition, launched by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), asked FE students to produce a logo for the quality mark, which is finally set to be granted to a number of “excellent” colleges later this year.

At the time, Chris Thompson, deputy director for performance management at BIS, said: “Students will be the main customers for the chartered status so we wanted something they could identify with – having them involved is important and could be powerful.”

But the Chartered Institution for Further Education (CIFE), which in October 2015 took over from the Institution for Further Education (IFE), the company set up in 2013 to pave the way

Matthew Hancock presenting a certificate to Lisa Cassidy (pictured left), a graphic design student at The Manchester College, who created the winning design for a chartered status logo



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Lisa Cassidy's Design



CIFE's new logo

See feweek.co.uk for online poll.

for the Charter, told *FE Week* on Thursday that the logo would no longer be used.

A spokesperson for the body said: “The competition to design a logo pre-dated the establishment of the IFE. The Institution is now an independent body and the branding it uses appears on its website.”

Ms Cassidy told *FE Week* she had not heard anything from the CIFE since she attended the awards ceremony with Mr Hancock in London.

“I didn’t even know the logo wasn’t being used,” Ms Cassidy added.

At the time of winning the competition, Ms Cassidy said she was “amazed to win such a high profile competition.

“As a student you never think your work is good enough so this is a real boost to my confidence.”

As a result of the competition, Ms Cassidy also won an iPad and a work experience placement at *FE Week*.

The first FE providers to be offered Chartered Status are expected to be announced towards the “spring/summer” of this year. Colleges and independent learning providers could start applying for membership from 17 November.

So far, discussions have been held with a number of organisations who are preparing applications, but none have yet reached the stage of a formal submission.

BIS declined to comment on the changing of the logo.

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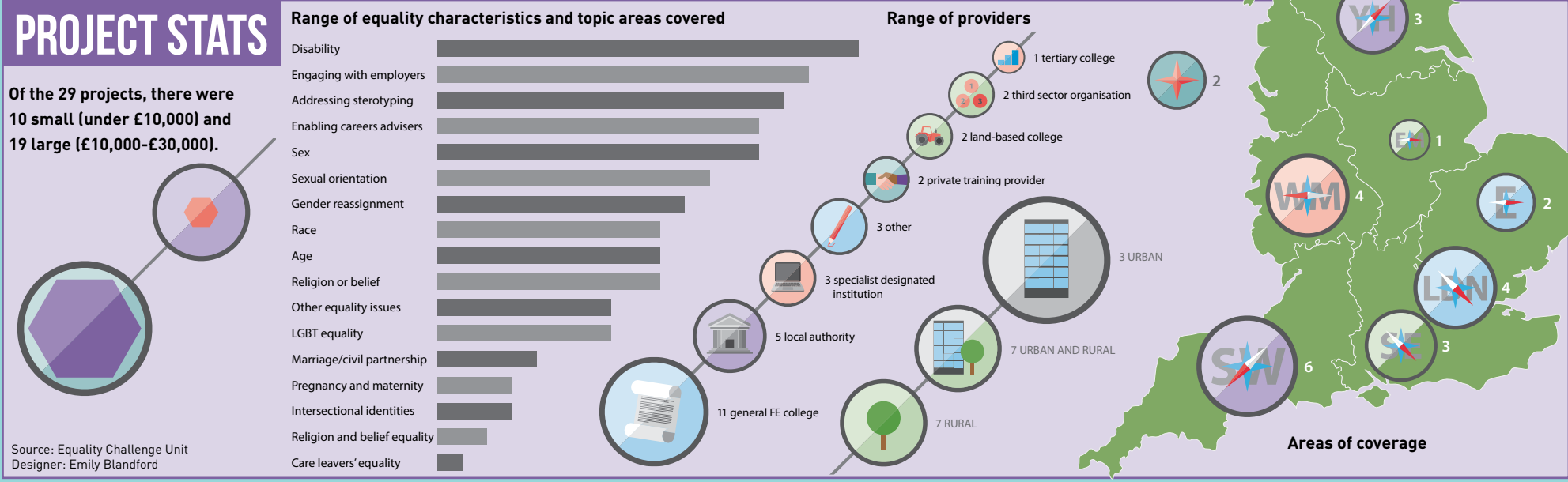
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The Equality and Diversity Good Practice Fund was the source of 29 innovative projects in 2014/15, but providers hoping to access funding this year will be disappointed to find it is no longer available. The fund, previously known as the Equality and Diversity Inclusion Fund, has been available for five years so far and was established to encourage and support innovate work that promotes equality and diversity. But a spokesperson for the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) has confirmed to *FE Week* that there are “currently no plans to fund new

equality and diversity projects in 2015/16”. She added that it was not anticipated that the fund would run year on year, saying: “The 2015 fund focussed on embedding and sharing the good practice learned from previous and current projects, with a focus on being self-sustaining in the future. “Over the last five years the funded projects have created a wealth of information and guidance for providers that will continue to be available.” The closure of the fund comes after the government said it would address recommendations made in a report from the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee’s Transgender Equality, which found evidence of “unacceptable” bullying

of transgender adult learners — a topic that some of the projects funded last year aimed to address. The fund was initially managed by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service, and then taken over by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education when the service was shut down in 2013. The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) won the tendering process for the most recent round of funding in 2014/15. Jonathan Gascoigne, performance and planning manager at the ECU, said; “From conversations with the SFA I think this is pretty much the last fund of this type for equality and diversity wok in the FE sector in England.

“There were three priorities really for the SFA, which were embedding, sustaining and spreading good practice, and I think because they thought that this might well be the final fund they wanted it to have more of a long lasting impact. “The emphasis of this fund was to identify and develop good practice that FE providers could embed into their existing processes.” The page opposite features four prime examples of projects that benefited from the Equality and Diversity Good Practice Fund in 2014/15.



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INTED AS EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FUND CLOSED

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

Students with learning difficulties, particularly those on the autistic spectrum, sometimes have difficulty understanding relationships.

Gloucestershire College's project provided these students with activities and resources adapted to their learning requirements, to help them understand sexual orientation, recognise diversity in their communities and be able to make informed choices about their own sexuality.

Gloucestershire College partnered with National Star College, a specialist college for learners with physical or learning disabilities, to develop four activities aimed at building an understanding of sexual orientation. These included flashcards, games and YouTube videos, and the resources are available for



download here: www.equalitiestoolkit.com/content/sexual-orienteeing-ecu-gpf

Kirsty Floran, project leader and Gloucestershire College head of school for foundation studies, said the scheme had helped students have a greater awareness of relationships, diversity and sexual orientation, but had also boosted teacher confidence in working on these themes.

Jane Griffiths, project manager at National Star College, said: "It is great to see these resources being used in learning sessions at National Star College, encouraging an inclusive dialogue and supporting students with learning difficulties to feel more confident and self-aware about sexual orientation and their own sexuality."

ABINGDON AND WITNEY COLLEGE

Abingdon and Witney College's project resulted in the first example of an organisation in Oxfordshire employing people with learning disabilities as apprentices.

The SEN [special educational needs] learners were part of a best practice model, in which they worked in a cafe run by employer partner and local charity Yellow Submarine. This successful example of how to help SEN students access pathways to apprenticeship training will now be rolled out to employers and providers across Oxfordshire.

"How to" guides for training providers and a film for employers, training providers and learners were created to explain best practice for apprentices with SEN, and the project's success was highlighted in a news report by



BBC South Today Oxford.

Jacqui Canton, assistant principal, employer engagement and marketing, at Abingdon &

Witney College said: "SEN learners are chronically overlooked within the apprenticeship market, both by employers and by training providers and colleges."

"These funds made this pilot work. We were able to demonstrate that through careful planning and

innovative tailoring of training packages it is possible to offer high quality apprenticeships to SEN learners.

"We are very proud that these apprenticeships are at the same standard as any other level 2 customer service apprenticeship in the country."

PLUMPTON COLLEGE

Plumpton College's project researched the barriers to achievement for apprentices and work based-learners who belong to minority characteristic groups. It aimed to remove these barriers and address stereotyping and underrepresentation.

The learners' performance was assessed in the context of their peer group, and data was used to develop a workplace and online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme for staff.

Managed by FE Sussex, the consortia organisation of colleges in Sussex, the project also established a virtual peer support network to allow the exchange of best practice in

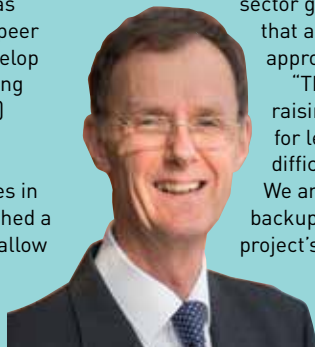
addressing race, gender and disability issues between staff and with learners.

