



FEWEEK



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20% TOP-SLICE CAP CONFIRMED

- Unlimited subcontracting fees to end under London adult education budget devolution plan
- Capital City College group could lose £250,000

Exclusive

BILLY CAMDEN BILLY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

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Learning lessons: How one college created a TV star, but for all the wrong reasons

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CITB pauses 'reverse subcontracting' negotiations after AoC steps in

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Exclusive

The Construction Industry Training Board has paused discussions with colleges about its proposed "reverse subcontracting" deal following a meeting with the Association of Colleges who fear it would break funding rules.

Colleges were in uproar last month after the CITB tried to force them to enter the arrangements where it charges top-slices of at least 28 per cent even though it won't be the prime provider.

The AoC immediately stepped in to say it was "deeply concerned" while colleges told *FE Week* it was "unfair".

A meeting between the association and the CITB took place this week to find a solution.

"Following discussions between CITB and AoC regarding the subcontract arrangements for non-levy apprenticeships in England, we have this week held a very productive meeting," a spokesperson for the CITB said.

"Good progress has been made

in developing a future agreed approach.

"CITB and AoC will now work together on finalising a way forward which will remain fully compliant with ESFA funding rules. This is currently a priority activity for both organisations and we aim to jointly share the outcomes of our discussions shortly."

He added: "We have agreed that while finalising the proposals, CITB will pause discussions with colleges regarding the current proposal for subcontracting."

Teresa Frith, senior policy manager at the AoC, said: "Whilst we appreciate we need to move quickly at this time, CITB and AoC need to engage with individuals within our organisations to ensure the proposed solutions are agreeable and are fully compliant with ESFA funding rules."

The bizarre deal was thought up by the CITB after it failed to win a non-levy apprenticeships contract.

Whereas before the levy it would use its apprenticeships contract as a prime and subcontract the training out to colleges, the CITB now wants colleges to agree to a "reversal of our contracts".

Colleges would be the prime but

have to pay a huge management fee believed to range from 28 to 36 per cent, like a subcontractor, for which the CITB will give access to construction employers and provide other services such as inductions and health and safety training.

It means that for apprenticeships on the carpentry and joinery level two standard, for example, the training provider would receive £12,000 government funding but have to give £3,360 of it to the CITB.

When it was first proposed the CITB deceptively said the AoC and Department for Education had endorsed the deal.

Part of the reason why this "reverse subcontract" will be deemed as uncompliant by the ESFA is that a number of activities the CITB contract proposes they will do are listed in the rules as ineligible for funding, such as recruitment.

The Department for Education said the funding rules "make clear that we expect a direct relationship between apprenticeship training providers and the employers and apprentices they are working with" and would "not support or endorse any funding arrangements that are inconsistent with these rules".

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Warm tributes paid to AELP founder Frank McMahon

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
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One of the original founders of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers has died after a short illness.

Frank McMahon was the vice chair and treasurer of AELP from its creation in 2002 until April 2018, and helped develop its membership to over 900 providers in that time.

Martin Dunford, chair of AELP, said Mr McMahon was "very committed" to the association's cause.

"It is worth remembering that the association's establishment was not an easy endeavour and we were greeted with scepticism and opposition in some quarters. Frank was one of those who were determined to make it succeed," he said.

"Frank was a very good vice chair, colleague and confidant to me, who served AELP diligently over many years. As well as keeping a close eye on AELP's balance sheet, he was not afraid to make constructive challenges in

the formulation of our national policy inputs.

"He will be sorely missed."

Mr McMahon was also the owner and managing director of YH Training Services, which has over 1,200 learners across Yorkshire and Humberside. Mr McMahon also committed YH to training unemployed adults to help them achieve their career aspirations.

The company won the Yorkshire and Humber Apprenticeship Employer of the Year and NHS Training Provider for the Yorkshire Humber Region in 2011.

On August 17, YH congratulated Mr McMahon on Twitter for making it through to be a finalist at Yorkshire Coast Radio's Toast of the Coast awards in the 'best boss' category. He died on September 5.

Mr McMahon was also a member of the government's bureaucracy review group from 2003 to 2009, which led to a reduction of the data collected from providers.

In Yorkshire, he set up and chaired a local learning provider network, Providers in Partnership, between 2005 and 2010, and was regional chair

of the Yorkshire and Humber Training Providers Network.

A resident of Scarborough, Mr McMahon invested a lot of time in regional voluntary commitments and was asked to judge the National Apprenticeship Awards on numerous occasions.

A spokesperson for the AELP said the association extends its "deepest condolences" to Mr McMahon's wife, Chris, and his family.

