

FE Week

**MEET THE NEW
EDUCATION MINISTER**

PAGE 14



**PLAN FOR FE ROYAL
CHARTER SURVIVAL**

PAGE 11



**ADULT EDUCATION
AFTER GREENING**

PAGE 16



ATKINS' AIDES: PRINCIPALS APPOINTED TO ADVISE DFE

See exclusive on page 6



WAS GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF LEARNDIRECT SALE LEGAL?

- **MPs demand answers over ESFA approving sale of Learndirect Apprenticeships in 2016**
- **PAC inquiry to quiz Ofsted on decision to delay inspection month before sale collapsed**

Exclusive **BILLY CAMDEN** @BILLYCAMDEN

See pages 8 & 9



KNIGHTED & AT HOME WITH TUCKETT

See pages 12 & 13



AAC APPRENTICESHIP AWARDS 2018



NOMINATIONS OPEN NOW

Last chance to submit nominations - deadline 17:00 Monday 15 Jan | visit feweekaac.com

FE Week

Meet the news team

feweek.co.uk



Nick Linford
EDITOR
@NICKLINFORD
NICK.LINFORD@LSECT.COM



Paul Offord
DEPUTY EDITOR
@PAULOFFORD
PAUL.OFFORD@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Please inform the FE Week editor of any errors or issues of concern regarding this publication.



Cath Murray
FEATURES EDITOR
@CATHMURRAY_
CATH.MURRAY@FEWEEK.CO.UK



Tom Mendelsohn
SUB EDITOR
@TOM_MENDELSON
TOM.MENDELSON@LSECT.COM



Billy Camden
SENIOR REPORTER
@BILLYCAMDEN
BILLY.CAMDEN@FEWEEK.CO.UK



Jude Burke
SENIOR REPORTER
@JUDEBURKE77
JUDE.BURKE@FEWEEK.CO.UK



Pippa Allen-Kinross
REPORTER
@PIPPA_AK
PIPPA.ALLENKINROSS@FEWEEK.CO.UK



Sam King
FEATURES AND DIGITAL REPORTER
@KINGSAMANTHA_
SAMANTHA.KING@FEWEEK.CO.UK

The team

- Head designer: Nicky Phillips
- Designer: Matthew Willson
- Photographer: Ellis O'Brien
- Financials: Helen Neilly
- Sales Team Leader: Bridget Stockdale
- Administration: Frances Ogefero Dell
- PA to managing director: Victoria Boyle
- Head of funding and assessment: Gemma Gathercole



Shane Mann
MANAGING DIRECTOR
@SHANERMANN
SHANE.MANN@LSECT.COM

Edition 230



Struggling college awarded £21m to make merger work
Page 5



DfE disappoints as it rejects a 16-to-18 funding-rate rise
Pages 7



Find Apprenticeship Training site forces providers into multi-location workaround
Page 10

Contributors



RUTH SPELLMAN
Page 16



JOE CROSSLEY
Page 16



MARK DAWE
Page 17

Page 19

SUBSCRIBE

Stay in the know with an FE Week subscription, from as little as £1 per week. FE Week is the essential read for the FE & skills sector.

Visit feweek.co.uk/subscribe or email subscriptions@feweek.co.uk

ADVERTISE WITH US

If you are interested in placing a product or job advert in a future edition please click on the 'advertise' link at the top of the page on feweek.co.uk or contact:


E: advertising@feweek.co.uk
T: 020 81234 778

Disclaimer

FE Week is owned and published by Lsect Ltd. The views expressed within the publication are those of the authors named, and are not necessarily those of FE Week, Lsect Ltd or any of its employees. While we try to ensure that the information we provide is correct, mistakes do occur and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of our material.

The design of the printed newspaper and of the website is copyright of Lsect Ltd and material from the newspaper should not be reproduced without prior permission. If you wish to reproduce an article from either the printed paper or the website, both the article's author and FE Week must be referenced (to not do so would be an infringement on copyright).


Lsect Ltd is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites linked to. Please address any complaints to the editor.

FE WEEK IS PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF 


Learning & Skills Events, Consultancy and Training Ltd
161-165 Greenwich High Road
London SE10 8JA
T: 020 8123 4778
E: news@feweek.co.uk

PREMIUM JOB OPPORTUNITIES


THIS WEEK'S TOP AVAILABLE JOBS IN THE FE SECTOR. TO FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION PLEASE TURN TO THE CENTRE OF FE WEEK. OR VISIT THE WEB ADDRESS LISTED




WESTMINSTER ADULT EDUCATION SERVICE
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, BUSINESS AND SUPPORT SERVICES
£63,930 - £71,580
<http://9nl.es/wjav>




MOULTON COLLEGE
DIRECTOR OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT & STUDENT SUPPORT
CIRCA £60K FOR AN OUTSTANDING CANDIDATE + TPS + RELOCATION
<http://9nl.es/rhlq>



MGTS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
HIGHLY COMPETITIVE PACKAGE



WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE
VARIOUS ROLES
SALARY DEPENDENT ON ROLE
<http://9nl.es/0ke9>



LET ME PLAY
VARIOUS ROLES
SALARY DEPENDENT ON ROLE

TO ADVERTISE YOUR VACANCY WITH EDUCATION WEEK JOBS AND FE WEEK PLEASE CALL 020 81234 778 OR EMAIL [ADVERTISING@FEWEEK.CO.UK](mailto:advertising@feweek.co.uk)

NEWS

Non-levy tender appeals are lucky for some

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

EXCLUSIVE

Multiple providers have successfully overturned the government's decisions not to award them contracts in the controversial non-levy tender – including several big hitters.

The ESFA last week began contacting organisations that had appealed the outcome of the procurement before Christmas.

Among the winners were Focus Training Group, which has a 'good' rating from Ofsted, Basingstoke College of Technology, and the grade three West Kent and Ashford College.

FE Week understands that decisions on some appeals are still outstanding, including that of the grade one Exeter College and grade two Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group, and that more successful wins could be in the pipeline.

Focus Training, which has delivered apprenticeships in the south-west for 20 years, was originally told it had not reached the minimum threshold score to secure a contract.

Following a nervy festive break, the ESFA altered its decision last week.

It said that after reviewing its scores, and undertaking more quality-assurance, FTG had reached the pass mark and had its complaint upheld.

Jamie Rail, FTG's managing director, told FE Week it had been "one hell of a month" following the initial outcome of the tender, but he was elated with the final decision.

"Both myself and all of our staff are delighted that our appeal was successful," he said. "We were convinced from the outset that it was never the intention of the government or the ESFA to lose 'good' provision through this process.

"This will allow us to meet the growing demand from our employers across the region, and we now look forward to a successful 2018."

Paul Hannan, the chief executive of the Hadlow Group, of which West Kent and Ashford College is part, said it was a "massive achievement" to have the decision overturned.

"The ESFA dealt with our case swiftly and efficiently," he added.

Other providers have not received such good news about their appeals.

One of these was HYA Training, rated 'good' and based in Yorkshire and the Humber, which passed the score criteria but fell below the £200,000 threshold

above which the ESFA applies its pro-rata methodology.

It appealed the decision on the basis it had been unaware of the pro-rata percentage rule, but the appeal was not upheld.

"We feel the process of adopting a pro-rata methodology left providers such as ourselves second-guessing what would be a safe and secure allocation to tender for and, like many other providers, we would of course have tendered for more had we known," Patrik Knowles, the managing director of HYA, told FE Week.

The FE sector has been up in arms about the outcome of the tender ever since results were released after a long delay in December.

A total of 714 providers were given an allocation to train apprentices with small employers between January 2018 and March 2019, but 227, nearly a third, are on their first direct apprenticeships contract.

As revealed by FE Week, one organisation that went out of business two months ago, for example, was awarded a contract in the procurement – even while several high-profile colleges ranked 'good' or 'outstanding', including Exeter, missed out.

Those which had been successful started receiving their contracts just before the Christmas break.



Paul Hannan

60% of the top 10 FE colleges for GCSE maths use ForSkills

Interesting? or Interested!

Contact sales@forskills.co.uk or call 01623 709818 for an informal chat.

NEWS

Lifelong learning knight laments the loss of 'adult' in NIACE rebrand

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
@PIPPA_AK

It was a "bad idea" for the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education to remove the word "adult" from its name, according to its former head.

NIACE changed its name to the Learning and Work Institute following its merger with the Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion in 2016 but Sir Alan Tuckett, who led the body for 23 years until 2011 and was knighted in the new year's honours list, admitted he did not support the decision, and wants it reintroduced as a "sub-brand".

In a profile interview featured on page 12, Sir Alan suggested that he was one of a "large number" who had disagreed with the change, as it would spoil "90 years of brand recognition" and take the focus from adults.

"There's more to learning than the world of work," he added.

David Hughes, who now heads the Association of Colleges, said at the time there had been debate over dropping "adult".

"There were some people saying 'if we drop the word, let's make sure that we don't lose our commitment to learning for older people' and we were able to assure them that we are still committed to lifelong learning," he said.

"If I were running it, I would resuscitate Inclusion and NIACE as sub-brands," Sir Alan said this week. "Brand and memory are slow to build up."

He was also critical of the decision to change the name of the annual Adult Learners' Week, which he launched in 1991, to the Festival of Learning.

"It's the focus," he said. "If you're running a festival of learning, learning means lots of different things. Adult Learning Week was really the first national festival focused on adults and it had good media links."

During his time at NIACE, he raised the company's turnover from £1 million to £45 million, and increased the staff from under 20 to 300.

But despite his concerns on branding, Sir Alan expressed admiration for LWI's current boss, Stephen Evans, and said he had been "impressed with what they're doing".

Read the full interview
on pages 12 and 13

Lifeline for Somerset provider devastated by the AEB tender

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

A community learning provider in Somerset that found itself at the sharp end of the adult education budget debacle has been handed a lifeline, with a vital funding meeting with the ESFA.

Somerset Skills & Learning, which teaches around 10,000 students but had its funding cut by a drastic £1 million last year, will meet officials on January 30.

The provider, which has had to close centres and make vast redundancies as a result of the loss, claims that Somerset is the only county in England not to get a major grant in the tender and believes this was done because of an administrative error.

SS&L was at first faced with a 97-per-cent cut in September but following a campaign to lobby MPs and ministers, the ESFA made a partial U-turn on funding to providers, and the organisation was given 75 per cent of its required allocation on a "transitional" basis.

It is now hoping that the ESFA can find a way of upping its funding even more.

"We have requested the meeting to discuss future funding for SS&L and Somerset," Susie Simon-Norris, chief executive of SS&L,

told FE Week.

"We are continuing to liaise with local MPs, who are keen to support us, and Somerset County Council will also be at the meeting. We are hopeful that the will is there to find a way to restore Somerset's Community Learning funding, as we are now the only county in England that will not have this funding."

Ms Simon-Norris told the West Somerset Free Press that her organisation was "not sure why the SFA made those cuts" and they think there "may have been an error in terms of the criteria they used".

She added: "We cannot comment on the impact of not receiving the funding at this stage, but clearly the impact for Somerset, and the 50-plus community groups that we work with would be devastating, and a backward step in terms of supporting social mobility and the hardest to reach learners in our communities."

The ESFA did not comment on the scheduled meeting.

SS&L was forced to put its courses on hold in August after it first received a measly £111,000 allocation despite a "successful" AEB tender – amounting to just three per cent of the £3.4 million it received in 2016/17.

But in September it was told its allocation



Susie Simon-Norris

for 2017/18 had been raised to just over £2.4 million owing to the ESFA's rule change.

This followed a different rule change at the beginning of that month, when the ESFA told providers which either did not participate in the procurement or were unsuccessful, that they would receive 75 per cent of the value of its previous contract to use in 2017/18.

Despite the bump, SS&L said it was still likely to close six centres and make over 50 redundancies.

Any further funding increases in the Ofsted 'good'-rated provider's AEB contract will be paid from the massive £200 million underspend on adult training last year, which FE Week revealed in September.

The AEB tender was itself plagued with delays. Results were supposed to be first released on May 19 after it was first launched on January 27. It originally came to just £110 million for 2017/18.

Anger as ESFA dodges MPs' scrutiny over subcontracting fees

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

EXCLUSIVE

The government has been accused of shocking double standards on transparency, admitting it probably won't publish its long-delayed findings on subcontracting fees in time for parliamentary inquiry hearings.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency has taken over responsibility for publishing all subcontracting "management" fees, but it "aims" to publish them by the end of March – four months after its own deadline and too late to make them available for scrutiny by MPs.

