



AoC IN INDIA

FE WEEK ON LOCATION IN NEW DELHI



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Welcome to this *FE Week* supplement

Nick Linford, editor of FE Week

On first hearing that 30 FE colleges were to have a permanent presence in India I was intrigued. I asked myself, is there not enough of a challenge educating learners and supporting employers during tough economic conditions in the UK? Why use precious resources chasing contracts in unfamiliar countries, where many have tried and failed before?

And was Sir Michael Wilshaw, the chief inspector for Ofsted, right to ask in his first speech to FE colleges, if international work is a distraction from the urgent need to raise the standards of teaching and learning for our own learners?

My next question was whether it was worth the time and financial cost of flying to India with *FE Week* colleague Shane Mann to find out. That was easy to answer — yes.

AoC [Association of Colleges] India is an important development in FE. It is a story we couldn't possibly do justice to from our office in London.

For this reason, we have produced a supplement, in partnership with NOCN, on the development. It starts by introducing

you to the colleges taking part (31 at the time of going to print), each one investing £20k for a two-year membership to AoC in India.

We then introduce you to Sannam S4, the consultants with the contract from AoC in India to be the eyes, ears and representatives on the ground.

Next up comes interviews with the chair of the group, Asha Khemka, and project director John Mountford.

Further education Minister Matthew Hancock was also visiting India seeking opportunities, learning about India's plans to train half a billion people by 2022 and, as a Parliamentary cricket team member, quite reasonably taking a spectator seat for the one-day international between England and India in Chandigarh.

We were granted an exclusive interview with the minister en route the official launch party for AoC in India, held at the UK High Commissioner's residence in New Delhi.

As reported in a recent edition of *FE Week*, AoC in India is by no means the first nor the only FE college venture into the



From left: Shane Mann and Nick Linford.

Photo by Marguerite Hogg, AoC

Asian education market, and on page 14 and 15 we look at to such projects.

What struck me was that by clubbing together the colleges have chosen a relatively low risk form of investment.

The use of an Indian market entry specialist firm makes a lot of sense. Sannam S4 is well-placed from New Delhi to quickly spot a good opportunity from an unrealistic or poor one. They have also already made impressive headway in arranging meetings with the relevant Indian agencies.

The challenge now will be not just to convert ambition into returns on investment, but also dealing with the

tricky operational and strategic issues, presumably familiar to all new partnerships made up of competing businesses.

I also attended the official opening of New College Nottingham's International Lifestyles Academy, to which its East Midlands parent college is contributing curriculum design and quality assurance.

Finally, as for my most unexpected experience in India?

That was being invited to stay for dinner after the AoC in India launch and being told by the ambassador's wife that the apples in the crumble were a gift from the King of Butan.

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FE Week is a newspaper dedicated to reporting on news, analysis, jobs and fun in the further education sector.

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The AoC in India delegation with staff from Sannam S4, at the firm's office on the third floor of Devika Tower, New Delhi

Photo by Nick Linford

Colleges set off on an Indian venture

Shane Mann
@shanermann

Thirty-one colleges (at time of print) from across the UK have come together with the aim of entering the vocational education marketplace in India over the coming years.

The AoC has established a limited company, AoC India Ltd, with the aim of helping deliver the "UK's world-class vocational training alongside further education training providers in India in an effort to meet the country's growing demand for skills." Trading as AoC in India, it will act as a representative body for its members.

AoC in India has employed the services of a market entry specialist, Sannam S4 Consulting Pvt Ltd, in New Delhi, (see page 4) who will build the initial team that will be based in India.

It is envisaged that this "Indian base" will act as a hub for sharing best practice and forge strong ties between UK and Indian training providers and employers.

AoC in India is the largest collective attempt by UK colleges to contribute to India's enormous and ambitious skills strategy.

AoC in India will be governed by company directors including Andy Wilson, principal of Westminster Kingsway College,

and Asha Khemka, principal of West Nottinghamshire College and chair of AoC in India.

The company is a partnership of UK colleges secured for the next two years by a two-year financial commitment of £20,000 from each member college.

AoC in India represents a strong partnership of UK further education colleges that will work together

It is hoped that it will help both UK educational establishments and businesses explore opportunities, set up, and expand their business in India.

It will be overseen on a day-to-day basis by a strategic management group which will report to board of directors.

During AoC in India's visit to New Delhi, Sannam S4 organised networking events for the fifty-strong delegation with the National Skill Development Corporation

(NSDC), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and vocational education and training providers from India.

Minister for Skills, Matthew Hancock MP, officially launched AoC in India (see page 12) on January 22 at the British High Commissioner's Residencies in front of a delegation of Indian and UK skills providers, industrial partners, government ministers and civil servants.

The opportunities in India are vast, with around 500 million young people requiring vocational training over the coming decade.

AoC's international director, John Mountford, said: "This marks a great opportunity, not only for our member colleges in the UK, but also for a huge variety of education and training providers in India. AoC in India will be a way of sharing educational best practice that has been developed in colleges in the UK over many decades.

