

FE Week

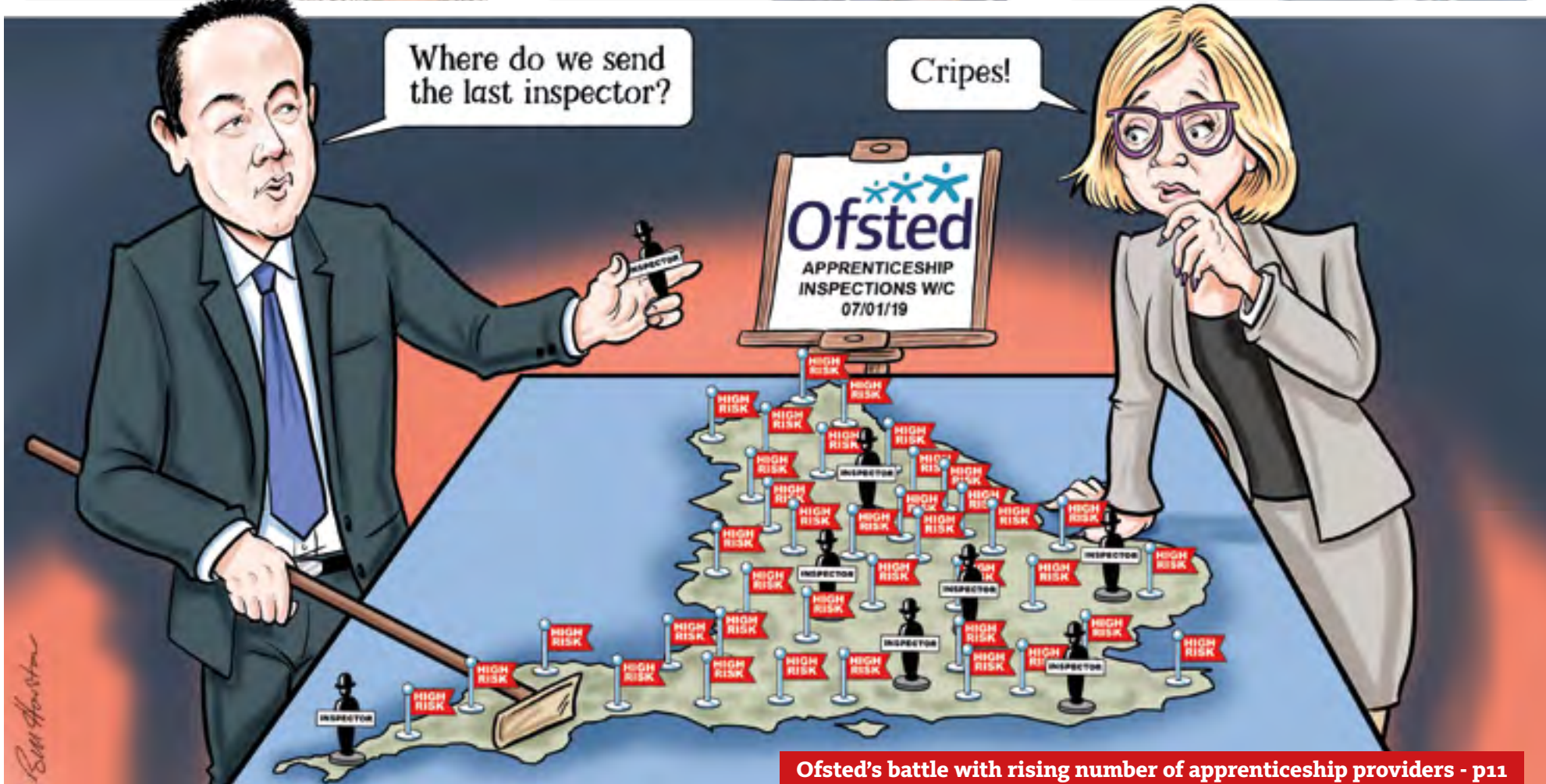
NEW MILTON'S MONTHLY MUSINGS
PAGE 16



'DFE DAMAGES FE REPUTATION'
PAGES 8 & 16



16-18 SHOULD BE COMPULSORY
PAGE 10



RETURN OF THE QUAL

- Civil servants lose fight with employers to keep qualifications out of apprenticeships
- IfA to announce significant loosening of restrictions after minister demands flexibility

Exclusive **JUDE BURKE** @JUDEBURKE77

See page 4



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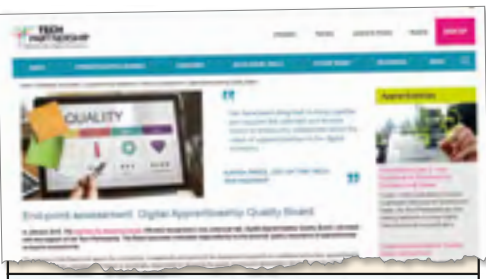


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Edition 233



IfA approves quality assurer despite plans for closure
Page 6



Carillion update: CITB prepares £1.4m apprentice rescue package
Page 7



Save Wornington campaign claims total victory
Page 13

Contributors



ANNE MILTON
Page 16



SAM PARRETT
Page 16



JULIE HYDE
Page 17



FEATURED CAMPUS ROUND-UP
Page 19

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NEWS

Nearly £25m in non-levy cash went to new providers

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

EXCLUSIVE

Around £25 million was given to providers entering the apprenticeship market for the first time in the controversial non-levy tender, Anne Milton has revealed.

In her first monthly column for FE Week, the skills and apprenticeships minister makes a robust defence of the government's approach to the procurement exercise, explaining how it was unavoidable due to EU law (see page 16).

But in what will likely be taken as bittersweet by the top colleges and providers that received no funding, she disclosed that five per cent of the £485 million pot – £24.25 million – went to new providers who were neither prime nor subcontractors before.

"We have enabled more new providers and employers to enter the market while still supporting the existing supply where we could; approximately 95 per cent of the funding awarded will be to providers currently delivering apprenticeships," Ms Milton writes.

While disgruntled providers who were denied contracts in the tender continue to

fight their appeals, the AELP has hinted that there could yet be some good news on the horizon.

"We are working very closely with ESFA to get a package of measures agreed that we hope should help ease the position for our members through to April 19," the association's chief, Mark Dawe, wrote in his newsletter to members this week.

"Usual line of 'imminent' I'm afraid, but we are aware how important this is to many of you."

Meanwhile, Conservative MPs have begun weighing in on the debate, with one requesting that all colleges have access to funding for apprenticeships with smaller employers.

Jeremy Lefroy, the MP for Stafford, became the latest prominent voice to raise the issue in parliament after Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group, which is in his constituency, was denied a non-levy contract.

"Just having the levy on its own is not necessarily sustainable," he said in a written question. "Will the minister ensure that all further education colleges have access to funding for non-levy apprenticeships?"

Universities minister Sam Gyimah failed to address the latter issue in his response,

but insisted that the levy is in its "infancy" and needs to be given time to work.

Mr Lefroy is likely to be joined in the non-levy fight soon by Royston Smith, the Conservative MP for Southampton, who is jumping to the defence of SETA, a registered charity who has delivered engineering apprenticeships in the area for 48 years.

The Ofsted 'good'-rated provider was unsuccessful because it fell below the £200,000 threshold the ESFA used to apply its pro-rata methodology.

"We have re-appealed to the better judgement of the government to see the damage this could cause our sector," Mike Driscoll, director of operations at SETA, told FE Week. "We have liaised with our local MP and will continue to fight the decision."

He added that if the ESFA continues to deny them a contract, then the message to employers in the short term is that "size matters".

"So, if you're a large levy-paying employer you can continue to use SETA. However, if you are small, sorry – you will have to find another provider with the funding to train you," he said.

"Or, perhaps you can hold off recruiting until April 2018 when we may well be able to fund the service you've enjoyed for the last 48 years."

Other top training providers and colleges have also turned to influential MPs in an effort to squeeze the cash they need from the government after they were denied contracts in the much-delayed procurement.

Exeter College, which FE Week rates as the best college in the country, is working with Ben Bradshaw, a former culture, media and sport secretary who described the situation as "inexplicable".

Meanwhile, 'good'-rated HYA Training is liaising with its own MP, Emma Hardy, who sits on the education select committee.



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Qualifications WILL be allowed for apprenticeships

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

FROM FRONT

EXCLUSIVE

Strict rules that apprenticeships cannot involve qualifications are set to be overturned next week, FE Week understands, potentially unsticking a series of standards held up for years by the ban.

The Institute for Apprenticeships is expected to announce that qualifications, such as technical certificates that show evidence of knowledge, will be considered in the future.

Both existing qualifications and those in development will be covered in the rule change, representing a significant U-turn on previous guidance.

It's part of the IfA's promise to make its process and policies "faster and better", announced in December after skills minister Anne Milton admitted that "some oil on the wheels" was needed.

The change – revealed exclusively to FE Week by a source close to the IfA – will be welcomed by many across the sector.

Current rules state that, except in "certain specific circumstances", standards "should not incorporate qualifications".

Exceptions exist where a qualification is a "licence to practise", where one is required for professional registration, or if an apprentice's career would be held back without it.

Last summer the rules were tightened to include a bar on allowing employer groups to submit a standard for approval if it includes a qualification that's still in development.

In December, the IfA promised it would clarify when qualifications can be included in apprenticeships, because current policy had "led to some unpredictable results".

Minutes from a board meeting held earlier

that month reveal an upcoming shift in the rules.

These indicate that the board agreed to proposals from a presentation on mandatory qualifications, but noted that "there needed to be effective communication on the changes to both trailblazers and relationship managers".

The minutes also reveal that, for the first time, Ms Milton attended the meeting, held on December 6.

“ Anything that the IfA does, anything on standards, it needs to be quick and responsive ”

A spokesperson for the IfA confirmed that this had been the skills minister's first meeting, but declined to comment on the nature of the changes, ahead of a February 6 briefing on its 'Faster and Better' programme.

Since the IfA became operational in April last year, the process of standard development appears to have slowed down.

The number of standards approved for delivery fell from 84 in 2016, to 63 in 2017, according to the IfA's own figures.

In total, just 222 (42 per cent) of the current 531 standards approved for development are available for delivery.

In a wide-ranging interview in November, Ms Milton told FE Week that she understood "where the sticking points are, where we need to put some oil on the wheels" in the



MINUTES

INSTITUTE BOARD

Meeting Title Institute Board (8 December 2017)
Date of Issue 20 December 2017

4. Mandatory Qualifications in Apprenticeship Standards

4.1 The Board received a presentation on mandatory qualifications in apprenticeships. The Board agreed the proposals, noting that there needed to be effective communication on the changes to both trailblazers and relationship managers. The Board asked about the position on degree apprenticeships. The DfE are conducting a deep dive on degree apprenticeships and offered to present to a future Board meeting on the outcome.

apprenticeships process.

"Anything that the IfA does, anything on standards, it needs to be quick and responsive," she said.

Anthony Elgey, the general manager at MP Futures, which is responsible for the national occupational standards for the quarrying, mineral products and mining sectors, told FE Week he'd been "fighting from the very beginning" to have qualifications included in standards for those sectors.

These included qualifications that were required by the Health and Safety Executive for someone to be permitted to work unsupervised.

But despite it appearing to fit the IfA's criteria for an exception to the general rule, Mr Elgey said he'd been told "flat out" by the IfA that "you either remove that qualification requirement or we will never approve it".

Without frameworks or standards the sectors could use for the last four years, "we've been turning apprentices away," Mr Elgey said.