There are several imminent select committee inquiry hearings on the matter, both from the Commons education and public accounts committees, which will focus on major concerns that have arisen on subcontracting, and on providers including Learndirect.

The chair of the education select committee, Robert Halfon, has told the DfE to redress this "deeply worrying" situation, and collect the data "immediately" so it "can be collated and we can see them".

"The taxpayer should have the exact information readily available as soon as possible, as to how much money is being creamed off," he insisted.

His demand was echoed by the shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden.

"The continuing failure of ministers and the ESFA to provide this data, after they

had trumpeted loudly taking responsibility for it, risks hampering hugely the work of public bodies such as the education select committee's current enquiries on the concerns around subcontracting," he said.

"It seems to be double standards, a case from this government of 'do as I say, not as I do'."

The DfE's apparent delaying tactics indicate "defensiveness", Marsden claimed "not least in terms of its decisions in the Learndirect funding controversy".

The education select committee launched an inquiry in November into the quality of apprenticeships and skills training.

It is due to hear evidence on January 16, and will focus on concerns over value for money. It will more than likely investigate the Learndirect saga in more detail.

The largest training provider in the UK retains all of its contracts despite an Ofsted grade four last year – in what looks like special treatment from the DfE.

It is notorious for charging high management fees: in 2015/16, it retained £19.8 million from its 64 subcontractors, 36 per cent of its total SFA funding for that year.

The public accounts committee will also hold its own hearing on January 15, to "examine the funding of Learndirect

Ltd".

Individual lead providers once had to publish the annual figures by the end of every November, but civil servants have not even sent out the templates, on which providers are to record their figures for the last academic year. The DfE claimed they will go out "in due course".

A spokesperson admitted there is still no firm date for when the fees will be published.

"We aim to publish the information on our website by the end of this financial year [March]," he said.

"The new process will provide greater transparency and will mean information is much easier to find and all charges will be published in one location."

The delay has provoked dismay on the government's online forum, feconnect.

"For 2015-16, we had to publish the fees charged and funding paid to our

subcontractors on our own website within five weeks of the R14 close, whereas for 2016-17 year, the ESFA were supposed to supply us a template. Has anyone received this?" one user said.

"No sign of this yet," another replied. "Rather ironic considering they decided to do it this way round cos some people weren't bothering to do it and now no one is doing it."



Robert Halfon

NEWS

Struggling college awarded £21m to make merger work

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

EXCLUSIVE

A struggling college received a massive £21 million bailout from the government as part of its recent merger deal, FE Week has learned.

Telford College of Arts and Technology formally joined forces with neighbouring New College Telford to form Telford College shortly before Christmas, over 18 months after the partnership was first announced.

But a source close to the merger, who did not want to be named, told FE Week that TCAT's financial troubles were so severe that it needed the multimillion-pound cash injection from the government's restructuring facility.

The grade three college, which had an income of £19.5 million in 2015/16, currently has three notices of concern from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, for financial health, financial control and apprenticeship minimum standards, and was subject to FE commissioner intervention in 2016.

Graham Guest, the principal of the new college, admitted to FE Week that it had received funding, but refused to confirm the amount.

"The college continues to work with the Transactions Unit [which administers



Telford College principal Graham Guest (centre) with vice-chair Gail Bleasby and chair Paul Hinkins

the restructuring facility] and Barclays to review its finances and long term liabilities," he said.

"Due to the commercial sensitivity of the merger we are unable to provide more information while discussions continue to be held."

The Department for Education would also not discuss the sums involved, and claimed the college's accounts – which include details of any financial support – would be

published in due course.

Just £120 million had been allocated to 10 colleges from the restructuring facility by October last year, meaning that the TCAT deal is worth almost twice the average sum dished out so far.

Despite this, a DfE spokesperson insisted the facility was "not being used to prop up failing colleges".

"The restructuring facility is designed to help colleges make major changes following

an area review recommendation that they cannot fund themselves and that will result in high-quality provision for the local community," she said.

TCAT received its first notice of concern for financial health in November 2015.

This prompted a visit from the then-FE commissioner Sir David Collins, who placed the college into administered status in January 2016.

His report noted that "the college has experienced a rapid decline in its financial health in recent years", and "over-optimistic forecasting" was deemed a "core problem".

That July, the college earned the dubious honour of being the first to receive a clean sweep of notices of concern since the SFA started publishing them, a month after Ofsted branded it 'inadequate'.

But its notice for inspection was lifted last year, after it improved its grade to 'requires improvement' at an inspection in June.

The merger between TCAT and New College Telford, also rated 'requires improvement', was first proposed in April 2016, shortly before the end of the Marches and Worcestershire area review which both took part in.

According to the review report, "the merger has the potential to deliver efficiency savings through a complete review of the operations of both colleges, which are sited a mile apart".

CogniSoft YETI



YETI is a proven and highly configurable learner management system, providing effective support for work based learning and training providers.

A Sector Wide Solution

Track, store and manage a learner journey on any kind of funding stream from a single database.

Manage all types of work based learning and all programmes funded by the ESFA, ESF, DCELLS and SDS.

ESFA rules are built into YETI, ensuring data validation at the point of entry and ease of use for administrators.

Access Instant Management Information

The YETI system empowers providers to gain insight and understanding into their business and take control of financial and quality management.

From day one, users have access to a comprehensive suite of reports for internal and external/audit requirements.

Reports include:

- Financial and Claim reports
- Funding reconciliation and forecasting reports
- Audit Reports
- Pre-inspection OFSTED reports
- Ethnic Diversity reports
- Statistical analysis reports
- Monitoring guided learning hours for foundation learning
- ESFA, SDS, ESF and DCELLS statistical reports

Flexible enough to mirror your processes and procedures, YETI is easily configured to provide the tools and information that assessors, verifiers, contract managers and administrators need in one single system.

Commissioner appoints 'magnificent 7' to advise government

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

FROM FRONT EXCLUSIVE

A crack team of seven top principals has been chosen by the FE commissioner to advise government officials on skills policy, FE Week can reveal.

The seven, who make up Richard Atkins' principals' reference group, will be used as a sounding board for officials on topics including the development of T-levels.

Speaking exclusively to FE Week, Mr Atkins said he was "very anxious" that Department for Education officials – many of whom are new to working in FE – "get to meet some of the outstanding principals".

"It's very important that all these new colleagues consult with the sector," he said.

"There are lots of ways of doing that, but one is to get a group of some of our most experienced and successful leaders to give feedback on policy development on a whole range of things that involve colleges."

The group, who aren't paid for the role, will have "four to six meetings a year, here at the department".

These meetings will be "partly to hold me and my team to account, and partly for them to be consulted by officials in the department on policy".

The first of these is planned for later this month, and will include "a discussion around T-levels, with the team here that are developing them," he said – while

apprenticeships and skills minister Anne Milton is due to attend the second meeting.

"I want Anne to celebrate the fact that we're bringing the group together and we're going to use the group to consult with," Mr Atkins said.

Each of the seven – five of whom oversee 'outstanding' colleges, and two who lead 'good' colleges – underwent a rigorous selection process before being chosen.

Shortlisted candidates – selected from the "20 or 30" principals who applied – had to complete a case study based on "a college with problems" and how they would deal with them, followed by a panel interview.

As well as "gender mix and the geography mix", Mr Atkins said he was particularly interested in principals that had "improved colleges" rather than those who'd "inherited an 'outstanding' college, because it's quite hard to go further".

"I'm really pleased with the group I've got. I think I've got some really good principals there," he said.

Appointment of the reference group comes alongside a move by the commissioner to double his team of deputies, as part of his drive to slash the number of colleges at grades three or four.

The four new recruits – who include two principals who will retire from their colleges later this year – mean Mr Atkins now has eight deputies who will help him to carry out "diagnostic assessments" at colleges at risk of failing.

National Leaders of FE assemble

Richard Atkins' army of National Leaders of FE is starting to take shape, as the first seven recruits are announced.

The aim of the programme, first announced in October, is to use the expertise from successful colleges to support struggling institutions.

It's a "developing piece of work", according to the FE commissioner, and seven college leaders have been appointed so far out of a target of 20.

The group is distinct from the principals' reference group – although there is some overlap in terms of membership, as "some members of the steering group applied to do both, they wanted to do both", he said.

"We want these colleges to be the ones that will help grade three colleges – or possibly grade four – to improve."

Each national leader is expected to support "a number of colleges that require help to improve".

But it's not just the principal who will be involved.

"What these colleges have signed up to is that they and their management teams are ready and willing to go out and help," he said.

"What I found as a principal at Exeter was

that people didn't want me for long – they usually wanted my head of MIS or my head of teaching and learning."

A college that needs to improve – perhaps having had a diagnostic assessment – would be put in touch with their nearest NLFE by Mr Atkins and his team.

For example, for a college in the north-east "we might say, I'm going to ring Lindsey Whiterod [Tyne Coast College principal] and introduce you, and we're going to ask her to come over and talk to you to see if we can establish a partnership," he said.

The expectation is that each of these partnerships will lead to an application to the £15 million strategic college improvement fund, also announced in October.

This cash can be used to develop an improvement programme and a tailored package of support – which can also include the costs of the lead college.

NLFE colleges will get a "very small stipend" of around £10,000 a year for expenses "to spark off the initial engagement", Mr Atkins said – but not enough to cover all their costs.

A bid to the improvement fund is "one of the ways they would recover their costs", he said.



Richard Atkins

Could Atkins and his team be coming to your college?

The latest weapon in Richard Atkins' college improvement armoury could see him and his team visit up to 60 colleges to carry out "diagnostic assessments".

These involve two-day visits to colleges at risk of failing – particularly those that have received multiple grade threes in a row – for what he describes as "amazing free consultancy" from his team.

So far 40 per cent of the pilot assessments have either caused colleges to enter full intervention, or be at risk of doing so.

Mr Atkins estimated there are "about 60 colleges that could benefit" from one of the assessments, although "they won't all be urgently in need of intervention or failing".

Every college he has visited so far has been positive about the process – although "chairs tend to be keener than principals", he said.

"I'm hoping the majority say 'we know what the issues are, this is what we're doing and they're all going to deal with'," he said – but some "will need to take pretty urgent action".

FE COMMISSONER TEAM AND NEW APPOINTMENTS

Deputy FE Commissioners

Meredydd David CBE [Starting Sep 2018]
Ioan Morgan CBE [New]
Frances Wadsworth [Starting Apr 2018]
Teresa Kelly OBE [New, promoted]
Marilyn Hawkins
Steve Hutchinson
Andrew Tyley
David Williams

FE Advisers

Catherine Prest [New]
John Boyle [Sixth forms]
Lynne Craig
Mandy Exley
Phil Frier
John Hogg
Stephen McCormick
Josephine Nowacki [Sixth forms]
Bob Smith
Louise Twigg

Principals' Reference Group

Gill Alton
Judith Doyle CBE
Shelagh Legrave OBE
Dr Paul Phillips CBE
Jatinder Sharma OBE
Mandie Stravino
Graham Razey

Principal and Chief Executive

Grimsby Institute
Gateshead College
Chichester College Group
Weston College
Walsall College
Derby College
East Kent Colleges Group

National Leaders of FE

Gill Alton
David Gleed
Peter McGee
Dr Paul Phillips CBE
Graham Razey
Lindsey Whiterod CBE
Lowell Williams

Principal and Chief Executive

Grimsby Institute
North Kent College
St John Rigby College
Weston College
East Kent Colleges Group
Tyne Coast College
Dudley College of Technology

NEWS

DfE disappoints as it rejects a 16-to-18 funding-rate rise

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

The Department for Education has ruled out an increase in funding for 16- to 18-year-olds next year – dealing a blow to campaigners fighting for more cash.

In a letter to providers published this week, the department confirmed that there would be no change in funding for 2018/19.

“The national base rates of £4,000 per full-time student aged 16 to 17 and £3,300 for 18-year-olds are maintained for academic year 2018 to 2019 as are the part time funding rates,” it said.

“This is in line with the commitment made in the 2015 spending review”.

James Kewin, the deputy chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges’ Association, said the decision – made “despite the best efforts of our Support Our Sixth-formers campaign” – was “deeply disappointing and continues to be a major barrier for improving social mobility”.

But he added that he was “encouraged” by the government reshuffle appointment of Damian Hinds as education secretary, following Justine Greening’s resignation, who he said was “deeply committed to social mobility”.