"AoC in India represents a strong partnership of UK further education colleges that will work together to effectively engage with leading Indian training, education and industry partners

"It will develop programmes which, due to the scale of the skills drive in India, may involve training local people to train others and 'cascade' skills down to the wider population."

The 31 members of AoC in India

- Barking & Dagenham College
- Barnet and Southgate College
- Belfast Metropolitan College
- Blackburn College
- Birmingham Metropolitan College
- Bournville College
- Bradford College
- Bournemouth and Poole College
- Burton and South Derbyshire College
- City and Islington College
- City of Westminster College
- Edinburgh College
- Exeter College
- Grimsby Institute
- Guildford College of FE and HE
- Harrow College
- Havering College of FE and HE
- Henley College Coventry
- Highbury College
- Isle of Wight College
- NESCOT (NE Surrey College of Tech)
- New College Durham
- Oaklands College
- Solihull College
- South Thames College
- Stockton Riverside College
- Westminster Kingsway College
- West Nottinghamshire College
- Walsall College
- Warrington Collegiate
- Ytsrad Mynach College

AoC IN INDIA



Helping colleges enter the Indian market



Members of the Sannam S4 team. From left: Edward Dixon, chief operating officer, Adrian Mutton, chief executive, John Philip, country adviser for AoC in India, Cindrela Arthur, head of events, Lakshmi Iyer, head of education, Tanushree Ray, office manager, Krishna Kumar, head of research and partnerships (and head of skills sector)
Photo by Nick Linford

Shane Mann @shanermann

The challenge of entering the Indian education marketplace should not be underestimated.

Opportunities for partnerships are immense, but the question remains as to whether the UK model of FE could tie-in with the Indian model.

There are also cultural differences to consider, plus and a skills training requirement on an unimaginable scale.

A helping hand to assist with market entry is a good place to make inroads into answering these questions.

AoC India Ltd has bought the services of Sannam S4, a “specialist, single-window provider of market entry and business

development services in India.” Its client list ranges from several UK universities, including the University of Westminster and the University of London, to large multi-national organisations such as TK Maxx and Unilever.

Sannam S4 will have the responsibility of representing AoC in India and its 31 member colleges on the ground in India on a daily basis.

Its services will include, among others, analysis of the opportunities available in India for UK colleges, introductions to businesses with training needs and brokerage with the Indian government’s education ministry.

Sannam S4, with offices across the major cities in India, will also provide an Indian base from which AoC in India will operate.

John Philip (pictured above), country

adviser for AoC in India and an employee of Sannam S4, will be the primary liaison and contact for AoC in India. In the coming months, as AoC in India expands, Mr Philips will be joined by a further two colleagues who will assist with the Indian operation.

He told delegates at a welcoming and introductory meeting on Sunday, January 20: “I am delighted to welcome my 31 bosses to India and to our office here in New Delhi.

“I believe AoC has entered the Indian market space at exactly the right time. The skills gap in India is large and the Indian government requires a focused approach to vocational education in India. AoC in India can help India achieve.”

Adrian Mutton, chief executive and founder of Sannam S4, said: “The skills

challenge in India is immense and the Association of Colleges and its members are well positioned to contribute to tackling this. Our local knowledge and expertise of the education and skills markets in both the UK and India will help the AoC team identify training opportunities.”

The challenge for Sannam S4 over the coming couple of years will be to manage the introduction of the UK’s FE offer, through the consortia.

While AoC in India is not a pioneer for colleges working in India, the partnership between 31 colleges is new and poses many challenges.

It will be one of Sannam S4’s roles to ensure that the consortia’s entry to India is smooth, successful and meets the expectations of an Indian client base.

Q&A with Adrian Mutton, Sannam S4 chief executive

How did Sannam S4 come about?

“I had come to the end of a prolonged holiday following the sale of my previous company. I had not a clue what to do next. I thought China was my next step, but then I stood on a street corner of Shanghai one afternoon, looked around, and observed a country that had everything it needed. India does not have everything.

“I had lived in India previously and in a moment of inspiration, thought about the challenges I’d had before and what I would pay for as a British exporter. I thought ‘that’s it!’ — I could support British business aiming to enter the Indian market.

“We’re coming into our fifth year

and Sannam S4 is going from strength to strength. I’ve got a fair amount of experience in India, but I’ve still had to learn a lot in the last 5 years, so I consider myself a foreigner coming into the market starting a business from scratch, and building up from 0 to 80-plus staff.”

How long has Sannam S4 been involved with AoC in India?

“We have been working on this project now for around a year. The challenge for us has been to create a structure over here that will help to support, benefit and most importantly get the job done for AoC in India and all of those in the consortia.”



What opportunities are there in India for UK colleges?

“The opportunities that exist here in India for UK colleges are overwhelming.

Half of the world’s under 28 population live in India — they need equipping with skills. “India is a country on a turning point that could easily see it becoming the largest economy in the world. A key concern for many, including the World Bank, is the skill gap — if this ever-expanding population does not educate, it will have severe issues.

