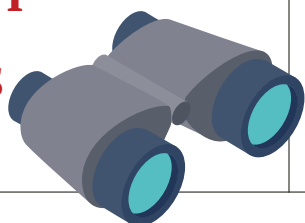


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# FE WEEK

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## NCG AND ME

**Exclusive:** In a wide-ranging interview ahead of a damning new Ofsted report, the chair admits:

**'Standards are not as high as we want them to be'**

**'There's no point growing and growing and growing if we are not delivering on standards'**

**'The group chief executive has done an excellent job'**

BILLY CAMDEN [BILLY@FEWEEK.CO.UK](mailto:BILLY@FEWEEK.CO.UK)

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# Metro mayors demand control over unspent levy money

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The metro mayors overseeing the devolution of the skills budget have joined forces to demand access to apprenticeship levy cash that employers fail to spend.

The devolved adult education budget will come into effect from 2019/20.

In a joint statement, they insisted that with Brexit approaching it is more important than ever to ensure local workers have the right skills.

“We recognise the government’s efforts to reform the skills system and applaud its ambition to see three million apprenticeships by 2020,” they wrote. “However, the reality is that the number of apprenticeship starts has dropped sharply.

“With that in mind, we call on the government to give us the flexibility we need to address these issues, specifically by granting city regions control of the apprenticeship levy funding which levy-payers do not spend, and by further



devolving control of 16-to-19 skills policy.

“We also call on the government to provide additional funding for us to ensure that there are enough quality providers in our city regions, and to drive the quality of apprenticeships.”

Large employers have been forced to pay the levy since it was launched last year.

The money goes into a pot which they have two years to claim back to spend on apprenticeship training, but concern is growing that many will not be able to spend this in time.

London’s mayor wants even more powers over apprenticeships funding and devolution powers.

“In London, I want to go even further, and for London’s whole contribution to the apprenticeship levy to be ring-fenced and devolved to spend on meeting the capital’s complex skills needs,” said Sadiq Khan.

FE Week revealed last month that Mr Khan plans to top-slice less than one per cent of London’s £311 million AEB allocation to pay around 50 people to administrate it.

It emerged last week that employers have used just 10 per cent of their levy funds in 12 months after it was introduced.

The education minister Lord Agnew admitted to Parliament that between May last year and the end of this April, levy-paying employers “drew down £207

million from their apprenticeship service accounts for new starts”.

This amounts to just a tenth of the ring-fenced budget set by the government “regardless of how much levy receipts are each year”.

The government had hoped the levy would force more employers to invest in training, and help it hit its manifesto target of three million apprenticeship starts by 2020.

But starts have actually fallen since its launch: it emerged today that apprenticeship starts for March are down 52 per cent compared with the same period in 2017.

The directly-elected regional mayors met in Liverpool to back the joint statement and discuss their devolution plans.

It is understood that taking part were Andy Street representing the West Midlands, Tim Bowles for the west of England, Andy Burnham for Greater Manchester, Sadiq Khan of London, Ben Houchen for Tees Valley, and Steve Rotherham for Liverpool.

James Palmer of Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and Dan Jarvis for Sheffield were unable to attend, but signed the statement.

Mr Burnham wants more powers over apprenticeships and the incoming T-levels.

“Further devolution to allow a less fragmented post-16 skills system with clear and attractive choices for young people, including apprenticeships and T-levels, would go a long way to connecting residents and businesses with the growth of Greater Manchester,” he said.

“Our reforms to the apprenticeship system are about increasing the number of quality apprenticeships in this country to give people and businesses the skills they need to thrive,” said skills minister Anne Milton.

“To do this we have put employers at the heart of designing the new apprenticeship standards.

“Levy funding is already quite rightly fully devolved to employers – giving them direct control so they can invest in high quality training, to suit the needs of their business.”

## It’s an ‘outstanding’ Ofsted result for Redbridge Institute of Adult Education

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A local authority provider has been rated ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted for the first time since 2015.

Redbridge Institute of Adult Education has received top marks in all headline fields.

The report was full of praise for the organisation, which teaches at a main adult education campus in Gants Hill and 47 other community settings in the east London borough of Redbridge.

“Teachers have extremely high expectations of their learners, their enthusiasm to pass on their knowledge to learners is infectious and lessons are fun,” inspectors wrote.

Leaders and managers also have a “clear and accurate understanding of the quality of provision”, and teachers promote English and maths skills “particularly well”.

According to Ofsted statistics, there are 136 local authority providers and just three have grade one ratings: Oldham metropolitan borough council, Wolverhampton adult education service and Kirklees council adult and community learning.

Oldham was most recently inspected, retaining its grade one at an inspection in November 2015.

The quality of learning support for learners at Redbridge Institute who need extra help and support is “excellent”.

“Teachers accurately identify the starting points of learners, both on accredited and community learning courses,” inspectors added. “They provide frequent and verbal and written feedback to learners.”

The institute provides community learning from entry level to level four for learners drawn predominantly from Redbridge. It taught over 2,400 learners last year, and most study at up to level two.

“This result really puts Redbridge on the map and recognises the commitment, support and expertise of all our staff who provide the innovative and inclusive provision which enables our very diverse range of learners to thrive and succeed,” said Joni Cunningham, the principal.

Dr Sue Pember, who leads adult and community learning providers and their representative body, HOLEX, said her members were “very pleased and excited” that an adult community learning provider had been recognised as outstanding in all areas.

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# News

## Merger partner found for FE college incorporated just four years ago

**BILLY CAMDEN**  
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An FE college incorporated in 2014 has found a merger partner, after the FE commissioner decreed it would no longer be sustainable as a standalone institution.

Prospects College of Advanced Technology plans to join forces with South Essex College of Further and Higher Education.

It only converted from an independent training provider to college status four years ago, becoming the first college to be instituted in 20 years.

Its brand will still be “retained” with further investment going towards developing its headquarters in Basildon, Essex.

In an FE commissioner report published last month, Richard Atkins revealed the extent of PROCAT’s troubled finances.

Matters were so bad that he warned it was “extremely unlikely to be able to deal with its financial challenges alone” and recommended the college merge by the end of 2018.

PROCAT’s chair David Sherlock described the new partnership as an “exciting merger”.

“Our dream has been to create a technical university for Basildon,” he said. “To do that we need larger scale as well as excellence.”

The merger process in itself still has a number of stages to complete, before seeking the approval of the education secretary later this year. The merger will formally start in the new year.

“Our decision to merge with PROCAT has been underpinned by our shared commitment in providing technical training opportunities up to degree level in Basildon,” said SEC’s principal Angela O’Donoghue.

PROCAT, rated ‘good’ by Ofsted, has around 2,000 learners, while South Essex, also rated ‘good’, has over 11,500.

The commissioner’s report noted a “very small” turnover of £9 million, around three times less than the average for FE colleges in England, and said it was “difficult to envisage the college, at this size, being able to invest in sufficient high-quality people”.

It was issued a financial notice to improve in February after being assessed to have “inadequate financial health by ESFA following a review of the college’s latest outturn figures for 2016/17 and the revised budget for 2017/18 and associated information”.

## Richard Atkins is now recruiting new national leaders of governance

**JUDE BURKE**  
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The FE commissioner is on the hunt for recruits to join his army of national leaders of governance.

Serving governors or clerks from grade one or two colleges can apply for the role, which pays £300 a day for an estimated 50 days’ work a year.

They will provide mentoring and support to governors at other colleges identified as needing extra help.

“We know governors need development,” Richard Atkins told FE Week. “I’m really looking forward to working with a group of experienced governors, who might be chairs, governors, or clerks, and deploying them to colleges that would benefit from that kind of focused support.”

The closing date for applications is July 13, and he aims to have a small team assembled by October.

Known as NLGs, they will work with colleges rated grade three or four that have been identified as needing governance support following a “diagnostic assessment” or full intervention carried out by the FE commissioner and his team.

Areas they could work on include diagnosing and reviewing governance improvement needs, and helping the board to develop an improvement plan, along with other support, advice, coaching and mentoring.

NLGs must be serving chairs, governors or clerks from a college rated ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ both for overall effectiveness and for leadership and management at its most recent Ofsted inspection. The college can’t be subject to current commissioner intervention.