Tim Strickland, chief executive of FE Sussex and leader of the project, said: "As a result of the project good practice has been embedded through collaborative working of cross sector groups to develop resources

that are both age and cognitive level appropriate.

"The resources provide awareness raising and appropriate challenge for learners with a range of learning difficulties and or disabilities.

We are now working on YouTube backup videos as part of sustaining the project's success and outputs."



Dr Tim Strickland, CEO of FE Sussex

WORKING MEN'S COLLEGE

At the Working Men's College in Camden, Leila El-Metoui, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender) education consultant and teacher, coordinated a project bringing students and staff together to promote greater understanding and respect.

The work led to the college celebrating LGBT History Month for the first time and students took part in a six week course on labels and language use.

They created artwork and performances to show what they had learned and made videos about the perception of LGBT at the college.

Other outcomes included an anti-discriminatory staff development training package that offered methods for tackling challenging behaviour and a vocational module for hairdressing students that demonstrated inclusion of all gender and sexualities, through

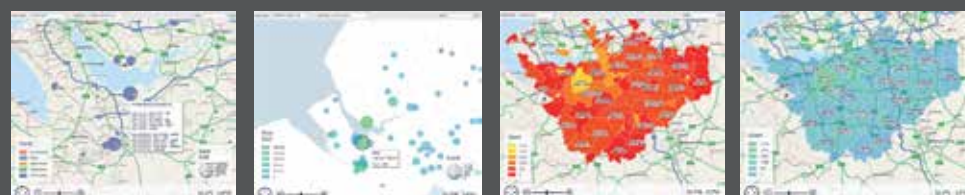
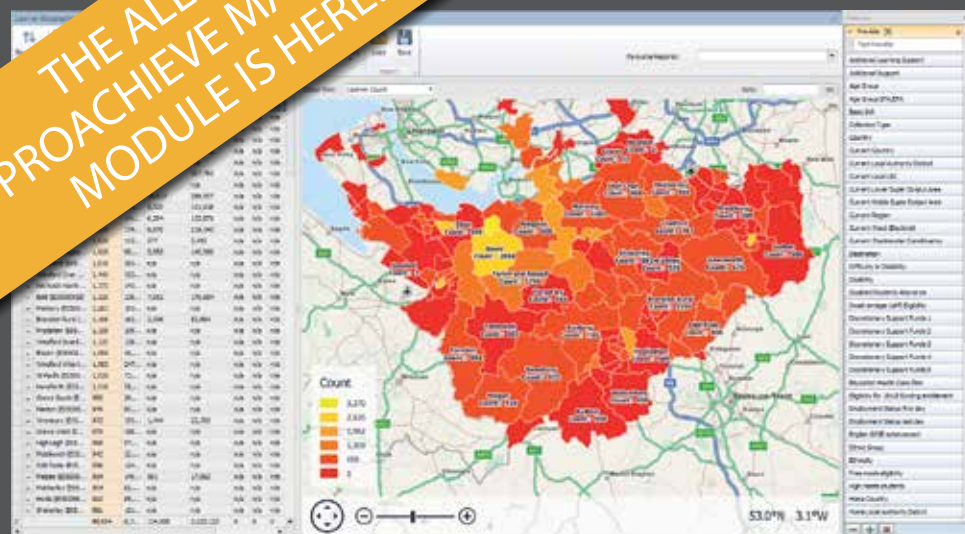
features such as a genderless pricing system.

The work concluded with a conference aimed at senior equality and diversity managers in the sector to share good practice.

Ms El-Metoui, who has worked on LGBT projects over the last ten years, said: "The Working Men's College is outstanding; I had support from staff and students ... In other colleges it has been much more challenging."



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FE WEEK COMMENT

Honesty is the best policy

Take a moment to empathise with the Central Delivery Service (CDS) advisers at the Skills Funding Agency.



As if what must feel like annual restructures at the Agency were not stressful enough, they represent the front line in communications with embattled providers.

On the 23 December last year they dutifully emailed colleges and training providers to "confirm the outcome of any 16-18 growth requests" would occur as planned, by 8 January.

Yet as *FE Week* went to press, nearly a month later, there remains little to no news about when or whether the apprenticeship growth requests will be granted.

What we now know is an unrelated budget mess at the DfE is to blame.

Do civil servants at the DfE know what damage this does to the relations between providers and their SFA CDS adviser?

And even if they do, will they even care?

History has shown that these growth requests are granted in the end, but at what cost to the very human relationship between funder and provider?

Communication is key, and a DfE claiming to be committed to transparency should practice what they preach.

Nick Linford
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NUS launches campaign to hear FE students' views

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The National Union of Students has launched a campaign to force the government to recognise the impact that post-16 area reviews are having on learners.

The launch of #FEunplugged was officially announced on Wednesday.

An NUS spokesperson said the aim was to "raise the profile of [post-16 education and training] area reviews and make sure the student voice is not ignored during the process".

As part of the campaign, the union will be asking students across the country what is most important for keeping them in college. The spokesperson explained this would help decide the issues that the union wants the government to address through the area review process.

Shakira Martin, NUS vice president for FE, told *FE Week* in an exclusive expert piece introducing #FEunplugged (see page 15) that "it's not news to say area

reviews are the product of funding cuts, but there's definitely a story in the way the FE sector's very own Dr Frankenstein, [Skills Minister] Nick Boles, is cutting up the sector [through the area reviews] and trying to sew it back together – badly".

"He's completely disregarded the heart of FE by leaving students out of any decision-making," she added. "The NUS fought hard to get a seat at the table where these decisions are being made and we're bringing students' needs right to the heart of the discussion."

The spokesperson said the NUS was "deeply concerned" about the lack of student consultation through the planned rationalisation of the sector.

It will try to redress this by holding roundtable discussions with students in each area up for review.

Reports on these will then be sent to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) area review boards and circulated to the providers involved, the spokesperson added.

"We're finding out what students care about when it comes to quality education,

access to education, learner voice and what students want to get out of their time in college.

"Whether it's decent and affordable transport, plenty of contact time with tutors or tailored support to help them with their disability, we'll be listening to what students need."

She warned students could have to travel further for their courses if colleges merge or are closed, meaning they "will be sacrificing more time and more money to access education".

So far 15 area reviews have been launched, covering 102 general FE colleges and 54 sixth form colleges.

A Department for Business Innovation and Skills spokesperson said: "We welcome the input of students to our area reviews. These are not about cuts, but making sure that students have access to high quality education and training.

"With local partners, we are ensuring a high quality and financially sustainable college base across England which meets the economic and educational needs of learners and employers."

COMMENTS

Does Skills Minister Nick Boles have any idea about Institute for Apprenticeships' policing?

It worries me that Mr Boles can be so blasé about something that will impact on people's careers! Is the minister even aware of the consequences of his reforms and the need for more definitive guidance? I think not.

Andrew Gladstone-Heighton

As a taxpayer, I am very worried about these reforms. History indeed does show that there will be fraudsters looking to make a tidy sum from this.

Remember previous failed attempts to set up Individualised Learning Accounts? "Courses" were being run from market stalls. This WILL NOT WORK!

Many genuine employers do not want these changes either. There are other ways of putting employers in the driving seat without leaving the doors of the public vault ajar.

Ian Wilson

I don't think this government has any idea what an apprenticeship is for, or should produce. None of them have been near a real job and none of them actually have to work to provide for their families. Most of the actions taken by this government serve to provide one thing – more income for the rich at the expense of the poor.

Who does housing benefit go to? Landlords. How many of the government are landlords? Who will take money for apprenticeships? Employers. How many of the government have links to businesses

which benefit them or their families?

A Torbitt

'Inadequate' Ofsted warning over face veils

How is an Ofsted inspector supposed to judge that girls wearing a face veil is damaging their education? How do we determine that the inspector doesn't already have prejudiced views and just wants rid of them anyway? I just want some evidence presented first that shows that wearing a niqab will have a detrimental effect on education. I am a white male, I am an atheist. This news does not affect me directly, I am just appalled with the treatment of Muslim people in my country. Makes me sad to be British

Anon

TOP EMPLOYER SKILLS SURVEY TWEETS

Andy Brown @VoteAndyBrown
With massive skills shortage presumably government will pump lots of new money into #FurtherEducation? Dream on.

Jeffers @JeffersView
Compelling evidence against EBacc some would say...