“A fifth of the world’s workforce will come from India over the next decade. UK

colleges could easily provide training to Indian students.”

What are the likely challenges these colleges may face?

“We have heard already from several colleges in AoC in India about the issues they are having with the UK border agency (UKBA).

“The UKBA’s odd decisions, to refuse visas, can cause problems. While it is recognised that there is a problem with bogus colleges and students coming over illegally, there needs to be an education provided in ensuring that the difference between a genuine FE college and a bogus one is understood. I hope the minister will take on board these issues and feed them back to his government.”



Taking questions from the AoC in India delegation. From left: Sunaina Mann, principal of North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOT), Andy Wilson, principal of Westminster Kingsway College, Sudeshna Chatterjee, director of South Asia development at Bournville College, Sue Rimmer, principal of South Thames College, Clive Hill, executive director of Birmingham Metropolitan College, Shane Mann, reporting for *FE Week* and John Mountford, international director for the AoC
Photo by Nick Linford

Q&A with the chair of AoC in India

How did the AoC in India launch event in New Delhi go?

“It was a tremendous success. The most important parts for me were that it allowed AoC in India and its member colleges to show off the world class education that we provide in England. Furthermore, it reaffirmed our challenge and agenda — to deliver and make a real difference.”

What are going to be the challenges?

“The biggest challenge for the Indian government is not the population who can afford to pay and get educated, it is the vast majority who still live in the rural parts of India and cannot afford education.

“The Indian government need to invest resources, it needs to invest capital and it needs to give these young people somewhere to go where they can have decent training. If you go to the institutions here in India some are like a shell, in tiny surroundings and without resources.

“At the same time there are other institutions where people charge \$10,000 a year and there are amazing facilities. Our greatest challenge is the sheer diversity of this country.”

What does the UK FE sector have to offer India?

“We have a lot to offer India. I feel we should start by working with UK companies that have operations in India such as JCB and Rolls Royce. We need to capture their interests and investment and work with them in providing a workforce with a qualification that says you are properly trained and qualified in this particular trade.

“We bring with us to India our intellectual property — qualifications. Although vocational qualifications only work when people can see well-paid jobs at the end of it, that’s why it is important for us to work with the employers.”

In a couple of years’ time what do you see the ideal membership of AoC in India being?

“I think we have to limit the numbers, because when you have too many, you can’t get anything through. I have really worked hard as chair to ensure things are happening in the right way. Consulting with our 31 colleges, getting their approval and agreement is challenging enough and if we have a bigger cohort, yes it’s good, but we need to see what our destination and outcomes are in two



Asha Khemka, principal of West Nottinghamshire College and chair of AoC in India, interviewed by Shane Mann at the British High Commissioners Residence in New Delhi
Photo by Nick Linford

years’ time ARE, evaluate them and start to think about where we go next.”

What do you think the biggest reward will be for the colleges AoC in India, regardless of the revenue?

“Revenue I don’t even consider — this is not for money-making. This is about

discharging your corporate national responsibilities, raising the profile of what we do in Britain and sharing with our partners in India. Where they do not have that track record, nor have the expertise. That is the great satisfaction and this is why I’m doing it, nothing more and nothing less.”



Getting a feel for a foreign market

At the end of a very busy few days in India, *FE Week* caught up with AoC international director John Mountford, who has overseen the development of AoC in India. We asked him about the launch of AoC in India and what we can expect to see over the coming years.

How has the visit to India gone?

“It has been excellent. We came with two key objectives — one was to get the office off to a good start, and through the launch and the meetings I think we have achieved this. Second, we wanted to give all those involved the chance to get a feel for what India is all about.

“You’re not always going to get that on a first trip, but I hope people who have come will go back with a better feel for what the opportunities are and what the challenges are than when they arrived. I think we have achieved these two objectives.”

You have the task of getting 31 colleges working together on this project. Do you think it will happen?

“I do — I’m optimistic that they will. They have to if they are to access India successfully because of the scale and complexities. You have to take a joined-up approach.

“You’ve got to get the model right and that takes thought and time, but if it properly and carefully and work together getting something that you’re all happy with then AoC in India will be a great success.”

Do you think you’ve been taken seriously by the Indian government?

“Definitely. There has been a real enthusiasm and interest in what we’re doing and that’s actually very heartening. Going back to your first question, I think that’s one of the positives to what we have gotten out of this week — a very warm Indian welcome

“At the end of the day they know they’ve got this huge human resource that they need to train and up-skill, and they also acknowledge they haven’t got the internal capacity to do that.

“So they need to work internationally, there is an interest in what the UK model is

and I think the fact the UK has come here to establish a base is very exciting for the Indian partner.”

There’s some scepticism back home about the value of the project. What’s the added value to organisations that are participating?

“We’re operating in a global landscape now and you don’t have to come to India to see that in 20 to 30 years’ time, countries like India, China and Brazil will have become more dominant. Countries like the UK have to be positioned to work effectively with them.