Those interested in applying must be able to show experience in three main areas: supporting college improvement, building capacity within the college board of governors, and coaching and



Richard Atkins

mentoring.

A previous NLG programme was run until March this year by the Association of Colleges, on behalf of the Education and Training Foundation, after which the skills minister Anne Milton brought it back into the Department for Education under Mr Atkins.

This happened “because we want to link the smaller number of NLGs to colleges that require or are asking us for specific help”, he said.

“We definitely want to target it more.” The programme is one of a number of measures the FE commissioner and his team now use to support colleges before they fail.

It extends the “peer-to-peer approach” taken by the National Leaders of FE programme. These are serving principals or chief executives of ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’, who also work

with struggling colleges to support them to improve.

Alongside these two programmes, weaker colleges can apply for cash from the strategic college improvement fund to pay for a tailored package of support.

“My overall aim here is to try and avoid the catastrophe we’re seeing at the moment at one or two colleges,” he said.

“If we’d caught some of these colleges earlier, put in an NLFE or an NLG, and they got a SCIF and we supported them, while they might have been in a bit of trouble they might not have ended up in such a bad way,” Mr Atkins said.

The NLG programme is part of wider plans by the DfE to strengthen college governance, more details of which are set to be announced later this year.

Applications should be sent to FE.leaders@education.gov.uk by July 13.

## AELP leaps to defence of level two apprenticeships

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Low-level apprenticeships should not be rubbishised by “commentators and policy makers”, the Association of Employment and Learning Providers has claimed in a new report.

The body wants ministers to use government spending and post-18 education reviews as an opportunity to “reverse the sharp fall in level two apprenticeships since May 2017”.

The apprenticeship levy is encouraging large employers to “prioritise higher and degree-level apprenticeships over intermediate levels”, it claims in a paper that hits out at people who believe level two is “not a proper apprenticeship”.

AELP’s boss Mark Dawe said it is “extraordinary” how many government figures “don’t appreciate how significant level two attainment is for both the economy and the large proportion of young people who leave school without it”.

“The knowledge, skills and behaviours defined at level two are some of the most

transformational in the apprenticeship suite of standards,” the paper states, and these are “vital starting points for the young, the inexperienced and the disadvantaged”.

AELP’s report takes aim at, among others, Tom Richmond, a former senior advisor to two skills ministers who now works for the Reform think-tank, who has been highly critical of many level two apprenticeships.

“If all apprenticeships are high-quality at level two, then we would expect to see the numbers increase, because it would be a genuinely attractive option for young people,” said the former advisor to Nick Boles and Matt Hancock.

“It is disappointing to see AELP refuse to acknowledge that some level two ‘apprenticeships’ are nothing more than low-skill, low-wage roles that have been rebadged as an apprenticeship to attract government funding.”

Reform strongly supports more apprenticeships in the service sector, but “too many level two programmes fall well short of international standards and simply would not be recognised as apprenticeships in other countries because they offer so little training”.

AELP believes government intervention is necessary because “the market alone will not incentivise” a reversal.

The proportion of level two apprenticeship starts has fallen below 50 per cent for the first time, according to exclusive FE Week analysis. It has dropped from a high of 65 per cent in 2013/14 (see table). The proportion of apprentices aged 25 has fallen below 30 per cent, from a high of 42 per cent last year.

Mr Dawe’s counterpart at Association of Colleges, David Hughes, said the AELP paper had asked “searching questions” about level two apprenticeships and agreed “there are some sectors where numbers have dropped significantly”.

“We have urged the government to refocus attention on its own definition of an apprenticeship as being for new job entrants,” he said.

Mr Hughes has previously suggested that apprenticeships should start at level three.

“Where young people start a level two apprenticeship, the aim should be to get them to level three at the minimum,” he said.



Mark Dawe

“Level two apprenticeships are helping people to train and progress in their careers,” said apprenticeships minister Anne Milton. “In fact, we have seen nearly 174,000 starts on apprenticeships at levels two and three in first half of 2017/18.”

She wants to “improve the quality of apprenticeships across the board”, by replacing old-style frameworks with new employer-led standards “from level two right up to degree or masters level”.

The Institute for Apprenticeships also weighed in, and claimed it supports “the development of all high-quality apprenticeships at levels two to eight”.

“The Institute sees high-quality apprenticeships as crucial routes in helping young people reach their potential, providing excellent career development, as well as retraining opportunities later in life,” it said in a statement.

# Now the National Audit Office is sniffing around T-levels

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T-levels will be watched for “potential losses and fruitless payments” according to the comptroller-general at the National Audit Office.

Sir Amyas Morse has turned his eye towards the new post-16 technical qualifications after a rare ministerial direction published last month.

The education secretary Damian Hinds refused to delay the initial 2020 rollout of the upcoming technical qualifications despite a request from his permanent secretary, Jonathan Slater.

The NAO is automatically informed of all ministerial directions, and it advises the chair of Public Accounts Committee on whether action is necessary.

Sir Amyas wrote to PAC chair Meg Hillier on June 7, and she has told FE Week her committee is planning on grilling Mr Slater about the issue in two

weeks’ time.

In his letter, the comptroller-general said he had “no concerns at present” that the department is using public funds “irregularly” in delivering T-levels.

But he will “monitor future spending and consider the potential for losses and fruitless payments arising from T-levels as part of my audits of the department”.

“I have asked my staff to discuss with department officials the reasons for the permanent secretary seeking the ministerial direction, and the plans and risk management arrangements in place to introduce T-levels from 2020,” he added.

“I will then be in a position to decide whether I should undertake any further work on this now.”

Sir Amyas also informed Ms Hillier that should she “wish to ask Jonathan Slater about this matter, he will next appear before the committee on 25 June to give evidence on Ofsted’s

inspection of schools”.

Ms Hillier confirmed she would be present to quiz him, in his role as the DfE’s most senior civil servant.

“There are certainly a lot of concerns over the viability and potential for value for money of T-levels,” she said. “They are a nice idea with young people in industry from the beginning, like a super-duper apprenticeship with more education than work, but it is going to be practically quite challenging.”

She added that there is currently no planned PAC inquiry into T-levels but that could change “depending on what the permanent secretary says”.

Ministerial directions are formal instructions from ministers telling their department to proceed with a spending proposal, despite an objection from their permanent secretary.

The DfE published Mr Hinds’ direction on May 24.

“As things stand today, it will clearly be very challenging to ensure that the first three T-levels are ready to

be taught from 2020 and beyond to a consistently high standard,” wrote Mr Slater a week before.

As the DfE’s accounting officer, he is required to “consider the regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility of public spending”.

“If these were the only considerations, you are aware that I would advise deferring the start date to 2021 in order to mitigate the feasibility and consequential value for money risks.”

Despite these concerns, Mr Hinds insisted he would be sticking to the 2020 start date for the first three T-levels, claiming that none of the advice he had received “has indicated that teaching from 2020 cannot be achieved”.

T-levels have been designed as match for A-levels.

They were originally intended to begin in 2019, but in July last year the skills minister Anne Milton announced they had been put back to 2020.



Sir Amyas Morse

A subsequent announcement in October revealed that pathways in just three subject areas would go live in the first year, with the remaining subject routes launched by 2022.

But the full roll-out of T-levels has now been delayed until September 2023 after concerns were raised about the planned pace of the scheme, particularly by the Confederation of British Industry.

## March apprenticeship starts fall 52 per cent

JUDE BURKE

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Apprenticeship starts in March were down 52 per cent compared with the same period in 2017.

There have been 23,900 starts recorded so far in March 2018, compared with 50,000 in March 2017 according to the Education and Skills Funding Agency’s monthly apprenticeship statistics update.

Overall starts for the year to date stand at 261,200, compared with 362,400 for the same period in 2016/17 – a fall of 28 per cent.

That means the government is now 230,300 or 17 per cent off the necessary trajectory to achieve its target of three million by 2020.

The government is also on the defensive over the apprenticeship levy.

An open letter signed by skills minister Anne Milton, Institute for Apprenticeships boss Sir Gerry Berragan and dozens of senior figures from businesses and other organisations urged the sector to “support employers in making use of the levy”.