“We have protected the base rate of funding for all 16- to 19-year-old students until 2020 to make sure every young person has access to the education or training they deserve,” said a Department for Education spokesperson.

“We are also giving colleges an extra £600 for every additional student that continues to study maths to an advanced level after their GCSEs.”

The Support our Sixth Formers campaign, backed by major players including the Association of Colleges and SFCA, as well as FE Week, has been calling for a £200 “SOS uplift” in 16-to-18 per-pupil funding rates.

The SFCA claimed in November that sixth-form colleges were at “tipping point” after their overall Ofsted ratings fell for a third year running, largely as a result of funding pressures.



This is the sixth year that the funding rate for 16- to 18-year-olds has remained unchanged.

It means that providers have faced a real-terms funding cut over that time.

Amanda Spielman, Ofsted chief inspector, said during her speech at the launch of the Ofsted annual report in December that the “sector will continue to struggle” without an increase in the base rate funding for this age group.

Her comments reflected wider fears that the breadth and quality of the curriculum is being seriously undermined.

They developed on her previous remarks to the education select committee in October, when she warned colleges catering to this age group are struggling to cope with dire financial restraints.



Spielman added in her annual report launch that she did not want her speech to become “the annual lecture for criticising the state of further education”, but insisted it would be “remiss” not to mention that the “sector continues to lag”.

SDN 
The Strategic Development Network

Preparing front-line staff for their future role in apprenticeships

Launching our 2018 support for trainers and end-point assessors, starting February:

- Level 3 award - Undertaking End-Point Assessment
- Webinar series - getting to grips with end-point assessment methods and practice
- Webinar series for trainer-assessors - preparing for your future role in apprenticeships

Visit: www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/sdnevents

MPs demand answers on ESFA

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

FROM FRONT EXCLUSIVE

MPs furious at the long-running Learndirect debacle are asking the public accounts committee to find out why the government supported the sale of the provider's apprenticeships business, consequently delaying its Ofsted inspection.

Labour's shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden and Wes Streeting, the MP for Ilford and a former president of the National Union of Students, are demanding answers after FE Week uncovered new information about the failed sale to Global University Systems, of which they claimed "something isn't passing the smell test".

The global teaching company began negotiations to buy Learndirect Apprenticeships (LDA) nearly two years ago.

The timing of this deal, which eventually fell through in December 2016, was significant because it was used as a reason to delay an Ofsted inspection that had been scheduled for November 4 that year, as was revealed in a recent National Audit Office report, and a situation the Commons public accounts committee of which has been highly critical.

To push the deal through, then-education secretary Justine Greening had to agree to transfer delivery of apprenticeships funding from Learndirect Ltd to Learndirect Apprenticeships Ltd, which would subsequently end in a sale to GUS.

Ms Greening did sign off on this, but FE Week has learned she might have had to curve EU procurement rules to do so.

A letter sent to Learndirect on October 4, 2016, signed by former ESFA boss Peter Lauener on behalf of Ms Greening, said: "Please note, if requested in the future, the SFA is unlikely to agree to the transfer of the contract from Learndirect Apprenticeships to any other legal entity."

"I think there are serious questions to be answered by the Education Secretary, the ESFA and Ofsted about their dealings with Learndirect Ltd, LDA and GUS"

"The SFA would have to comply with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 in relation to the award or transfer of the contract to a different legal entity."

In other words, had the government followed procurement rules, it should have put the contract out to tender, unless it had already assured itself there would be no interest.

The ESFA sent the letter agreeing the sale to Ofsted, and despite serious concerns about the quality of provision, the inspectorate applied its referral policy and cancelled the inspection,

believing the sale would take place.

Any delay to intervention is controversial, as Learndirect Ltd continued to receive millions of pounds in ESFA funding each month, even though its provision was eventually found to be severely wanting after the inspectorate eventually visited the following March.

"I think there are serious questions to be answered by the education secretary, the ESFA and Ofsted about their dealings with Learndirect Ltd, Learndirect Apprenticeships Ltd and GUS," said Mr Streeting, who had a public spat in September with the skills minister Anne Milton about the Learndirect saga.

"Something isn't passing the smell test here and the PAC needs to get to the bottom of this," he told FE Week.

Mr Marsden added that "we already knew" the DfE's handling of Learndirect had been "shambolic" and claimed this new evidence, of potential mishandling of the sale to GUS, was even more concerning.

"It now looks as if they [the DfE] may not have followed due process in terms of approving the funding itself," he said.

"That is a very serious admission which I would hope and am sure the PAC would want to take strong notice of in their hearing on Monday."

FE Week asked the DfE if it had complied with procurement rules and explored wider market interest in the sale, but it would not be drawn.

"Under the new regulations from 2015,

contracts can under certain circumstances be modified during their term without a new procurement procedure taking place," said a spokesperson.

The DfE had previously told FE Week that officials from the ESFA met with GUS representatives in August 2016 and gave approval the following month, but refused to furnish us with the exact date or who attended.

Even though the ESFA insisted that novation of Learndirect Ltd's contract to Learndirect Apprenticeships Ltd was a one-time offer, it subsequently agreed to a transfer that would take place in May, which Learndirect used to try and delay Ofsted's inspection in March.

"Something isn't passing the smell test here and the Public Accounts Committee need to get to the bottom of this"

But the inspectorate rejected the request and went in for a full inspection, which ended in its infamous grade four and started a legal battle between the two organisations, eventually won by the watchdog.

The delay to Ofsted's visit has been highly criticised by the PAC and is set to feature prominently in next week's scheduled hearing.

Public Accounts Committee inquiry into the funding of Learndirect Ltd

The Public Accounts Committee will grill the organisations involved in the Learndirect saga on Monday (January 15).

The hearing will dissect the findings of last month's National Audit Office report, which examined the monitoring, inspection and funding of the nation's biggest FE provider.

Taking place around 5pm, witnesses will include Ofsted chief inspector Amanda Spielman, Learndirect boss Andy Palmer, former ESFA chief Peter Lauener, and the Department for Education's permanent secretary, Jonathan Slater.

It can be watched via parliament.tv.

Scope of the inquiry

PAC statement in full: In March 2017 Learndirect Ltd, the UK's largest commercial further education provider, was rated inadequate by Ofsted. As a result the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will cease funding Learndirect in July 2018.

In 2016-17 Learndirect received £121 million from contracts with central government. Much of this came through ESFA. Although Learndirect had previously been rated good by Ofsted and its financial health satisfactory by ESFA's predecessor organisation, its financial rating

was downgraded to inadequate in the autumn of 2015.

On 13 March 2017, after a failed attempt by Learndirect to sell its apprenticeships business, ESFA issued the company with a Notice of Serious Breach, citing falling standards in apprenticeship provision. Ofsted performed a full inspection on 20-23 March 2017 and concluded that the company's provision was inadequate.

Learndirect attempted to challenge the decision legally, but failed. It will receive no further ESFA funding

from July 2018 onwards, but is due to receive £95 million from ESFA during the 2017-18 financial year.

As well as the cost implications, there are concerns about the number of learners affected by inadequate provision and by the possible gap following the removal of funding of Learndirect.

We will ask representatives from the Department for Education, ESFA, Ofsted and Learndirect how provision was allowed to slip, whether the Government could have done more to save money and better monitor their contracts with Learndirect, and what will be done to ensure that the removal of funding from Learndirect does not leave apprentices and others without courses.



Jonathan Slater



Peter Lauener



Andy Palmer



Amanda Spielman

A support of Learndirect sale

Timeline: Learndirect Ltd aborted sale of LDA and Ofsted's delay

February 2016	Discussions begin between Learndirect Ltd and Global University Systems concerning a sale of the apprenticeships division.
March	Learndirect Ltd incorporates Learndirect Apprenticeships Ltd.
April	Ofsted moves Learndirect risk assessment rating from amber to red after 2014/15 achievement rates show decline and schedules inspection for November 2016.
June	On 2nd June Sky News reports it "understands that Global University Systems (GUS), which has a presence in 30 countries, is in exclusive negotiations about a takeover of the apprenticeships division of Learndirect."
August	ESFA meet with GUS representatives concerning the purchase of Learndirect Apprenticeships Ltd.
September	ESFA gave it's agreement to the sale of Learndirect Ltd's apprenticeship provision.
October	Peter Lauener, chief executive at the ESFA, writes to Learndirect Ltd to confirm that the Secretary of State agrees the transfer of funding (contract 'novation') from Learndirect Ltd to Learndirect Apprenticeships Ltd on the basis of a sale to GUS. Mr Lauener says in future the ESFA would have to comply with the public contract regulations 2015 in relation to the award or transfer of the contract to a different legal entity. ESFA sends Learndirect letter to Ofsted and applies deferral policy and cancels inspection planned for Learndirect.
November	Scheduled Ofsted inspection does not take place.
December	GUS pulls out of sale negotiation and ESFA informs Ofsted
January 2017	Ofsted reschedules inspection of Learndirect Ltd for March, once 2015/16 achievement data finalised.
March	On 16 March Ofsted informs Learndirect inspection will begin the following week. Learndirect Ltd asks Ofsted to apply their deferral policy (again) and delay the inspection as the ESFA has (again) agreed a transfer of contract to Learndirect Apprenticeships Ltd from 1 May 2017. The following day, on the 17 March, Ofsted tell Learndirect the inspection will go ahead as planned the following week.
April	Ofsted delay publication of the Grade 4 report owing to Purdah ahead of the General election.
June	Ofsted delay publication of the Grade 4 report owing to legal challenge from Learndirect.
August	Ofsted publish Grade 4 report after Learndirect lose legal challenge.

Learndirect Ltd's income from its main government contracts

Table Notes

- Advanced Learner Loans help people aged 19 and over to undertake general and technical qualifications at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6. ESFA gives funding to providers which use this funding to issue loans to eligible learners.
- Learndirect Ltd was allocated £47.1 million by ESFA as part of its European Social Fund 2014-2020 projects. In 2017/18 Learndirect Ltd is expecting to claim £31.1 million against its allocation. The Heads of Terms states that Learndirect Ltd's European Social Fund contracts with ESFA will end in July 2018, and that learners will not be enrolled on courses that cannot be completed before 31 July 2018. Learndirect Ltd has told us that it is discussing with Local Enterprise Partnerships the possibility of funding after July 2018.
- Learndirect Ltd has a number of contracts with DWP, but the Work Programme contract is the largest of these. Learndirect Ltd's contract for the DWP Work Programme will run into 2018/19, but the company has informed us that it is taking a prudent approach to its forecast for this contract.
- From 2018/19, all apprenticeships training will be undertaken by Learndirect Apprenticeships Ltd.
- These contracts will be re-procured. Learndirect Ltd will be eligible to bid for them.
- Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Funding source	Actual 2016/17 income (£m)	Expected 2017/18 income (£m)	Expected 2018/19 income (£m)
Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), for Adult Education Budget (AEB)	59.2	45	0
ESFA, for 16 to 18 apprenticeships	14	5.3	0
ESFA, for adult apprenticeships	23.8	9.1	0 ⁴
ESFA, for Advanced Learner Loans ¹	3.6	4.2	0
ESFA, for European Social Fund ²	5.3	31.1	See note 2
Home Office	6.4	6.3	See note 5
Department for Work & Pensions (DWP), for Work Programme	2.7	0.9	0 ³
Standards and Testing Agency	3.2	3.6	See note 5
Total	118.2	105.5	Unknown

NEWS

Government search site is flooded with hundreds of 'locations' for the same providers

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

EXCLUSIVE

Training providers are flooding the government's Find Apprenticeship Training website with hundreds of locations they have no permanent presence in, to get around a search function that only allows employers to filter geographically.

FE Week found one provider listing itself as having nearly 400 different sites from where it can deliver training, most of which are residential homes.

This tactic, which has been sanctioned by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, optimises providers' search rankings to appear near the top for apprenticeships around these areas, as the site restricts searches by location.

One of the most high-profile examples is that of Lifetime Training, a provider with a giant £37.2 million allocation to deliver training this year, which plotted itself 189 times for the business and administration level two standard.

The provider's boss, Alex Khan, who was awarded an MBE in the New Year honours list, explained this was the "purest way" of getting across that his organisation is a "national provider" on the government site.

He inputs the home postcodes of tutors he employs to deliver work-based learning so that any employer or apprentice looking for a provider in their area is aware that Lifetime Training can train them.

"We worked with the ESFA on this one," he told FE Week. "When you do a search, it does it on a geographical radius from the point of where the potential learner or employer is.