Rosie @RosieGSutton
"ESS is the best survey for tracking data at the local level" Alexandra Jones speaking at the launch of #ESS15 @ukces

David Harbourne @davidharbourne
It's tragic that government is withdrawing funding for @UKCES. Furthermore they haven't got clear plans for continuing #ess15. @NickBolesMP

Isa Mutlib @isamutlib
For #Education and #Skills, @ukces have some awesome infographics #ESS15



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NEWS

Employer Skills Survey in limbo after f

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Questions remain over the future of the UK's largest employer skills survey, with indications that responsibility for labour market information could fall to local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) in the future.

The Employer Skills Survey (ESS), published every two years by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, examines the skills challenges facing employers and is based on interviews with around 90,000 UK businesses.

Its future has been in question since the government's spending review in November, when it was announced that the UKCES would have its budget cut. Earlier this month the Skills Minister, Nick Boles confirmed that the government would be withdrawing funding during 2016-17.

No announcement about the future of the survey has been made.

When asked by *FE Week* if this year's UK-wide survey would be the last one, a UKCES spokesperson said discussions were still ongoing.

Speaking at a parliamentary evidence session on Monday, Mr Boles said it was the "obvious role" for LEPs to have



responsibility for labour market information.

"Who should take responsibility for knowing more about the labour market at which level?" he was asked by Neil Carmichael, joint chair of the sub-committee on education, skills and the economy.

"It always seemed to me at least that it's the absolutely obvious role for a local economic partnership to be gathering the data and then translating it into various conclusions," Mr Boles replied.

"I would have thought it was a good use of their time and their budget," he added.

David Hughes, chief executive of Learning and Work Institute, warned that it would be a "backward step" if the ESS did not continue to be UK-wide.

"As devolution quickens, the need for a single, consistent, comparable set of data about the labour market heightens," he said.

Jo Lappin, chief executive of the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership, agreed with Mr Boles.

"Having a really good handle on both growth and replacement demand will mean that LEPs, working with their education and training providers, will be able to collectively deliver properly planned provision," she said.

Ann Limb, chair of the South East Midlands LEP, agreed that it would "make



Nick Boles MP Sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy

sense" for LEPs to take over responsibility for gathering data on the local labour market.

"All LEPs base their strategic economic plans on evidence drawn from local labour market intelligence and so it would make sense for us to continue and develop this practise in the future," she said.

The ESS 2015, published on Thursday, said vacancies that go unfilled because employers can't find workers with the right skills are a "growing challenge" to UK businesses.

It found that 23 per cent of vacancies went unfilled because of skills shortages – a proportion that has not changed since 2013, despite 42 per cent growth in the number of vacancies in the UK overall.

Companies in the electricity, gas and water sector had the biggest shortage of skilled workers, the survey found, with 36 per cent vacancies last year, up from 23 per cent in 2013 (see table, right).

The 243-page report, made up of interviews with businesses across all sectors of the UK, revealed that jobs in skilled trades, machine

operating and professional roles were most affected. Reading, writing and numeracy were among the skills the employers said prospective employees were lacking, with around 25 per cent of applicants falling short in those areas.

The skills gap within employment has fallen since 2013, but 14 per cent of employers still report that they have employees who don't have all the skills they need to do their job. The survey also revealed "over two-thirds of employers that had difficulty filling their vacancies solely as a result of skill shortages had experienced a direct financial impact through either loss of business to competitors, or increased operating costs."

A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) said: "We are discussing the future of the valued Employer Skills Survey with UKCES and other stakeholders, including other government departments, devolved administrations and LEPs."

EXPERT

LESLEY GILES

Deputy Director at the UK Commission for Employment and Skills

Survey helps us deal with skills gap

The UKCES Employer Skills Survey is one of the largest of its kind in the world. More than 91,000 employers across the UK are interviewed to draw together the data contained within the report, creating a comprehensive insight into the ways employers train and develop staff, as well as their experiences of where skills are lacking, and what those skills may be.

The results of the 2015 survey show us that employers are seeing a return to growth. There were a total of 928,000 vacancies reported in the 2015 survey – a 42 per cent increase from 2013 and the equivalent to almost 300,000 more opportunities for those hunting for work. This is a continuation of a trend seen since 2011, following recovery from the recession.

But although vacancies have risen, skill-shortage



vacancies – where employers are unable to fill a vacancy due a lack of applicants with the right skills – have also grown. Employers are having difficulty finding the skilled people they need. In fact, skill-shortage vacancies have risen by a massive 130 per cent since 2011.

Skills issues are also not just tied to recruiting new employees, as many UK employers also face challenges in relation to getting the most out of their existing workforce. The Employer Skills Survey found that 14 per cent of establishments reported having staff who were not fully proficient in their role – a total of around 1.4 million.

More significantly, the survey also reveals that more employers who report having skills gaps have noticed an impact as a result. This is also particularly felt among smaller businesses – a concerning issue given that employers with less

than five employees make up around half of all UK employers.

These figures show that the skills landscape in the UK is an increasingly complex one. On the one hand we have a surge in opportunities – fantastic news for those still desperate to get a strong foothold on the career ladder. Yet, on the other hand, it is clear that a major disconnect still exists between what employers desperately want, and the skills that people really have.

Clearly, there is a crucial role for the FE sector to play in resolving this, and better understanding the problem undoubtedly goes a significant way to helping create an effective solution. Delving deeper into our data can offer further insights into just what skills employers are so desperate to see.

In terms of the skills lacking in applicants, problem solving and analytical skills were both cited more frequently than reading, writing and numerical skills. When asked about skills which were present, but in need of improving, time management and customer handling skills dominated the responses.

A similar picture is also seen among existing employees, with over half of employers reporting time management and team working skills as being in need of improvement. Problem solving skills

were again among the most absent among existing employees, while once more literacy, numeracy and IT skills were far easier to come across.

This clear shift towards softer personal and people skills presents new challenges for the FE sector. Employers are increasingly looking for far more than technical competency when recruiting, with recruits needing to be able to demonstrate experience in more pastoral capabilities that underpin good management.

But challenges bring with them opportunities, and using robust labour market intelligence – such as the Employer Skills Survey – to help shape training, courses and curricula and wider working practices to better develop and utilise people's skills to meet employers' needs.

Such intelligence can also provide high quality careers information, about jobs and what employers require, enabling young people to make effective, long term career choices based on the demands of employers in a particular sector or geography.

Lesley Giles is deputy director at the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. For more information on the Employer Skills Survey, and to view the findings in full, visit www.gov.uk/ukces

unding cut

Should LEPs be responsible for the ESS in future?

YES

“The availability of a skilled workforce is essential to the economy, with almost every employer seeing skills as one of the most important issues for the continued growth of their business.

“LEPs therefore really need to understand what is happening in their labour market and make sure that the education and training system is delivering the skills needed by businesses and the wider economy.

“Having a really good handle on both growth and replacement demand will mean that LEPs, working with their education and training providers, will be able to collectively deliver properly planned provision. This takes on an even greater importance as skills funding is increasingly devolved.”

Jo Lappin,
chief executive,
Northamptonshire
Enterprise
Partnership



NO

“The Employer Skills Survey provides a rich set of data which is invaluable to all sorts of organisations and people across the UK. It provides good evidence to policy makers and commissioners about what’s needed from public investment to support employer and individual investment.