Richard Longthorp, the lead for three agriculture standards, said the issue of qualifications had "delayed the finalisation of the standards by a good 18 months".

He enlisted the support of agriculture minister George Eustice, who raised the issue in a meeting with then-skills minister Robert Halfon, but "they still kicked it out".

Meanwhile, Sarah McMonagle, the lead for two master builder standards, said employers in her sector had hoped to develop a "rebranded, high-quality, all-singing, all-dancing qualification" to include as the existing ones weren't up to scratch – "but were told no".

Employers are not alone in lobbying on the issue.

In a briefing paper published in September, the Association of Employment and Learning Providers argued that their omission "could adversely affect portability and transferability, while making it difficult to make comparisons between standards of level and breadth".

The return of qualifications to apprenticeships is at the heart of the IfA's 'faster and better' regime

The Institute for Apprenticeships, under the new regime of Sir Gerry Berragan, launched its assault against government red tape in December.

Under the heading "faster and better", the IfA outlined a number of improvements it would make in 2018.

"We've always recognised some of the systems, policies and processes we inherited needed improving," it acknowledged.

In addition to clarified qualification rules, it promised to work with the Department for Education to refresh policy in a number of areas, including occupation and standards criteria.

The institute committed to "developing a quicker and more transparent system for making funding band recommendations" aligned to a new approvals process, "to cut out unnecessary stages and make sure new apprenticeships are ready as quickly as possible".

It's also pledged to speed up the process of standards development, with new two-day workshops on offer "to complete the writing of standards or assessment plans from start to finish, saving about a third of the usual time".

It also plans work with the groups so that "standards and EPA plans can be submitted and approved in parallel, saving about six weeks from the end-to-end process".

Other promises included a simplified process for reviewing standards, fixed templates for drafting proposals, standards and assessment plans, "strong upfront support for trailblazers" and improved communications.



IfA senior team caricatured in FE Week edition 229

“ Excellent venue, inspiring speeches, great networking opportunities and fabulous gala dinner! ”

Fabienne Bailey, Stockton Learning and Skills Service previous AAC delegate

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HMCI Amanda Spielman
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Ofsted



Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP
Chair, Education Select Committee, House of Commons



Sir Gerry Berragan
CEO, Institute for Apprenticeships



Sir Vince Cable MP
Leader of Liberal Democrats

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WE'RE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THAT BBC BROADCASTER & JOURNALIST, KIRSTY WARK, WILL BE RETURNING AS CONFERENCE CHAIR FOR 2018.



Image: BBC broadcaster & journalist Kirsty Wark chairing AAC Conference in 2017.

NEWS

IfA approves quality-assurer despite closure plans

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

EXCLUSIVE

A company approved to provide external quality assurance for digital apprenticeships will fold in September, in a situation described as an “unworkable short-term solution”.

The Institute for Apprenticeships approved the Tech Partnership for the role in December, two months after it announced plans to shut up shop.

The IfA also confirmed that if no suitable replacement is approved by September, it may itself have to take on the quality-assurance role for the sector, “either on a permanent basis or for however long is necessary to cover any transition”.

Other parts of the sector are not best pleased with the situation: a source from an end-point assessment organisation for digital apprenticeships, who asked not to be identified, has hit out at the IfA.

“There are already far too many questions surrounding EQA and apprenticeships. For the IfA to grant the Tech Partnership a short-term contract is unthinkable,” they said.

“What we need now more than ever is continuity, comparability and fairness not more uncertainty.

“More effort needs to be concentrated on a



successor for the EQA and encourage more positive press for apprenticeships, as opposed to fuelling the fire with unworkable short-term solutions.”

The decision has split opinion across the tech industry. Some providers believe that the Tech Partnership is a “sensible” short-term appointment and that a replacement will be ready for September.

The EQA provider will be auditing end-point assessment procedures, and EPA providers will foot the bill.

It will be able to mandate changes to EPA organisations’ activities and can invoke sanctions if these are not met.

EQA firms are obliged to report back to the IfA on the quality and consistency of assessment, as well as the general operation of the standard and assessment plan.

The Tech Partnership announced on January 8 that the IfA had officially

recognised its new employer-led Digital Apprenticeship Quality Board, and would assume “immediate responsibility” for EQA.

The board includes representatives from Google, Sainsbury’s, Auto Trader UK, Inspired Energy and Delta Financial Systems.

“Its primary responsibilities are to review the quality of end-point assessment decisions and the internal quality-assurance processes of all organisations approved by the IfA to administer EPA,” a spokesperson for the IfA said.

Responsibility for EQA “will be transferred to another organisation”, before Tech Partnership closes.

“This involves employers, through the Digital Apprenticeship Quality Board, deciding on the best approach, and overseeing an orderly handover,” he added.

“The most important point is that we now have over 5,500 digital trailblazer apprentices studying, and hundreds of apprentices now undertaking end-point assessment.

“It was therefore agreed that it was in the best interests of a rapidly growing body of learners and employers to establish an EQA panel as soon as possible to establish

consistency, comparability and quality in the assessment process, and that the Tech Partnership was the best-placed organisation to arrange this on an interim basis.”

The Tech Partnership, which has not received a letter from the IfA confirming its EQA appointment, announced on October 4 that it would close the following September.

Its income in 2016 was £7.1 million, but its latest accounts show this had fallen to £2.45 million in 2017. The organisation retained just under £4 million in assets minus liabilities.

The IfA already plays a dominant role as EQA provider of choice for many trailblazer groups – even though it describes itself as the “option of last resort”. There are concerns across FE that its staff could struggle to cope if it also has to take on EQA for the digital sector.

NOCN boss Graham Hasting-Evans has previously described situations in which the government’s own EQA regulator, the IfA, will effectively have to regulate itself for a number of sectors, as “bizarre”.

An IfA spokesperson said the Tech Partnership had been “very open about its position” and had been “working closely with the Institute and the relevant trailblazer groups in order to assure the quality of specific apprenticeships and to support the transition to an alternative EQA provider from late 2018”.

Five metro mayors launch BAME apprenticeships push

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

Five city mayors have committed to increasing the number of apprentices from ethnic minority and disadvantaged backgrounds.

The ‘Five cities project’, launched by the Department for Education, will see the National Apprenticeship Service work with the mayors of Greater Manchester, London, Bristol, Birmingham and Leicester to improve apprenticeship diversity in their areas.

The cities’ respective elected leaders are Andy Burnham, Sadiq Khan, Marvin Rees, Andy Street, who represents the whole of the west Midlands, and Peter Soulsby. They are all Labour politicians, except for Mr Street, a Conservative.

Former education secretary Justine Greening was accused on FE Week’s front page last November of being “all talk” on growing apprenticeships amongst ethnic minorities.

She had told the education select committee that she had a “big focus” on encouraging “a higher proportion of BAME young people going into apprenticeships”, but the DfE was subsequently unable to identify a single policy to this end since 2015.

Mr Burnham will lead efforts in Greater Manchester to hit a 16-per-cent increase in black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) apprenticeship representation.

“We want to be known for fairness, equality and inclusion – a place where that everyone can get on in life and get into work, whatever your circumstances, background or aspirations,” he said.

“That’s why I’m proud that Greater

Manchester is part of a pilot that’s going to celebrate the diversity of our city region.”

The DfE said the mayors will help “break down barriers” preventing people from BAME and poorer backgrounds from applying for apprenticeships.

Their work will include a promotional drive for more higher and degree-level apprenticeships.

The Five Cities Project is part of the government’s commitment, set out in the recent social mobility action plan, to identify and spread good practice “so that successful approaches can be adopted more widely”.

Major national employers supporting the project include B&Q, Rolls Royce and the BBC.

“I’m thrilled by the strong support we have received for this project,” she said the skills minister Anne Milton. “It’s great to be working together on our drive to make sure

that everyone, whatever their background, can get onto an apprenticeship at whatever level suits them.

“We want it to be easy as possible to get on an apprenticeship, so that everyone can benefit from the excellent career prospects that apprenticeships offer.”

Members of the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network, which is made up of around 30 employers and works on behalf of the government to encourage other firms to “share and build on best practice in widening participation”, will also support the project.

Government data painted a bleak picture last November for BAME representation. The ESFA’s national achievement rate tables showed that just eight per cent of England’s young apprentices are BAME.

In the rest of FE, 23 per cent are minorities, who make up 18 per cent of the country’s total population.

“It cannot be right in this day and age that BAME individuals in England are overall less likely to be successful in their apprenticeship applications than their white counterparts – yet sadly this is what the statistics do show,” said Sue Husband, the director of the National Apprenticeship Service.

“It is critical that we capture the talent of individuals from all backgrounds, and proactively work to remove any barriers that do exist – and that is why the Five Cities Project is so important.”



Andy Burnham
Greater Manchester



Sadiq Khan
London



Marvin Rees
Bristol



Andy Street
Birmingham



Peter Soulsby
Leicester

NEWS

Colleges must meet new 16-to-18 career guidance rules

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Colleges have been warned that they could be stripped of funding if they do not comply with the government's new careers guidelines.

Updated guidance was published this afternoon by the Department for Education following the unveiling of the long-overdue careers strategy in December, which said colleges need to meet eight "Gatsby Benchmarks".

It states that colleges are expected to begin to work towards these standards, which have been designed over the past three years to ensure they succeed in a post-16 setting, now and meet them by the end of 2020.

The guidance then warns that colleges risk losing their grant funding if the demands are not met in that timescale.

"Colleges are expected to comply with this guidance and this forms part of the conditions of grant funding," it said.

"In the event of non-compliance it is open

to the ESFA to take action in accordance with the provisions of its grant agreement."

The careers strategy includes £4 million to support every school and college to have a careers leader, and a further £5 million funding to develop 20 careers hubs.

One of the benchmarks is called "encounters with employers and employees". The DfE said it expects every college to begin to offer every learner at least two "meaningful encounters" with an employer each year and should meet this in full by the end of 2020.

This could, for example, involve students attending careers events, participating in CV workshops and mock interviews, mentoring, employer-delivered employability workshops, or business games and enterprise competitions.

At least one of these "encounters" should be related to learners' fields of study.

From September 2018, every college should appoint a named person to the role of "careers leader" to lead the programme. Every college should also publish the careers programme on its website.

Requirements and expectations of colleges

Timing	Action
Ongoing (requirement was introduced in September 2013 through FE college and sixth form college grant funding agreements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every college must ensure that 16- to- 18-year-olds and 19- to- 25-year-olds with an EHC Plan are provided with independent careers guidance
From January 2018 to end 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every college should begin using the Gatsby Benchmarks to improve careers provision now, and meet them by the end of 2020. For the employer encounters Benchmark, every college should begin to offer every learner at least two meaningful encounters with an employer each year and should meet this in full by the end of 2020. At least one encounter should be related to the learners' field of study.
From September 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every college should appoint a named person to the role of Careers Leader to lead the careers programme Every college should publish the careers programme on the college's website in a way that enables learners, parents, college staff and employers to access and understand it.

The DfE said it "recognises" that the work needed to meet all eight Benchmarks will vary for each college, but in any case they should be met by the end of 2020.

An online self-evaluation tool, Compass, will be available in September 2018 for colleges to "assess" how their careers support compares against the Gatsby Benchmarks and the national average.

The Careers and Enterprise Company has also said it will provide external support to colleges.

The eight benchmarks are:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each student
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

Carillion update: CITB prepares £1.4m apprentice rescue package

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Cash incentives of £1,000 are being offered to every employer who takes on apprentices caught up in the collapse of Carillion.