"The most logical way of doing this for us, because most of our training delivery is done on site, is that we utilise the locations of our trainers.

"So if you put Birmingham and we have a whole bunch of trainers in that particular area, it would show we have a presence.

"There is nothing sinister about this but we need to demonstrate we have the national coverage. We can do everything everywhere and therefore we should feature to actually have the capabilities."

He admitted that it doesn't seem like the "most sophisticated way of doing it" but that it is "pure".

The Department for Education told FE Week that it doesn't mind if providers use Find Apprenticeship Training like this, as an organisation that offers an apprenticeship doesn't need a permanent site, as long as it actually delivers in an area.

"Organisations listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers are eligible to use Find Apprenticeship Training to promote their apprenticeship offer, and are responsible for keeping their information on the course directory up to date," said a spokesperson.

Other providers employing this tactic

admitted they had similar motivations.

"We approached the directory by listing postcodes in areas our tutors are based, to ensure our provision comes up in searches where we nationally deliver," said Azmat Mohammed, director of the British Institute of Recruiters, which bombarded the government site with 372 different postcodes, mostly around London, for the level three recruitment apprenticeship standard.

And at the business and administration level two standard, Professional Training Solutions listed itself over 150 times, while CQM Training & Consultancy inputted nearly 100 different locations.

“There is nothing sinister about this but we need to demonstrate we have the national coverage

"CQM Training & Consultancy Ltd is a national award-winning provider which delivers tailored business improvement programmes mainly on employers' premises," said Andrew Cheshire, its managing director.

"It is important that we reflect our ability to deliver nationally on the government's Find Apprenticeship Training website and we are proud to offer our successful programmes anywhere in England."

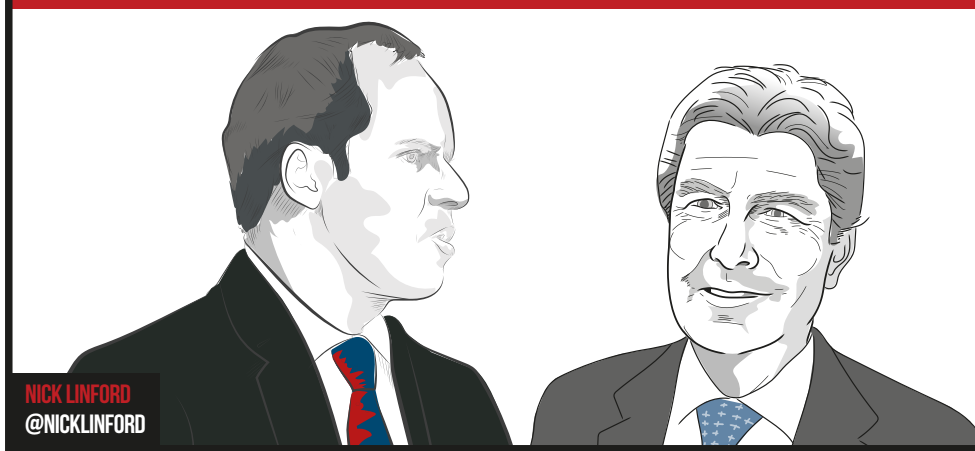
Professional Training Solutions did not comment.



Alex Khan

Above: The British Institute of Recruiters - Professional Business & Management School dominates a page of Find Apprenticeship Training for the business admin level 2 standard in E16, after flooding the website with all the locations of its tutors

NEWS

EDITOR ASKS... Dan Wright

Chartered status: When will the government subsidies end?

The Chartered Institution for Further Education, the brainchild of the former skills minister John Hayes, was first conceived back in 2012, to get high-achieving FE providers the royal seal of approval. But almost six years later – and more than two years after it first started accepting paying members – just eight providers have been awarded “chartered status”. A Freedom of Information request has revealed that the institution has received more than £1 million in public subsidy, and is still being propped up to the tune of £210,000 a year. FE Week’s editor Nick Linford caught up with the institution’s chief executive Dan Wright to talk about how it plans to recruit more members, and what’s in it for providers.

Why is the CIFE still receiving public money?

Quite simply, it doesn’t yet have enough members. Mr Wright acknowledges that a “lot of time” has been spent on “setting up the institution and getting it through the privy council”, and “determining the body

as something that’s going to add value to the sector”, but he admits there is still “a big task for us to do”.

Part of the challenge is that providers, grappling with issues like the apprenticeship levy and the non-levy tender debacle, are telling him “we’ve got our plates full at the moment”.

He has a plan, however, agreed with the Department for Education last summer, setting out how the institution will be self-sufficient by mid-2019.

“We needed to make the plan realistic but acceptable to the department, so they knew we had a date by which we would be free of government funding,” he says.

How will the CIFE survive without public money?

Mr Wright’s goal is to have 80 members, which would make it “completely free” of government subsidy.

Although that’s a massive jump from the institution’s current membership of just eight, he’s “very confident” he’ll meet that

target.

The “current pipeline” – which he says is “pretty much in line” with his plan – “is that there are seven applications which are currently being considered, a further eight which are on the point of being submitted, and as of today’s date, 45 organisations we are in active discussions with”.

Each prospective member pays a £3,000 fee to have their application assessed – a process that involves a financial assessment as well as evaluation against the institution’s quality criteria – and a further £5,000 a year in membership fees.

The DfE is “reviewing the progress against the plan, and they hold my feet to the fire in terms of are we progressing against it”, Mr Wright says.

How do you counter the criticism that the CIFE is elitist?

He acknowledges that some people might see the CIFE as elitist, although that’s not how he wants it.

The regalia of the institution’s first inauguration ceremony, held last February – complete with full academic dress – can’t have helped its highbrow image, I suggest.

Mr Wright tells me that the institution’s chair, Lord Lingfield, “wishes to present it in that way” – but is quick to defend the approach himself.

“Academic dress is a common fact of higher education – why shouldn’t it be for the FE system?” he points out.

“To have a royal charter is something which is unique to the sector and something which doesn’t exist elsewhere,” he adds, suggesting that the “sector can take advantage of that in terms of raising its profile externally”.

“Some people will see it as being elitist, and some people may see it as being very encouraging and that’s a matter of choice.”

What’s the relationship between Ofsted grade and membership?

The institution’s criteria are for members to

be rated grade one or two – but when I push him, it turns out things aren’t quite so clear-cut.

It’s certainly “correct” to say that no grade three provider can become a member, he says.

So what happens if an existing member falls to a grade three?

“We would have a discussion,” he says. “We’d review where they’d fallen down and where the issues are. Then that would be a matter for the council to discuss as to whether their membership would continue or not.”

While this might surprise some, he insists that quality is about more than just an Ofsted grade – with other factors including “financial sustainability, whether organisations work in the right way, in an ethical way, and whether they treat their people well”.

What’s the advantage for a college or training provider to gain chartered status?

“The use of the charter mark with employers is a powerful thing,” he insists.

They’re often “bombarded with a lot of approaches” from training providers, and struggle to “determine what good provision is”, he explains – so chartered status can help “employers make clear decisions” about which provider to use.

It’s also about showcasing best practice and celebrating the achievements of the sector.

“To me there’s just not enough of that,” he says. “We tend to gravitate towards the lowest common denominator – lots goes wrong, and that tends to mask what goes really right.”

Ultimately, he says, his goal is for “earned autonomy”, in which chartered status is seen as the “quality standard” for the sector.

“There ought to be a need for less intervention by having proved that you’ve been through a rigorous process and you’re committed to abide by a code of conduct which is going to sustain that quality throughout it.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW AUDIT APPROACH TO APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING

YORK

DATE: 21 FEBRUARY 2018

LONDON

DATE: 26 FEBRUARY 2018

Places are expected to go fast, so register now to avoid disappointment. The fee is £265+ VAT per delegate (no limit per organisation).

FE Week gold members will receive £50 off the cost of this event (gold membership must be in the delegates name).

Register now at no risk (full refund for cancellations 7 days or more before the event) as this event has been fully booked in the past.

BOOK NOW AT LSECT.COM/EVENTS

PROFILE

Introducing

SIR ALAN TUCKETT

*Adult education champion*CATH MURRAY
@CATHMURRAY_

A lifelong left-winger who has dedicated his life to adult education, meeting Yasser Arafat and the Sandinistas on the way, Sir Alan Tuckett was knighted in the recent new year's honours list. He spoke to FE on his work in a sector that's badly understood by the politicians who pay for it.

Adult education guru Sir Alan Tuckett, who was knighted in this year's honours, is best known for spearheading the growth of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education – now Learning and Work Institute – spending 23 years at its helm.

What is less well known is that in pursuit of his cause, he worked with world leaders such as Yasser Arafat and Daniel Ortega, and even had the American beat poet Allen Ginsburg sleep in his bed (Sir Alan took the sofa...).

He's been president of the International Council for Adult Education, advised UNESCO, founded charities, sat on a myriad of boards, authored hundreds of academic papers and held visiting professorships all over the world.

And if the characters that colour his stories reveal his political inclinations as being firmly on the left, his approach to politics is pragmatic. As chief executive of NIACE – a charity founded in 1921 – he positioned the organisation as “critical friends” of government: “We'd win contracts, but they recognised that we could, and would, be publicly critical on behalf of the interests of adult learners and the providers who provided for them.”

He has never shied away from public action. He made waves early in his career by organising a highly successful seven-day “teach-in” to protest adult education funding cuts in Brighton, capturing the media's attention with celebrity visits and quirky classes, such as having a group of pensioners “painting the night away”. But he was heavily influenced during his eight years as principal of the Brighton Friends Centre, a Quaker adult education hub, by the group's emphasis on dialogue and consensus-building for conflict resolution, principles he took with him throughout his career.

“We'd always tell the government how we were going to fight them: privately, in advance,” he says of his tenure at NIACE. “And if it was really inconvenient, like they've got some major policy coming out on Thursday, we were interested in the long run, not the immediate run. So we'd put it off for a week.”

Sir Alan sees community action as a “form of commitment to critical democracy”, and can find no reason to stop challenging a government that has showered him with accolades – first an OBE in 1995 and now a far higher honour. Quite the contrary: “Any recognition gives you the chance to make the case for saying 'it's not good enough currently'.”

And that's exactly what this doyen of adult education, who has spent his life making a fuss about the “invisibility” of the

FE sector to politicians, is saying.

“I think we've had an almost entirely inappropriate industrial strategy in Britain,” he explains, adding that successive governments, inspired by the OECD's love affair with the idea of “human capital”, have tried, wrong-headedly, to engage in a form of planning that links training directly to gaps in the labour market.

“From 2003 you get an increasingly narrow Gradgrind utilitarianism where there's a crude link between what the government will pay for and what the outcomes are,” he says.

But this kind of top-down approach can lead to perverse consequences, he claims, drawing parallels between Train2Gain, “which included ludicrous things like paying Tesco for the induction training they were already doing so they would hit their targets”, with present-day criticisms about the levy apprenticeship system “validating things people can already do”.

“We'd always tell government how we were going to fight them in advance.”

And as white-collar jobs risk being wiped out “faster than blue-collar jobs went, with globalisation's impact on manufacturing”, training must be “expansive” rather than “restrictive” and adults must be empowered to take control of their own learning.

“If you're able to exercise your creativity you feel more agency, ownership and possibility – and you take that wherever else you go.”

He contrasts this with the government's “incredible short-termism” and lambasts the just-ex-universities minister Jo Johnson's decision not to fund qualifications at the same level or lower than those already held: “People displaced by industrial change need more imaginative public policies than that.”

He is outraged that colleges have had their funding slashed in recent years while university budgets have boomed. But that's not all; once upon a time, universities were funded to provide educational outreach in the community – a funding stream that ended in 1992. The Brighton Friends Centre was in fact an “extramural” post for the University of Sussex, from which Sir Alan was able to launch a pioneering adult literacy campaign at a time of general skepticism about the existence of adult illiteracy, creating resources that were initially reported to the local MP as “biased” for addressing themes such as squatting, but which were later lauded by government and distributed nationwide.

After Brighton, Sir Alan moved to London in 1981, as principal of Clapham-Battersea Adult Education Institute, where he stayed for seven years and, towards the end of his tenure, campaigned hard (this time, unsuccessfully) to save its parent organisation, the Inner London Education Authority.

ILEA would offer classes in “more or less anything you can think of” for “risible” fees (£1 a year for unlimited classes for pensioners) and had dramatically higher levels of participation than anywhere else in the country. Its dissolution in 1990 was a huge hit for adult education in the capital, and for society in general, he reckons.