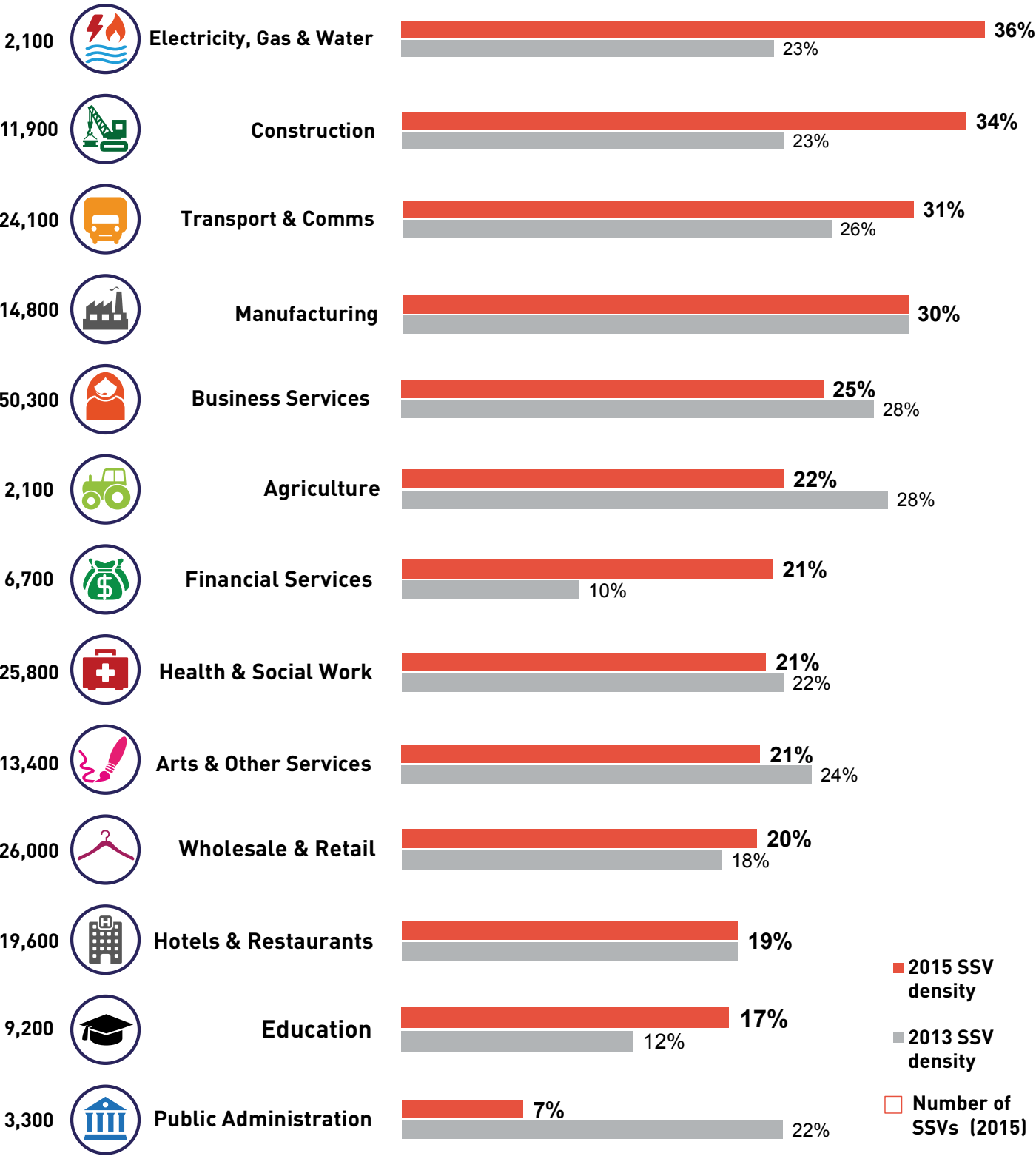
“We are keen that this research continues in the future, whatever that future holds for UKCES. A national survey, carried out once every two years and accessed by hundreds of organisations is a very efficient way to gather this intelligence and it would be a backward step if it did not continue in some form.

“As devolution quickens, the need for a single, consistent, comparable set of data about the labour market heightens.”

David Hughes, chief executive,
Learning and Work Institute



Number and density of skill -shortage vacancies (SSVs), by sector



Incidence and density of skill-shortage vacancies (SSVs) by country

Country	Unwtd base 2015	% of establishments with an SSV (incidence)			% of vacancies that were SSVs (density)		
		2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015
		%	%	%	%	%	%
UK	91,210	3	4	6	16	22	23
England	75,129	3	4	6	15	22	23
Northern Ireland	4,014	2	3	3	21	18	15
Scotland	6,035	3	4	6	15	25	24
Wales	6,027	3	4	6	18	20	23

PROFILE

A CHAMPION YEAR FOR NEIL

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It's been a big week for Neil Cain, who has seen his name in lights after being crowned Apprenticeship Champion of the Year for 2015.

The 51-year-old operations director for grounds maintenance company John O'Conner received the award on Tuesday, almost 36 years since he began his own apprenticeship course at 16.

Growing up in Sunderland, Cain attended Roman Catholic primary and secondary schools St Benet's and St Thomas Aquinas and found school "fantastic".

He enjoyed the focus on English, maths and religion, but it took him a little while to settle on a career plan. Cain's family had worked in the shipyards for generations, but his father was sceptical about future job opportunities.

"He was in the management and realised that long-term the shipyard industry had no future," Cain says.

As a result, he turned to his mother's side of the family, who were from a rural location in south Tyneside and had always been involved in horticulture.

Cain mentioned this background on a visit to his local jobcentre in 1980, and was told that Sunderland Council's parks department was advertising for apprentices in horticulture.

He decided to go for it and took a City and Guilds apprenticeship with the department: "I was delighted at the sponsor of my award last night, I was thrilled that it was City and Guilds."

He was one of 20 who joined the programme to do an induction into all areas of horticulture with the parks department's training division.

Of the group, 10 were then selected to go on and start a phase one City and Guilds Horticultural Apprenticeship at East Durham and Houghall College, while the other 10 continued with the in-house training.

Cain was thrilled to be one of those selected to move up, and says that his group became very close.

"It was fantastic because straight away you knew you had been selected on your ability, on what you were delivering on the ground," he says, adding that most of those 10 people went on to take up management roles in the horticulture industry.

Cain says the course was very challenging, but he was grateful to have a full-time day release for 30 days over the year, with a good mix of classroom in the morning and practical horticulture in the afternoon.

"The teachers were very hard with us, very experienced

horticulturalists, in fact fantastic horticulturalists, but because they were from the older generation they were very, very strict."

Cain finished this training at 21 and decided to pay to do a supervisory management course at Sunderland University.

At the same time, Michael Walsh, a park manager in the Houghton-le-Spring area, was looking for a horticultural foreman and Cain ended up seconded into this role.

Cain says Walsh was a fantastic mentor. Keen to make Cain a full-time foreman, Walsh said if he dropped his course to continue working in the park, he would pay for Cain to go back to Sunderland University the following year.

Cain took up the offer: "It was equivalent to a level four course, and very quickly I went from being foreman to park superintendent at the age of 23."

The park also paid for him to complete a level 5 in horticultural supervisory management at East Durham and Houghall Community College. After Walsh was promoted Cain took over his job as acting park superintendent.

The next stage of Cain's career was influenced by government policy, when the then Conservative government planned to outsource the parks departments.

Cain turned to look at opportunities in the private sector and after meeting brothers Tony and Pat Brophy, joined their father's company, CM Brophy, to work in a supervisory management role as the firm competed for parks contracts across the UK.

The new job saw Cain move away from home for the first time, relocating to Croydon, south London, at the age of 24 and then getting married in 1989 to his wife Jax.

Six years later, the couple were expecting their son, Samuel, and moved to Kimpton in Hertfordshire to be nearer to Jax's family.

Cain and his family are still living in Kimpton and he has enjoyed becoming part of the community there.

"I must have been doing something right because last year I got recognised for my community work for the village," he says, explaining how he raised over £100,000 to design and project manage a new pavilion for the local football club.

Despite Cain's love of the sport, his son is more interested in urban art and is currently studying at Central Saint Martins College in London.

In 2011, Sam also considered following his father in the apprenticeship route. After completing a foundation level 2 in engineering at school, Sam looked for options but found little available locally.

"The engineering opportunities were very, very limited," says Cain.

"Even though they had a skill gap, no one had any bespoke

apprenticeships. On one apprenticeship we did find they wanted him to then go back to do his level 2, which had already done as a diploma, when he was in year 11.

"It didn't make sense at the time so then he went and did his A-levels and found a real passion for art."

In the same month that Sam was born, Cain also took on a new position, after being approached by Fountains Forestry.

Fountains had been successful in Scotland and was broadening out across UK, hiring Cain in a "compulsive competitive tendering" management role. He spent 13 years working with Fountains, but in 2008 another change of direction came from a lunch meeting with John O'Conner, who had been one of his first subcontractors in 1988.

"John was always someone who I could go to if I ever wanted to gain any knowledge or experience," Cain says.

O'Conner told him about a vacancy at his firm for an operations director, so Cain joined the firm. At John O'Conner, Cain helped the board launch an apprenticeship scheme, drawing on his experience of working with the Royal Parks Apprenticeship Board to relaunch their apprenticeship scheme in 1999.

The firm partnered with Capel Manor College and private training provider Keeping Excellence in Training Standards and initially took on five apprentices.

Cain adds: "I think it's fair to say we've offered hundreds of work experience placements, traineeships and apprenticeships since we launched that in 2010."

The latest initiative is to get all apprentices and junior managers to set their own career enhancement plans, with support from the senior management.

"We're dovetailing that enhancement plan to ensure that as we secure more business we've got people already in place who can provide the right support. We're looking for controlled growth to turning over £20m by 2020.