“We believe that the apprenticeship levy gives employers a real opportunity to invest in training, bringing the well-recognised enthusiasm and new ideas of apprentices to their business,” they said.

Other signatories include Euan Blair, the son of former prime minister Tony Blair and co-founder of apprenticeship agency WhiteHat, and leaders from businesses including Airbus, Barclays, Siemens and Aston Martin.

Mark Dawe, the boss of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said he understood why the skills minister had gone on the defensive – and that he “strongly supports” the levy.

“With the government showing no intention of abandoning its three million target, start numbers are now so far behind the curve, action has to be taken now to reverse the falls,” he added.

According to the commentary that came with the figures, “care should be taken when comparing individual months with previous years as they are unlikely to provide a meaningful year-on-year trend” as the “profile of apprenticeship starts changed significantly in the run up to the introduction of the levy and beyond”.

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# The Queen’s birthday honours 2018: Who got what in FE and skills?

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The FE and skills sector has been well represented in the Queen’s birthday honours list this year, with Ofsted’s chief operating officer made a Companion of the Order of the Bath. Matthew Coffey, who joined Ofsted in 2007 and was appointed COO in 2014, has made a “huge contribution” to the education watchdog, according to chief inspector Amanda Spielman.

“He has seen us through many challenges and complexities, applying intelligence, energy, determination and integrity, while above all putting the interests of children and young people first,” she said. His honour, one reserved for senior civil servants, is “thoroughly well deserved and everyone at Ofsted is delighted for him”.

The leader of a college that boosted its Ofsted grade to ‘outstanding’ just a year ago is among four new FE sector OBEs honoured. Gill Alton, chief executive of the Grimsby Institute, was recognised for services to education. She was also named to the FE commissioner’s principals’ reference group and national leaders of FE programme in January, and admitted she is “completely overwhelmed and humbled”.

“I’d like to acknowledge and thank

the people I’ve worked with, who are the very best in the sector and have achieved wonderful things for Rotherham, Grimsby and Scarborough – this award is really a result of their hard work,” she said. Richard Bridgman, founder and owner of mechanical engineering firm Warren Services, received an OBE for his services to apprenticeships. The 70-year-old, who began his own career as an apprentice, has been dedicated to promoting

“He has seen us through many challenges and complexities, applying intelligence, energy, determination and integrity”

apprenticeships and work experience opportunities for young people for many years. This includes employing many apprentices at his own firm over the past 28 years. “Many people have helped me throughout my business life and without their support and understanding I don’t think this award would have been possible,” he said. John Boyle, governor and lately chair at Blackpool Sixth-Form College, told FE Week he “couldn’t speak” after learning of his OBE for services to education. Mr Boyle has been on the board

at the grade one SFC for 15 years, and was appointed adviser to the FE commissioner earlier this year. The honour is “very surprising and very humbling”. Angela Williams, principal of grade one Huddersfield New College, also

received an OBE. “It is an incredible privilege to work with young people on a daily basis, and it is a joy to be part of the wonderful staff team at Huddersfield New College, who work extremely hard to help the young people in our care to achieve their dreams,” she said. Seven figures in the FE and skills sector have been recognised with MBEs. These include Beverly Aitken, the former chair of governors at East Kent College, who said it was “an incredible feeling to receive this award”. She joined the college’s board in

1990, and was appointed chair in 2012 – a position she held until the college merged with Canterbury College in February. Adult and community learning was recognised with two MBEs – one for Rehana Mohammed, learning manager at the Workers’ Educational Association, for services to the education of marginalised women in Rochdale and Oldham, and the second for Helen Osborne, principal of the Friends Centre in Brighton, for services to adult education. “I have so much pride for my community and for them to nominate me and to recognise my commitment to them is such a blessing,” said Ms Mohammed. Ms Osborne added that her honour “represents all that we do here at Friends Centre”. “I am very lucky to have a supportive team and set of trustees to ensure we are able to help over 1,100 learners each year through our courses.” Two training managers for WorldSkills UK also received MBEs following Team UK’s stellar performance at WorldSkills Abu Dhabi in 2017. Paul Dodds said it is “great to be

rewarded for work which helps a lot of young people reach such high levels of skills”, while Sue Simpson is “honoured to be recognised for my years of work with young people, nurturing them to grow and progress”. Sandra Clelland, the estates security manager at Hugh Baird College, received an MBE for her services to the community and charity in Liverpool. Hugh Baird principal Yana Williams said the honour is “a fitting recognition of her commitment and service to the local community and her contribution to fundraising for some of the most vulnerable and deprived in the Liverpool area”. Alan Moss, a senior lecturer at the RAF Central Training School, received an MBE for his services to apprentice training. And finally, Peter Templeman, a curriculum technician in carpentry and joinery at Oaklands College, was named a medallist of the Order of the British Empire for his services to technical education. He described the award as the “ultimate validation” that what he did everyday was “of value, is worthwhile” and “is making a difference to the lives of the students”.



Matthew Coffey  
Companion of the Order of the Bath



Gill Alton  
OBE



Richard Bridgman  
OBE



Rehana Mohammed  
MBE




Helen Osborne  
MBE

2018 Queen’s birthday honours list - FE and skills sector recipients	
Companion of the Order of the Bath	Matthew Coffey, Chief operating officer, Ofsted
OBE	Ms Gillian Margaret Alton, Chief executive officer, Grimsby Institute Group
OBE	John Oswald Boyle, Governor and lately chair of directors, The Blackpool Sixth Form College
OBE	Richard William Bridgman, Founder and owner, Warren Services Ltd
OBE	Mrs Angela Williams, Principal, Huddersfield New College
MBE	Mrs Beverley Aitken, Chair of governors, East Kent College
MBE	Miss Sandra Clelland, Estates security staff member, Hugh Baird College
MBE	Paul Frederick Dodds, Training manager, WorldSkills UK
MBE	Ms Rehana Mohammed, Learning manager, Workers’ Educational Association
MBE	Alan Stephen Moss, Senior lecturer, RAF Central Training School
MBE	Mrs Helen Elizabeth Osborne, Principal and learner services manager, Friend’s Centre, Brighton
MBE	Mrs Susan Simpson, Training manager, WorldSkills UK
British Empire Medal (BEM)	Peter Andrew Templeman, Curriculum technician in Carpentry and Joinery, Oaklands College, Hertfordshire

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Within the programme of speakers in attendance, we are delighted to have invited a number of employers on day two of the conference to hear how they are tackling the skills challenge.

Employers **Grant Thornton, Aktrion, British Airways** and **IBM** will be discussing the 'Opportunities and challenges for employers under the reforms'; a must-see session for all delegates.

Do not miss out on your opportunity to attend the AELP National Conference, one of the key strategic events within the skills and employability sector calendar! Open to both AELP members and non-members.



## News

# Trouble ahead for NCG with anticipated grade three

BILLY CAMDEN

BILLY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

From front

Exclusive

The largest college group in the country is to be dropped from the government's final bidding round for Institutes of Technology after Ofsted hit it with a grade three rating, FE Week understands.

Two teams of inspectors were deployed to NCG last month, in a visit prompted by achievement rate concerns.

FE Week understands that they are expected to deliver an overall 'requires improvement' rating for the group, down from 'good', raising particular

concerns with its leadership and management.

Its training provider, Intraining, was subject to a separate report and is also expected to be awarded a grade three.

The ramifications of a 'requires improvement' are likely to be severe. For instance, FE Week also understands that NCG will now be thrown out of the final stage of the government's competition to open an IoT.

It was one of 16 providers to make the cut in bids for a share of £170 million put aside for the institutes.

In a wide-ranging interview below, NCG's chair Peter Lauener explains that NCG's bid was a "good model" which included a "hub and spoke involving a lot of other providers in the region".

However, he would not be drawn on



NCG chair Peter Lauener and chief executive Joe Docherty

Ofsted's findings, nor his thoughts about the bid being dropped by the DfE, other than to say "that is not a decision for us".

DfE guidance for opening an IoT states that a provider's Ofsted grade must be at least 'good'.

As revealed by FE Week last month, alarm bells started ringing at NCG after Ofsted took a highly unusual decision to extend its inspection.