“If not, they’ll work with someone else and that also applies to our learners as well. So if our job as a sector is to prepare people to be effective in the work place, so that UK industries are competitive and efficient, then there should be an international dimension to our work. Otherwise we’re not properly preparing our learners.

“It has been a very positive week and a very exciting project and we’re optimistic that it’s going to push our sector forward.”



John Mountford at the Sannam S4 briefing

Employability in India

Graham Hasting-Evans, managing director of NOCN, is working in India with Auctifer, the Institute of Productivity (IoP) and is developing a long term relationship with the All India Management Association (AIMA), the proposed management/behavioural skill council of India.

How is it possible that in a country blessed with a demographic dividend and an abundance of labour there is still a shortage of employable and productive people?

Yet that seems to be the case in India. For although two-thirds of the country’s 1.21 billion population is below the age of 35 and its colleges disgorge more than 750,000 science and engineering graduates every year; only 26 per cent of those graduates are fit for employment in India’s US\$60 billion (Dh220.37bn) technology sector – according to the National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom), an industry lobby group in New Delhi.

And all this when India’s employers are reporting skills shortages in a number of sectors including auto components, construction, engineering, food, IT, machine tools, outsourcing, plastics, services, textiles and tourism.

So, what is behind this apparent dichotomy?

Simply put, it is employability skills which of themselves help drive productivity.

In the Indian education system experience by learning is negligible. Indians, it seems learn more by rote.

Many sectors face skills challenges. From the discussions NOCN has had with Indian employers and educational organisations, and the feedback at the recent AIMA Employability Forums in New Delhi, the most common areas of skills shortages are found in communication, customer care, English, project management and working in teams.

To overcome such challenges government, academia and employers will have to join forces to act as one.

Long term and short to medium term strategies will be needed.

In the long term the government would need to develop teaching and assessment methodologies which are more broadly based. These would need to include experience-by-learning and the development of employability skills. What’s more it needs to be recognised that such a strategy could take at least a generation to show any benefits.

In the short to medium term India would need to consider putting in place programmes aimed at improving employability skills. These programmes would need to be available to both students in their final few years at school and university graduates and postgraduates, as well as the unemployed and people already



Seated from left: Mike Dillon, NOCN Intl, Graham Hasting-Evans, NOCN, John Heap, IoP and Dr Sunil Abrol, AIMA with colleagues during a recent visit to New Delhi

working. At present qualifications in India are ‘technically’ based, for example, providing a degree in engineering. There is only a limited emphasis on certifying that the would-be employee has the necessary skills needed for the job.

To put that in context, just two per cent of India’s young people undergo vocational training, compare that to South Korea, you’ll find that figure is a staggering 90 per cent.

But, if the Indian government and employers tackle the employability challenge now it could lead to a bright future.

One could envisage a student, unemployed person or employee taking a course, which would lead to a certified qualification stating they have reached a particular level of attainment (grade) in all or specific of the recognised employability skills. The course could be either stand-

alone or form part of a wider qualification.

The student could receive a printed certificate, just like any other certificate that they could then show to a further education establishment or a future employer.

However, it would require both the further education establishment and employer having confidence in the certificate and what it demonstrates about the person’s capabilities and skills.

But if India is to thrive it is essential that industry and academia work together to address the employability challenge facing them. If they don’t, students will be leaving school or university without the skills needed for the economy to grow and become more prosperous.

This in turn has consequences for unemployment for, paradoxically, it could remain high – even though there are skills shortages.

Graham Hasting-Evans, NOCN

Welcome to India Mr Hancock

The AoC India launch formed FE Minister Matthew Hancock's first major international visit since he took up the post late last year.

It was a visit that also took in a number of other duties, including attending the opening of the New College Nottingham International Lifestyle Academy (NILA) in New Delhi.

There was time for a trip to the Mumbai stock exchange and a meeting with his counterpart in India, Subramanian Ramadorai, from the National Council on Skill Development, who advises the Indian prime minister.

He also used the trip to announce the UK government's plans to establish Education UK, a dedicated team at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to promote UK education abroad.

"The partnership between the UK and India is already a strong one, culturally and economically. But we have the opportunity, potential, and the intent to go even further," he said.

"India has to be innovative in providing training, because of the sheer scale of the challenge. Half a million young people in Britain need stronger English and maths, while the challenge in India is a thousand times bigger. So although the context is



From left: FE Minister Matthew Hancock is presented with a bouquet of red roses by Hemant K Batra, director for the Batra Group

Photo by Nick Linford

different, and it's important to remember that, the innovation here is enormous and we can learn from that."

He continued: "It is essential that we realise the potential of the largely untapped resource that is our education exports. There is a fast-growing demand for high-quality education, and

we are lucky to have a dynamic and entrepreneurial sector that is well placed to contribute.

"We are in a global race and other countries are presenting attractive and co-ordinated offers, so Education UK is a vital step in bringing together the UK sector to drive its international engagement,

particularly on high-value opportunities."