The payments have been sourced by the Construction Industry Training Board in a £1.4 million package that sees firms receive £500 upfront, and a further £500 after six months if they've retained the displaced trainees.

Over 550 of the 1,400 affected apprentices have been given new job offers since the outsourcing giant ceased trading two weeks ago, according to the CITB.

If all the apprentices are found new employers, the board would pay £1.4 million over the next six months.

"To encourage employers to take on and retain Carillion apprentices, we will pay in-scope employers an encouragement grant of £500, with a further £500 retention grant after six months," a CITB spokesperson explained.

"This is in addition to any apprenticeship grants an employer is entitled to."

Meanwhile, the government this week confirmed that any former Carillion apprentice yet to find alternative employment will be paid beyond January, despite initial reports that they wouldn't.

A story by *The Huffington Post* on January 29 claimed that Anne Milton had said payments to the out-of-work construction trainees would stop at the end of the month, in an answer to the shadow education secretary Angela Rayner.

"The ESFA can confirm that all affected apprentices will continue to be paid by the receiver until the end of January," Ms Milton said.

The Department for Education later U-turned, and confirmed that pay would stretch beyond January 31.

"At present all former Carillion apprentices will continue to be paid while alternative employers are being sought," a

DfE spokesperson said.

She added that the CITB has already secured new employment, with wages, for nearly half of the apprentices and is working "around the clock" to sort out the others.

Liz Green, the mother of one former Carillion apprentice, called Alex, said it was a "relief" that the government stepped in to ensure that apprentices would still be paid.

She did however add that it "would have been nice" to have been personally informed on the Carillion "disaster", rather than "relying on the press to tell us".

Ms Rayner described the decision as a U-turn and said she hopes the government now sticks to its word.

Immediately after Carillion's collapse, the CITB set up a project team to assist with the retention and redeployment of its apprentices.

Over 40,000 construction employers are said to have been contacted and encouraged to take on the trainees, who are mostly aged 16 to 18.

More than 850 employers have responded and offered job opportunities, the CITB said.

"I'm delighted that we've been able to help so many former Carillion apprentices; so many small firms have been critical in finding these roles but the job is not done," said Gillian Cain, head of apprenticeships at CITB.

"I want to reassure those who have not yet received job offers that the team at CITB will continue to do everything they can to help apprentices find new employers and get on with their training. We are confident that with industry support we can get all apprentices back on track very soon."

The Carillion apprentices were being taught at the company's skills division, Carillion Training Services, which held a £6.5 million ESFA contract last year.

New education secretary Damian Hinds promised last week that he would ensure every apprentice affected by the collapse of the UK's second biggest construction firm would be found new employment to complete their training.



How the government's Progress 8

Two colleges drop their 14-to-16 provision to save reputations

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Two huge colleges are walking away from their 14-to-16 provision because the government's new progress measures are too "onerous" and damaging to their reputation, FE Week can reveal.

London South East Colleges was the third-biggest college recruiter in this age group last year, and its principal has described the situation as a "travesty".

NCG, one of the largest college groups in the country, is the other formally putting a stop to the provision more commonly known as "direct entry".

They revealed their decision this week after the Department for Education released its latest Progress 8 data on January 25.

It showed that the 17 colleges which offered direct entry last year scored -2.10 on average, by far the lowest of any type of educational institution (see Progress 8 explainer below).

Individual data was also published, and showed that all but one of the colleges were below the government's floor standard of -0.5.

National media subsequently ran stories listing "the worst schools in the country", in which the colleges were included.

In an expert article on page 17, LSEC's principal Sam Parrett describes the negative reputational impacts of this "misleading" measure on the wider college, which is rated 'good' by Ofsted, and claims direct entry is simply now too big a reputational risk.

Her college had 122 students in direct entry last year, with a Progress 8 average of -2.57.

"Every single student in our own year 11 cohort progressed successfully into employment, further education or training," she said, asking: "Is this really what 'underperforming' looks like?"

But rather than being able to celebrate this success, Ms Parrett explained her board had to take the decision last year to close its 14-to-16 provision.

"Despite these young people making up less than one per cent of our total student community, the effect of these league tables on the reputation of our wider college is a risk we can't afford to take," she wrote.

"This is a travesty for young people in Bromley who wanted and indeed needed a technical alternative to mainstream school."

She added that her college is not alone in its "disappointment" and expects others will "sadly have to follow suit", a prediction that has proved true.

A spokesperson for NCG, also rated 'good'

by Ofsted, had a cohort of 18 direct-entry students last year, who scored an average of -3.26.

A spokesperson told FE Week that the college had made the decision to stop direct recruitment in 2016 and "focus on school partnerships instead as the requirements to comply with Progress 8 and other national curriculum requirements were proving onerous in relation to the number of learners".

Independent school data analyst Philip Nye, who works at the research group Education Datalab, is asking whether Progress 8 is an "appropriate" performance measure for colleges, and said it's "clearly having big unintended consequences if it's forcing them to consider whether they continue doing so".

While the loss of 14-to-16 delivery at two high-profile colleges will be damning news to the government, it appears its progress measures are not the final nail in the coffin for direct entry.

Two colleges, South and City College Birmingham and Northumberland College, took on cohorts of 14-year-olds for the first time in September 2017.

This will keep the number of college delivering direct entry this year at 17.

Like nearly every other colleges currently delivering 14-to-16 provision, both are backing the Association of Colleges' wishes to change how the "extremely misleading" Progress 8 measures are reported.



Sam Parrett

AoC: 'Leave FE providers out of misleading data releases'

The AoC wants colleges to be excluded from the government's published progress data, claiming it is based on school models and unfairly represents the delivery of FE.

It wrote to the new education secretary Damian Hinds this week shortly after last week's Progress 8 data was released.

It insisted that it is unfair to publish college results next to those of schools because FE providers only recruit their key stage 4 students from year 10, and thus only have learners for two of the five years that Progress 8 measures.

On top of that, the AoC argues that college cohorts are far too small to draw conclusions from, as the Department for Education has itself acknowledged.

The association has now asked Mr Hinds to intervene, explaining that direct-entry provision, which was set up in September 2013, provides an alternative to the school-based curriculums, with a focus on core skills and technical education.

"It most often caters for young people who have not thrived in a mainstream school setting and should therefore not be judged in the same way," a spokesperson said.

"Colleges report that their 14-to-16 cohort often have complex learning and pastoral needs, with students often at risk of exclusion or at risk of becoming NEET.

"If you look behind the numbers, college data shows incredible added value, high levels of post-16 progression to level two and three programmes and apprenticeships, improved progress from entry point,

better attendance and increased engagement."

University technical colleges and studio schools share the same frustrations when it comes to Progress 8 data, as they also recruit from 14.

"We deliver a curriculum focussed on building a strong and deep foundation for a career in a certain specialism, whereas the performance tables are intended the government policy of a broad and balanced curriculum," said Neil Patterson, the principal of Silverstone UTC.

"Consequently, the number of pupils able to fill all the buckets for Progress 8 is reduced for a UTC."

The colleges branded as the "worst-performing" in the country are also backing the AoC's call for change.

"It is like comparing apples and oranges", said principal of Newbury College, Dr Anne Murdoch.

Nevertheless, she insisted that her college would continue to recruit key stage 4 students as it "provides an important service" to young people who've had barriers to learning at mainstream school.

East Durham College principal

Suzanne Duncan said that for the DfE to present "the performance of our college's near-4,000 learners in this way is extremely misleading to the public and detracts from the excellent achievements of so many of our students".

While the measure does "obviously disadvantage us in



Alison Maynard

The expert view: Colleges are treated 'very harshly'

An independent researcher believes colleges are being harshly treated by the government when it comes to Progress 8.

The performance measure, brought in by the Department for Education in 2016, looks at the progress a pupil has made between the end of primary school and follows their results across eight GCSEs, comparing their achievement with other students of similar ability.

Schools are judged against the measure every year, and are considered to be below the floor standard if, on average, students score half a grade less (-0.5) across these eight GCSEs.

The government believes this to be a "fairer way" to assess overall school and college

effectiveness, because unlike the previous five A*-C headline measure, Progress 8 allows them to "get credit for the good work they do with all their pupils, not just those on the C/D borderline".

But Philip Nye, a researcher at Education Datalab, believes college key stage 4 provision is unique and they are being judged "very harshly" as it stands, with almost all finding themselves below the DfE's floor standard as a result.

"Pupils will only have spent two years in these institutions, and in many cases they will be pupils who wouldn't have done well had they stayed at a mainstream school," he explained.

"Progress 8 also measures the performance

Reporting is failing English colleges



Suzanne Duncan

terms of creating negative perceptions around the college”, she is not considering stopping the provision because it is too much of a “valuable service” to the local community.

Alison Maynard, the Tyne Coast College principal, described the data as a “slap in the face” for colleges who are “actually looking at alternative provision for all levels of learners”.

But she isn't allowing this setback to stop her college delivering the provision.

“The devil is in the detail not the data,” she said. “Where are these young people ever going to get education if we pull away another opportunity for them?”

A spokesperson for Hugh Baird College agreed that the general public was “unlikely” to understand how “poorly” the Progress 8 measure fits the unique provision of direct entry, and that results would have a “negative impact” on the college as a whole's reputation.

Niki McKenna, deputy head of Leeds City College's 14+ Apprenticeship Academy, added that this provision offers an “invaluable lifeline” to young people who are struggling in mainstream education and shouldn't be stopped.

A spokesperson for South Devon College said that to be “fair and accurate”, data sets should reflect “actual time at an institution rather than attribute time not spent there”.

of pupils entering a majority-academic basket of subjects – and these institutions don't always have curriculums well aligned with P8, so inevitably they do badly.

“We'd make the case – as we have with alternative provision – that mainstream schools should retain accountability for pupils who leave to pursue an education at a college.”

There is no automatic consequence to being below the Progress 8 floor standard, but scores are used as one factor when deciding if a school or college requires government intervention.

A Department for Education spokesperson claimed the data is “just a starting point for a conversation” about college performance.

“We are clear that while colleges should not be judged on the basis of 2017 figures alone, they are an important part of the picture of a school or college's overall performance.”

She added the overall picture of Progress 8 is “one of stability” and many colleges are “rising to the challenge of higher standards.”

Attainment 8 and Progress 8 by school type England, state-funded mainstream schools, 2017

	Number of schools	Number of pupils at end of key stage 4	Average Attainment 8 score	Average Progress 8 score	Progress 8 lower confidence interval	Progress 8 upper confidence interval
Local authority maintained mainstream schools	1,038	172,106	46.0	-0.06	-0.06	-0.05
Academies and free schools	2,095	343,917	47.8	0.03	0.03	0.04
Sponsored academies	593	86,459	42.2	-0.12	-0.13	-0.11
Converter academies	1,375	250,283	49.9	0.10	0.09	0.10
Free schools	53	3,362	48.7	0.15	0.10	0.19
University technical colleges	40	2,555	37.5	-0.86	-0.91	-0.81
Studio schools	34	1,258	36.5	-0.68	-0.75	-0.61
Further education colleges	17	1,175	14.2	-2.10	-2.18	-2.02
All state-funded mainstream schools	3,153	517,756	47.1	0.00	0.00	0.00

Source: Key stage 4 revised attainment data

Progress 8 score by individual FE college

College name	Institution type	Pupil Numbers end of KS4	P8 Score
Newbury College	FESI	33	-3.32
NCG	FESI	18	-3.26
Middlesbrough College	FESI	38	-2.63
Hugh Baird College	FESI	67	-2.63
London South East Colleges	FESI	122	-2.57
East Durham College	FESI	44	-2.51
Cambridge Regional College	FESI	31	-2.41
St Helens College	FESI	60	-2.28
East Kent College	FESI	49	-2.05
Leeds City College	FESI	164	-2.02
Tyne Coast College	FESI	22	-1.73
Hull College	FESI	65	-1.21
South Devon College	FESI	54	-0.86
Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education	FESI	104	-0.37
John Ruskin College	FESI	97	LOWCOV*
New City College	FESI	70	LOWCOV*
West Thames College	FESI	138	LOWCOV*

LOWCOV*: indicates that a school's Progress 8 or value added measures have been suppressed because coverage is less than 50% of the cohort

NEWS

'Force parents to keep kids in education 'til 18'

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

Enforcement measures should be introduced to make sure that 16-to-18-year-olds participate in education and training, a leading sector figure has said.