Generally the watchdog would expect only to carry out a short inspection had there been no concerns. NCG was rated 'good' in September 2016 following a five-month standoff during which it successfully overturned a lower grade.

Intraining was also given a grade two

that June.

However, overall achievement rates at NCG are well below the national average. In 2016/17, the combined overall apprenticeship achievement rate for NCG's colleges was just 55.6 per cent, while Intraining's was 58 per cent.

Both are around 10 points lower than the national average of 67.7 per cent, and lower than the minimum threshold of 62 per cent, according to the latest government data.

And for the all-important 16-to-18 study programmes, NCG was 4.4 points below the national average of 81.5 per cent.

It is understood that Ofsted wanted to reinspect NCG last year, but had

been unable to analyse the group's achievement rates because "data glitches" absented it from the 2015/16 tables.

Mr Lauener, who joined the group in March after retiring as chief executive of the ESFA, admitted that NCG's achievement rates are "not where we want them to be and are not high enough".

"We are absolutely committed to improving standards and we actually expect to see some quite rapid improvement in achievement rates in 2017/18," he insisted.

He has "full confidence" in the group's chief executive Joe Docherty, despite anticipated criticism of leadership and management from Ofsted.

"I think Joe is a first-rate chief executive," he told FE Week. "I am absolutely confident he is the right person to realise the potential of the organisation."

At the same time as dealing with these inspections, NCG is cutting staff numbers by up to a fifth at Intraining and its other private provider Rathbone Training in an effort to save £3 million.

The group was further shaken in April when staff at Lewisham Southwark College, a long-distance merger partner, voted to strike over pay and last week announced the free school they sponsor, the Discovery School, is to close.

## The big interview: NCG chair Peter Lauener

NCG has been in the headlines lately, what with the visits from Ofsted, its falling achievement rates, mass redundancies, strike action and the closure of the free school it sponsors. FE Week senior reporter Billy Camden sat down with the group's new chair, once the ESFA's chief executive, Peter Lauener to discuss why he took the job, potential future expansion, and those falling standards.

### Why did you take the role?

"I think the NCG model is very interesting. It has grown now to six colleges and two training providers (see map) after recently bringing on Carlisle College and Lewisham Southwark College, which was a big, big change.

"It changed from something that felt manageable in the old system into something that needed a new way of managing.

"There was opportunity for a different approach that said 'we can operate more sufficiently across a large group and we can do that to save money which can be ploughed back in to improving front-line services'.

"We wanted to be tight nationally on finance, with autonomy locally on quality and the curriculum offer. I found this model intrinsically

interesting and I liked the idea of it being fairly new and there was an opportunity to help formulate things.

"We think the model has saved around £2 million in the network of colleges, through savings on back office work."

### Standards have dropped across the group over recent years. Has leadership taken its eye off frontline learning to focus on expansion?

"In some cases standards are slipping because of the changes in apprenticeships that have affected all parts of the sector.

"There have also been restructures at Newcastle College where we had to reduce the size because learner numbers were falling. It takes a while to get things back in focus but we think we've laid the base for quite rapid improvement over the next couple of years.

"The expansion has happened and we now have a sizeable group. We need to realise our potential and shift focus to improving standards.

"There were significant financial problems in Carlisle and Lewisham Southwark College which our leadership had to focus on, and Newcastle was having redundancies.

"So it was not that people weren't looking at the quality, but inevitably there are other problems that need to be sorted and you have to sort the financial issues to move forward."

### NCG is expected to receive a 'requires improvement' rating from Ofsted in its upcoming report. What is the group doing to improve?

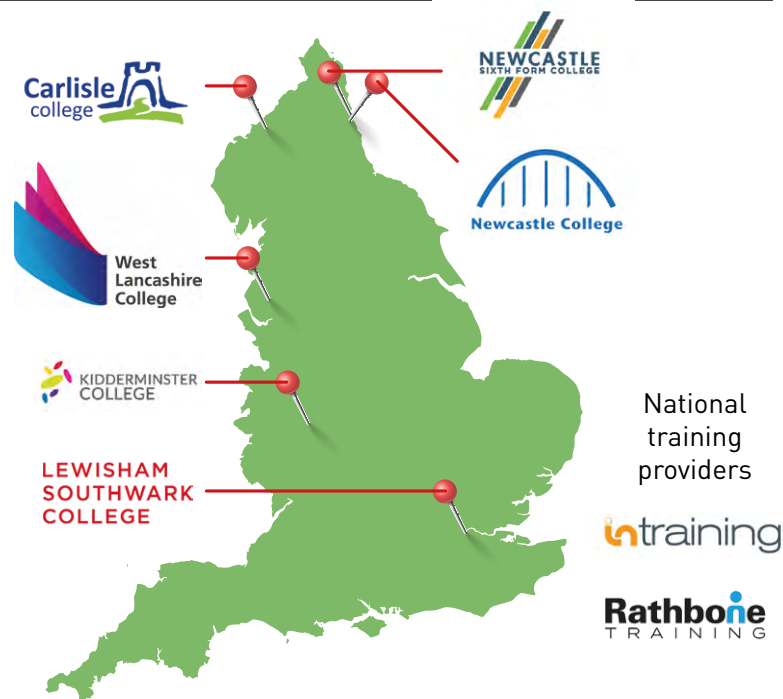
"The corporation feels it needs to do two things: a review of governance and a new drive on standards.

"We're improving governance arrangements and how we put local and national views into effect. We want people to share expertise and experience across the group from Lewisham to Carlisle.

"We are also clear that standards are not where we want them to be and I would be surprised if the Ofsted inspection doesn't confirm that.

"The important thing is we want them to improve and we have a lot of the right building blocks in place after restructuring and are expecting standards to improve rapidly. That is going to be our driving focus over the next several years.

"This is about our journey back to 'outstanding'."



### Does NCG have any expansion plans?

"There is no point growing if we are not delivering on standards so we need to improve those first.

"I wouldn't say we are too large but we are at a level where we have no plans to grow until we have gone through this next phase and consolidate the structures, and make sure governance is really working and address the standards.

"The group has had approaches from other colleges but we have not encouraged them."

### Ofsted is expected to criticise NCG's leadership in its report. Do you have confidence in group chief executive Joe Docherty?

"I think Joe is a first-rate chief executive, and he has done an excellent job over the last couple of years. I am absolutely confident he is the right person to realise the potential of the organisation that he has helped to shape.

"Any restructuring is difficult and it is not a surprise that some people are not happy with it.

"I am confident Joe has the ambition, the nous, and the commitment."

# Festival of Learning 2018 winners announced

PAUL OFFORD  
PAUL@FEWEEK.CO.UK

The Learning and Work Institute has announced the 35 award winners and highly commended nominees for the 2018 Festival of Learning.

The winners and nominees were selected for a wide variety of categories recognising, among other things, social impact, learning for health, tutors, employers and innovative projects.

The awards were handed out at a special ceremony in central London.

They include the 'employer award', which went to McVitie's, which in partnership with the College of North West London was praised for "using its apprenticeship levy to deliver advanced team member training at its Harlesden factory – the largest biscuit factory in Europe".

The programme is open to employees who work on the biscuit production lines, who can "access higher-level engineering than would be the case in their everyday jobs". Many from the first cohort "have gone on to take promoted

Festival of Learning award winners	
Name	Award category
Terrie Cornwell-Dunnett	Patron's Award
Equal Voices	President's Award
Joyce Abumujor	Outstanding Individual
Casey Bougourd	Young Adult Learner
Bernadette Taylor	Senior Adult Learner
Frank McCann	Learning for Health
Tracey Everitt	Learning for Work
Washington Shearer	Return to Learning
Dorjana Llukani	English Language Learning
Steve Whitmore	Social Impact
Sonia Ritchie-Park BEM	Tutor
McVitie's	Employer
Changing Lives / No Barriers	Project

posts or additional responsibilities".

The prestigious 'learning and work award' went to Tracey Everitt.

The judges recognised how she had left school "without any qualifications and her confidence was low", but she didn't lose sight of her goal was to become a registered childminder, and signed up for courses including

basic food hygiene and introduction to working in care at Islington council's adult and community learning service.