A BIS spokesperson added that the UK's education sector had the potential to make a "significant contribution" to growth — with education exports currently worth more than £14bn annually. By 2020 this could rise to £21.5bn, they said, and to £27bn by 2025.

FE Minister up for India challenge

What brings you to India?

"The Indian government's goal of training half a billion people by 2022 is an enormous opportunity for UK providers to support them. So in part this is a trade mission, but the second and equally important element is learning."

Do you welcome the AoC in India initiative?

"Yes, they're also here as more than a trade initiative — we're all learning, because I see learning and trade as two sides of the same coin.

"There's already a small British presence in India, apart from the British Council, but there are very big opportunities for organisations like City & Guilds and Pearson."

What would you say to those who are concerned international education is a distraction from educating British students?

"Learning from overseas is part of improving the service at home, which is absolutely top of the agenda. And so where collaboration overseas can play its part then it's a great help.

"Standards in FE are vital, and in focussing on that we've got to look across the whole world at how we can improve our systems."

What is EducationUK?

"EducationUK will be ten staff, funded through UKTI to co-ordinate the government's support for education as an export industry, which currently sits

across different departments, and putting it under the roof of UKTI.

"Education is not just vital domestically but it is also a major export opportunity. Across the world people want British English qualifications, for example, and the need for internationally recognised qualifications, whether at university or technical or basic skills levels, is expanding.

"EducationUK will support initiatives like AoC India, it will support and is closely related to the work of the British council, which will continue to be important, but it will also support private providers breaking into new markets."

Is the UKBA a help or hindrance for education providers?

"It's important Britain has a strong and controlled immigration system and UKBA helps.

"I've been clear there is no cap on students wanting to come to high quality institutions because it's also important we attract, in an organised way, the best people from around the world.

"However, for the very large numbers of people around the world who will want further education, in-country delivery is the only way that can happen on such a mass scale.

"So provision of FE has to focus much more on in-country delivery, meaning UK providers being in the country where people who want to study UK qualifications or do a UK course are living."





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creating opportunities

The Indian FE sector: a selection of slides presented by Sannam S4

India's Supply of Skilled Manpower

Country	Total population (in million)	Young population (15-24 yrs) as % of total population	Literacy rate (%)	Unemployment rate (%)
US	310	14%	99%	9.6%
UK	62	13.1%	99%	7.8%
Brazil	195	17.2%	89%	6.7%
Germany	82	11.2%	99%	7.1%
France	63	12.4%	99%	9.3%
China	1,341	16.8%	92%	4.3%
Japan	127	10%	99%	5%
India	1,225	19.2%	74%	10.8%
Australia	22	14.1%	99%	5.2%

Source: United Nation Population Division, CIA World Factbook

Capacity Development in India

- About 12 million people join the workforce each year
 - Unskilled workforce constitutes the majority of population entering workforce
- Current skill capacity of the country is 4 million
 - Aims to enhance skilling and technical education capacity to about an estimated 15 million
 - Vocational training in India is primarily imparted through Government and Private-run Industrial Training Institutes/Centres (ITI/ITCs)

Year	Number of ITI/ITCs	Total seats in ITI/ITCs
2007	5,465	749,510
2008	6,079	829,377
2009	7,886	1,062,524
2010	8,642	1,206,448
Feb 2012	9,447	1,335,488

Source: Ministry of Labor and Employment, Annual report, 2011-12

Capacity Development in India

- Current Vocational training capacity of the country is at 1.3 million

Region	# of ITIs	Capacity	# of ITCs	Capacity	Total (ITI/ITCs)	Total Capacity
Northern	797	122,354	2,173	252,753	2,970	375,107
Southern	424	95,404	2,914	325,702	3,338	421,106
Eastern	201	50,138	1,212	197,885	1,413	248,023
Western	822	204,842	904	86,410	1,726	291,252
Total	2,244	472,738	7,203	862,750	9,447	1,335,488

Source: Ministry of Labor and Employment, Annual report, 2011-12

Current Skill Development Structure

Legend:
 ■ Compulsory education
 ■ Pathway to higher education
 ■ Pathway to vocational education

Coordinated Action on Skill Development

- Government of India has adopted skill development as a national priority over the next 10 years
- At the national level, coordinated action on skill development in India is created as a three-tiered institutional structure.
 - The three-tier structure together facilitates implementation of skill development on the ground through Central Ministries, the State Governments and private and public training organisations.