“We're an ageing society,” he points out. “Keeping learning is one of the ways of keeping out of being a burden on the state through the health service.”

Linked to the GLC, ILEA was likely closed, he jokes, in retaliation for its public support for the miners' strikes. While working there, he was elected president of the International League for Social Commitment in Adult Education, leading to collaborations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation and its leader Arafat – who was “really committed to education” – in Tunisia and Gaza, as well as a visit to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua for one of their legendary adult literacy campaigns.

NIACE, which Sir Alan joined as chief executive in 1988, has an impressive history of its own, spawning respected cultural institutions such as the British Film Institute and the Arts Council. One of its lesser-known inventions was the army's bureau of current affairs, organised by his predecessor W.E. Williams during WWII, where soldiers would have an hour of discussing contemporary issues “on the basis that if you're fighting for democracy you ought to know what it's all about”.

As he tells this story, it's clear why Sir Alan took the role at NIACE – it's precisely this kind of creative approach to education that gets him excited, and to which he has dedicated his life.

Absolutely committed to “social justice and a world in which everybody can live with dignity and fulfil themselves”, and determined to get the media and policy makers to sit up and take notice, Sir Alan threw his energies at NIACE into developing research capacity to demonstrate the “difference adult learning makes”. From 18 employees when he first arrived, he grew the Leicester-based organisation to 300 at its peak.

Adult Learners' Week was Sir Alan's major legacy project. Started in 1992 with the aim of showcasing adults learners' stories, the concept was adopted by UNESCO and spread to 55 countries. Now renamed the Festival of Learning and run by NIACE's successor organisation, the Learning and Work Institute, he's disappointed at the loss of a unique adult focus: “Learning means lots of different things; Adult Learners' Week was really the first national festival focused on adults.”

The rebranding of NIACE is another move that has left him perplexed. He was five years gone from the top job there when it merged with the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion to form LWI in 2016, but this didn't stop him from arguing against the name change at the AGM.



With David Blunkett, congratulating winners at the Adult Learners' Week national awards ceremony



Sir Alan with Yasser Arafat and women's literacy organiser Sahar Ghosheh, Gaza 1995



Sir Alan with his wife Toni Fazaeli (former CEO of the Institute for Learning) and their son, Lewis

"If I were running it, I would resuscitate Inclusion and NIACE as sub-brands," he says. That way, "they'd be more visible, and the focus on adults wouldn't be at risk". But if throwing away "90 years of brand recognition" seems nonsensical to him, he's keen to note his admiration for LWI's work under the leadership of Stephen Evans.

On leaving NIACE in 2011, Sir Alan couldn't resist another chance to work internationally and accepted the presidency of the International Council for Adult Education, leading to collaborations "with brilliant colleagues in India, Latin America and Iran" on the UN sustainable development goals. He's still dodging retirement, with a job-share FE professorship at Wolverhampton University.

As I leave, I pass a replica medieval helmet on one of his living room chairs, which turns out not to be a costume left by a grandchild (he and his wife Toni Fazaeli – another FE veteran – have six between them), but rather a joke gift from his brother-in-law making light of his knighthood.

His own approach to his new title is similarly low-key.

"The recognition is for the sector," he insists. "They don't have the policies in place but I like to think it's a tiny green shoot of change."

It's a personal thing

What are you most looking forward to when you retire?

I'm looking forward to more time on the allotment, where I'm incompetent – I like being the least competent person.

What's your biggest regret?

That I never persuaded anyone to fund adult education properly!

Where would you escape to for a month?

Coogee in Sydney, Australia – I worked there once and would swim across the bay and back in the morning before starting my day.

Favourite thing about living in Leicester

Its cultural and human diversity, although once upon a time I would also have said the Leicester Tigers.

Who was the worst education secretary in your career?

John Patten: combining self-regard with inadequacy, he was even worse than Thatcher or Gove.

What did your parents do?

Dad was in the forces, so I grew up all over the place. Mum was a domestic servant before the war – so she used to tell me not to argue with anybody or I'd lose my job!

EDITORIAL



In favour of Milton

Anne Milton MP has been the apprenticeship and skills minister for seven months, and will continue to be an education minister.

Nadhim Zahawi MP, former apprenticeship adviser to the PM, joins the DfE as a minister, mostly likely for childcare.

But as FE Week goes to press, two days after the junior minister reshuffle, the Department for Education is unable to confirm whether Milton or Zahawi will be responsible for apprenticeship and skills policy.

Individual ministerial briefs are determined by the new Secretary of State, and Damian Hinds appears in no rush to decide.

In all likelihood Milton will retain responsibility for apprenticeship and skills policy, which would be welcomed.

The apprenticeship levy is in full swing and T-Level plans cannot afford further delay.

So experience and continuity of leadership is what's needed at this pivotal moment in the perpetual FE reform cycle.

Nick Linford, Editor
news@feweek.co.uk

RESHUFFLE TWEETS:

HOLEX @suepemberholex

Congratulations to @DamianHinds on move to @educationgovuk Looking forward to working with you on lifelong learning

David Hughes @AoCDavidH

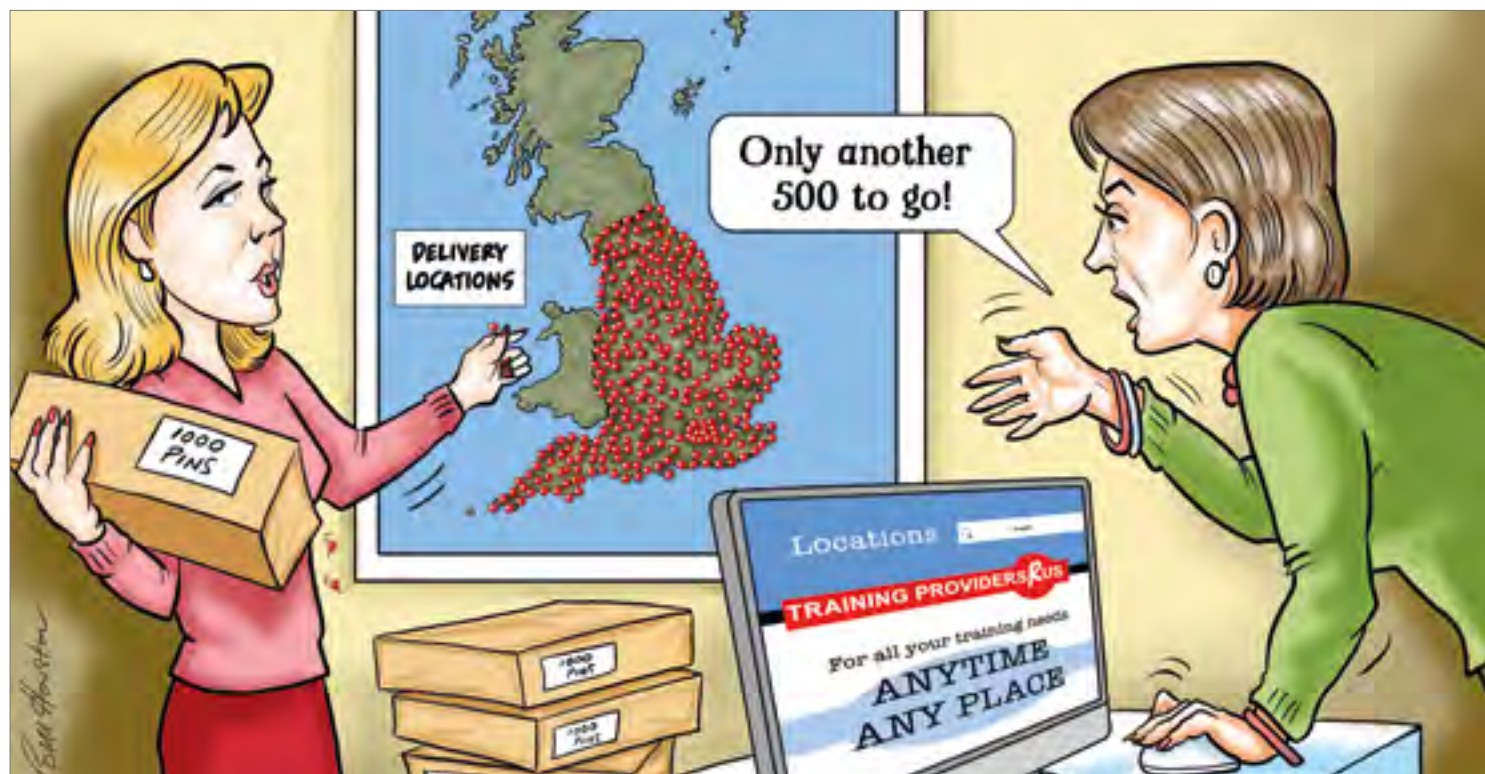
Sorry to see @JustineGreening leaving - she helped @DfE become a more collaborative department, willing to work with people in education to find solutions & was good to work with

Debbie Gardiner MBE @DebsGardiner16

Welcome to the world of education and congratulations on your new appointment @DamianHinds. Please don't forget the Independent Training Providers (ITPs); in 2016 we delivered 76% of all Apprenticeship starts. I'm sure @AELPUK will be able to brief you with more detail...

Ian Pryce CBE @ipryce

Imagine trying to dismiss someone just because you find their tone "patronising" (Sunday Times). Wouldn't you just have a quiet word? Whatever happened to management advice? Justine Greening was doing a good job wasn't she?



Could Hinds experience make T-levels work?

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

Damian Hinds has been appointed as the new education secretary and, with a background including responsibility for youth employment at the Department for Work and Pensions, he could be exactly what T-levels need.

The government has said that all T-level students will have to take part in "high-quality" work placements, which should last between 45 and 60 days and consist of a minimum of 315 hours, something described as "impossible" by the Association of Colleges.

But Mr Hinds, who served as the government's employment minister at the DWP from July 2016 until his sudden promotion on Monday, has past form for linking together employers with young people.

At a Westminster Hall debate on youth employment in December, he spoke of the importance of employers "large and small" offering work experience and vocational training in an effort to "improve productivity, promote intergenerational fairness and tackle poverty and disadvantage".

As part of his brief at the DWP, he helped introduce the Youth Obligation programme

in April last year, a scheme he described as "a partnership approach between the government, MPs and educational employers".

The programme, in areas where full universal credit is running, requires claimants aged between 18 and 21 to undergo intensive job-support training, including work experience, skills workshops, mentoring, help with job applications and interviews, and training in maths, English and IT.

Those still unemployed after six months are given compulsory vocational training and work experience in a sector with a high number of vacancies or encouraged to take up a traineeship.

Mr Hinds is so confident in his ability to link young people up with employers that, during the debate last month, he told his fellow MPs to contact him if they were having difficulties putting local businesses in touch with job centres so he could help to "facilitate" it.

"When businesses give a young person a chance of employment or the valuable opportunity of work experience, it is not only the job-specific skills that they gain that make a difference," he said.

"Through work experience, young people broaden their horizons, learn how to work with others and gain confidence. That in itself

can be instrumental in changing their job opportunities and life chances."

The Department for Education is currently running a public consultation on T-levels, but there will be no backtrack on the mandatory work placements, according to his predecessor as education secretary, Justine Greening.

Mr Hinds replaced Ms Greening on Monday evening, when she resigned from the government after refusing to take up a post at the DWP.

Skills minister Anne Milton had been tipped to move to health but remained at the DfE when the reshuffle came to an end on Tuesday.

However, the YouGov founder and former apprenticeships adviser to David Cameron, Nadhim Zahawi, was promoted to junior minister at the DfE.

At the time of going to print, the DfE was still refusing to comment on whether Ms Milton or Mr Zahawi would take on the apprenticeships brief.

Mr Zahawi became apprenticeships adviser to the Mr Cameron in November 2015, in support of the Conservative manifesto pledge to deliver three million apprenticeship starts by 2020.

In August 2016, a month after Theresa May became prime minister, it was confirmed that he was no longer in the role.