The controversial proposal, which would see parents legally bound to ensure their children's attendance, has split the sector.

The boss of the Association of Colleges, David Hughes, has said the idea deserves "serious consideration", but his counterparts at the Association of Employment and Learning Providers and the Sixth-Form Colleges Association have lined up next to the former schools minister David Laws to condemn it.

The proposal was made in report from the NCFE and the Campaign for Learning written by New College Durham principal John Widdowson, and entitled 'Mending the gap: Are the needs of 16- to 18-year-olds being met?'

Its stand-out recommendation is for the government to extend the legal duty on parents, which currently applies for children aged under 16, to make sure learners participate in education and training until 18.

"Sanctions should be introduced as a last resort to ensure young people and parents support the duty to participate, not to criminalise young people, but ensure cases of non-participation are highlighted to ministers to stimulate necessary policy change," the report said.

In 2007, the Labour education secretary Alan Johnson announced in a green paper that participation in education and training should continue until 18.

This was subsequently legislated, and is referred to as "raising the age of participation" or RPA.

Mr Widdowson's new report criticises the ways "successive governments" have "turned a blind eye" since then.

"The Labour government planned a range of enforcement measures on 16- and 17-year-olds to participate and on employers to offer jobs with training, but these were not introduced," he wrote.

As a result, 8.5 per cent of the "cohort still remain uninvolved, with a relatively large number of 'not-knowns', quantified to around 99,000 individuals".

Mr Widdowson said at the launch that "if you have a legal duty that then is explicitly not enforced, it's not a duty".

"Young people and families work it out pretty quickly," he continued. "They know that if they don't attend there's not a lot that can be done; there are no real sanctions applied.

"It might be an appearance before magistrates, or some restriction on benefits entitlement which usually encourages families to encourage the kid out of bed in the morning. Something is needed that actually says 'we are serious about this'."

Speaking after the event, Mr Hughes said that this and other suggestions on improving participation deserve "serious consideration".

"His proposal that Parliament shouldn't



John Widdowson presenting his recommendations at the report launch

pass laws that it doesn't intend to enforce is right," the AoC chief said.

"The RPA law is different to the law on school attendance, because the post-16 duty is on the young person not their parent. The Department for Education would need to also act on funding, curriculum and transport recommendations."

However Mark Dawe, the boss of the AELP, disagreed: "While we should fight for a shift in culture towards more learning after 16, trying to impose sanctions on families won't help.

"Many of those young people potentially in scope will come from broken homes or very disadvantaged backgrounds and they will end up alienated even more."

Bill Watkins, chief executive of the SFCA, said his organisation "would like to see a focus on the carrot, rather than the stick".

"For example, RPA ambitions are more likely to be realised if we can properly inform and advise young people at 16," he said.

Mr Laws said he was "very cautious about a highly sanctions-driven approach for all the really obvious reasons".

He warned of "issues that might be impairing young people from participating", and questions over "how much parents are in a position to actually tackle some of the issues that are causing them not to participate".

The DfE did not comment ahead of publication.

Funding and financial support also needed

The other proposals put forward in the report include:

- The duty to participate should be extended to end of the academic year in which a young person turns 18
- Funding needs to be made available to allow providers to deliver high-quality provision for full-time academic and technical education, and apprenticeships until the 19th birthday
- Financial support also needs to be extended to help the 16- to 19-year-olds to participate in full-time education and apprenticeships until their 19th birthday

In his own words: John Widdowson

The report did not go into detail about how the sanctions would work, so FE Week editor Nick Linford spoke to Mr Widdowson about the types of enforcement that could be used, beyond extending the current pre-16 parental duty.

"You could look at entitlement to benefits if the kids don't participate, that requires better tracking," he said. "One question that probably should be answered is 'who would do the enforcement?'"

"I suspect the only ones who would be in a position to do that are local authorities, because they can track the students."

He said that enforcement does take place pre-16, because "they are on the school roll".

After that, "they are not on a school, college, or training provider roll, but they are out there somewhere".

"In what I think is a small minority of cases, you could introduce what I'd call a buddy system."

"Youth workers will stand in the place of the parents as far as this is concerned ... to the point of saying 'look let's go down to your college or training provider's careers fair', and give some individual consideration.

"Although that's expensive, it is much cheaper to get these people engaged between 16 and 18, than to try and do it later on."

Mr Widdowson was invited to counter criticism that

He did not deny criticism that it is an issue to expect parents to have control over what their children do past 16, but insisted "you can't separate parents from his role, just like you can't pre-16, if you are going to set the tariff at 18".

16- to 17-year-olds meeting and not meeting the duty to participate

Source: *Mending the gap: Are the needs of 16- to 18-year-olds being met?*

Meeting the duty to participate June 2017		
Full-Time Education, Work-Based Learning, Students on Gap Years and Other Training	83.8%	972,390
Apprenticeship	6.7%	77,744
Employment Combined with Study	0.8%	9,283
Working Towards Participation	0.2%	2,320
Total	91.5%	1,061,737
Not meeting the duty to participate June 2017		
Part-time education	0.1%	1,160
Employment with Non-Regulated Qualifications	0.8%	9,283
Temporary Break from Learning	0.6%	6,962
Not known	7.0%	81,226
Total	8.5%	98,633

NEWS

Cambridge and Greggs join 352 organisations on the register

NICK LINFORD
@NICKLINFORD

The register of apprenticeship training providers (RoATP) has grown by 354 organisations, and there are now a total of 2,187 organisations with direct access to funding, and which Ofsted can inspect.

The number of providers now in scope for inspection, assuming that the majority recruit at level two and three, has now more than doubled since last year's levy reforms.

Most organisations that succeeded in the third official application window are private companies, 12 of which have yet to file their first set of accounts with Companies House.

In addition, 15 universities, including Cambridge, join the register, taking the total number of universities on RoATP to just over 100. Under current arrangements, degree-level apprenticeships will be inspected by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, and where there is a prescribed HE qualification contained within an apprenticeship at levels four and five, it will be done jointly with Ofsted.

Funding allocations for 2016/17 suggest that before the introduction of RoATP there were 837 providers in scope for inspection; that year Ofsted inspected 189 providers on their apprenticeships.

Successful register of apprenticeship training providers (RoATP) applications

Month	Main provider added	Employer provider added	Total providers added	Total providers in scope for Ofsted inspection
Mar-17	1,251	144	1,395	1,395
Apr-17	4	0	4	1,399
May-17	369	53	422	1,821
Jun-17	5	1	6	1,827
Jul-17	2	0	2	1,829
Aug-17	0	1	1	1,830
Sep-17	0	2	2	1,832
Oct-17	0	0	0	1,832
Nov-17	0	0	0	1,832
Dec-17	0	1	1	1,833
Jan-18	293	61	354	2,187
Total	1,924	263	2,187	

Source: <https://roatp.apprenticeships.sfa.bis.gov.uk/download>
Analysis: FE Week (excludes 'supporting' providers)

In a wide-ranging FE Week interview last March, Ofsted's chief inspector Amanda Spielman was asked about the impact of RoATP, which said included "a lot of people with very limited experience and potentially quite a lot of fragmentation".

She admitted that both she and Paul Joyce, the inspectorate's head of FE and skills, were "worried" about the possibility that they'd eventually have more than 2,000 providers in scope.

"This is something that I raised last

year with Jonathan Slater [the permanent secretary at the Department for Education], that if the levy policy was a success then a lot of these new providers are going to come on stream and start having learners and we expect to have more work and need more resource to do that," she said at a meeting of the Commons public accounts committee in January.

"We had the acknowledgement that the more work we had the greater resource we would need. We haven't got a specific

resource increase because we don't know how many [new providers] will come on stream with a volume of learners. But we have the acknowledgement in principle that this will be required."

The issue was also raised during an education select committee session the following day, as part of the inquiry into apprenticeship quality.

Joe Dromey, a senior research fellow for the policy think-tank IPPR, warned apprenticeship numbers and Ofsted resource was "going in opposite directions".

Of the 354 additions, 61 are employer-providers which can now directly access their own levy funding, including household names such as the Salvation Army, Greggs, British Airways, River Island and Lloyds Bank.

And the 2,187 total does not include the 114 organisations added to the 276 with 'supporting provider' status taking their total to 390 on RoATP.

Providers categorised as supporting' cannot access funding directly. They can only subcontract from one of the main providers up to the value of £500,000 per year and are not directly in scope for Ofsted inspection.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency has so far completed three official RoATP application windows, and is currently reviewing the process.

St Helens College keeps RoATP place with merger loophole

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

A college rated 'inadequate' for its apprenticeship provision more than seven months ago was given special dispensation to remain on the register of apprenticeship training providers.

St Helens College was given the lowest possible grade for apprenticeships in a report published last June, but has never been removed from the register – even though other providers with the same grade have.

In the same week that new rules were published outlining when and how providers would be removed from the register, the Department for Education admitted that the college was treated differently due to its merger with Knowsley Community College, which completed on December 12.

It explained that merged colleges are considered ungraded by Ofsted, and are eligible to apply to the register under exceptional circumstances – and it is on this basis that the college is still listed.

St Helens itself claimed it had been removed from the register, but that following the merger it had reapplied and "is registered as an approved provider."

However, this claim is contradicted by the date the college was added to the register, which is listed as March 13, 2017.

Previously the agency had said it would

"exercise its right to terminate contracts where a provider is not meeting the standards expected" – and that any provider with a grade four would be "removed from the register in due course".

But under the new rules, published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency on January 30, an 'inadequate' provider would be given five days' notice of their removal from the register and must not take on any new apprentices, any existing apprentices would be able to stay on only at the employers' discretion.

"A provider with a grade four Ofsted rating is ineligible to apply to the register and it is right that a provider is removed if

they are later assessed as inadequate," a DfE spokesperson said.

Eight independent training providers along with St Helens College have been rated grade four for their apprenticeship provision since being added to the register.

Of those, six ITPs have all been removed – Community Training Services Limited, Be Totally You, Matrix Training and Development Limited, EQL Solutions Limited, Compass Group UK & Ireland and First City Training.

All six had their reports published more than three months ago.

A further two providers, London Skills and Development Network Ltd and NLT

Training, were rated 'inadequate' in December and have yet to be removed from the register.

St Helens is the only college on the register to receive a grade four for its apprenticeship provision – and the only provider to remain on the register beyond the standard three-month contract termination period.

The college would not reveal whether it had taken on any new starts since the Ofsted report was published in mid-June.

But it had a non-levy allocation of £315,928 between May to December, according to the ESFA.