"In the future that focus on apprenticeships will continue, because as we promote a supervisor to a manager, we'll need a foreman for a supervisor and we'll need a craftsman for a foreman."

Cain says his family were thrilled that all his work on apprenticeships over the years has now been recognised by the Apprenticeship Champion of the year award.

"They always believed it was the right thing for me to be having an apprenticeship, so it reinforced to them that they'd made the right decision as parents, coaching and supporting me down that route," he says.

"Someone asked me how I felt at the awards ceremony, and we have an expression in the north east: when someone asks you 'How are you?' people say 'I'm champion!' That really is how I felt."

2013

Neil visits Chinatown to celebrate Chinese New Year with friends from Kimpton



2014

Neil performing Bohemian Rhapsody at his 50th birthday celebrations with friends and family



Neil and his son Sam at La Tomatina festival in Valencia, Spain

The 50th Anniversary of the May Festival in Kimpton— Neil has been a committee member involved in coordinating the event for nine years



2016

Neil meets David Cameron at a reception at 10 Downing Street celebrating apprenticeships and reinforcing the government's 3m target



CAIN



My family believed it was the right thing for me to be having an apprenticeship, so they're thrilled

It's a personal thing

What's your favourite book?

I like taking books away on holiday, especially autobiographies. I just like reading about people's work, especially entrepreneurs and business

What do you do to switch off from work?

Getting involved in my village and supporting as many community events as I can. The village May festival raises over £30,000 in that weekend, but it takes a year to plan it. I also love music, indie bands, and discovering bands before they've really started to get big

What's your pet hate?

I haven't got a pet hate really, but I don't like Newcastle Football Club!

If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be?

I'm a big Paul Weller fan; he could play me some tunes

What did you want to be when you were growing up?

I wanted to play for Sunderland

Curriculum vitae

- 1964 – Born in Sunderland
- 1969 – St Benet's RC Primary School
- 1975 – St Thomas Aquinas Secondary School
- 1980 – Started City and Guilds apprenticeship with Sunderland parks department and East Durham and Houghall College
- 1984 – Started supervisory management course at Sunderland University
- 1987 – Appointed park superintendent in Houghton-le-Spring, Sunderland parks department
- 1988 – Joined CM Brophy
- 1989 – Married Jax Morley
- 1995 – Joined Fountains Forestry; son Sam born; moved to Hertfordshire
- 1999 – Worked on relaunch of Royal Parks apprenticeship scheme
- 2008 – Joined John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance
- 2010 – Launch of the John O'Conner apprenticeships scheme
- 2016 – Winner of City & Guilds award for Apprentice Champion of the Year



NEXT WEEK'S PROFILE

Read our profile interview with Ann Limb in the next edition



FE INSIDER

Shane Chowen is head of policy & public affairs at the Learning and Work Institute and a governor at Westminster Kingsway College. He is also a former Institute for Learning policy officer and ex-vice president of the National Union of Students. His exclusive FE Insider column features in the first *FE Week* of every month.

Regulation must not hinder battle against prejudice

A report published earlier this month by the House of Commons women and equalities committee found evidence of “unacceptable” bullying of transgender adult learners. FE Insider Shane Chowen looks at how the sector can respond to this.

In workplaces, schools, colleges, training providers and universities across the country this month, activities will be taking place to mark LGBT History Month.

This is a time when we mark the contribution that lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people around the world to society and their community, often in the face of discrimination and persecution from their peers or their governments.

It’s also the time of year we make all sorts of pledges to make our learning institutions; our buildings, classrooms and curricula, not just safe spaces for LGBT people, but places where prejudice and discrimination is challenged and we provide students with the skills to challenge homophobia, biphobia and transphobia at work and in their every-day lives.

Or at least that’s what we thought.

I’m sure I’m not the only one who was disappointed to read in a parliamentary select committee report last month that they had evidence which suggested the learning environment for LGBT students in further education was, “more hostile than in higher education.”

On the face of it, that’s quite a charge to throw at FE, so you’d be forgiven for being shocked or possibly defensive.

But then, the more you think about it, and the more you look into the research, it becomes less shocking.

A report out this month from the Forum for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity supported by Learning and Work Institute and Skills Funding Agency, will offer new evidence about the experiences of LGBTQ+ (Q represents people who define as ‘queer’ — not necessarily identifying with LGB or T or identifying with multiple identities, and the + is for other identities that are not represented by LGBT or Q) learners and staff in FE, which we hope will shape future activity that works for practitioners, managers and learners

So this LGBT History Month, as well as the activities you might be planning at your institution, I offer a number of points for providers and policy makers to consider.

For a start, I don’t believe that we lack any ambition in FE to make our learning

institutions safe spaces for everyone to access, achieve and progress.

But the fact is FE institutions face challenges that universities don’t, which is why making direct comparisons about relative levels of “hostility” might not necessarily be very helpful.

Students in FE, particularly 16-19 year olds, are highly regulated.

Every hour of their learning has been pre-determined by someone leaving practitioners with little room for manoeuvre.

I don’t believe that we lack any ambition in FE to make our learning institutions safe spaces for everyone to access, achieve and progress

The time we do have with learners is prioritised and we sadly categorise things like learning about the world and the difference between people we co-exist with as “soft skills” which is, in turn, lower priority.

For better or worse, the regulation of FE learning doesn’t stop there.

The challenge is not allowing equalities to just be another tick-box at the end of a lesson plan, but something we collectively take every opportunity to embed.

The last thing our teachers need is to be told that alongside English, maths, IT, sustainability and citizenship there’s another box you need to tick.

Clearly, there are major differences in the student experience which allows for more learning and positive student-led interventions in higher education than in FE.

Students are not physically around for as much time, by and large, and won’t necessarily come to FE with much exposure to diversity as students who go to university will have had.

Nonetheless, whether it’s better staff training, more resources for student-led campaigns, or a better policy for your institution, this is a great opportunity to start to do things differently.



DR DEIRDRE HUGHES OBE

Principal research fellow, Warwick Institute for Employment Research, and former chair of the National Careers Council

Time to deliver on quality careers advice

The government announced on January 24 that it would legally force schools to let FE providers talk to students about the benefits of apprenticeships, as part of a review. Deirdre Hughes reflects on progress being made in this area.

I welcome the government’s announcement to publish a new careers strategy.

For more than three years, the government has received a series of evidence-based reports indicating the careers system in England is fragmented and incoherent (for example Ofsted, 2013; National Careers Council, 2013 & 2014; Pearson, 2013, British Chamber of Commerce, 2015).

A key element missing in all recent announcements from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is the role of career development professionals trained and qualified to provide independent and impartial careers guidance.

Firstly, we heard about more employers going into schools, then Jobcentre advisers, then mentors and now apprenticeship providers.

Where do career development professionals fit into current thinking?

Schools are increasingly acknowledging their responsibility to guide students in their career development.

The guidance provided to schools in England from government focuses, for the most part, on helping students towards their academic achievement, and not on helping them develop competencies to manage their future career.

While some schools, colleges and local authorities are doing reasonably well, many institutions need to rise to the challenge of meeting their statutory and non-statutory duties to provide impartial and independent careers guidance.

In countries such as Austria, Finland, Germany and Switzerland, these issues are addressed by ensuring that careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) feature prominently in their education and training systems from an early age.

For example, a 2009 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report said a key strength of the Swiss vocational education training system was the integration of school and work based learning, with information on the benefits of both communicated between them.

London has made an excellent start in making explicit what a good careers offer looks like for young people across the city.

However, outside of London, many local enterprise partnerships are getting on with shaping their own local provision.

Time is of the essence, with yet another cohort of young people missing out this year on having access to good quality careers information, advice and guidance.

The new Careers and Enterprise Company is employer-led and independent of government.

It hopes to position itself at the heart of the careers and enterprise ecosystem — as a ‘market maker’ with funding provided from government.

Time is of the essence, with yet another cohort of young people missing out this year

The National Careers Service also has a formal ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ with the new company (it had a 5 per cent allocated budget from the Skills Funding Agency for ‘brokerage services’ to schools and colleges).

In December last year, Skills Minister Nick Boles indicated in a Skills Funding Letter, April 2016 – March 2017, that the National Careers Service should be “re-focussed on the new priority groups, young people aged 19-23 not in touch with schools/colleges, lower skilled adults aged 24 plus and adults (25 plus) with learning difficulties and disabilities... to help citizens make informed choices about learning and work and determine their career pathway and suitability for programmes including apprenticeships and traineeships as well as other learning and skills programmes intended to boost UK productivity”

This shift in policy represents a potential further reduction in trained and qualified career development professionals supporting local schools and colleges with their careers offer to young people, teachers and parents/carers.