Tracey is now running her own Ofsted-approved childminding business and has "inspired her sister and daughter to start their own learning journeys".

"I've got more confidence, I'm

active and focused, and I'm offering a professional service to local families. I love my job of providing good-quality care," she said.

Derwentside College learner Casey Bougourd took home the 'young adult learner award' after breaking down gender barriers in her drive to embark on a career in construction.

"I've achieved my goal of gaining an apprenticeship, as well as making a little history and creating a path for other women to follow," she said.

Other award winners included University of Suffolk student Terrie Cornwell-Dunnett who received this year's 'patron's award'.

The award is given each year to someone who has made a particularly special commitment to learning, chosen by LWI patron Princess Anne from a shortlist of award nominees.

Ms Cornwell-Dunnett began her learning journey with a BTEC diploma in social care, and is now studying a degree in special educational needs and disability studies. She is raising a child at the same time and refusing to let a physical disability, which has required

16 operations on her spine, resulting in constant pain and discomfort, from deterring her against improving her life through study.

Coventry Adult Education Service learner Frank McCann was presented with the 'learning for health award' for his drive to relearn skills he'd lost in the wake of a severe brain injury and heart attack.

"My learning has made a huge difference to my life skills and continues to do so," he said.

In addition to the 13 award-winners, a further 22 individuals, tutors, employers and projects were highly commended.

"The Festival of Learning is all about inspirational people who show that anyone can benefit from learning. Lifelong learning is vital for all of us as jobs and society change around us," said Stephen Evans, LWI's chief executive.

"We encourage everyone to give learning a try, and there's hundreds of free activities to pick from during June on our 'have-a-go month' calendar. Learning can help us at work and at home, and to build a fair and inclusive society."



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# Atkins: Struggling colleges won't stop needing stopgap funds

JUDE BURKE  
JUDE@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Exclusive

Colleges that get into financial difficulty will still need funding to “oil the wheels” once the bailout tap has been turned off, the FE commissioner has said in an exclusive interview with FE Week.

Struggling colleges currently have access to the restructuring facility and exceptional financial support (EFS), but these will each be withdrawn later in the year.

There will be new arrangements for troubled colleges, but it's not clear if these will be backed with cash.

“I don't know how the sector will manage without any restructuring

funds of any kind,” said Richard Atkins. Because colleges will “occasionally get into difficulty”, he insisted they will need “some sort of funding to oil the wheels in these situations” to ensure stability and protect learners.

“I would have thought that something will need to be put in place, and I know there are people in the Department for Education looking at that at the moment,” he said.

The DfE will pull the plug on EFS once the insolvency regime is introduced later this year.

It expects “all colleges to be working to make sure they get on a financially sustainable footing by the end of this financial year” while funds from the restructuring facility are still available.

But new arrangements will be put in place, a spokesperson said. These will be “centred round the new insolvency

regime”, and full details “will be announced in due course”.

The new regime, which will allow colleges to go bust for the first time, will be introduced later this year, although no firm date has yet been announced.

EFS, which can come in the form of a grant or a loan, is available to colleges that are “encountering financial, or cashflow, difficulties that put the continuation of provision at risk”.

The restructuring facility, administered by the transaction unit, was originally designed to help colleges implement area review changes but is increasingly being used to support colleges in dire financial straits.

The application deadline for the restructuring facility is September – although colleges will have until March next year to spend the cash.

When the restructuring facility was first announced in 2016, the then-skills minister Nick Boles told colleges they would be “basically on your own” once the fund had been used up, without the “same level of ad hoc support” they had previously had access to.

**There will need to be “some sort of funding to oil the wheels for colleges in difficulty”**

FE Week has reported on a number of high-profile cases of colleges receiving multimillion-pound bailouts from the restructuring facility.

These include Hull College, which reportedly received £54 million from the fund earlier this year.

Lambeth College's 2016/17 accounts revealed that it expected to receive £25 million from the facility, £8 million of which would go to repaying the exceptional financial support it had received up until that point.

Struggling Telford College of Arts

and Technology received £21 million for its merger with New College Telford, which went through in December – a sum that came in the form of a grant, according to its accounts.

And Stoke-on-Trent College's accounts show it was awaiting the outcome of a £21.9 million application to the fund.

But not every college has been successful in their bids to the facility.

An FE commissioner report into Kirklees College, published in March but based on an intervention last October, revealed the college had pinned its hopes of financial redemption on receiving “substantial” money from the fund.

But this request was turned down, forcing it to request a “substantial” amount of EFS as it battled high levels of long-term debt and minimal cash reserves.

FE Week reported in February that 12 struggling colleges had received a combined total of almost £12 million in EFS payments in one month alone.

This included two payments of £1.5 million each to Bradford College, which is now subject to intervention by Mr Atkins.

His report determined that the college's dire financial position had come as a surprise to its governors, who were only made aware of management concerns around finance in June last year.

EDITORIAL



Let’s not be so quick to plan a raid on the levy pot

Readers of FE Week will be familiar with the excruciatingly slow start to the apprenticeship levy reforms since last May.

According to the Department for Education, employers spent just 10 per cent (£200 million out of £2 billion) of their levy contributions in the first year. Each month that three million starts target slips further away.

Inevitably, there are more demands for a change of course, anything from scrapping the target to scrapping the Institute for Apprenticeships, but as I’ve explained before and won’t repeat now, it is far too soon to panic.

But this does raise questions about what will happen to any unspent funding, particularly when public finances are tight.

This week the eight metro mayors signed a joint statement asking the government to let them raid unspent funds to boost devolved education budgets from August 2019.

It is an attractive pitch, but there are at least five compelling reasons why it would be a mistake.

1. The apprenticeship reforms have been designed on the basis that many employers will fail to use all of the levy. Why? Because without unspent levy there would be no funding for small, non-levy-paying employers, English and maths qualifications, employer and provider incentives, and the 10-per-cent levy account top-ups.
2. Apprenticeship providers say they have demand from small employers but not enough non-levy funding, so they should be first in the queue when large employers choose not to use their funds.
3. Unspent funding could be used to incentive the growth of apprenticeships where a market intervention is needed. For example, the government will pay £1,000 to care leavers who start an apprenticeship from this

August. They could also increase incentives to recruit 16- to 18-year-olds, either fully-funding them or increasing the £1,000 employer incentive.

4. Many employers are waiting for standards to become available for delivery (over 280 are currently in development according to the IfA) and have 24 months to spend their levy money before losing access to it. Raiding it now would likely result in a significant overspend in a year’s time.
5. The government is making it easier for large employers to use their levy, by allowing them to transfer up to 10 per cent to those in their supply chain.

So although I’m sure the mayors won’t be alone in eyeing up a slice of levy pie, long term underspend may not even be crumbs.

Nick Linford, Editor  
news@feweek.co.uk

Who’s up & who’s down

	<b>Sally Hunt</b> The University and College Union has continued its run of success this week, as it secured concessions and ended the threat of strike action at two more colleges.
	<b>Joni Cunningham</b> Good news for the principal of Redbridge Institute of Adult Education, as it became the first local authority provider to be rated ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted since 2015.
	<b>Matthew Coffey</b> Ofsted’s chief operating officer was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath in this year’s Queen’s birthday honours list.
	<b>Anne Milton</b> Apprenticeship starts are still sluggish, with March’s figures 52 per cent down on last year.
	<b>Sarah Robinson</b> The chief executive of Alpha Academies Trust will be overseeing a much smaller trust, as it announced the closure of its two studio schools this week.
	<b>Neil Davies</b> The owner of Watertrain complained of “factual inaccuracies” from an Ofsted inspection team, but their critical early monitoring report was still published.

Readers’ reply

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Metro mayors demand control over unspent levy

Putting to one side the practicalities which would need to be worked through, I can fully understand why Sadiq Khan would call for any unused levy funds to be ring-fenced for other skills-related uses in London. After all, there will be a disproportionate number of the UK’s large levy-paying companies with their corporate HQs registered in London, generating a value of levy payments which is disproportionate to the number of people employed there. However for the mayors of those areas outside of London its worth remembering that a ring-fence works two ways.