And the college has continued to promote its apprenticeships provision on its website, claiming that "we have an excellent reputation for delivering high-quality apprenticeships and traineeships across all sectors".

Last year's Ofsted inspection, carried out between April 24 and 27, was heavily critical of St Helens' apprenticeship provision.

"The majority of current apprentices are making slow progress on their qualifications; just under half of current apprentices have completed their qualification within their planned timescales," the report, published on June 16, stated.

But according to minutes from a board meeting on July 10, the college's overall and timely achievement rates were both above the national average – and that it "anticipates that the picture will continue to improve".



St Helens College

Learndirect enters redundancy talks

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Learndirect has entered redundancy talks with an unknown amount of its staff.

A consultation on job losses was launched on Thursday, and is directly linked to the termination of its ESFA contracts which will end in July.

“We have entered a period of consultation with a number of colleagues,” a spokesperson for the nation’s biggest provider said.

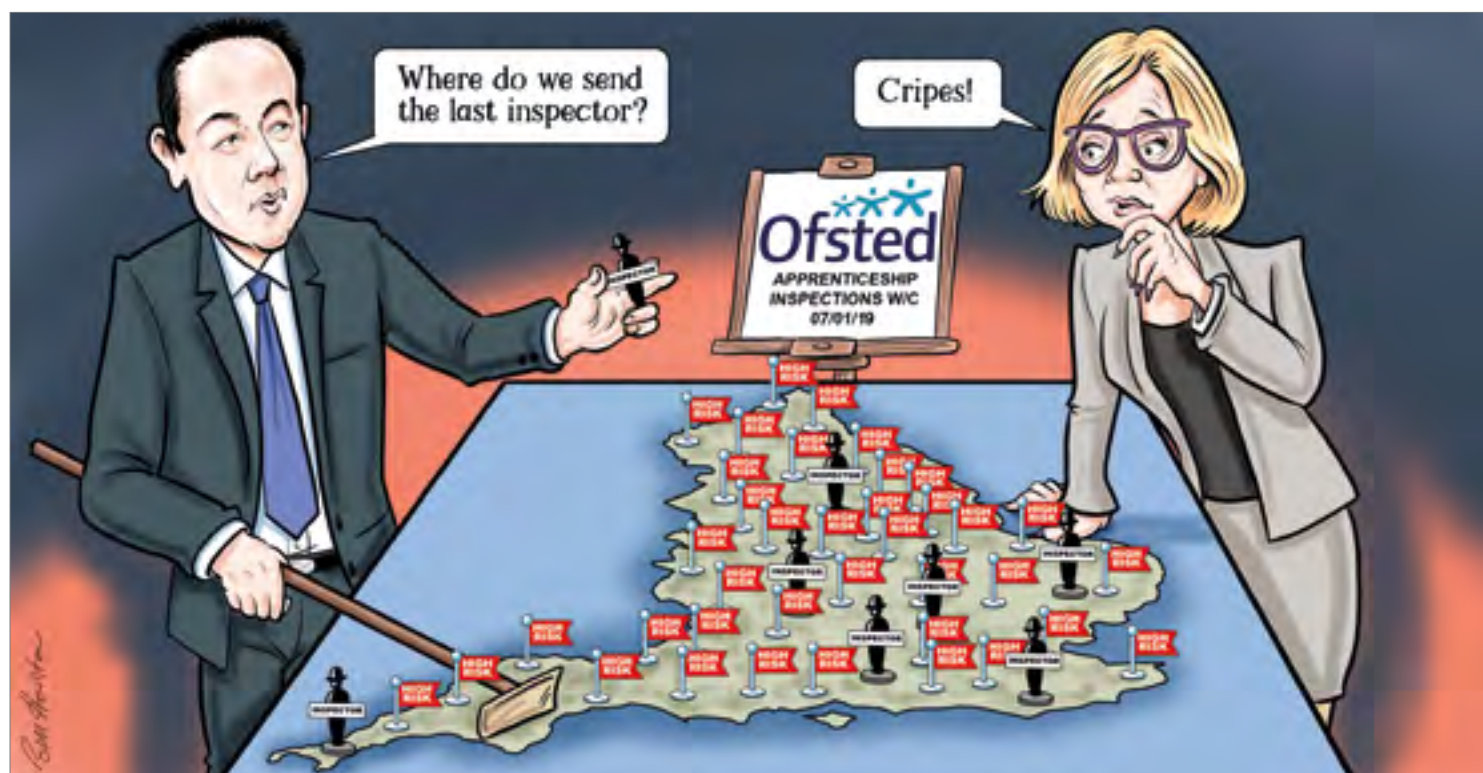
“This is directly linked to the cessation of a number of ESFA contracts in July 2018 that was announced last year.”

He would not say how many staff were in line to lose their jobs.

The decision to terminate Learndirect’s funding came about after Ofsted slammed it with a grade four in August last year.

Although the provider’s contracts are coming to an end, the government singled it out for special treatment by allowing it to retain its contracts for almost a year – much more than the usual three-month termination period.

Learndirect, which was subject to a recent National Audit Investigation and Public Accounts Committee inquiry, was given £95 million from the ESFA for 2017/18.



Cameron and Osborne ‘forced’ Gove to establish UTCs

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

As education secretary, Michael Gove was “forced” to create university technology colleges by George Osborne and David Cameron, a former senior minister has revealed.

David Laws, a Liberal Democrat who served under Mr Gove as schools minister in the coalition government from 2012 to 2015, told FE Week that he “never liked” the policy, but had it “imposed” on him by the ex-chancellor and former prime minister.

Mr Laws, whose think-tank the Education Policy Institute is currently investigating the UTC project after several have closed after failing to recruit enough pupils, even suggested that it should be scrapped and its model replicated within the existing system of schools and colleges.

Invited as a speaker at the launch of a report into the educational needs of 16- to 18-year-olds, Mr Laws said Mr Gove, who last February suggested in a Times column that the programme had failed, had “never liked” the UTC policy, but claimed Lord Baker, another former education secretary, had persuaded those above him that it had merit.

“It was a very rare example during his time as secretary of state of a policy being imposed on him, as a consequence of the prime minister

and the chancellor who were persuaded by Lord Baker. There are not many people who managed to do that during his time in education.”

Mr Laws said his concerns about UTCs related to their age range; most have struggled to recruit pupils at 14, and eight have closed as a result.

“My concern about this is you’re trying to inject a 14-to-18 solution into a system which isn’t 14-to-18, and is not one the government wishes to be 14-to-18,” he said.

“I think the difficulties of that are very obvious, and I would far rather we embedded some of the principles Lord Baker is trying to lead us towards, that seem to be on the whole sensible, in the existing system, and redesign that, which is far more likely to succeed, rather than creating lots of expensive institutions that don’t fit the rest of the education system.”

Lord Baker, who heads UTC advocacy charity the Baker Dearing Trust, said he was “surprised” Mr Laws had come out against the colleges and their age range, and argued that UTCs have “become an established part of the English education system and ministers accept their unique contribution”.

He accepted that recruitment at 14 had initially been difficult, but said numbers had increased by 21 per cent last year after councils were forced to write to parents of year 9 pupils to inform them of the existence of UTCs.

A new duty for schools to give alternative providers access to their pupils, dubbed the Baker Clause, will also help, he claimed, and UTC principals are already preparing visits.

He cautioned Mr Laws against “writing off UTCs”, and invited him to visit one of the institutions “so that he can appreciate the way that the life chances of thousands of students have been significantly improved”.

An investigation last month by FE Week revealed that almost all UTCs missed recruitment targets and were overpaid last year, leaving combined debts of over £11 million. The Education and Skills Funding Agency is trying to retrieve cash from 39 of 44 UTCs still open in 2016/17.

The EPI’s review will seek to “disentangle” problems surrounding UTCs.

“We plan to investigate the impact of UTCs with the aim of publishing a report in the summer,” it said “At this stage the work is in its very early stages and we haven’t yet finalised its scope.”

Last year, UTCs were described by Mr Gove as “the biggest institutional innovation in vocational education made by David Cameron’s government”, but he admitted that “twice as many UTCs are ‘inadequate’ as ‘outstanding’, according to Ofsted”.

He added: “UTC pupils have lower GCSE scores, make less progress academically and acquire fewer qualifications than their contemporaries in comprehensives.”

EDITORIAL



Invest and trust in Ofsted

This week the number of providers and employers able to directly tap into an annual £2.5 billion apprenticeship pot exceeded 2,000.

Everyone and anyone is being given a piece of the funding action, from Cambridge University, to Greggs, to one-man-band sole traders.

Regulating the quality of training in this proliferation of actors will be mission impossible for Ofsted.

But however hard monitoring and reporting on the apprenticeship delivery taking place across England is going to be, there needs to be a solid plan with substantial and additional resource.

Against a backdrop of public funding cuts, it is still vital that the Department for Education invests substantially in the inspectorate.

Failure to do so will be to fail to protect the apprenticeship brand along with any of the apprentices participating.

Nick Linford, Editor
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COMMENTS

Manchester Creative Studio will be 18th studio school to close

OK, I’m going to say it again.

We’ve spent an inordinate amount of money building, funding and shoring up these failed experiments. Money that could have been invested in the existing vocational delivery sector that can successfully deliver applied learning that enhances academic learning. Isn’t it time to stop looking elsewhere for a solution when we can utilise existing pre and post 16 provision to work in partnership, maximising the skills across the whole sector to deliver effective applied learning?

Noel Johnson

The 3m apprenticeship manifesto target slips further way – and now the AoC boss wants it scrapped

Just because you’re short on a target, does that mean you should scrap it?
I’m pretty sure that if we were above the target by the same margin, there would be no calls to scrap it...

Lurch

Warrington UTC enrages neighbouring schools by ‘poaching’ pupils

This is the result of introducing commercial competition into education.
No one should be surprised by this!
Be careful what you wish for...

Lurch

Over half of Learndirect’s 17,000 apprentices failed last year

Too big to fail? Clearly not

T Smith



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of Further Education

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As part of our attractive and unique remuneration package, the College can offer a range of financial support options for Principal accommodation.

Easton and Otley College is one of the UK's largest independent colleges specialising in land-based studies. Our priority is to offer all our students an inspiring and innovative learning environment. Focused on our two campuses in Norfolk and Suffolk we operate at the heart of the largest sector of one of the fastest growing regions in the UK. With over 4,000 students and a turnover of c£25m pa we want to extend our impact and influence across the region, and nationally, based as we are in one of the best places in the UK to live, work and learn.

We have been through a challenging period, but with a new Chair and a fully committed and engaged Board, we are demonstrating clear and decisive leadership in implementing a robust recovery plan with clear targets and timelines for growth.

As incoming Principal with a record of exceptional leadership qualities, you will help to drive recovery and growth, to realise our ambition to be a national exemplar in shaping the future of our sector, and to be a college of first choice for great professional careers.

You will bring an entrepreneurial approach to tackling internal and external challenges, together with an empathy and understanding of the College's mission and purpose. We are looking for exemplary candidates and are open to applications from the public and private sectors.

This is an exciting and career enhancing opportunity for an individual with an outstanding track record of leadership and management. You will bring the strategic skills to set out a bold vision for sustainability and future growth. Your commercial leadership skills will enable you to think creatively about new business opportunities and develop further the culture of robust and innovative thinking. Adept at managing external relationships, whilst providing strong and inspirational leadership internally, will require a candidate of integrity, intellect, impeccable judgement and charisma. Above all you must bring a commitment to the learning community of the east of England, driving standards of high quality education and life-long learning to the benefit of all; students are at the heart of all we do.