The Careers & Enterprise Company is part of the solution in transforming the provision of careers, enterprise and employer engagement experiences for young people.

It plans to “launch a series of campaigns to stimulate debate, increase collaboration and raise aspirations.”

In reality, England does not need a series of costly campaigns.

Instead, government should assure quality control in the congested marketplace and take steps to ensure independent and impartial careers guidance is available to all young people.

EXPERTS

The NUS has launched a new #FEunplugged campaign to battle against provider closures through the government’s programme of post-16 area reviews. Shakira Martin explains how collecting views from FE students on their needs and concerns for the future can help boost their case.

Area reviews are a secret our sector seems to be really good at keeping to itself. It’s not news to say area reviews are the product of funding cuts, but there’s definitely a story in the way the FE sector’s very own Dr Frankenstein, Nick Boles, is cutting up the sector and trying to sew it back together — badly. He’s completely disregarded the heart of FE by leaving students out of any decision-making, all the way from Solent to Tees Valley. If this was happening in schools or universities, it would be on the front page of every national newspaper. The NUS fought hard to get a seat at the table where these decisions are being made and we’re bringing students’ needs right to the heart of the discussion. We’re hosting a roundtable for all students’ union officers and student governors in each area, asking them to come together and talk about what matters to them. The roundtables cover a range of topics, from what quality education is to the very fundamental things students need to access their education.



SHAKIRA MARTIN

National Union of Students (NUS)
vice president FE

Student views will strengthen college campaign case

After these discussions, NUS is writing a report for the area and delivering it to BIS, so each area review board knows exactly what students need. It’s a really big job. We’re asking students to give up their time, but it’s all so we can make sure the education received by the next generation of students is just as good as what current students are getting. But this isn’t enough. There are major concerns coming up at every roundtable. Over and over again, students are saying the local transport infrastructure is so poor they can’t get to college in a timely and affordable way. Other students are worried about whether they’ll get tailored support to help them make choices about their futures. This is why NUS is launching the #FEunplugged campaign. We don’t think it’s right for the government to pull the plug on FE. Colleges have been backed into a position where mergers are now essential for survival, instead of arising through a desire to collaborate and coexist. We want students’ unions to speak to their students and find out what keeps them in education. It could be specialist support for their disability, a campus on their doorstep so they can balance studying and childcare, a classroom with enough workstations and equipment for everyone to use or simply a bus journey they can afford. Then we want students and their communities to fight to keep these things. It could be by making local MPs finally understand and care about the sector and the vital role college plays in their constituency. Or they might ask a bus company to change its timetabling and routes so students aren’t missing out simply because they can’t get to college. NUS wants students to have a powerful voice when it comes to the decisions that shape their education and ultimately the lives

this education allows them to lead. And let’s be fair, it’s about showing Nick Boles that FE is already a resilient sector. We’ve put up with a lot and colleges are still delivering for students who, like me, need these courses and these opportunities so much.

Students are worried about whether they’ll get tailored support to help them make choices about their futures

This campaign won’t be successful unless the sector gets behind it. We’re calling on principals and clerks to support students, so they can attend our roundtables. We need tutors to make space for students’ unions and course reps to find out what students need. All of us need to make sure our voices are heard loud and clear when we fight to stop the plug being pulled on our bright futures.



GRAHAM HASTING-EVANS
Managing director, NOCN

Qualified or qualification?

What exactly are the new, reformed Trailblazer apprenticeships? Nobody seems to be sure – but maybe we aren’t looking at them in the right way. If we do, we could have a world class apprenticeship regime. The Government has set itself a target of 3m apprenticeships in this parliament, embarking on a major programme of change and, at the end of last year, publishing “Guidance for Trailblazers — from standards to starts” giving the first ideas of how this might work and what might be meant by “qualified” and “qualifications”. So let’s start with the purpose of an apprenticeship. It’s a period of learning and skill development towards a defined job role. At the end of it the person who has successfully completed their apprenticeship will be “qualified” to be say a doctor or a chef. The person is thus qualified to

competently carry out the full range of requirements for the specific job. But isn’t that a qualification? I would argue no. It is confirming a status in the workforce rather than a “qualification” which in many people’s minds is more about “knowledge” than skills development and competencies. Successful apprentices who have “passed-out” must be able to perform the job day in day out and they can only do this as they develop their skills and competencies — until they reach the point at which they can operate safely and with confidence on their own. So where do qualifications fit in? Well, they are part of what an apprentice must achieve to become qualified to do a certain job. The exact requirements for “qualification achievement” for each job will vary very considerably, from passing a training knowledge qualification course that might involve 10 weeks study up to a degree or master degree. Against this wide range of requirements

there are some potentially common parts to an apprenticeship where qualifications are included: entry qualifications — employers may require the would-be apprentice to have achieved a certain set of formal, knowledge-based standards for example five GCSEs or three A-levels in certain topics.

Qualifications are part of the apprenticeship — they are not the apprenticeship; having a qualification doesn’t mean you’re qualified (or job competent)

Core common skills qualifications — this would be English and maths, at a minimum of level one (for example Functional Skills) for a level two apprenticeship and at a minimum of level two for a level three apprenticeship. For certain apprenticeships it will also

be a requirement to achieve a defined qualification in the use of new technology/ IT. Licence to practice qualifications — in certain sectors or for groups of jobs it will be necessary to achieve a “licence to practice qualification” to work for example in construction site safety, first aid and food safety. “Major” knowledge qualifications — certain jobs may require the apprentice to achieve a significant “knowledge” qualification such as a degree, masters, HNC or defined professional and technical regulated qualification during the period of the apprenticeship. “Small” knowledge qualifications — certain jobs may require the apprentice to achieve a qualification in a certain topic, for example the use of CAD as a technician, laboratory analyst or working at heights. So qualifications are part of the apprenticeship — they are not the apprenticeship; having a qualification doesn’t mean you’re qualified (or job competent). For some this may seem radical, but this is because we are used to a regime of regulated qualifications and funding driven by achieving qualifications. In Europe and even previously in the UK the approach I have outlined is very common and is seen as the way of doing things. It’s different from our recent past, but it could give us an apprenticeship regime which is not only world class, but also provides the bed rock for a productive and successful economy in the future.

CAMPUS ROUND-UP



Megan Giles back on familiar territory outside Duchy Home Farm

Megan chips-in with golf win

Duchy College learner Megan Giles chipped her way to victory in the golf Andalucía Junior European Open in Spain.

The 16-year-old qualified for the Open, which is widely regarded as one of the biggest honours in junior golf, by winning the regional final based in the UK.

The individual strokeplay championship in Spain was played over five rounds.

Megan finished with a total of 227 after rounds of 77, 72 and 78, the same score as Spain's Carlota Sanchez.

It went down to a sudden-death play-off against Sanchez where Megan emerged victorious on the first extra hole.

Megan, who is currently on the tournament golf college development programme at the college in south-east Cornwall, said: "It was amazing really, the other players were so good and so I wasn't expecting to be anywhere near the top."

"The course that I'm studying at Duchy College is great because it means that I get to practice so much more than I would do at school, and I've really improved."

Curriculum lead for sport at the college, Kym O'Mara, added: "It was a nail biting few days, especially going into the final round, but she [Megan] showed the grit and determination that all successful sports people need, if they want to succeed."

In the frame with photo agency



From left: Central College Nottingham photography learners Klaudia Tomiak, aged 20, Samantha Dawn, 21, and Aaron Greco, 20

Photography learners at Central College Nottingham have launched their own commercial photo-agency.

The young snappers will run Focus Central out of the college's photography department and will give up to 20 students on the photography foundation degree course real-life work experience of how a business operates.

Students will take on assignments such as family portraits, weddings and events including PR and product launches.

"We are really confident that we are going to be able to deliver a professional service," said 21-year-old foundation degree learner

Samantha Dawn. "We have already got two weddings booked even though we officially launch next month, which is really great for us."

"Everyone hopes that the business will build up and we want to be doing as many jobs as possible."

The money the learners generate through any bookings is put back into the agency to fund student trips to see other creatives' work and put on future exhibitions.

Robot hands out canapés



Oscar the robot hands out canapés to principal of Nelson and Colne College Amanda Melton

Oscar the robot helped host the official unveiling of £2m-worth of hi-tech engineering facilities at Nelson and Colne College.

The new department features a subsonic wind tunnel, along with workshops equipped with the latest technology and software, such as computerised numerical control machinery.