G Callaghan

**Festival of Learning winners 2018 winners announced**

Well done to all winners and those highly commended. A particular shout out to

our winner Casey who has shown that young females can become fantastic bricklayers.

Karen Redhead

We’re so proud of Joyce, the winner of the Festival of Learning Outstanding Individual Learner Award 2018. It is an honour to be part of her learning journey.#lovecclife #folawards #inspiring

@ChesterfieldAC

Truly inspiring attending @festival\_learn #FOLawards today.....days like this reminds me why I do what I do FE & Skills is about making a difference to peoples’ lives day in day out

@PaulEeles

Lots of people with ‘something in their eyes’ at the @festival\_learn awards. Some inspiring stories #FOLawards

@aldridge\_zac

Casey ‘girl power’ indeed. Definitely one to watch. Congratulations on the young adult learner award and good luck for the future #folawards #lovetolearn

@NewBeginningUEL

‘I love building a better me’ what a quote from the English language winner Dorjana: inspiring. #folawards #lovetolearn AEWolverhampton

@joannekeatley1

**Queen’s birthday honours 2018: Who got what in FE and skills?**

Tutors and support staff under represented as usual.

I accept that leaders can have an impact on greater volumes (for better or worse!) but the balance never seems quite right to me.

Geoff

REPLY OF THE WEEK

‘Outstanding’ Ofsted result for Redbridge Institute of Adult Education

Well done to the Redbridge Institute and Joni Cunningham for getting the just recognition of her work over a number of years, culminating in this ‘outstanding’ judgment. Under her leadership, Redbridge was not only a pioneer in promoting safeguarding and prevention of radicalisation for its own adult learners, but shared its good practice by making materials freely available to others in the sector. Adult education needs protecting and promotion of the services provided that can improve so many lives. Nice to see Ofsted convert a short inspection to a full one to recognise outstanding practice.

Phil Hatton

# Senior Education and Skills Competition Manager

**Salary:** £46,500 **Location:** London

A fantastic opportunity has arisen for an experienced highly motivated, competent and solutions driven senior manager to make a significant contribution to the work of WorldSkills UK. The role will provide leadership and management of projects; developing new initiatives and partnerships that further our work and the UK's performance in international competitions.

The successful candidate will have significant experience as a senior manager, alongside extensive applied specialist knowledge of vocational and technical education underpinned by exceptional project and relationship management skills and have a strong ability to drive projects forward, working well with a large and complex network of stakeholders. The successful candidate will also have a commitment for developing programmes for young people to accelerate their personal and professional development.

**Closing Date:** 25th June 2018

It is intended that interviews will be held in London, short-listed candidates will be advised of the process.

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



## How to apply

Applications should be submitted no later than Monday 25th June and should include:

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

Applications should be submitted by email or post (marked 'Private and Confidential') to:  
**Meryem Ozbiloglu**, Senior HR Manager  
[jobs@worldskillsuk.org](mailto:jobs@worldskillsuk.org)

For an informal conversation about the role please contact **Parisa Shirazi**, Head of Education and Skills Competitions by email at [pshirazi@worldskillsuk.org](mailto:pshirazi@worldskillsuk.org)

## DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE

**Salary:** £50,000- £54,067 p.a

**boston:college**

Boston College is a highly successful college that requires a Director with a keen eye for detail and understanding of funding and performance, to join the Executive Team. The financial health of the College is outstanding with over 8,500 enrolments. The recent Ofsted inspection confirmed that we are "good" and our journey to outstanding is well on the way. This role is critical in providing leadership to the key business functions of Registry, MIS, Partnerships and External Funding.

As Director for Planning and Performance you will be responsible for ensuring that funding streams are maximised through the modelling and forecasting of funding and overseeing Partnerships to maintain high quality performance. You will be responsible for supporting with the development and implementation of the College's IT strategy, managing all aspects associated with IT services. With the ability to effectively manage complex information systems and be able to apply business planning skills, this role will advise on the strategic, operational planning and performance factors to the Executive Team.

For an informal discussion please contact **Jo Maher**, Principal and Chief Executive **(01205) 365701** extension **3300**.

**Closing date:** Monday 25th June 2018 by 12 noon.

**Interview date:** Tuesday 3rd July 2018.

For more information and to apply online please visit [www.boston.ac.uk](http://www.boston.ac.uk).

Boston College is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all learners. All posts are subject to enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service checks.

Boston College is committed to promoting Equality and Diversity

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**National role working remotely**

**£40 - £45k OTE £60,000**  
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We're looking to further expand our Client Engagement team to achieve our next phase of growth and are looking for a passionate and experienced Apprenticeship expert who can successfully identify and win new client opportunities with large businesses in our core market sectors.

Our Client Engagement Consultant will be responsible for identifying new opportunities/leads with large organisations who will benefit from the high quality Apprenticeship solutions Paragon Skills offer. Building market intelligence, a sound knowledge of our target clients, you'll nurture excellent relationships with prospective client contacts, positioning Paragon Skills as their partner of choice.

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INVEST IN **YOUR** FUTURE

# Vice Principal- Quality, Curriculum & Standards



**Job type** - Full-time, permanent

**Hours** - 35 per week (+5 hours paid lunch)

**Salary** - £63,155

**Location** - Head Office Southwark (Some flexibility on location)

Do you want to make a difference to young people's and adults lives, inspiring them to achieve and realise their true potential? If so, then join Nacro, a registered charity and training provider, who educate, nurture and transform lives.

## Who we are looking for?

We are seeking a senior quality and curriculum professional that has the passion, pride and skills to help us on our journey of transformation at Nacro Education. You will be on top of new policy developments, skilled and experienced in what you do, and able to bring about rapid improvements through working with others. You will be looking for your next challenge to make a significant difference to our learners and committed staff team.

It is an exciting time for Nacro and its education delivery, as it grows and develops. This is an ideal opportunity for a teaching and learning professional who is exceptional and resilient, and who wishes to move to a senior post and to quickly progress through the range of opportunity and exposure Nacro can offer.

## Duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Working closely with our Principal, Senior managers Faculty Managers and Teachers to raise aspiration and opportunity across the Nacro Education community

- Leading the quality improvement and assurance across Nacro's Education and Skills provision to ensure that we consistently deliver excellent results
- To drive the development and delivery of curriculum ensuring that it is innovative and inclusive and responsive to Nacro's ethos
- Proactive relationship building and horizon scanning will also be of key importance, to enable the successful growth and diversification of our services.

The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate senior level leadership skills and have significant experience of leading Teaching, Learning and Assessment within an FE setting and a complex environment.

If you are motivated by contributing to a culture of continuous improvement, and keen to work in diverse settings, then we would like to hear from you.

**Please note:** An enhanced DBS check & regular travel to Nacro Education sites throughout England, will be required for this role.

**Closing Date:** Midnight July 1st 2018

**Interview Date:** July 10th 2018

Please apply online at <https://bit.ly/2MI9cwr>

## Subject Leader Counselling Skills

Trittiford Learning Centre, Billesley, Birmingham

£26,470 - £33,136

Permanent. 1 x 36.5 hours per week or  
2 x 18.25 hours per week

Ref: BCC000334

Subject Leaders at Birmingham Adult Education Service are good or outstanding teachers of adults and lead on quality assurance in a particular subject area.

We have 10 Learning Centres in Birmingham and the successful applicant will be based at our Trittiford Learning Centre in Billesley.

The role is for a teacher with remission for internal quality assurance and good practice sharing. Travel between Centres is required and travelling expenses can be claimed according to BCC approved mileage scheme. Excellent interpersonal and organisational skills are required together with a commitment to driving up quality and evidence of flexibility, as occasional evening and Saturday work is required. Close team work with the Health and Social Care curriculum team will be critical.

The successful applicant will hold a level 5 teaching qualification, A subject qualification in Counselling at least at level 4, an Internal quality assurance qualification, maths and English at least at level 2 and be currently active in a Counselling Practice.

Considerable experience of teaching adults in Counselling or a related subject.

Closing date: Monday 2 July 2018.

To view Job Description & Person Specification and to apply, please visit: [www.wmjobs.co.uk](http://www.wmjobs.co.uk) and search reference number: BCC000334.