To find out more, please visit our dedicated microsite at www.eastonandotleyleadingtheway.com For an informal and confidential discussion, please contact our advising consultants at GatenbySanderson: **Paul Aristides** on 020 7426 3964 or **Jo Boardman** on 07834 030501.

Closing date is 12 February 2018.

Final interviews will be held on w/c 5 March 2018.

GatenbySanderson





city college
plymouth

WORK WELL - LIVE WELL

CHIEF EXECUTIVE & PRINCIPAL - Competitive Salary

City College Plymouth is a significant player in the economy, skills and employment arenas of the South West of England. As the only general FE college in the thriving city of Plymouth, the college is well positioned to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Following the announcement of our current Chief Executive and Principal to retire at the end of the academic year, we are looking for an exceptional individual to lead us into the next phase of our development.

Our next Chief Executive and Principal will drive and deliver strong outcomes across all aspects of the organisation whilst using their expert ambassadorial and stakeholder relationship skills to position the college to excel locally and regionally.

We have appointed FE Associates to support us in this significant appointment.

Interested parties are encouraged to contact Samantha.Bunn@fea.co.uk for an initial conversation.

Further details can be obtained from our microsite: <https://plymouthleadership.fea.co.uk>

Closing date: Wednesday 21st February 2018 at noon.

Interview dates: Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th March 2018.



Finance & Payroll Manager

Department: Shared Services/Finance
Report to: Managing Director /Financial Director
Manager: Managing Director
Salary: Negotiable

Job Role

Main point of contact for Directors regarding all aspects of budgeting, ensuring that management accounts and related information are readily available for audit. Main Duties involve managing pay roll administration, financial processing and ESFA accounting and Financial Audits. Contributing to SAR, QIP and Ofsted preparation/Inspection.

Key Performance Indicators

- Timely payments of Payroll & Invoices
- Queries on payroll
- Monthly reports identifying areas at risk for SLT
- Managing CPD
- Time Management
- Prioritising Workload

Qualifications/Experience

Professional Finance Qualification at Degree level, minimum of 2 years in FE sector financial role and knowledge of Maytas and/or similar systems.

Quality and Compliance Manager

Department: Quality
Report to: Managing Director/Training Director
Manager: Managing Director
Salary: Negotiable

Job Role

To ensure PTS LTD meets the relevant quality standards of the necessary/required standards demanded by Professional Bodies, Funders, ESFA, Ofsted and Learners. To ensure contract compliance is managed and rigorous. Contributing to SAR,QIP and Ofsted preparation/Inspection.

Key Performance Indicators

- Gaining new standards/awards to be identified/ agreed by SLT
- Maintain/ Renewal of current standards/awards
- Production of audit reports with action plans
- Prioritising workloads
- Manage your own self- development /Continuous Professional Development which includes webinars.

Qualifications/Experience

Degree Level in relevant subject area, minimum of 2 years working in the FE sector in a similar role and knowledge/experience of Maytas/etrack or similar systems.

Please send CV's to

Andrew@ptstrainingacademy.co.uk

or ring **07943215845** for further information.

<http://www.ptstrainingacademy.co.uk>



Cyfle unigryw

Prif Swyddog Gweithredol/Pennaeth

tua £120K

Allech chi arwain ac ysbrydoli yng Ngholeg Sir Benfro? Mae hwn yn gyfle gwych i lunio dyfodol y sefydliad bywiog hwn, yn dilyn ymddedioli ei Brif Weithredwr/Pennaeth.

Mae Coleg Sir Benfro yn ddarparwr addysg a hyfforddiant blaenllaw yng Nghymru ac wedi cael ei farnu'n 'dda' yn ddiweddar gyda rhagolygon 'rhagorol' ar gyfer gwella gan Estyn, mae'r Coleg yn chwilio am arweinydd ysbrydoledig a all barhau â'r daith i ragoriaeth a datblygu'i bortffolio gwasanaethau.

Mae'r Coleg yn gwasanaethu dros 12,000 o ddysgwyr a, thra bod ei brif gampws yn Hwlfordd, mae'r Coleg yn gweithredu ledled De Orllewin a De Ddwyrain Cymru, fel prif ddarparwr consortiwm dysgu seiliedig ar waith sy'n cynnwys 5 coleg arall yng Nghymru. Me'r Coleg yn ceisio datblygu'r ddarpariaeth hon ymhellach mewn ymateb i gyfeiriad Llywodraeth Cymru. Mae'r Coleg yn brif gyfrannwr i ddiwygio addysgol yn Sir Benfro ac agorodd Ganolfan Lefel A gwerth £7.0 miliwn ym mis Medi 2017.

Mae gan y Coleg statws categori A yn ariannol, mae ganddo drostiant o £26.0 miliwn ac mae ganddo bolisiau buddsoddi cryf. Gyda dros 500 o staff, mae buddsoddiad i ddatblygu diwylliant 'uchelgeisiol' wedi bod wrth wraidd gweithgaredd y Coleg yn y blynyddoedd diwethaf ac ar hyn o bryd mae gan y Coleg y cyfraddau llwyddiant uchaf o'r colegau Addysg Bellach cyffredinol yng Nghymru.

Yn uwch arweinydd profedig ac uchelgeisiol o'r sector Addysg a Sgiliau, rydych yn barod i arwain y Coleg trwy ei bennod nesaf. Bydd gennych brofiad rheoli perthynas, rhwydweithio a sgiliau datblygu masnachol yn ogystal â hanes profedig mewn cydweithio. Yn gyfnewid, mae'r Coleg yn cynnig pecyn cyflog cystadleuol. Disgwylir i ymgeiswyr ymrwmo i'r iaith Gymraeg a'r diwylliant Cymreig.

Mae Protocol yn falch o fod yn gweithio ar y cyfle cyffrous hwn ar ran Coleg Sir Benfro.

Am ragor o wybodaeth a phecyn cais, ewch i protocol.co.uk/pembrokeshire

Y dyddiad cau yw 9.00yb dydd Llun 12 Chwefror 2018 a chynhelir y broses gyfnewid ar 21 a 22 Mawrth 2018.

Protocol Excellence in FE

A unique opportunity

Principal / CEO

Salary - circa £120K

Could you lead and inspire at Pembrokeshire College? This is a fantastic opportunity to shape the future of this vibrant organisation, following the retirement of its Chief Executive/Principal.

Pembrokeshire College is a leading provider of education and training in Wales and having recently been judged as 'good' and having 'excellent' prospects for improvement by Estyn, the College seeks an inspirational leader who can continue its journey to excellence and develop its portfolio of services.

The College serves over 12,000 learners and, whilst its main campus is in Haverfordwest, the College operates throughout South West and South East Wales, as lead provider of a work based learning consortium involving 5 other colleges in Wales. The College is seeking to develop this provision further in response to Welsh Government direction. The College is a major contributor to educational reform in Pembrokeshire and opened a £7.0 million Advanced Level Centre in September 2017.

The College holds 'category A' status financially, has a turnover of £26.0 million and has strong investment policies. With over 500 staff, investment into the development of an 'aspirational' culture has been at the heart of College activity in recent years and the College currently has the highest success rates of all general FE colleges in Wales.

As an ambitious proven senior leader from the Education and Skills Sector, you will be ready to lead the College through its next chapter. You will have relationship management, networking and commercial development skills, as well as a proven track record in collaborative working. In return, the College offers a competitive salary package. Applicants are expected to have a commitment to the Welsh language and culture.

Protocol is pleased to be working on this exciting opportunity on behalf of Pembrokeshire College.

For further information and an application pack visit protocol.co.uk/pembrokeshire

Closing date: 9am on Monday 12th February 2018. The interview process will be held on 21st and 22nd March 2018.

www.protocol.co.uk/pembrokeshire | pembrokeshire@protocol.co.uk | David Beynon: 07970 042 334 | Ian Sackree: 07795 271 559



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.

Create Your Future

Waltham Forest College

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.



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joinjtl.com



NEWS

Save Wornington campaign claims total victory

PAUL OFFORD
@PAULOFFORD

A merger between two London colleges has been called off after direct intervention from the FE commissioner, part of the fallout of the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy.

Kensington and Chelsea College had been pressing ahead with plans to merge with Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College in the face of massive local opposition, who did not want the former's Wornington Road campus sold off.

But Richard Atkins personally told campaigners he had called it off, three days before the skills minister discussed the situation in the House of Commons at the end of last month.

Anne Milton said she had been "delighted to meet with campaigners".

"I would congratulate the FE commissioner for stepping in and having numerous meetings," she added. "I know he's anxious to make sure we get the right solution for this precious college, this valuable resource which has been around for many, many years."

Meg McDonald, a leading campaigner from the Save Wornington College group, which has been working with local residents battling for justice following the blaze last



Mary Curnock Cook

June, thanked thousands of people who helped stop the merger.

"It is definitely off and that's because of you, whether leafleting and fly posting, emailing the governors and principal, lobbying governors meetings in the cold, getting the petition signed, coming to meetings with your ideas, investigating legal matters, writing letters, speaking at meetings, you have been the core of this campaign," she said.

"They will now be looking into proper consultation with the community and other interested parties, speaking to the council to negotiate a better and longer lease for Wornington, and the finances."



Richard Atkins

Mr Atkins, who has not commented publicly on the case, was sent in by Ms Milton before Christmas to review the merger.

This was in part a result of fears among local people that the resulting super-college would have been more likely to close KCC's Wornington campus, which has traditionally been a popular place of learning for less affluent residents of London's richest borough.

It stands in the shadow of Grenfell Tower, in which 71 people died in a huge fire last summer.

Campaigners insisted that local facilities, including the Wornington campus, should be

preserved as "reparations".

The campus was recently sold under a lease-back deal for £25.3 million to the borough council, which then outlined plans for the site which would at best result in greatly reduced teaching space.

But Kim Taylor-Smith, who took over as deputy leader of the council in July and is lead member for Grenfell recovery, said before Christmas that he had listened to a huge number of complaints and indefinitely paused all redevelopment plans.

"We are really pleased that Mr Atkins reached the decision he has over the merger," said Edward Daffarn, a Save Wornington campaigner who escaped from the fire.

"But it is against a backdrop of sadness, as we know all of this government intervention wouldn't have happened if it hadn't been for all the loss of life at Grenfell, and the need they now feel to repay the community.

"It is now important that we secure the long term future of the Wornington campus, which cannot be done simply through the college securing a 10-year lease on the site from the council. No-one would know what would happen after the decade."

"The board will now be discussing the recommendations of the FE commissioner at its February meeting," said KCC's chair of governors, Mary Curnock Cook.



NOT TO BE MISSED

UPCOMING EVENTS

APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING AND SYSTEMS – ADVANCED

LONDON

DATE: 23 FEBRUARY 2018

LEEDS

DATE: 7 MARCH 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.

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PROFILE

JO MAHER

*Principal and CEO of Boston College*CATH MURRAY
@CATHMURRAY_

EXCLUSIVE

32-year-old Jo Maher was recently appointed principal and CEO of Lincolnshire's Boston College, so how is she coping with the pressure of such a high-profile job? FE Week went to find out.

When leading an institution of tens of thousands of students through a massive, systemic overhaul, there are a variety of attitudes one can take.

The stance adopted by the principal of Boston College reminds me of an elite sailor in an ocean race, watching the weather to predict the next squall, bringing her sails to optimal tension at the precise moment it hits.