The new Secretary of State for Education: Damian Hinds

- > Born in 1969, Damian Hinds is 48 years old
- > Attended St Ambrose Grammar School in Altrincham, Cheshire
- > Studied politics, philosophy and economics at Trinity College, Oxford University.
- > According to his LinkedIn profile he worked in hotel management after university before becoming a strategy consultant.
- > First elected MP for East Hampshire in 2010, with a majority of 25,852 (47%)
- > Served on the Education Select Committee and until October 2012.
- > Chaired the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility.
- > Assistant Government Whip from July 2014 until March 2015
- > Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury from May 2015 until July 2016
- > Minister of state for employment at the DWP from July 2016 to January 2018





Assistant Principal, Business and Support Services



Salary: range £63,930 - £71, 580

Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES) recently judged by Ofsted Inspection as “officially good and on our way to outstanding” is the largest local authority adult education service in London and one of the largest in the country. We offer a large and diverse programme of further education qualification courses, apprenticeships, as well as extensive community based provision. We have a diverse, enthusiastic student community, taught and supported by well qualified, passionate and dedicated staff. Our three main centres in Westminster are all modern, easily accessible and purpose built, offering high quality teaching and learning facilities.

We have an exciting opportunity for an inspirational senior leader to take on the role of Assistant Principal for Business Support Services.

You will work closely with the Principal, Governing Body and the Service Management Team to deliver our aspirations and plans for a truly outstanding adult education service in central London, inspiring, challenging and empowering our learners and the surrounding communities.

You will strategically lead the Service’s business support teams for admissions, funding and data management, ICT and marketing, delivering and supporting the strategic objectives of the Service, within a fast changing environment.

You will have significant senior level experience of raising standards, the ability to

motivate successful and effective multi-disciplinary teams and work collaboratively with a range of partners both internally and externally in a manner that supports the ambition and values of the Service.

You will have the commitment, drive and ambition to achieve high expectations and standards, making a real impact to the progress of our learners and our work with employers and key stakeholders.

In return, the Service offers a competitive salary, employment benefits including a public sector pension scheme and opportunities for Continuous Professional Development.

Job description and application forms are available from www.waes.ac.uk/vacancies. If you are experiencing problems downloading or have an enquiry regarding a particular vacancy please contact HR by emailing recruitment@waes.ac.uk quoting the relevant reference number.

Please quote reference number: ED/WAES/781 in all correspondence

Closing date for applications: 22 January 2018

Assessment and interviews: Thursday 1 February 2018

Moulton 
COLLEGE



Could you ensure outstanding quality at Moulton College?

Moulton College is a standalone specialist land based college delivering construction, sport and food and drink manufacturing supporting around 5,000 students each year - based in beautiful rural Northamptonshire. The College is committed to providing an outstanding student experience and is seeking an inspirational Director of Quality Improvement and Student Support who will be instrumental in its transformational journey, ensuring continuous improvement for the student experience and academic performance.

The college has realistic and achievable quality-improvement and finance plans focused on developing a high-quality learning environment supported by specialist commercial enterprises.

Director of Quality Improvement and Student Support

Salary c.£60k for an outstanding candidate + TPS + relocation

As a strategic leader you will be experienced in the education and skills sector, with a proven ability to drive quality improvement in both academic performance and the overall student experience.

You will need to demonstrate a clear understanding of Ofsted and QAA inspection frameworks, so experience in this area is essential. You will provide leadership and direction in raising the quality of provision and performance and will embed across the College, a quality culture which strives for excellence and outstanding performance.

As Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) you will lead on all aspects of Child Protection and Safeguarding. You will have passion for Continuing Professional Development as well as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategies. The student experience is at the heart of the college, and you will lead the strategy to ensure that this is always maximised.

This is an important role which in return, will offer a competitive salary package, a supportive Governing Body, Principal and Senior Leadership Team, underpinned by superb staff and students who the college is justifiably proud of.

Closing date: 12pm, Monday 22nd January 2018

Assessment centre is scheduled for Tuesday 30th January.

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role contact Ian Sackree 07795 271559 or David Beynon 07970 042334

To apply for this role or to download an application pack visit: www.protocol.co.uk/moulton

Protocol | Excellence in FE



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Highly competitive package tailored to the potential of the individual

Midland Group Training Services (MGTS) is an established national award-winning training provider with training centres based in the heart of England. Operating as an educational charity, the organisation has established itself as a national centre of excellence for the education, training and development of both leaders and young people, working closely with its partners in the engineering sector to meet their specialist needs and expectations. We have a clear set of strategies in place to maintain our current position as a leader in our field and our current strong financial position.

Following unprecedented demand for our range of services and the planned retirement of our current CEO, we now have an exciting and challenging opportunity for a dynamic and creative individual to drive the continued expansion of our national training provision and commercial activities to the next level.

Putting employer's strategic business needs at the centre of decision making, we are looking for an exceptional leader who has the vision and capability of developing and delivering a platform of initiatives to bring about a step change in product development, contractual sales and implementation strategies to further improve financial performance.

Supported by the Trustees who oversee the governance of the organisation's affairs and other key partners you must be able to demonstrate an ability to empower, motivate and inspire a dedicated and diverse workforce along with the ability to influence customers, stakeholders and institutions alike in this strategic outward facing role.

The ideal candidate will be degree qualified, have a proven track record of successful business development and could suit either a seasoned professional from the commercial enterprise or training field, or alternatively someone looking to step up to their first CEO role. Either way, they will require exceptional levels of drive and energy, strong networking and teambuilding capability and enjoy the challenges and opportunities that the constantly changing economic, political and technological environments place in front of the organisation as it continues its successful journey.

How to apply:

To apply please send a CV and supporting statement [no more than two pages] to biggins@mgts.co.uk Include details of your current salary. All job offers are subject to receipt of satisfactory references.



Exciting Opportunities Available

Waltham Forest College is a major provider of learning in East London. We are looking for talented prospective employees to join us in our pursuit of excellence in everything we do. We wish to appoint staff who are enthusiastic about education, are well qualified in their area of expertise, enjoy working with people aged 14 through adulthood and are prepared to assist in the further growth and development of this College.

If you feel you have something to offer and are excited at the prospect of a career at this College then take a look at our current vacancies.

Current lecturer vacancies:

Electrical Installation

Automotive Engineering

Public Services

For more information or to apply visit our [Education Week Jobs webpage](#) or email recruitment@waltham.ac.uk

Senior Learning Manager - Study Programmes

Our vibrant college has a buzz of excitement about working in our lively and highly diverse community. Our team makes a difference to individuals and their life opportunities.

As part of our very successful curriculum management team, we have created a career opportunity for experienced and talented managers.

S/he will deputise for the Assistant Principal in managing the Study Programmes and will manage two learning areas.

Senior Analyst Programmer

This is an excellent opportunity for an experienced and proactive Senior Analyst Programmer to join our team. You will:

Undertake analytical and programming tasks for the development and support of the college's databases and information systems. You will have experience of writing complex SQL queries, functions and procedures. You will also have experience of creating reports and data feeds.

You must be committed to equality and diversity, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our learners and have a flexible attitude to work.



Principal



Salary: circa £90,000 per annum, dependent on experience

Our mission at Scarborough Sixth Form College is to provide an excellent service to our community, based in Scarborough, but drawing from students along the Yorkshire Coast and into the hinterland toward York and Hull.

The College has a very strong reputation in its community, and you will find at the College a very talented and hard-working staff team, who are very proud of our deserved reputation, and determined to build on this. At the heart of the College's success are staff who are committed to the highest standards of professional practice in order to provide the best experience for students. The ethos of the College - honest and self-critical, but supportive - is very precious to us.

At the last short inspection by Ofsted in 2016 we were confirmed as Good, but were on the cusp of Outstanding. There are numerous challenges and opportunities as we face the future, but our ambition to be outstanding, and to be excellent in all we do, is paramount.

We are looking for an ambitious and determined person to lead the College, moving it forward to become one of the best. Already with substantial experience of management and senior leadership in education, you will have the skills and ambition to lead the College to excellence, through development and drive of the College team, and sustain its strong financial health in challenging times.

With a high level of data fluency, good planning and communication skills, the key to success will be your ability to work with, and motivate, a diverse range of people

toward clear aims through actions for improvement. You will have a very clear vision and sense of strategic purpose underpinning the evolution of the College, but you will also be able to respond effectively to a variety of day-to-day operational issues.

Above all, what matters to us is the quality of the student experience, good teaching and effective support that underpins this. You will have a passion for the education of our students, and the commitment to raise both their aspirations and achievement. Our new Principal will provide strong leadership for our College in challenging times and be the right person to lead the College to the next stage in its development.

To help you make the right decision we also offer you the opportunity to find out more about the College from Marcus, the current Principal. He can be contacted by phone **01723 365032** or by email **m.towse@s6f.org.uk**.

For any application queries, please contact **Beth Jones** on **01723 380726**.

Closing date: 10 am on Wednesday 31 January 2018

Interviews: Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 February 2018



Let Me Play Ltd. is currently looking for excellent people to join their growing Apprenticeship team across the UK. All job roles are full-time and are based at our head office in Hammersmith unless stated otherwise. All job roles pay a competitive salary and the sales and account manager roles include a generous commission structure.

Let Me Play Ltd. specialize in providing apprenticeship training for schools across the UK. They have secured exclusive contracts with some of the biggest Multi Academy trusts as well as being awarded their own direct funding from the ESFA for Apprenticeship delivery.

For more information, a job description or to apply please email your CV to **info@lmpeducation.org**. No Agencies please.

Or visit our website **<http://www.letmeplay.co.uk/careers/>**

Vacancies

1 - 2x Employer Engagement Manager-

Must have an excellent track record within sales. Role will be based at our head office within the LMP Sales team to promote our Apprenticeship programme within schools across London.

2 - 2x Apprenticeship Levy Account Manager-

Must have a IQA Level 4 as well as a good understanding of the Apprenticeship Levy.

Main priority of this role will be to give good Information, Advice and Guidance to our existing Levy clients. This will ensure that they are able to either upskill their existing workforce or create new Apprenticeship opportunities. The successful candidate will be required to travel as part of the role.

3 - 5x Travelling Teaching Assistant Assessors-

1 in Birmingham, 1 in Manchester, 1 in Great Yarmouth/Norwich, 1 in London & 1 in Bristol.

4 - 5x Travelling Business Administration Assessors-

1 in Birmingham, 1 in Manchester, 1 in Great Yarmouth/Norwich, 1 in London & 1 in Bristol.

All roles above will be based within the Apprenticeship delivery team to service our Apprenticeship Levy clients. Any roles outside of London will be home based.



Director of Learner Services

Salary: Competitive



Halesowen College is a very successful tertiary further education college located in Dudley in the Black Country. We are seeking to recruit a candidate who shares the College's values and commitment to learners and can lead the learning support functions to be outstanding.

The College's aim is to recognise the individual needs of learners and put in place support and direction through the delivery of an inclusive portfolio of provision from entry level to higher education.

You will be joining a successful College Leadership Team and have specific senior responsibility for a range of learner service and support departments including the

line management and functional activities of: Learning Support (EHCPs); IAG; Careers; College Counsellors; School Liaison; Library and Learning Centres. The role includes lead responsibility for safeguarding and the College's approach to students' Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare (PDBW).

Closing Date: Monday 22 January 2018

To apply, please visit: <https://jobs.halesowen.ac.uk/>



Our Future. Here's what's in it for you.

You don't get to lead an industry by following others. You do it by setting standards, challenging conventional thinking and harnessing the energy and talents of people who are passionate about delivering results that matter.

That's what makes JTL special - and why we're now looking for qualified electricians and plumbers to build on our success as the UK's leading provider of apprenticeship training in the building services engineering sector.

There has never been a better time to join us. We work with approximately 3,000 businesses and train more apprentices than anyone else in the building services engineering sector. That takes brilliant resources, of course. But it also takes brilliant people - professionals, like you, who know what it takes to support and inspire the next generation of aspiring electricians and heating and plumbing engineers. We can promise you:

- **Flexible working patterns** - if you like to manage your own time and priorities, you'll fit in perfectly.
- **A competitive salary** - one that recognises and rewards your experience and expertise.
- **Excellent benefits** - including a pension scheme, life insurance and BUPA.
- **Ongoing investment in you** - everything you need to stay at the leading edge of the industry.

In short, we can offer you a career environment that few other organisations can match. As long as you have the right technical qualifications and experience, including proven ability to support and mentor apprentices, you will discover the kind of personal and professional growth you've been looking for.

JTL is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all its employees to share this commitment.

We welcome applicants from all sections of the community. Please note: an online application form must be completed, we cannot accept CVs. Strictly no agencies please.



NEWS

Hughes criticises DfE for claiming HE regulator has FE representation

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

EXCLUSIVE

The government and its former universities minister are under fire for “worrying” confusion over FE college representation on the board of the new higher education regulator.