Skill Development Framework in India

- National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)
 - A not-for-profit company formed in 2008-09
 - First of its kind PPP initiative in India that largely focuses on skill development efforts targeted at unorganized sectors
 - Provides viability gap funding to organizations that provide skill training
 - Set up to catalyze the setting-up of large scale, for-profit sustainable vocational institutions in the country, by encouraging private sector participation and providing low-cost funding for training capacity
 - Focuses on 21 sectors and makes every sector attractive to private investment
 - Responsible for skilling 150 million learners across 21 high-growth sectors by 2022



AoC in India plans: a selection of slides presented by Sannam S4

Operational Strategy

- Strategy organized along three broad-lines of action
 1. Policy dialogue for vocational education & training in India
 2. Partnerships with Government of India to support & implement its initiatives
 3. Partnerships with private-sector to leverage investments & knowledge to develop new business and revenue models for UK & India providers



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AoC In India Offer

- Focus on UK FE's comparative advantage & mandate
 - Provide support and consultancy in skills training curriculum
 - Create access to high quality Industry-led programmes
 - Create bespoke training programmes for employers
 - Conduct train-the-trainer and teacher training programmes
 - Conduct English language training and employability
 - Work towards setting up of standards and quality assurance benchmarks in training at an institutional, regional and national level
 - Create access to functional skills assessments
 - Offer UK-based certification & credits to in-country Vocational Education and Training (VET) programmes
 - Conduct multi-tiered training programmes in skills development



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Opportunities

1. Seek projects with Ministries which fund skill development through external providers & be implementation partners
2. Offer curriculum design and pedagogy support to State Skill Development Missions & State-sponsored projects
3. Seek implementation role in Govt. sponsored ITIs & private ITCs towards capacity building projects & to introduce new trades, standards, quality assurance & certification
4. Setup a consortium of FE colleges with the guidance of a local partner to constitute Sector Skill Council through NSDC partnership
5. Partner with local, private-sector vocational education & training providers and NSDC partners to offer paid training programs & affiliated services



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Targets

- Short-term (3-6 months)
 - Secure MoUs with NSDC, CII and FICCI to facilitate AoC's gradual introduction and visibility of its services countrywide.
 - Build brand identity and contacts with key players in the Skills Development space including NSDC partners, Industry associations and Private-sector firms.
 - Establish and train a three-member team in Delhi
 - Undertake active business development to identify commercial interests for UK FE Colleges
 - Assist individual colleges in furthering their India strategies



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Targets

- Medium-term (6-12 months)
 - Partner with at least 3-5 ITI/ITCs
 - Establish new business partnerships with at least 3 leading NSDC and private-sector skill providers
 - Setup at least 1 Center for Excellence operated by UK FE Colleges through financial assistance from Ministry of Labor & Employment/DGET
 - Undertake active business development to identify commercial interests for UK FE Colleges
 - Assist individual colleges in furthering their India strategies



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Targets

- Long-term (1-2 years)
 - Create business partnerships with at least 2 existing Sector Skill Councils (NSDC)
 - Take the lead in setting up at least 1 new Sector Skill Council
 - Partner with additional 25 ITI/ITCs
 - Establish new business partnerships with additional 10 leading NSDC and private-sector skill providers
 - Undertake active business development to identify commercial interests for UK FE Colleges
 - Assist individual colleges in furthering their India strategies



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Reception celebrates AoC in India launch



From left: Sue Rimmer, South Thames College, Andy Wilson, Westminster Kingsway College, Dawn Ward, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Matthew Hancock, FE Minister, Asha Khemka, West Nottinghamshire College, Stella-Ngozi Mbubaegbu, Highbury College, Sunaina Mann, Nescot, and Richard Atkins, Exeter College.

Shane Mann *@shanermann*

The garden lawns of the British High Commissioner's residence in New Delhi, was filled with more than 100 VIP guests for the official launch of AoC in India.

Being treated to an outdoor canapé and drinks reception in the middle of January is not something we typically experience in the UK.

The reception, held on the evening of Wednesday, January 22, was hosted by FE Minister Matthew Hancock and sponsored by Pearson. Guests included all of the AoC in India delegation and other UK college representatives, senior civil servants from BIS, Foreign and Commonwealth office and UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), Indian civil servants and VIP guest, Dilip Chenoy, chief executive and managing director at the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).

A memorandum of understanding was also signed on the evening between AoC in India and the NSDC.

Chair of AoC in India Asha Khemka told of her pride at the achievement that had been made by launching AoC in India and her excitement and anticipation over the challenge ahead.

"Quite rightly the spotlight is now on India to develop its skill base and infrastructure to continue its economic growth," she said.

"I am really excited following our visit this week and I am looking forward to forging new partnerships and building on our mutual strengths. I am immensely encouraged by the energy and drive in India that I have seen."

Martin Doel, Association of Colleges' chief executive, during his introduction of Mr Chenoy explained the creation of AoC in India.

"The true creator of AoC in India is Dilip," said Mr Doel.

"When I visited India around two

years ago we sat down with Dilip and he explained the challenge that the nation, India, was facing with India and the aims that it had set itself.

"He said to me, 'Martin, if you are going to come back here, come back serious. You won't be serious by coming back every three months. You need to take it seriously. You need to show us that you want to be a determined partner — that will think long and hard about how we will work together'."

Mr Chenoy gave his congratulations at the launch, saying: "The National Skill Development Corporation would like to congratulate the 31 further education colleges affiliated to the Association of Colleges, UK, which have decided to come together to form AoC in India with the objective of collaborating with local skills training providers and Sector Skill Councils for imparting an outcome-oriented and skills-related education in this country.