It is aimed at helping the college's engineering students learn the skills needed to help them get jobs in Lancashire's manufacturing sector.

On the launch night, interactive robot

Oscar spent time talking to guests about apprenticeships and giving out canapés from the college's restaurant and bistro.

Nelson and Colne College's assistant principal for enterprise and engagement, Alison Rushton, said: "This is such an exciting time for the college, and we are looking forward to seeing school, college and adult learners, as well as employers, benefit from this outstanding skills facility."

"Manufacturing forms the largest private sector employment for Pendle, so there really is no better time for students to get ready for their future with Nelson and Colne College."



Public services students deal with the aftermath of the road accident simulation

Passing road accident test

Public services learners at Suffolk New College had their leadership skills put to the test when they were tasked to deal with the aftermath of a serious road accident.

The group were given different roles in the simulation which tested the knowledge learned on their level three course.

Some students played the part of those injured in the "accident", while others took on the role of paramedics, police, journalists and members of the public.

Tutor Martin Memory said: "The students attended a scenario where the driver of a car suffered a heart attack and crashed into two

pedestrians.

"They each had various roles to play and the purpose of the simulation was to learn how to deal with a serious situation."

Mr Memory, who previously served as a sergeant with Suffolk Police, said the exercise was useful for the students who are likely to use their qualifications to pursue careers in the emergency services.

"Exercises such as this bring the classroom to life," he added. "It's always important to learn by doing and using role play helps students to put their skills into practice."

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CAMPUS ROUND-UP

Refugee Abel on track with long distance running

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From humble beginnings, refugee Abel Tsegay is on track to become a world renowned athlete thanks to help from Canterbury College, writes Billy Camden.

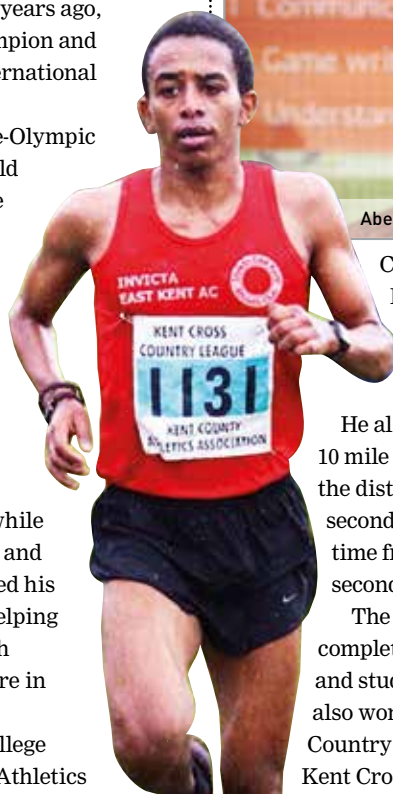
Teenage refugee Abel Tsegay credits Canterbury College with helping him race towards his dream of emulating Britain's greatest ever distance runner Mo Farah.

The 19-year-old BTec level two sport learner, who only arrived in the UK as a refugee from his native Eritrea two years ago, is Kent Cross Country Champion and recently took part in an international competition in Belgium.

Much like his idol, double-Olympic gold medal winner and World Champion Farah, who came to the UK from Somalia speaking very little English at a young age, Abel has had a lot to overcome while pursuing a career in athletics.

He told *FE Week* that moving to the UK was a "scary experience", as he struggled to communicate while training with other athletes and in the classroom, but credited his teachers at the college for helping improve his grasp of English since he began studying there in September 2014.

Abel, who trains at the college and with Invicta East Kent Athletics



Abel Tsegay at Canterbury College

Club, travelled to Brussels in December to compete in the international Lotto Cross where he finished in ninth position.

He also retained the Canterbury 10 mile title on Sunday, completing the distance in 51 minutes and 36 seconds, which beat his winning time from the previous year by 27 seconds.

The teenager, who plans to complete his college qualifications and study sport science at university, also won the 2014 Liverpool Cross Country Challenge and last year's Kent Cross Country Championship.



all the time, including his English skills."

Sport lecturer Jemma Cullen said: "On a personal level, Abel has never been afraid to take on new challenges.

"For example, we recently took Abel canoeing and it didn't faze him, despite the fact that he can't swim.

"There was a point when he had to capsize himself, but it didn't bother him at all. That is the attitude he takes to all new challenges.

"We're very proud of him. Despite his success, he's got decorum and poise.

He's a really well-

mannered and kind young man."

And Ms Cullen believes Abel, who felt too uncomfortable to talk about his past ordeals and instead wants to focus on the future, can go all the way to achieving his dream of becoming an Olympic athlete.

"I wouldn't put anything past him, to be honest. If Abel carries on the way he has been, I'm sure he will."



Great Britain's Mo Farah celebrates winning the Mens 3000m Final of the Sainsbury's Anniversary Games

Reflecting on the difference that attending college has made to his life, he said: "It is good for me to study here. It means I can improve my language and my sport skills and I can learn a lot and different kinds of activities.

"I was always good at running and when I saw my idol Mo Farah at the world championships on TV, I knew that is what I wanted to do," Abel added.

"My dream is to become an Olympic athlete and to break world records."

Abel's tutor, Dain Lewis, said: "Abel has embraced his new life in the UK and is already giving back to the community.

"His social life revolves around running and when it comes to his studies, Abel's developing

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CAMPUS ROUND-UP?

Send your stories with pictures to campus@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course details of students where applicable

& MOVERS SHAKERS

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

The National Skills Academy for Financial Services (NSAFS) has appointed Peter Pledger as its chief executive, taking over from the outgoing Sylvia Perrins who has retired.

Mr Pledger brings more than 20 years' experience of working in the education and training sector to the role, with much of this in collaboration with the financial services industry.

Prior to this, Mr Pledger was chief executive of the London College of Beauty Therapy and before there he was chief executive of South

London Business.

Mr Pledger was also the executive director of the London West Learning and Skills Council responsible for the planning and funding of post-16 education across west London. He has also served as a governor of St. Mary's University for nine years.

Commenting on his appointment at NSAFS, Mr Pledger said: "I look forward to developing the NSAFS to continue to meet the needs of employers in financial services, create opportunities for access to jobs in the sector and expand the range of services to improve

knowledge and understanding of financial services."

Meanwhile, Lawrence Kenwright has joined the board of governors at City of Liverpool College.

Mr Kenwright is the co-founder, with his wife Katie, of Signature Living, a new chain of city centre hotels.

The college hopes the entrepreneur will bring expertise in construction, digital and social media to the board.

Mr Kenwright said it is an "honour" to join the college.

"I am proud to have been appointed governor to offer my expertise within the different industries I am involved in," he added.

"The college does fantastic work to develop local talent so it is a real honour that they have asked me to join the board. I am relishing the opportunity to get involved and help the college grow and become more

successful in the years ahead."

Peter Grieve, chair of City of Liverpool College board of governors said Mr Kenwright's appointment is part of ongoing work to "build a curriculum around key growth areas like the visitor economy, identifying what the job and skill needs are for these sectors and shaping courses to match.

"This strategy will ensure that the education we provide will lead to real jobs for our students."

And John Laramy has been appointed as the new principal of Exeter College, replacing Richard Atkins who will retire in March.

Mr Laramy, who has been vice principal of Exeter College since 2009, will take up his new post at the start of April.

He said he was "delighted" to have been chosen.

"I am privileged to have the opportunity to lead one of the best colleges in the country. Exeter College is exceptional, and I look forward to working with students, staff, governors and stakeholders to build on its success in the future," he added.

In the past, Mr Laramy has also worked part-time at North West Kent College and in a number of roles at North Devon College, including in the senior management team.

He sits on the Exeter Mathematics School Board, a partnership between Exeter University and Exeter College, and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Building.



Peter Pledger



Sylvia Perrins



Lawrence Kenwright



John Laramy



Richard Atkins

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Salary: Lecturer Scale, points 1- 7
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You will teach GCSE English with the potential of some Functional Skills delivery to students of all age groups within the FE sector. The programmes are delivered across all college sites and in community venues.

You will possess a degree or professional vocational equivalent, Certificate in Education, PGCE or equivalent or the ability and willingness to obtain a Level 4 professional teaching qualification within 2 years of commencing employment.

You will ideally also hold a specialist qualification in English, alongside a specialist qualification in teaching literacy/numeracy. The successful candidate will have recent relevant teaching experience in the specialist subject area and Functional Skills.

You will have good communication skills both written and oral, alongside good organisational skills.

0.5 LECTURER IN GCSE ENGLISH, POST NO: LC0106P

Salary: Lecturer Scale, points 1- 7
i.e. £22,857 - £32,598 pro rata per annum.