During a bitter parliamentary debate on January 8, ex-minister Jo Johnson claimed that FE was represented on the board of the Office for Students in the form of Monisha Shah, the chair of Rose Bruford College, an arts college in Kent, after it was suggested that the sector had been missed out.

However, FE Week has established that Rose Bruford receives no FE funding and is officially classed as a higher education institution – even though representatives from the Department for Education explicitly insisted it is an FE body – and AoC boss David Hughes is concerned.

The row arose when Labour MP Nik Dakin asked Mr Johnson why there was “no space for somebody with FE experience” at the OfS at a hearing initially convened to explain why the free schools advocate Toby Young had been appointed to the OfS, shortly before he resigned amid widespread fury at offensive comments

he had made on social media and in articles.

Mr Hughes said he was “disappointed” by the lack of FE representation – and the DfE’s attempt to mask it.

“Just because an institution has ‘college’ in the title doesn’t make it an FE college,” he said. “I have been pleased so far with the relationship we are building with the OfS chief executive and chair, and look forward to working with them.

“I was, though, disappointed that the board has no student nor any FE college representation, and it is worrying that the previous minister seems to have overlooked that fact in his answer to the recent parliamentary question tabled by Mr Dakin.”

FE colleges are “central” to the government’s drive to widen participation in HE, he claimed, adding that “we worked very closely with officials to ensure this was recognised during the passage of the Higher Education and Research Act”.

“The FE college contribution to higher education is both high-class, with many achieving gold in the recent teaching excellence and student outcomes framework exercise, and unique, with much of it supporting students unlikely to have accessed higher education in other ways,” he added.

“I am confident the OfS will ensure that its



Jo Johnson



David Hughes

regulations and operations recognise and value that, without creating unnecessary burdens and additional costs.”

HEFCE allocations for 2017/18 show that Rose Bruford College was one of a total of 133 HEIs, alongside 190 FE colleges.

The only college-relevant FE course it appears to run is an access-to-HE course, but it is run “in collaboration with London South East Colleges”.

Shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden warned that when the government doesn’t “seem to be able to distinguish between an FE college and an HE provider”, public confidence is undermined.

“With 100,000 HEFCE-funded students in FE institutions each year, it is essential that they have some form of direct representation on the OfS board,” he told FE Week.

Mr Dakin, who was shadow education minister between September 2015 and June last year, was also deeply unimpressed.

“When a third of HE students have studied

in FE, and colleges are such a major provider of HE themselves, it is a real shame that there is no-one with significant FE experience on the board,” he said.

“The minister’s failure to recognise this aberration in his reply to me was disappointing.”

“It is good that the resignation of Toby Young gives the government the opportunity to right this wrong.”

Mr Johnson was replaced as minister for universities in this week’s reshuffle by Sam Gyimah, so future OfS board appointments lie under his remit.

A student panel appointed to advise the OfS appears to feature only one former FE college learner, the president of the National Union of Students, Shakira Martin, who was once president of the student union at Lewisham Southwark College.

The DfE would not say who else on the panel had relevant FE experience, while Rose Bruford College was also unavailable for comment.

Advertorial

Data protection: is your college ready for new laws?

Demand from our further education members for information and advice on the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has been strong and seems to be increasing as the day draws nearer when it becomes law – 25 May, 2018.

The GDPR is a huge subject with wide-ranging ramifications and colleges have much to get to grips with. You will need to review how your organisation collects, processes, stores and shares its personal data of staff and students.

If you’re unsure whether your college is well prepared, help is available from the education sector’s technology solutions not-for-profit, Jisc. We have a variety of free advice to offer, including blog posts, online guidance and regular training courses. And now available on our website are recordings of speakers at our GDPR conference, so if you missed it, you won’t miss out.

Among main points to consider are:

Accountability

There will be stricter rules requiring organisations to implement policies and document procedures which serve to ensure – and evidence – compliance with the GDPR.

Organisations should conduct an information lifecycle audit to identify and document how personal data is collected, accessed, shared, analysed, and retained. Full record-keeping will be important, too.

An audit will also better enable organisations to use that data in collaboration, and learning analytics projects (as examples), in the knowledge that the data is accurate, up to date, and can be fairly and lawfully used.

Privacy by default and design

Organisations will be obliged to implement data protection and security “by design and default” – to build in data protection from the outset. This includes assessing risk before processing begins, and identifying measures to address those risks.

Higher standard for valid consent

Where organisations rely on consent for processing, the GDPR will introduce a higher standard for this to be valid; it specifically prohibits silence, inaction or pre-ticked boxes as being means to obtain consent. Individuals must be free to refuse consent without detriment.

Statutory liability for processors

Organisations will be required to provide risk-based measures to protect the security of information. Significant security breaches will need to be reported within 72 hours.

Increased data subject rights

Data subjects will be able to request relevant information, which must be provided free of charge within one month, unless the request is complex, in which case, a further two months may be granted.

Individuals will have the right to know what personal data is being collected, for what

purpose, for how long and to whom and to where it is being transferred. They will also have the right to data portability and the highly-publicised right to be forgotten.

Reputational damage and fines

Security breaches inevitably attract publicity and criticism, so organisations should be aware of the risk of serious reputational damage caused by a data breach. The ICO had said that the fines regime will remain proportional to any poor data processing practices leading to a breach, although the fines’ limit has increased substantially and is now a maximum of €20 million, or 4% of annual turnover, whichever is greater.

Data protection officers (DPOs)

Organisations whose core activities involve large-scale monitoring or processing of sensitive data may need a DPO. In our experience, most universities and colleges have concluded that awarding degrees involves “large-scale monitoring” so are assigning DPO roles and responsibilities. A DPO must operate independently and not take instructions from their organisation.

For further information, visit <http://ji.sc/fewweek-gdpr> or email dataprotection@jisc.ac.uk.



EXPERTS



RUTH SPELLMAN

General secretary, the Workers' Educational Association

We must plan to tackle social mobility at all ages

Justine Greening may be gone, but her social mobility plan lives on. Ruth Spellman wants to see much more adult education.

In December last year, Justine Greening released her plan to improve social mobility through education. With her exit from Cabinet this week, the sector is right to be concerned that further disruption will distract government from the job at hand. Her plan deserves to live on, and we hope her replacement Damian Hinds, who has a positive track record on social mobility, shares her vision that “everyone deserves... a chance to go as far as their hard work and talent can take them” – not to mention her belief that education is a vital part of securing this future.

This belief has underpinned the work we've done at the WEA for over 100 years, but at the moment the reality doesn't match up. There is a large and growing gap in education, employability and housing, between those people with good prospects and those who are being left behind.

Better education at all life stages is vital in closing this gap, but investment in adult education and skills makes up considerably less than 10% of the DfE's budget – meaning a fraction is available for people who need repeated opportunities to improve their education and skills. Despite acknowledging that the government has “not done enough to invest in FE” Ms Greening's plan failed to highlight the contribution that adult learning makes towards tackling the social mobility challenge.

The WEA's latest report, ‘How adult learning transforms lives and communities’, demonstrates the role that lifelong learning can play in helping the people and communities we need to reach.

We have over 50,000 students, nearly half of whom have no or only low-level qualifications. Over a third live in disadvantaged postcodes and 48 per cent are on income-related benefits. Our students face challenges that are a direct result of social inequality, and adult education has offered them a way to overcome some of these.

We see the benefits in the employability of our students, who also go on to become active members of their communities, developing new skills and growing in confidence, which in turn is passed on to their children and beyond.

We need to address the fact that five million adults lack basic reading, writing and numeracy skills required for everyday life. This impacts not only employability but confidence, health and wellbeing. We need a cross-

departmental strategic approach to improving performance, unlocking opportunities for millions of adults who are currently held back.

We know that school performance tends to set adults on a path limited by their performance at 16, and it is difficult to make up the ground. It also tends to turn people away from education for life. Adult education can change the course of these people's lives and greater provision in local, community-based venues can encourage them back into the classroom.

“ **Investment in adult education and skills makes up less than 10% of the DfE's budget** ”

We need to see real choice at post-16 and post-19. Adult education works best when it meets specific needs. Although adults can apply to be apprentices or study for technical qualifications, many will need to first build their confidence through non-accredited courses or access courses. We need investment in appropriate education pathways for students of all ages, otherwise apprenticeships and T-levels will benefit only those who have consistent support to get them to the appropriate level.

The WEA wants an adult education strategy that covers access to learning, infrastructure issues and rights for adult students to enjoy parity of esteem with the traditional student. We are not just talking about vocationally specific and higher-level skills but delivering opportunities for people to access current entitlements to English, maths and digital skills.

We should commit to removing the barriers that stand in the way, making good the current deficiencies which exist in every community. The “working poor” need to be able to earn and learn, and older people who have left the workforce should be able to derive the health and social benefits which come from continuing access to education.

For tens of thousands of people across the UK, community and adult learning provides a life raft to a better future. We must not write off the adults in our society as lost causes, and instead give them equal opportunity to learn, develop and to contribute as active citizens.



JOE CROSSLEY

CEO, Qube Learning

Growth requests are leaving traineeships unsustainable

The traineeship funding processes could be simplified to help successful providers grow their provision more successfully, writes Joe Crossley

Providers are pulling out of the traineeship market with alarming regularity and it is not hard to see why: the funding methodology is complicated, growth is hard to achieve, and the client group is one of the most challenging to engage with.

After several years of hard work to create an effective traineeship programme, we are finally seeing substantial development, but this was hindered, rather than helped, by the surrounding bureaucracy. We believe that traineeships are valuable for young people and providers can manage them successfully but there are things the government could do to make that easier.

Understanding the rules for each funding stream is the first challenge, as 19+ trainees are funded differently to 16- to 18-year olds. For the younger students, financial backing is calculated based upon the hours delivered, regardless of the content included in the programme. What's more, there is no additional “job outcome” payment outside the base funding rate. This alone disincentivises providers from working towards the outcomes for which traineeships are built: progression to an apprenticeship or employment.

Students aged 19 to 24 are easier to understand and are backed through a combination of a single traineeship programme rate and any embedded qualifications that are included in their plan, with 80 per cent paid on programme and the rest upon achievement. An additional payment is made for students who progress to an apprenticeship or employment, providing they retain this outcome for at least six weeks.

It would make a lot of sense for the ESFA to amalgamate the funding methodology into one model, adopting the latter method as the norm. This would enable providers to make more accurate projections based on actual instead of planned delivery, and reward providers' hard work.

Growth is difficult to achieve. Although 16- to 18-year-olds are seen as a priority area, many providers are denied it. Overperforming on a contract is a risk, but necessary for businesses wanting to increase their provision or enter new markets.

When growth is not granted, particularly where overperformance is the case, it

puts pressure on providers: do you stop your growth plans and reduce your staff base? Or use networks and contacts to find new partners, a different type of risk, with a reduction in revenue based on the management fees involved. We know of one provider which, due to an unsuccessful growth request, did not get paid between January and March in 2015. Then, in April, after several months of uncertainty, it was told that its overspend would be paid by the ESFA and was retrospectively awarded the growth for which it originally applied!

More than any other year in recent memory, 2017 demonstrated how vulnerable training providers are, with numerous centres closing their doors due to insufficient funds. Providers used to have a real, tangible relationship with a dedicated ESFA account manager, and this ongoing association allowed funding to be awarded based on actual, physical evidence of good work. This is no longer the case.

“ **It would make a lot of sense for the ESFA to amalgamate the funding model** ”

One solution would be to allow for a rolling, monthly window to apply for increased allocation, but to limit the number of times per year one provider can apply.

The roll-on/roll-off recruitment of trainees means that growth is required at almost every point throughout the academic year. Sometimes its award has negative consequences – we were given more than we asked for in March 2017 and missed our maximum contract value by around 20 per cent at the next review point, meaning exclusion from the most recent growth opportunity in October as the ESFA, “would not expect to support an increase where your performance in 2016/17 was less than 97 per cent of your final allocation”.

It would be a real victory for the sector if the ESFA redesigned the system, because when delivered well, the traineeship programme is the most rewarding I have had the pleasure to oversee.

EXPERTS

The boss of the AELP wants the education select committee to help him get rid of the 20-per-cent off-the-job training rule hated by so many small ITPs

The education committee's inquiry next week into the quality of apprenticeships could not be more timely after the change at the top of the Department for Education. The good news is that Damian Hinds brings with him the same commitment to social mobility as his predecessor. AELP's pitch to both the secretary of state and the select committee is that the drive for more social justice is endangered by the current state of the apprenticeship reforms. The committee could play a very important role in putting them back on track.