"We are confident that AoC in India will

contribute in a big way to strengthening the strong links that already exist between the UK and India in the vocational education and training space, and help India attain a position to be able to leverage its favorable demographics for achieving a faster and more inclusive growth.

"At the NSDC, we have been constantly engaging with several UK-based organizations such as the UK's Department for International Development, UK Commission for Employment and Skills, UK-India Education and Research Initiative, and the Association of Colleges, UK, to introduce international best practices in skills in India. We would be happy to work closely with AOC in India to transform the domestic skills landscape."

Following the official launch and the signing of a memorandum of understanding, guests continued to enjoy their prestigious surroundings before the end of the reception just after 9pm.





Martin Doel, chief executive of the AoC



Dilip Chenoy, chief executive and managing director at the National Skill Development Corporation



Asha Khemka, principal of West Nottinghamshire College and chair of AoC in India



From left: Martin Binns and Ronnie Todd, both Bradford College, David Taylor, New College Durham, Natalie Warren-Green, Highbury College, Sanjeev Ohri, Dudley College, Manjeet Kumari-Lal, Walsall College, Nicole Barber Westminster Kingsway College, Myrtle Northage, Warrington Collegiate, Sally MacPherson, Havering College and Rosy Banwait, Burton and South Derbyshire College

AoC IN INDIA





Cutting the ribbon to mark the official opening of NILA. From left: Sujata Dewan, principal of NILA, Harish Rawat, Indian minister for water resources, Matthew Hancock, UK FE minister, Dharan Vir Batra, chairman of the Batra group of companies, and Amarjit Basi, principal of New College Nottingham. Pictured below, the new NILA building Photo by Nick Linford

Ribbon-cutting ceremony marks NILA opening

Shane Mann
@shanermann

Government officials and civil servants from India and the UK, business leaders and more than 100 VIP guests made their way to Gurgaon, India, for the grand opening of the New College Nottingham International Lifestyles Academy (NILA).

Founded in partnership with the Batra Group, NILA is committed to providing world-class higher level education and training for up to 1,000 students per year in line with the priorities of the Indian National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).

In accordance with the Batra Group's wishes, the campus building was blessed in a traditional Pooja ceremony, to ensure the prosperity of the endeavor.

Speaking at the opening on Tuesday, January 22, New College Nottingham (NCN) principal Amarjit Basi said: "As an Indian, as a principal and chief executive of New College Nottingham, and a proud member of the Association of Colleges, this is a huge moment, for me, for us, for the sector.

"The realisation of a pioneering

collaboration three years in the making, the coming together of business excellence and leadership in vocational areas, and specifically a meeting of minds, values and ambitions mobilised around common challenges."

The new academy will deliver hospitality management, interactive media, retail and fashion management courses designed in consultation with employers, along with teacher education and advanced English language programmes.

With an emphasis on current industry developments, its ambition is to equip students with the necessary expertise and professionalism required to successfully compete in their chosen industry sector. Learners at NILA will undertake two-year higher national diploma programmes that will be awarded by Pearson.



"It's really important that you, we recognise that we need to think and act differently to support our learners, their families and their communities to thrive in an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world in which they live,"

added Mr Basi. "The unifying theme between Nottingham and Delhi, is that we as further education sectors, have realised the need to act differently. To ensure that our qualifications lead to employment and ensure sustained development of our communities.

"So we proudly stand here with our partners the Batra family, as future creators of wealth, creators of economies and makers of new opportunities for the key stakeholders."

FE Minister Matthew Hancock congratulated the work and partnership between NCN and the Batra Group in their development of NILA.

"I'm absolutely thrilled to be here at the opening of this important new step in the relationship between Great Britain and

India and thank you all and the academics who I can see in the side chapel all for your attendance today at this event," he said.

"It has been a very long process to get today's opening ceremony, a process we [the UK government] have supported as much as we possibly could. We have done so because we believe that as we bring British expertise and qualifications to India, so we will learn from the process and improve the skills and education back in the UK. I hope there is more of this to come."

The principal of NILA, Sujata Dewan, referred to the growing skills gap in India and the role NILA aims to play in supporting and supplying a skilled workforce.

"India is among the few countries in the world, with a large reservoir of young people and the potential to become the supplier of the global skilled workforce.

"However, out of this only an estimated 2 per cent have undergone training and hence the need is compelling. NILA was conceived with this in mind."

The Batra group have provided capital investment, while NCN will provide teaching and learning, curriculum design, delivery, development and on-going quality assurance expertise.



College partners with Sri Lankan academy

Rebecca Cooney
@anynamebutbecky

While some members of AoC In India initiative have experience in India, Bournemouth & Poole College has set its sights elsewhere in South Asia.

The college has forged a partnership with Key Academy in Sri Lanka, a country which, like India, has a rapidly growing demand for skilled workers.