"If they hold back the proliferation of apprenticeship standards to harmonise the T-levels behind them," she says, when I suggest the skills minister's attention might be divided between T-levels and apprenticeships, "then it's good to have a handle on both. Because the initial concept was this 20-per-cent difference..."

Firing her words fast and with precision – weaving talk of FE college strategy with the language of high-performance – it's not long before Jo Maher loses me. And since I get the feeling she's too generous to notice, I help us both out by professing an ardent interest in something more concrete: the trajectory that brought her to be principal of the Lincolnshire FE college, barely 10 years after graduating from university.

"I'd like to be judged on my competence, not my age," she declares. "For me, it's about building that credibility, based on my actions."

Ofsted gave her just that opportunity last November: as she was preparing to pack up for the Association of Colleges' annual conference in Birmingham, she got 'the call'. But the 32-year-old insists she wasn't fazed.

"I'm very calm in my style," she explains. "I've been through that many Ofsted inspections now, that having one eight weeks into post... my staff team were confident, calm and controlled."

The sports psychology graduate has been working in colleges since she was a student, initially as a sessional lecturer at Loughborough University and running their netball academy while studying for her masters. Such was her passion for the institution where she also did her undergraduate studies that she applied for a full-time job there before she was even qualified.

"The day I handed in my thesis, I started my full time contract the next day ... I've always been busy and had a lot of energy," she says – aware she isn't the norm.

In her capacity as a sports psychologist, she has supported Olympic athletes, professional golfers and rugby players, worked with the Premier League women's football club Crewe Alexandra and World Skills team GB, all the while working her way up steadily through the ranks of the college world.

"I was very passionate early on in my career that I wanted to go through every single level," she insists, "so I progressed naturally through."

Mahe attributes her incredible work ethic to this background in sports.

"I think my competitiveness within my career is because I had to retire from sport young," she admits, recalling an injury sustained at Loughborough, a stress fracture in her back. "I should still be playing football, really. I'm only 32, I should be still playing at the level I retired at."

The ex-club footballer's backstory is somehow mundane and remarkable at the same time.

At the age of seven, she used to jog two and half miles to get a lift to the stables on the weekend to earn herself free horse rides: "I've always been fit, I've always been into horses, and that was the work ethic; if you can muck out 12 horses at seven in the morning in minus two, you just develop it."

A love of horses – and animals in general – runs in the family; her mum joined the mounted police immediately after school, and she traces her lifelong obsession back to her grandad's work with shire horses on the milk floats in Liverpool. Her dad, also from a working class family in the centre of the port city, wasn't sporty, but she has a fond early memory of him helping her mum prepare for the fitness bleep tests, post-maternity, in a car park.

"Some WorldSkills disciplines are 16-hour competitions. It's brutal"

"He put the cones two metres wider so she thought it was really hard," she says. "And he knew on the day she'd breeze it."

After taking her GCSEs at a comprehensive in her home town of Widnes, near Liverpool, Maher took five full A-levels at a local sixth-form college. Desperate to get the two As and a B required for Loughborough University's prestigious sports science course, she took PE, "obviously", biology, which was required for the course, adding English literature and language as her strongest subject, and then to hedge her bets she threw in psychology and general studies, just to increase her chances of getting enough top grades.

She stayed at Loughborough for another nine years after graduation, progressing from sessional lecturer right the way through to head of department, during which time she taught "the whole suite of FE, higher education and apprenticeships". This was followed by two years as assistant principal at Reaseheath College, a specialist land-based college in Cheshire.

WorldSkills came calling in 2012, because of the work she was doing with an Olympic athlete, and her first global tournament was in Leipzig. Since Maher was the first psychologist used by team GB at WorldSkills, she found herself building a programme from scratch, including a whole series

"I'd like to be judged on my competence, not my age"

of boot camps to prepare the competitors both physically and psychologically.

"It doesn't matter if you're a welder or a beauty therapist. We're looking at high performance, how they cope under pressure."

While there was plenty that could be transferred from the world of elite sport, some challenges were intense in a different way: "If you're a 100-metre sprinter, you're performing five times potentially for 10 seconds. Some of these are 16-hour competitions. It's brutal."

Sustaining that over three or four days, psychologically, can be draining, and Maher accompanies the student competitors to the venues and is available for them throughout.

"I'm their 24/7 psychological support. If they ring me at three in the morning in my hotel room because they're having an anxiety attack, guess who's there?" she says.

Despite taking the top job at Boston, she still went to WorldSkills in Abu Dhabi last October as the team's practitioner psychologist. As well as an ethical commitment to the mission, she explains that after supporting the team for two years, "to withdraw three weeks before wouldn't be the right thing". She has donated the money from WorldSkills to a charitable fund, supporting learners from her college with aspirations – whether they need travel to an international sports competition or simply access to a food bank.

A sports evangelist, she points out that "if physical activity was bottled as a tablet and people just had to take it, it would be bigger than antidepressants". The trick is getting people to



Jo with football referee Howard Webb



Jo with her dog, Dolly



Jo with Peter Lauener and Theo Paphitis at WorldSkills

make the lifestyle change before the platform is burning, which is why she's big on wellbeing initiatives, such as coffee-and-chat breaks, or "getting staff to own physical activity and invite their peers along, because it builds self-efficacy".

Having attended university with elite athletes and future England football players, Maher doesn't seem to question the premise that one should aim for excellence in every aspect of life.

"I've come out of the world of sport," she says, "Olympic-standard, where we talk about marginal gains and one-percents, and we want reflective practitioners who are always aspiring to get that extra second."

She applies the same philosophy to her college, which, despite having just received its second 'good' Ofsted rating, she insists is "really on that journey to 'outstanding'".

It is not uncommon for leaders of educational establishments to admit, when pressed on whether there is really a difference between 'good' and 'outstanding', that the distinction is moot, inspectors' judgments are unreliable, there's unconscious bias, and it's always going to be something of a fluke whether you get a grade two or one.

But the idea doesn't seem to compute: "My clear message to the staff is that if we have no external quality-assurance tomorrow, what does excellence and high performance look like for Boston?" she responds. "If you're doing a good job, any auditor, any inspector can come in on any day, because that should be the level that you are performing at. And I really believe in the staff team to do that."

It's a personal thing

Best work trip

It has to be Turkmenistan. We went with Loughborough University to consult on building their capacity to host the Asian indoor martial arts games. I went in as a sport educationalist to see how they would train their coaches, infrastructure and staff to improve in the world rankings.

Best memory of a sports tour

Playing netball against the Trinidad and Tobago under-21 national team in Barbados. I dislocated my shoulder, put it back in my socket and carried on, but it was an unbelievable experience. We did yoga on the beach every morning.

Ideal gift

An experience. Either to a different country – I love travelling – or to a fine dining restaurant, but I don't really like opening things.

Favourite book

Sue Grafton's alphabet crime series. She wrote the books all the way up to Y, then she died this Christmas – I was gutted.

What motto would you like your staff to see every morning?

Wake up every morning with energy, enthusiasm and resilience.

EXPERTS



MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

Anne Milton,
Minister for skills and apprenticeships

The non-levy procurement was as fair as we could have made it

Every month, Anne Milton, the minister in charge of skills and apprenticeships, will write a column for FE Week, giving her perspective on the issues facing the sector. For her first outing, she tackles the non-levy procurement exercise

As a government we have made significant changes to the way our apprenticeship system will work – placing quality at the heart of this programme, with employers centre-stage. Our wider reforms have introduced a number of important changes, which will naturally present challenges for businesses, so this is a chance for me to explain some of those.

I want to use my first column to talk about the non-levy procurement process, which was undertaken to fund organisations who can provide training to smaller businesses. This has meant providers have faced important changes to the way they receive funding before the apprenticeship service becomes the norm for every employer in 2019.

The procurement exercise was not a policy choice, but as a contracting authority we were under a legal obligation to run it in order to comply with the EU's Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

“ Tender exercises like this are always tough, and I've been open about these challenges

Tender exercises like this are always tough, and I've been open about these challenges after we had to restart it when we saw that the outcomes would not have delivered our goals of stability and continuity. Throughout this process, we have wanted to be careful, to take the time to get this right for providers, apprentices and employers. I know it won't have been an easy time for many.

So that we can help keep the supply of training as stable as possible, we introduced a number of elements. This included capping the amount of funding

for which different providers could bid, and a minimum contract award of £200,000 to make sure all contracts awarded would be financially viable. That naturally has led to disappointment from some, and I understand the challenges this led to for those who did not win contracts.

“ I understand the challenges the £200,000 minimum led to for those who did not win contracts

We wanted all providers to do their best and published evaluation and scoring criteria to help them in this process. Unfortunately, this was still a competition and not every bid – and we received over 1,000 of them – could be successful in such a highly competitive bidding process. We were mindful of the uncertainty, and took steps to extend the contracts of all current providers that were unsuccessful by a further three months. Of course, we will also make sure all existing apprenticeships continue to be funded until they are completed.

This procurement has been all about ensuring and increasing access to apprenticeship training for small- and medium-sized employers. We are encouraging them to take on apprentices and to take advantage of support available, including the joint investment of 90 per cent of training and assessment costs for apprenticeships provided by the government.

The awards have maintained the same proportion of funding across each of the nine regions as is currently delivered, and allow providers to meet the demand across all of the sectors apprenticeships currently support. We have also enabled more new providers and employers to enter the market, while still supporting the existing supply where we could; approximately 95 per cent of the funding awarded will be to providers currently delivering apprenticeships.



SAM PARRETT

Principal and CEO,
London South East Colleges

Progress 8 is making a mockery of excellent vocational education

The government's wrong-headed performance measures do not work for 14-to-16 provision, and cannot give vocational learning the credit it deserves, writes Sam Parrett

Over two years ago, I wrote to what was then the EFA to express my concerns around the new Progress 8 performance measures and how they would be applied to our cohort of learners at 14 to 16.

Sadly these worries were not unfounded, as we have seen with the publication of the government's latest school league tables. FE colleges offering 14-to-16 provision are languishing at the bottom, ranked as underperforming. This is disappointing and an unfair reflection of the very hard work done by students and staff across the FE sector.

Even more disappointing is the fact that we and others were assured that this would not happen. It is yet another reputational blow for an embattled sector which constantly has to fight for survival.

Progress 8 is based on a five-year secondary school model, in which pupils start at the end of key stage 2 and their progress is measured during KS3 and KS4. This isn't how schooling works for those attending 14-to-16 provision at FE Colleges, as they typically join at the beginning of KS4.

The government's own press release detailing GCSE results for 2016/17 clearly states that this fundamental difference between schools and colleges should be “taken into account when comparing [FE colleges'] results with those schools that start educating their pupils from the beginning of key stage 3”.

The DfE should surely admit that putting schools and colleges together in the same league tables is nonsensical and unfair. Apples are being compared to oranges and the real story behind the numbers is not being told.

With only 18 FE colleges in the country offering this unique alternative to mainstream school, the profile of their students will of course be different. Any student moving to college for the start of year 10 will usually be doing so due to interrupted schooling, permanent exclusion or disengagement from school.

Yet despite these difficult situations, many thrive in a college environment, achieving well and progressing onto level two and three courses or into apprenticeships. Most importantly they are not becoming NEET

(of which they are at high risk) and have re-engaged with education.

In fact, every single student in our own year 11 cohort (61 in total) progressed successfully into employment, further education or training. Ninety-nine per cent achieved an English qualification and 97 per cent a maths qualification alongside their vocational programme. Is this really what “underperforming” looks like?