Working 18.5 hours per week, you will teach GCSE English with the potential of some Functional Skills delivery to students of all age groups within the FE sector. The programmes are delivered across all college sites and in community venues.

You will possess a degree or professional vocational equivalent, Certificate in Education, PGCE or equivalent or the ability and willingness to obtain a Level 4 professional teaching qualification within 2 years of commencing employment.

You will ideally also hold a specialist qualification in English, alongside a specialist qualification in teaching literacy/numeracy. The successful candidate will have recent relevant teaching experience in the specialist subject area and Functional Skills.

You will have good communication skills both written and oral, alongside good organisational skills.

0.72 LECTURER IN FUNCTIONAL SKILLS ENGLISH AND MATHS (Temp to cover Maternity), POST NO: LC0246F

Salary: Lecturer Scale, points 1- 7
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Temporary to cover Maternity

Working 26.64 hours per week, you will teach GCSE English and Functional Skills English and Maths at all levels. Delivery is to students of all age groups within the FE sector. The programmes are delivered across all college sites and in community venues.

You will possess a degree or professional vocational equivalent, Certificate in Education, PGCE or equivalent or the ability and willingness to obtain a Level 4 professional teaching qualification within 2 years of commencing employment.

You will ideally also hold a specialist qualification in English, alongside a specialist qualification in teaching literacy/numeracy. The successful candidate will have recent relevant teaching experience in the specialist subject area and Functional Skills.

You will have good communication skills both written and oral, alongside good organisational skills.

0.8 LECTURER IN GCSE ENGLISH & FUNCTIONAL SKILLS (Temporary to cover Maternity), POST NO: LC0223F

Salary: Lecturer Scale, points 1- 7
i.e. £22,857 - £32,598 pro rata per annum.

Temporary to cover Maternity

Working 29.6 hours per week, you will teach GCSE English and Functional Skills English and Maths at all levels. Delivery is to students of all age groups within the FE sector. The programmes are delivered across all college sites and in community venues.

You will possess a degree or professional vocational equivalent, Certificate in Education, PGCE or equivalent or the ability and willingness to obtain a Level 4 professional teaching qualification within 2 years of commencing employment.

You will ideally also hold a specialist qualification in English, alongside a specialist qualification in teaching literacy/numeracy. The successful candidate will have recent relevant teaching experience in the specialist subject area and Functional Skills.

You will have good communication skills both written and oral, alongside good organisational skills.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR THESE POSTS IS SUNDAY 07 FEBRUARY 2016.


To apply for these vacancies, please visit Lincoln College job vacancies page.


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The qualified lecturer scale starts at **£23,832 rising to £35,982**

We welcome applications from NQTs

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS Disclosure


Application forms and job descriptions are available on our website www.riversidecollege.ac.uk


E-mail: HRUnit@riversidecollege.ac.uk

Closing date: 12 noon Wednesday 10th February 2016



Widnes & Runcorn





The Camden College


Sessional Functional Skills English Tutors

£28.21 per hour to start ASAP – various days and hours

We are looking for English Functional Skills tutors with familiarity of exams preferably using EDEXCEL as the examining board to work various days and hours. Tutor needs to be an experienced F/S tutor and have suitable teaching qualifications. Classes will run from February 2016 until July 2016.

To apply for this post, please visit our website www.wmcollege.ac.uk and click on About WMC, then Jobs at WMC where you can download the WMC Application Form, WMC Recruitment Monitoring Form and WMC Declaration of Criminal Convictions Form. When you have completed these forms, please email them back to recruitment@wmcollege.ac.uk

The closing date for this post is 9am Monday 8 February 2016 and interviews for this post will take place either that week or the week after.




The Camden College


WMC actively strives to be an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community. All appointments will be solely on merit. Registered Charity No. 312803. Tube: Mornington Crescent 2mins / Camden Town, Euston & St Pancras 10 mins


The same... **OUTSTANDING!** College


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FULL TIME MATHS & ENGLISH TUTOR/ TEACHER - £35,000PA OTE

LOCATION: ENGLAND

Due to the outstanding successes of our work to date, we are looking to recruit a new team of 15 experienced Skills for Life tutors. You will be delivering English and Maths from Entry Level through to Level 2, contextualised with a vocational award. Some delivery will be in the Health and Social Care sector, and therefore any experience in the H&SC sector would be an advantage but not essential. The role will be working on a peripatetic basis, delivering in your region. Willingness to travel and your own transport are essential.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA - PLEASE DO NOT APPLY IF YOU CAN'T COMPLY:

- Full time ONLY with flexible hours
- Have achieved a recognised full teaching qualification - Cert ed/ PGCE/ DTLLS or equivalent
- Experience in teaching English and/or Maths
- Outstanding personal written and verbal communication skills
- A driving license and access to your own transportation

HIGHLY DESIRED CRITERIA

- Experience of working with adult learners
- Working towards or have achieved a Level 4/5 Subject Specialist qualification in literacy and/ or Numeracy
- Excellent ICT Skills

The successful candidate will also be required to have a valid DBS Clearance Check. In the first instance, please send an email outlining your recent relevant experience together with your CV. NCC Skills Ltd is an Equal Opportunities Employer. No agencies please jobs@nccskills.co.uk

www.nccskills.co.uk



Lecturer Assessor Maths (Ref: JP1218)

0.6 FTE (21 hpw)

Closing date: Wednesday 10th February 2016

Interview date: Wednesday 24th February 2016

No agencies please.

For more information and to apply online visit www.accross.ac.uk/jobs

Accrington and Rossendale (AccRoss) College exists to provide high quality education and training to the widest range of local people.

PART TIME PERMANENT TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR GCSE/FUNCTIONAL SKILLS ENGLISH/MATHS TEACHERS (SOUTHAMPTON, SALISBURY AND POOLE AREAS)



FNTC Training is one of the south coast's leading training providers offering a range of courses including Maths, English, First Aid, Apprenticeships and Traineeships. The successful candidate will be required to teach at one or more of our centres and may be required to travel to the Isle of Wight. Place and times of work are agreed with the Director of Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Quality.

FNTC has the following opportunities for Teachers of GCSE/Functional Skills English and maths with the enthusiasm, vision and commitment to contribute to the success of the organisation.

In your role as the successful Teacher you will need the ability to inspire and motivate students, coupled with a strong presence and positive personality. Committed, conscientious and willing to contribute to team goals, you will have high standards of professionalism and expectations of students. Most importantly, you will be passionate about your chosen subject and must also possess the ability to work in collaboration with the wider teaching team, guide students' academic, personal and professional development, as a teacher, in accordance with the Centre's guidelines and procedures. You should also display the ability to inspire high achievement of students and to be prepared to participate in extra-curricular activities as may be appropriate.

Candidates must be qualified to degree level in their chosen subject and possess a teaching qualification, as well as having proven experience in successfully delivering the GCSE/Functional Skills syllabus to a range of students. It is essential that you have the ability to build positive relationships, displaying excellent communication, organisational and administrative skills, demonstrating a flexible and professional attitude. You will be a highly self motivated, energetic and driven individual, encompassing a strong sense of autonomy.

Salary: £23,000- £24,000 pro rata depending on experience and qualifications.

Hours: Up to 16 hours a week, may include evening cover

DEADLINE FOR THE POSTS IS THURSDAY 11TH FEBRUARY 2016 - INTERVIEWS WILL TAKE

PLACE WEDNESDAY 17TH FEBRUARY 2016.

For further information call Jacqueline Doherty on: **01794 523857** and to submit your CV and application form please email **Bev Samuel: Bev.Samuel@fntctraining.co.uk**

*FNTC is committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
FNTC is an equal opportunities employer and as a member of the Positive About Disabled People scheme will interview all candidates who wish their application to be considered under this scheme.*



FULFIL

ambitions



The new Level 3 Tech Level Diploma and Level 2 Technical Certificate in Physical Activity, Fitness and Exercise Science are now approved by the DfE for inclusion in the new look 16-19 Performance Tables with Level 3 accepted by UCAS for the new tariff.

Our active career pathway will enable your students to access the Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs), and gain work experience whilst they learn.

WITH OUR ACTIVE PATHWAY

Designed in collaboration with Active Leisure employers and training providers, these qualifications will equip students with the level of knowledge, skill and competence they need for direct entry to employment and higher education.

start
journey

Visit www.activeiq.co.uk or email businessdevelopment@activeiq.co.uk to start delivering from September 2016.

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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

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Difficulty:
EASY

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

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 week's spot the difference winner was Shirley Mann of Greenwich.