In 2009, the 26-year civil war between the Sri Lankan government and the separatist group the Tamil Tigers, which left up to 100,000 people dead, came to an end.

Now Sri Lanka's ambition to attract 2.5 million tourists by 2016 calls not only for more physical infrastructure, but also for an increase in the human resources available in the tourism sector:

In November 2012, Bournemouth & Poole College announced it was designing a range of employment-ready vocational courses, learning materials and assessments to be delivered at Key Academy in Colombo, Sri Lanka's largest city.

Sue Sharkey, Bournemouth & Poole College international director, said: "This is an exciting opportunity for us. The new college in Dehiwala, Colombo, will



From left: Lawrence Vincent, Bournemouth & Poole College, Tom Miller, Reed, Susan Sharkey Bournemouth & Poole College and Shafeek Wahab, Key Academy

mark a turning point in many students' lives, and the exciting opportunities that are available in Colombo will provide a springboard for them to achieve their potential and help them to secure employment."

Key Academy's first academic year begins this month and, through the partnership with Bournemouth & Poole College, it will initially be offering hotel

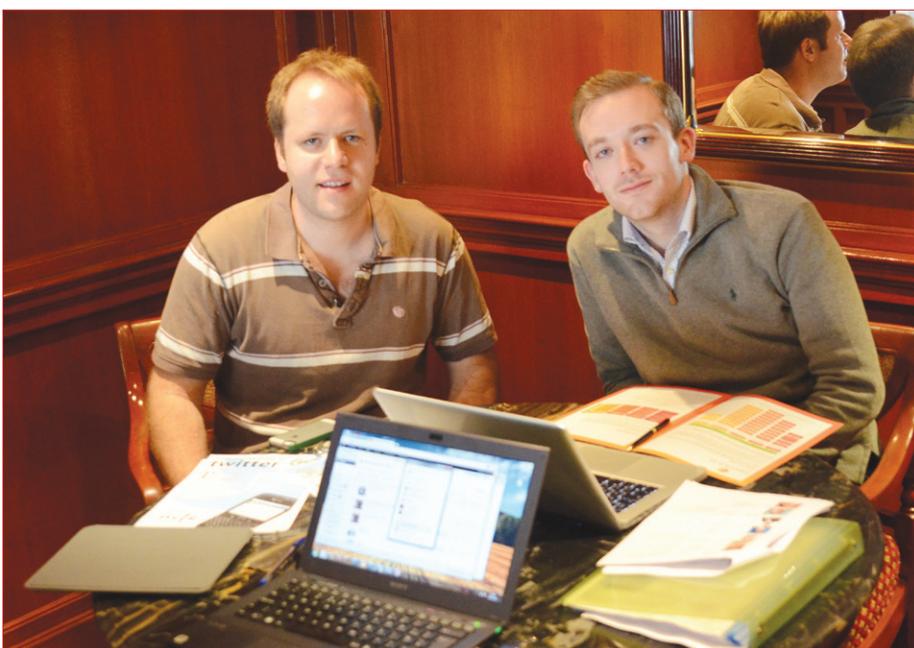
reception and housekeeping certifications, pitched to Sri Lankan students as 'an affordable UK education on your doorstep'.

The college hopes to expand its provision to offer courses in aviation and cabin crew training, hair dressing and beauty therapy, English teacher training, entrepreneurial career courses, travel and tourism marketing, access diplomas and

foundation degree courses.

Key Academy's parent company EMI Capital has also signed an agreement with global recruitment specialists Reed UK, which will work with major employers both inside and outside Sri Lanka enabling students to gain vital experience through work placement opportunities, as well as interview and assessment preparation.

FE Week on location



Nick Linford and Shane Mann in the Taj Club at the Taj Mahal Hotel in New Delhi. Much of this supplement was produced on location

FE Week mini-mascot

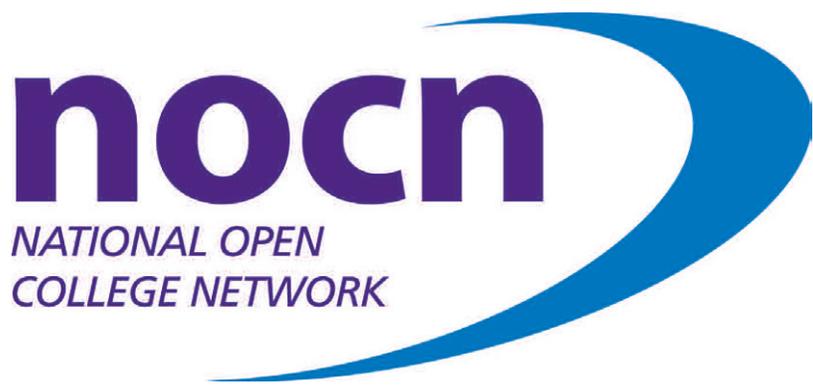
Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



Mostly this week I have been playing with the Tuk Tuk that daddy brought back from India

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford





I would love to do that ...

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For more information on NOCN and its range of qualifications please visit www.nocn.org.uk

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