The government remains resolute about pursuing its target for three million starts, and the committee is understandably concerned that the reforms should safeguard the quality of provision within the apprenticeship programme. After all, the interests of social justice are not going to be served if apprentices are experiencing poor training at any level.

So first of all, we want to acknowledge that four out of five apprenticeship training providers in the independent sector are rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted – and a long succession of employer and learner surveys have given providers the kind of satisfaction ratings that other industries could only dream of. But there is no room for complacency and one very positive gain from the new apprenticeship standards is the greater emphasis on ensuring the apprentice receives hands-on training rather than an assessment



MARK DAWE

CEO, Association of Employment and Learning Providers

Off-the-job training is still the biggest issue facing FE

of progress.

However, we cannot properly improve quality without adequate funding, and the new system under the levy requires the funding to cover not only the actual training but also the new end-point assessment, and the quality-assurance of that end-point assessment. How can any provider deliver a quality apprenticeship with 20-per-cent off-the-job training on a minimum 12-month programme, when the maximum amount of funding on some standards and frameworks is only up to £1,500 per apprentice? Adequate funding is required, particularly at the lower levels, to ensure that programmes can be delivered in a compliant way that also produces 'good' or 'outstanding' results for all levels in all sectors.

In AELP's submission to the committee, we cite evidence from employers that the

rigid implementation of the off-the-job rule is reducing recruitment of level two apprentices. This has a particular impact in sectors with high-volume, lower-wage employment and typically lower margins, those where many of the first steps in education and training are taken. Meeting the off-the-job rule is often a poor substitute for properly supported on-the-job training, and AELP believes it is no measure of quality.

We are urging MPs to dismiss the ill-informed, elitist rhetoric that level two learning, even when meeting a new standard, does not count as an apprenticeship, nor that it involves adequate development of knowledge, skills and behaviours. The government should not allow the price of an apprenticeship to be negotiated downwards by employers, as this potentially reduces the quality of the experience for the apprentice – the only

current example of reverse auctioning in the education system.

Removing nationally recognised qualifications from apprenticeship standards further reduces apprentices' job mobility. Another policy that runs counter to social justice is that provider funding for maths and English in apprenticeships is miserly, at only 50 per cent of the classroom rate. This comes in below the cost of delivery and provides no incentive to take on the most challenging individuals.

“ **Meeting the off-the-job rule is a poor substitute for properly supported on-the-job training** ”

AELP is pleased that the committee is looking at the issue of subcontracting, although time is short if we want to stop the repercussions of the disastrous non-levy procurement, which threatens to remove hundreds of good-quality, niche providers from the programme. We want the MPs to join us in demanding greater flexibility in subcontracting rules and reinstating the previous rules for the 15-month transition period until the next set of levy reforms take effect.

Award-winning eLearning for Functional Skills and GCSE

Used by 89% of FE colleges, including 8 of the Top 10 colleges for GCSE Maths

Contact us today for a **free online pilot, webinar or visit.**

T: 01623 413333
E: enquiries@bksb.co.uk
www.bksb.co.uk

bett WINNER 2016
AWARDS WINNER 2017

The **Skills** 2018
Conference

A must-attend event for anybody involved in the delivery or management of

Functional Skills or GCSE

This year's programme, delivered by renowned experts, will focus on:

- The UK's skills agenda for English, maths and ICT.
- The Functional Skills Reform Programme.
- Outstanding delivery strategies for Functional Skills and GCSE resits.
- Current funding information, and how to maximise income for skills.
- How to maximise learning outcomes, achievement and inspection results.
- Innovative ideas for embedding English and maths into wider curriculum.
- The importance of skills for apprenticeships and the workplace.

Find out more at:

www.bksb.co.uk/skills-conference-2018

Book Your Place now for just **£129**

Tuesday 6th March, 2018
King Power Stadium, Leicester, LE2 7FL

Hosted by **bksb** Sponsored by **Onefile**

CAMPUS ROUND-UP *with Samantha King*



Mark Tilling, centre, with students

The art of the chocolatier

Bake Off winner shows his sweet side

An accomplished chocolatier who won the BBC Two show *Bake Off Crème de la Crème* has visited Bath College to teach students a range of chocolate-making techniques.

Mark Tilling, an award-winning confectioner who came 7th in the 2009 World Chocolate Masters Finals in Paris, showed students how to melt and temper chocolate, how to create a marbled effect, stamp medallions and make different shapes during a three-hour workshop.

His visit was part of an employability week at the college, which has so far included workshops for catering students on bread

making, cocktail mixing, wine tasting, cooking demonstrations and mock interviews with employers.

"I always think it's important to teach the next generation, to come into college and show the students what we do," said Mr Tilling. "They are the ones who will carry the industry into the future, and hopefully they will pass on their skills when they look back and realise how useful these experiences were for them."

"We're always looking to engage with industry and are so thankful for the experts that continue to support our students," added Ryan Hanson, the college's deputy head of hospitality and catering.

Is this a trailer I see before me?

The Royal Shakespeare Company has asked creative media students at Stratford-upon-Avon College to film trailers for its upcoming productions.

Students on the college's level three creative media course made promos for an upcoming RSC production, pitching their artistic visions to the RSC's marketing team in a Dragon's Den-style presentation before getting the go-ahead to film.

Kris Vankay, a senior video technician at the RSC, supported the students during the two-week process, advising them on how best to present their ideas.

Mr Vankay also acted as a judge at the premiere screening of the finished trailers, handing out awards to the students in categories including 'best original idea', 'best lighting', 'best cinematography' and 'best overall trailer'.

"These are the next generation of creative people and we should support them in any way we can," he said. "It's great for us to know that there's some serious young talent coming through locally and, likewise, I think it's really important that the students know that there are creative companies and opportunities on their door step."



The aspiring filmmakers

Middlesbrough students help the homeless



Barber shop quintet: some of the student team

Homeless people in Middlesbrough received free haircuts courtesy of seven barbering students.

The team of trainee haircutters from Middlesbrough College visited Newport Community Hub to give free trims to those in need, as part of the council-run 'In out of the cold' event, which provided clean clothing, entertainment and advice to homeless people in the area.

"The barbering team were pleased to be able to help those less fortunate than themselves," said Tracey Todd, the college's barbering coordinator. "We also provided vouchers to people who attended the event

so they can come into the college and get a haircut at our salon."

Catering students from the college's MC Academy also helped out, preparing pastries and breads to be donated to the John Paul Centre, a volunteer-led organisation which supports people facing homelessness.

"Every day on their way into college they see people facing homelessness on the streets, and it can be quite shocking," added Sharon McIntyre, a teaching assistant at MC Academy. "By donating, the students do a great deed and also build their own confidence, showing they can effect positive change in the community."



Branching out: horticulture students get planting

Putting down roots in Leicestershire

Horticulture students are helping to transform the landscape around a new rehabilitation centre in Leicestershire.

The team of level three learners from Brooksby Melton College helped plant 30 trees along the Get Busy Living centre's driveway, and have already volunteered more of their time to help with future projects to develop the surrounding area, using the skills they've learned on their course.

The £1 million rehab centre provides support, advice, relief and treatment for people who have suffered a serious injury or

disability through taking part in sport, and is the first of its kind in the UK.

Grace Smith, one of the students who helped with the tree planting, said: "I enjoyed being a part of something for a good cause. It will be fantastic to look back in a few years and be able to see the tree that I planted during this visit."

"Visiting the centre was a fantastic experience for our level three horticulture students," added Mike Salotti, a horticulture lecturer at the college. "They were able to gain valuable experience of planting over 30 Fastigiata Hornbeam trees."

CAMPUS ROUND-UP *with Samantha King*

Gateshead College helps make history

FEATURED
CAMPUS
ROUND-UP

Gateshead College is helping ensure the future of a nearby history museum by upskilling its workforce in an innovative local project, reports Samantha King.

Employees of Beamish, an open-air museum in County Durham, are taking part in free business skills training delivered by their local college to ensure they're well equipped to support visitors and handle the day-to-day running of the attraction.

Courses range from search engine optimisation training (SEO) for communications staff, Excel and Microsoft Access short courses, Photoshop training for team members working on on-site displays, and even construction site safety work for when the museum undergoes expansion work.

The training is part of the regional skills and enterprise programme Go>Grow, led by Gateshead College in partnership with 30 training providers across the north-east, who are each offering free training to employees of selected local organisations and attractions in order to upskill the region.

The Go>Grow programme was launched after the college secured £15 million of funding from the European Social Fund through the Education and Skills Funding Agency to run the project. The North-east Local Enterprise Partnership and the North-east of England Chamber of Commerce backing the scheme.



The main attraction: Ivan Jepson, centre, with Beamish staff

"There's such a wide variety of roles at Beamish and it's growing significantly," said Ivan Jepson, the college's director of business development. "Being able to closely support their development and develop training for them allows us to match what they're looking for with our students here, providing them with a source of future talent as well."

"Hopefully we will also get involved in helping them deliver some of their apprenticeship programmes as we move down the line."

The Beamish museum, which explores

life in the north-east during the 1820s, 1900s and 1940s, was recently voted 'large visitor attraction of the year' for the fourth year running at the North-east England Tourism Awards.

It is currently undergoing redevelopment after receiving a £10.9 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Remaking Beamish project, which will boost visitor numbers and create around 95 new jobs and up to 50 apprenticeships.

"These bespoke courses have been well received by the staff that attended and they



Ivan Jepson

are now keen to apply what they have learnt in their job roles," said Michelle Lagar, Remaking Beamish project officer. "The main aim for us all is to continue to provide the best possible experiences for visitors."

Do you want to be in Campus Round-up?

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



Martin Sullivan

Principal, The Sixth Form College Solihull

Start date November 2017

Previous job

Interim principal, The Sixth Form College Solihull

Interesting fact

Martin owns a Bouvier Des Flandres (an eight-stone dog) called Fleetwood Mac who regularly takes him for a walk.



Andrew Comyn

Chief officer for finance and resources, Dudley College

Start date December 2017

Previous job

Vice-principal for finance and resources, Dudley College

Interesting fact

Andrew was once a professional footballer, playing for clubs including Aston Villa and West Bromwich Albion.



Lisa Bingley

Operations manager, MIRA Technology Institute

Start date January 2018

Previous job

Programme manager, HORIBA MIRA

Interesting fact

Lisa is a member of the Cosy Yarns Knitting and Crochet Club in Hinckley. Her club recently won a competition to create knitted teddy bear Christmas tree decorations.



Diana Martin

Vice-principal, Dudley College

Start date December 2017

Previous job

Assistant principal for curriculum and standards, Dudley College

Interesting fact

Diana was once rescued by a full fire crew because she had her arm wedged in the letterbox of her front door.



Andrew Cropley

Interim principal, Cadbury Sixth Form College

Start date January 2018

Previous job

Interim principal and CEO, Stratford-upon-Avon College

Interesting fact

Andrew had a distinguished Royal Navy career, which culminated in a role as commanding officer of the defence school of languages.

Movers & Shakers

...

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

FE Week

ANNUAL APPRENTICESHIP CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 2018

ICC, 21-23 MARCH 2018,
BIRMINGHAM

On the back of the tremendous success of AAC 2015, 2016 and 2017, the fourth Annual Apprenticeship Conference and Exhibition is set to be our biggest event yet.

AAC 2018 is the calendar's one truly not-to-be-missed three-day policy and practice conference dedicated to apprenticeships.

New for AAC 2018:

- Six specific one day route summits: Business and Administrative | Social Care, Childcare and Education | Sales, Marketing and Procurement | Engineering and Manufacturing | Construction | Digital
- Over 100 workshops across three days
- Free to attend exhibition and seminar sessions
- AAC Apprenticeship Awards and Gala Dinner

Early bird tickets available now.
Save up to 25% (ends January 6).
Group booking discounts available
for bookings of 3 or more.

REGISTER TODAY AT FEWEEKAAC.COM

#FEWEEKAAC18



HEADLINE SPONSOR



A City & Guilds Group Collaboration

CONFERENCE PARTNER



STRATEGIC PARTNER



HEADLINE SPONSOR



CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

For sponsorship & exhibition enquiries visit feweeaac.com or email aac@feweek.co.uk. Early-bird exhibition prices available until end of October 2017.

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

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next edition

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference To WIN an FE Week mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an FE Week mug.
Email your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to: news@feweek.co.uk.
Last Edition's winner: Stephen Ram Kissun, NOCN