Right to work in the UK documentation will be fully checked for all applicants. All non UK and non EU applicants are required to apply for a Certificate of Sponsorship from Birmingham City Council and must be approved by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) before any employment offer can be confirmed.



## AAT Lecturer - Huntingdon

**Salary £20,000 - £30,000** depending on skills and experience

We currently have a vacancy at our Huntingdon centre for an enthusiastic and committed individual to lecture and assess within our Business School.

The position will involve delivering AAT courses across a range of programmes, supporting learners in all aspects of their learning and achievement, as well as the opportunity to participate in student recruitment, careers events and employer liaison.

The successful candidate will hold a Level 4 qualification or relevant experience to demonstrate knowledge to Level 4 in accounts. A qualification relevant to teaching adults would be advantageous and professional registration must be up to date.

**Closing date: 3rd July 2018**

For further information or to request an application pack, please contact **Jackie Sumpter**, Human Resources Administrator, on **01480 422060 / [jobs@caw.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@caw.ac.uk)** or download an application form from the College's website ([www.caw.ac.uk](http://www.caw.ac.uk)).

The College of Animal Welfare is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people. All successful applicants will undertake a Disclosure DBS Check.

The College undertakes not to discriminate unlawfully either directly or indirectly against a job applicant or one of its own employees. The College is committed to equal opportunities: appointments are open to members of the community on an equal basis.



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### Principal & CEO

**Salary c. £115k - with scope for further progression based on performance.**

Leeds College of Building is unique. We are the only specialist further education college in the UK dedicated to construction and the built environment, with an enviable reputation both regionally and nationally. Our strong links with construction and engineering companies means we are at the heart of the sectors current and future needs.

The College operates over 2 campuses in Leeds City Centre, both with excellent facilities. The campus at Hunslet is currently being expanded, due to complete in the autumn of 2018.

We excel in the delivery of apprenticeships and alongside this we have invested heavily in the College's higher education provision which has grown significantly over the past five years and is now a key strategic priority.

Whilst we recognise that we have work to do to return to an Ofsted "Good" grade, we have brilliant students, excellent staff and sector-leading teaching and learning resources that will give our next leader the tools they need to be successful. Through astute business and financial management, College finances have improved, and we are rated in EFSA "Good" financial health.

We therefore seek a talented leader who can motivate and inspire the wider College team to achieve our goals and ambitions. Although a good understanding of construction and the built environment is desirable, you will have a successful track record within a curriculum, skills or resources background and possess strong business and financial acumen. You will be a forward thinking team player, committed to supporting the board to develop and deliver ambitious plans for the College. The Board of Governors wish to remain a standalone institution, so sustainability is key and you will need to continue to build on our strong local, regional and national profile.

The successful appointee will possess a clear understanding of the FE landscape and be able to demonstrate knowledge of the key national education and skills policies, priorities and agendas in order to lead Leeds College of Building through the next evolution of the sector, successfully navigating any challenges that may arise.



Closing date for applications is  
**Wednesday 27th June 2018 at 12:00pm**

Assessment centre will be held on the  
18th and 19th July 2018

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

To apply for this role or to download an  
application pack visit:  
[www.protocol.co.uk/lcb](http://www.protocol.co.uk/lcb)



## Quality & Curriculum Coordinator (Adult Education & Training)

**Salary:** £27,000- £32,000 per annum (dependant on experience)

**Closing date:** 5.00pm on Wednesday 27th June

High Trees Community Development Trust is a community anchor charity based in Tulse Hill in Lambeth. We deliver a range of services focussed in 3 key areas – Employment, Education and Training and Children, Community Engagement and Development and Young People and Family Services. All our work is focused on improving the social and economic welfare of the local community and supporting inclusiveness.

Our Curriculum & Quality Coordinator sits at the heart of our biggest team, Education and Training, and is responsible for all teaching, learning and assessment by overseeing the effective design, coordination and implementation of all courses as well as driving quality improvement across the organisation for a range of accredited and non-accredited courses aimed at the local community and other organisations.

The successful applicant will have solid experience in the Adult Education sector, whether in a community setting or an adult education provider, specifically of quality improvement and assurance.

For more information about the role and how to apply, please visit [www.high-trees.org](http://www.high-trees.org)

**Full Time Permanent £85,000 per annum**  
**35 Days Holiday per year plus Bank Holidays**  
**Based at the Welwyn Garden City and St Albans Campus**



# Deputy Principal Quality

Oaklands College mission is to realise the potential of our communities. We have a range of courses covering a wide range of vocational areas, from Engineering to Beauty, from Animal care to Sport as well as A-levels and Higher Education provision.

The role is to ensure high quality of provision across all aspects of the College Curriculum in order to drive continual improvement that will lead the College to have a good or outstanding provision.

With an outstanding track record, you will provide effective management, leadership and development to all direct reports through agreed college KPIs.

The successful candidate will work closely with the College Principal and provide effective leadership to the Strategic Leadership Team

in relation to the quality of provision. They will be the main contact for stakeholders, awarding bodies and inspection activities, including acting as nominee during Ofsted inspections.

The College Principal is looking for someone who wants to see people succeed and who makes sure that the College continually focuses on enabling our staff and students realise their ambitions.

To apply for this role please email [Rachel.ziemelis@oaklands.ac.uk](mailto:Rachel.ziemelis@oaklands.ac.uk) to ask for an application form.

**Closing Date:** Monday 18th June at 23:59

**Interview Date:** Tuesday 26th June / Wednesday 27th June

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## Experts



### SKILLS ON PARADE

Sir Gerry Berragan,  
Chief executive, the Institute  
of Apprenticeships

# How are apprenticeship funding bands allocated?

**There's plenty going on at the Institute for Apprenticeships at the moment, and its boss Sir Gerry Berragan is using the first instalment of his exclusive new column for FE Week to tell you all about it over the coming months**

The Institute is a "crown non-departmental public body", putting employers at the heart of decision-making processes, to improve the quality of apprenticeship standards in England.

We do that through our work to approve new apprenticeship standards and assessment plans, and by making recommendations to the Department for Education on the appropriate level of funding high-quality delivery and value for money.

We're just over a year old and have achieved a lot; there are now 276 standards approved for delivery across 15 occupational routes. A further 268 standards are currently in development. We've worked with over

2,500 businesses of all sizes to develop apprenticeship standards that are rigorous, future-proofed and meet the needs of employers and apprentices alike.

We've built up a network of over 100 industry leaders across 15 sectors to make up our route panels – ensuring each approved standard meets robust industry requirements.

On the funding side, there is a lot of change at present. In February, we made improvements to our funding band recommendation process to make it swifter as a result of employer feedback.

Alongside this, the DfE reviewed the existing 15 funding bands between £1,500 and £27,000, and will be replaced them with a 30-band structure within the same range from August. We will also review the funding bands of 31 standards that are already approved for delivery using our new funding approach.

With all of these changes going on, it's really important that we

communicate effectively. To that end, we held three webinars in May for trailblazer groups to explain the new funding process.

We received a lot of interest and more than 100 people joined the sessions, representing sectors including finance, healthcare, travel, emergency services, catering, energy and technology.

Initial feedback has been positive and we hope viewers gained a better insight into the new funding process, and the role of the Institute and DfE in making funding decisions.

During the sessions we gave trailblazers the opportunity to ask us questions, and there are some common themes around the initial funding band and final banding.

#### What are the main changes?

Funding will still be a two-step process: an initial funding band will be generated alongside the approval of the proposal, and then we'll make a final funding band recommendation

alongside the approval of the assessment plan.

#### How is the initial band assigned?

We make an initial funding band allocation when we agree an occupation proposal for development.

#### We do this using a calculation based on:

- An estimate of the amount of training needed to complete the apprenticeship standard (based on the length of the standard and the requirement that 20 per cent of an apprentice's time is spent on off-the-job training)
- The sector subject area of the training
- An allowance for end-point assessment

#### What should I do if I think my initial band is wrong?

If you think your initial funding band allocation is wrong, you can submit funding evidence alongside your end-point assessment plan to inform our final funding band recommendation.