However, rather than being able to celebrate this success, our board had to take the decision last year to close our 14-to-16 provision. Even though these young people make up less than one per cent of our total student community, the effect of these league tables on the reputation of our wider college is a risk we can't afford to take.

This is a travesty for young people in Bromley who wanted and indeed needed a technical alternative to mainstream school. Being treated as an adult and focusing on a particular interest or talent made a huge difference to these children – and now they have little choice but to struggle on in an environment that doesn't suit them or to drop out and become NEET.

We are not alone in our disappointment and I am sure others will sadly have to follow suit.

“ Is this really what ‘underperforming’ looks like?

It is encouraging to see that the FE community, headed up by the AoC, has come out fighting, making a case for alternative accountability measures. They highlight the unique student profile that makes up 14-to-16 provision, the challenges faced and the very different measures of success that need to be considered.

I find it hard to understand why politicians and policymakers are failing to understand this issue. I would like to see DfE officials visiting 14-to-16 FE colleges, to observe the good work and devise less brutal ways of judging this innovative provision.

Ultimately the government must ensure that vocational learning – and the success it brings – is represented fairly and given the credit it absolutely deserves.

EXPERTS

Unless there's the space for young people to transfer the skills they learn onto another route, we risk locking them into careers they no longer want to follow, writes Julie Hyde

With just under a week to go until the Institute for Apprenticeships closes its consultation on the occupational maps for the new T-levels, there are many problems that need to be addressed. Some are basic errors and easy to fix, but others are larger structural problems requiring thought, which I hope organisations across the sector will highlight in their responses, and decision-makers will recognise.

The maps set out the skilled occupations in the 15 new vocational education routes. Each map has pathways for possible career progression, and clusters that group together occupations with similar training requirements: shared skills, knowledge or behaviours. The core content of T-levels will be based on the chosen route and pathway, with more specialised content based on the specific occupation.

These maps will form the basis for a "coherent curriculum" and are designed to offer clear and credible routes into employment. However, as they stand, they demonstrate a lack of understanding of the occupations they cover, and the realities for young people making decisions about future careers.

It is vital that the new qualifications have flexibility built in, and are portable. This is particularly evident in our specialist areas:



**JULIE
HYDE**

Associate director, CACHE

Without more flexibility in T-levels, learners will slip through the cracks

education and childcare, and health and social care. In the current system, many learners start down one of these routes and end up choosing a career in another. Crucially, they can do so without having to start from scratch.

The routes do not divide as neatly in practice as they will in the new system. Occupations in these sectors require many of the same skills and attract similar personalities and learners, who know they want to work in a caring profession, but may not know exactly where their strengths and interests lie.

If the qualifications are not portable from day one, we risk closing options off – and choices made at 16 could limit career options long term. We are in danger of oversimplifying the system and forcing learners to specialise too early on.

This is unlikely to be a recipe for success.

How many of us are in exactly the job that we thought we would end up in at 16? Can we really expect a 16-year-old who has an interest in working in the care sector to know confidently that they want to work with adults in a social care setting until they have experienced the work first-hand? We know that many of our learners currently move freely between childcare, education, health, and adult social care, as their interests and priorities change. This is important to ensure that they find a career that suits them and gives them job satisfaction – which in turn is vital to delivering the skilled, motivated workforce that these sectors require.

Under the current proposals, the social care route would be apprenticeship only, arguably a mistake. Many of the qualifications that learners currently take to pursue occupations within the route are

delivered successfully in classroom settings and there is no reason that a credible T-level route cannot be created – either as a distinct path or within the health and science route. After all, integrating health and social care is also a government priority, and the workforce is crucial to delivering this shift and will need transferable skills to make it work.

This would also allow learners to choose

“**How many of us are in exactly the job that we thought we would end up in at 16?**”

the mode of learning that suits them best, ensuring that they have a better chance of completing the qualification and succeeding.

If the new system does not work for learners in practice, it will ultimately fail to deliver for employers. It is vital that decision-makers ensure that learners' needs and experiences are taken into account. We need the system to be flexible enough to allow young people to find the right path, otherwise some will fall through the cracks, and the government's ambition to create world-class vocational education will flounder.

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CAMPUS ROUND-UP *with Samantha King*



Emma Dodds on set with Johnny Vegas

Not here to 'make up' the numbers

Two aspiring makeup artists have had work experience on a new comedy series starring Jonny Vegas, Mackenzie Crook and Emma Thompson.

Middlebrough College makeup artistry students Aimie Carr, 19, and Emma Dodds, 17, spent several days working on the set of the new production, which has not yet been revealed to the public, honing the skills acquired on their level three advanced technical diploma.

The pair also experienced the challenges of makeup continuity and a demanding filming schedule.

Following their placement, Benidorm star

Johnny Vegas has requested their skills for another shoot taking place in the north-east.

"It's very easy for students to get star struck in situations like this, particularly as the crew work, eat lunch and relax with the cast," said Heather Ferguson, the college's hair and media makeup course leader who organised the placement. "This didn't phase Aimie and Emma, and they showed total professionalism at all times."

Emma added: "It was a fantastic experience to be able to work on a real production, and it's confirmed to me that a career in media makeup is exciting and rewarding."

Here to Ghana information



Delegates visit the carpentry workshop

Delegates from the Ghanaian Ministry of Education and National Teaching Council visited New City College's Hackney campus to learn more about vocational education.

The visit was organised by the British Council to aid the Ghanaian government in their drive to develop technical and vocational education in the country.

As part of the trip, the guests toured the campus, observed carpentry and hospitality training sessions, and took part in a round table with college managers, where they discussed how staff were recruited and

trained, and the benefit of vocational training to students.

"We were delighted to welcome our visitors to the campus, and to share our experiences with the key people who will be able to impact the development of skills training and education in Ghana," said Richard Surtees, New City College's director of international.

"We were impressed with what we have seen and hope that through this visit we can improve technical and vocational educational training in Ghana," added Enoch Cobbinah, the director of Ghana's Ministry of Education.

Jungle murals bring (X)-rays of hope



Students with their masterpiece

New animal murals now festoon the walls of a hospital's radiography department to help cheer up children who have to go in for X-rays.

Painted by Barnet and Southgate College's level three art and design students, the two large murals depicting colourful jungle scenes are on display at Barnet Hospital, and formed part of a work experience module to come up with a creative distraction for patients.

The paintings took two weeks to complete, and pupils from nearby Brunswick Park Primary School raised £250 through cake sales and a school tuck shop to pay for paints and other materials.

"It has been a great experience working



Aoife Drummond and her panda

on the mural," said 18-year-old student Aoife Drummond, who painted the panda in the mural. "It's lovely to hear the positive comments from staff and the school children."

"We are very grateful for their huge commitment," added Dr Steve Shaw, chief executive of Barnet Hospital. "It will make the experience at hospital a hundred times better for the children who will need to come here for their X-rays."



Free-range fashion

Coming home to roost in style

Bald hens at Reaseheath College are keeping warm with jumpers knitted for them by learners.

The 12 former battery hens had never been outside before and had poor feathering as a result, so animal behaviour students pulled together to knit the woolly outfits to keep them warm in the cold weather.

Since joining the college, the hens have already started to grow new feathers, and students are closely monitoring their progress and behaviour as they transition to free-range hens at the college's onsite zoo.

The hens are just over a year old, and were adopted by the college from the British Hen Welfare Trust, a rehoming charity

for commercial laying hens destined for slaughter.

"The hens responded very quickly by showing natural behaviour such as perching and scratching the ground, and will hopefully go on to enjoy long and happy lives with us," said Lauren Lane, head keeper at the college.

"It looks like they're being thoroughly spoilt which is the kind of life we want for all our ex-battery hens," added Francesca Taffs, communications officer for the British Hen Welfare Trust. "While the jumpers are not something we would generally recommend for rehoming use, it's clear these little ladies are being monitored and cared for closely."

CAMPUS ROUND-UP *with Samantha King*FEATURED
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National college takes pole position at motorsport awards

The National College for Motorsport (NC4M) has been recognised for its services to the motorsport industry, reports Samantha King.

The college, which was established in 2003, was presented the MIA Service to Industry Award at the Motorsport Industry Association's Business Excellence Awards in January, attended by representatives from across the motor industry, including people from Bentley, British Aerospace and Porsche.

Categories at the awards included the 'teamwork award', 'technology and innovation award' and 'business of the year with annual sales over £5 million award'. Winners in each category were voted for by industry professionals and MIA members.

The NC4M was up against Ginetta, a specialist builder of racing and sports cars, the service charity Mission Motorsport and the Warwick Manufacturing Group in the 'service to the industry' category, and was the only educational establishment to receive an award at the event.

The college won for its performance in



In the NC4M workshop



Jim Harrod, the college's motorsport manager

training, guiding young people into apprenticeships as race mechanics,

and its "dedication to the future of motorsport", a spokesperson for MIA said.

"The MIA represents all aspects of the industry at the highest level so it is especially nice for them to recognise our work," said Chris Weller, a motorsport apprenticeship assessor at NC4M, who accepted the award on behalf of the college.

"The majority of our students go onto to

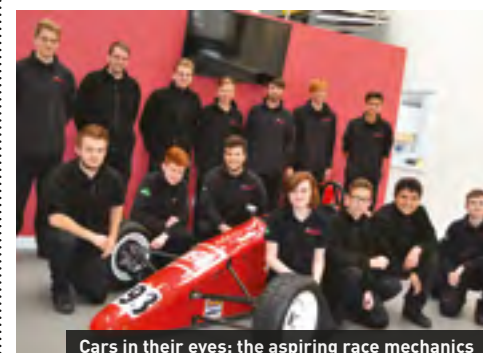
work within the industry, some working in Formula One and in teams based all over the world.

"We provide specialist training and the feedback we receive from the industry is that we get it right – they want to employ our students."

Based at the Silverstone Circuit, the college is part of Tresham College and the Bedford College Group, and was the first college in the UK to achieve the Motorsport Academy employer recognition scheme charter mark for training race mechanics.



Working on Lewis Hamilton's car



Cars in their eyes: the aspiring race mechanics

Do you want to be in Campus Round-up?

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Louise Harris

Managing director, Alder Training

Start date December 2017

Previous job

Operations director, Your Housing Group

Interesting fact

Louise is an identical twin, which she says can come in handy at times. She won't reveal why.



Altaf Hussain

Principal, Luton Sixth Form College

Start date September 2018

Previous job

Vice-principal for students and quality, Luton Sixth Form College

Interesting fact

One of Altaf's earliest childhood memories is washing his Action Man and hanging him out to dry on the washing line. He can still vividly see him clinging on for dear life as the wind blew.



Fay Gibbin

CEO, BB Training Academy

Start date January 2018

Previous job

Training manager, BB Training Academy

Interesting fact

As a new year's resolution, Fay began learning to ski, and hopes by next year she'll be able to keep up with her children on the slopes.



Alison Munro

Chair, the National College for High Speed Rail

Start date November 2017

Previous job

Advisor to HS2 and non-executive director, Ofwat (ongoing)

Interesting fact

Alison previously led the strategy and implementation plans for a £6 billion programme for advanced management of motorways, working for the Department for Transport.



Seb Schmoller

Chair of governors, the Sheffield College

Start date January 2018

Previous job

Chief executive, Association for Learning Technology

Interesting fact

Seb is an avid Nordic ski-tourer and cyclist, previously winning a Brompton world championship team event in 2010.

Movers & Shakers

...

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new and who's leaving

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FE Week Sudoku challenge

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

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

Solutions:
Next edition

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

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