#### How are final funding bands assigned?

In making our final funding band recommendation we consider a range of factors in addition to the initial funding band. We will consider:

- The evidence submitted on your funding form, taking into account only those costs which are eligible for public funding according to the existing funding rules
- The cost and funding bands of any equivalent apprenticeship frameworks
- The level and nature of the training or end-point assessment, and consistency across similar types of apprenticeship standards
- Affordability within the wider apprenticeship programme, and other factors in the Institute's strategic guidance
- The initial funding band allocated to the apprenticeship standard at the occupation proposal stage
- The expertise of our route panels

For more information about the Institute, please visit our website.

## STEPHEN EVANS

Chief executive, the Learning and Work Institute



# Five elements of any good devolved skills plan

**Sadiq Khan's first skills strategy has lots to welcome, writes Stephen Evans, but to make a step change we need a clearer devolution deal and ambitious mayors**

The mayor of London's been busy; criticised after FE Week reported his plan to fund 50 posts by top-slicing the soon-to-be-devolved adult education budget, he's now set out what he wants to do with those powers.

Sadiq Khan might be first out of the blocks, but the other metro mayors are busy planning for their new powers. So is devolution much ado about nothing, an unnecessary complication, or a chance for change?

Here's five things the Learning and Work Institute will be looking out for:

#### Big ambition

The AEB is relatively small compared to the cost of apprenticeships, let alone transport, housing etc. The real win is to better integrate adult learning with economic and community development. Rochdale council, for

example, used our 'Citizens' curriculum' programme to engage residents and save money for health, education and other public services. London's strategy says the right things at the start, but is a bit light for example on integration with employment services and benefits. Hopefully other devolution areas will raise the bar.

#### Better outcomes for people and places

The ultimate purpose of devolution must be for people to get better services – otherwise what's the point? We'll only be able to judge this over time, and if the data is published by the government and devolved areas. The London strategy argues for a gradual shift to focus on outcomes. That's something we've long called for. It should mean wider impacts on health, wellbeing and citizenship, as well as jobs and incomes. We've worked with some pioneering providers across England showing how to do this.

#### Doing something different

One person's postcode lottery is another's tailoring to local

circumstances. London's commitment to free learning for those earning up to £19,890 per year (compared with £15,700 in the rest of England) partly reflects the higher cost of living in the capital. Other areas might want to prioritise support for groups that miss out in their localities, or on growth sectors (e.g. media in Greater Manchester).

#### Raising demand for learning

The devolution debate too often boils down to who holds the purse strings rather than how to make the system work. Mayors are frustrated by the lack of devolution even for underspent apprenticeship levy funding. But if combined authorities worked with employers to raise demand for apprenticeships then increased funding would follow. The same applies to literacy and numeracy where there's a statutory entitlement for free learning for the nine million who need it. Which mayor will be the first to launch a coordinated drive to boost adult literacy and numeracy?

**“The ultimate purpose of devolution must be for people to get better services”**

#### What's next?

Even with the AEB, the mayor of London's skills powers are limited in comparison with cities like New York. Last year we worked with the Local Government Association to develop a more radical vision for devolved learning, skills and employment services. This would be underpinned by outcome agreements showing promised improvements for citizens –

moving from a bureaucratic debate to one that shows the difference we can make to citizens' lives.

Ultimately the AEB is relatively small, but it can be a catalyst for change.

Of course services, whether national or local, could achieve a lot more if they were properly invested in. And some things like, I would argue, apprenticeships do need a national framework. It's also unjustifiable to spend more money on administration; hopefully the ESFA will reach a deal with devolved areas to avoid this.

We definitely need more investment and a proper learning and skills strategy. But I'd be amazed if an objective analysis suggested the status quo as the right balance of national versus local.

We need to support devolved areas to make a difference, hold them to account, and work for a proper strategy that sets out who does what and why. Nothing new there, but perhaps we have the chance now to make it happen.

# DR SUE PEMBER

Managing director, Hoxle



## The London skills strategy is a devolution game-changer

**Dr Sue Pember hails Sadiq Khan's bold and far-reaching new skills and adult education plan for the capital**

The launch of the mayor's 'Skills for Londoners' strategy is an exciting new development. It is a momentous opportunity for the capital, and it will better meet the needs of Londoners and its economy.

Last week the mayor Sadiq Khan set out his vision and priorities to achieve a "city for all Londoners, to ensure everyone has the opportunity to succeed in a fair, inclusive society and thriving economy". This is a game-changer: unlike previous strategies it successfully brings together the needs of Londoners and of business.

The strategy is not only an exemplar for the other mayoral combined authorities but also for the government. It fills the void created by the government, which has a piecemeal approach to skills and adult education policy. This document seeks to create a more strategic, city-wide approach,

working collaboratively with learners, individuals, employers, providers, boroughs and many other stakeholders.

The present national skills landscape is complex and there are competing priorities and new, disjointed initiatives. The strategy makes sense of this for London, sets the landscape for devolution of funding and explains how Mr Khan will prioritise the £311 million of devolved funding which will be invested annually in the capital's learners.

**"Devolution will enable City Hall to deliver social as well as economic impact"**

The inclusive, constructive processes the mayor used to create this strategy also set it apart and should be a yardstick for progressive policymaking. The GLA asked, listened and acted. The strategy was enhanced by the

consultation process and, although at times frustrating, the final policy has been constructed around learners' needs.

Devolution will put the mayor firmly in the driving seat in terms of supporting adults aged 19 and more to access the skills they need to thrive. This will ensure investment is better directed, and the commitment to the skills Londoners need the most, including literacy, numeracy, digital and ESOL, is commendable. London

particularly for hard-to-reach and disadvantaged groups.

Devolution will enable City Hall to deliver social as well as economic impact, and it will enable the mayor to support his aspiration for greater social mobility, which – along with inclusion and diversity – is at the heart of this strategy.

There are many practical and implementation decisions to be made. For example who pays for the students who want leave the area? The GLA, like all the other MCAs, is developing an underpinning framework. Such frameworks will describe how MCAs will work with their providers.

I hope they choose a trusted-provider model in which learners' requirements are agreed jointly, and solutions and programmes are developed together. I believe these decisions will be made with the same diligence used in writing the strategy.

However, I urge these new administrators of public funds to look at the best and worst of past

systems. We must not succumb to the notion that commissioning by tendering works. Recent events have demonstrated that fixating on process rather than on partnership does not create community-led solutions. Using the language and methods of 1980s-style privatisation and outsourcing will not work in the post-Brexit world.

The mayor has already announced that it will be the living wage rather than the minimum wage will determine who gets free courses in London. This is fantastic but comes at a cost, and the budget is limited. If the mayor wants to keep participation at current levels, there needs to be more funding.

The big challenge for MCAs is the next spending review and their collective ability to persuade the Treasury to restore the 40 per cent of funding lost through successive austerity measures.

This is a new world and I am greatly looking forward to it, but need to be brave and patient to bring it to fruition.

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Former HMCI Ofsted




**Danielle Fallon**

Sales and marketing manager,  
Training Qualifications UK

**Start date** May 2018

**Previous job**  
National PTP Manager, NCFE

**Interesting fact**  
Danielle once got bass guitar lessons from a member of the Stone Roses.



**Charlotte Andrews**

Head of education, Skills Edge  
Training

**Start date** April 2018


**Previous job**  
Operations manager, Skills Edge Training

**Interesting fact**  
Charlotte has three girls, each one at a different stage of education – primary, secondary and university.

# Movers & Shakers

...

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




**Colin Peaks**

Principal, Wilberforce Sixth  
Form College

**Start date** September 2018

**Previous job**  
Deputy principal, Wilberforce SFC

**Interesting fact**  
Colin is a former student at Wilberforce, where he studied A-levels in art, graphical communication, and design and technology from 1991 to 1993.



**Roy O'Shaughnessy**

Chief executive, Capital City  
College Group

**Start date** Autumn 2018

**Previous job**  
Chief executive, the Shaw Trust

**Interesting fact**  
Roy studied theology at a seminary, and business and religion at university.

If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your college, training provider or awarding organisation please let us know by emailing [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk)

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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

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

Difficulty:  
Easy

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

Difficulty:  
Medium

Solutions: See right

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Last Edition's winner: Phill Adams

Solutions

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

Difficulty: Easy

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

Difficulty: Medium

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