Mark Dawe, chief executive of AELP, wrote in the association's newsletter: "Last week we heard the very sad news about the death of Frank McMahon, who will be greatly missed by many, especially in the ITP world, given the incredible contribution to education and training he made through his life.

"He also gave me an amazing lesson on apprenticeships for fishermen in Whitby – if ever a national policy undermined a quite special and high quality programme, I think this might be the best example.

"But that was Frank – passionate about every employer, every apprentice, every young person he worked with."



Frank McMahon

News

DfE denies studio schools review in face of evidence

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
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Exclusive

The Department for Education is still denying it conducted a formal review of studio schools – despite *FE Week* discovering an attempt to cover-up internal emails which openly discussed the existence and timescale of the review.

It was revealed last year that the former academies minister Lord Nash had met with the Studio Schools Trust to “review the concept of studio schools”, according to official minutes.

However David Nicoll, then chair of the SST which supports and promotes studio schools, claimed that a review was “definitely not on the agenda of any meeting I attended”.

Under the freedom of information act, *FE Week* requested all written correspondence between ministers and employees at the Department for Education and the SST from September 1, 2016, to March 6, 2018.

Many of the emails between Mr Nicoll and officials were released but were heavily redacted.

However, *FE Week* has seen full copies of the documents and

discovered that many of the blacked-out sentences mentioned a “review” of studio schools.

The small, vocationally-focused 14-to-19 studio schools have struggled to survive due to poor Ofsted ratings and low pupil numbers, with 26 closing or planning to close since the scheme was introduced in 2010 – despite millions of pounds of government investment.

One previously redacted message showed that, on February 16, 2017, Mr Nicoll asked the DfE if he could postpone a meeting with Lord Nash “since it seems that the review will not have been completed in time”. Four days later Mr Nicoll said he would be “back in touch as soon as we know what is happening with the review timing”.

On March 10, Mr Nicoll emailed: “I thought it was time to ask again if there was any progress and/or timetable you could share regarding the studio school review. I appreciate that this may seem impatient, but I am fending off enquiries on a daily basis at the moment”.

Three days later he received a response from a government official saying “we are making progress and hope to be in a position to make a decision shortly”.

All mentions of a review were

redacted in the government’s official FOI response.

The DfE stated the sentences were withheld under FOI rules because ministers and officials “need the freedom to make decisions based on the best advice available, including correspondence from outside bodies, without fear of this advice being disclosed”.

When asked about the legitimacy of the DfE’s redaction response, Maurice Frankel, director of the UK Campaign for Freedom of Information, said: “They are trying to conceal that 18 months ago there was a review, or some other word they prefer, and they are trying to keep it from the public.”

Asked about the review in the light of the redacted emails, a spokesperson for the DfE said: “There has been no formal review of studio schools and we have never set out the expectation that there is one.”

The spokesperson added that while studio schools “can be popular, we know that there have been challenges which is why we will continue to look into their performance”.

The DfE would not give any further details about what the “monitoring” of the programme consisted of.

Mr Nicoll could not be reached for comment.

Unions and colleges to march on parliament

Unions, college principals and staff will join forces on October 17 in a nationally coordinated lobby of MPs and parliament to call for fair funding for colleges.

The day, which is being run as part of the Association of Colleges “week of action”, has the backing of the National Union of Students as well as the Universities and Colleges Union.

It follows the government’s decision to fund a 3.5 per cent pay rise for school teachers while ignoring college lecturers.

The week will take place between October 15 and 19. All college students’ unions have been encouraged to “have a conversation with your principal” about getting involved.

T-level employer panel members revealed

The DfE this week published the list of T-level employer panel members for the routes that will be taught from September 2022 and 2023.

The panels are responsible for developing the outline content for the new technical qualification. They are made up of employers, professional bodies and providers and help in creating technical

education programmes.

“I am thrilled these talented industry experts have come on board to help make T-levels a success,” said skills minister Anne Milton.

“They will play a key role in creating a world-class technical education system for our country.”

Visit <https://bit.ly/2NbvUuX> to see the panel members.

Apprenticeship regional winners announced

The Education and Skills Funding Agency has started announcing the regional winners in this year’s National Apprenticeship Awards.

There are nine regional ceremonies taking place over the next three weeks. So far, winners have been unveiled in the east midlands, east of England, and the south east.

Now in their 15th year, the awards

celebrate “outstanding” apprentices, employers and individuals who go “above and beyond to champion apprenticeships across England”.

Keith Smith, director of apprenticeships at the ESFA, said: “I wish all winners the best of luck as we progress to the national stage of the competition.”

The national ceremony will take place on November 28.

GLA to cap controversial management fees at 20%

BILLY CAMDEN
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From front

Exclusive

Controversial management fees in subcontracting are set to be capped for the first time, *FE Week* can reveal.

The Greater London Authority has set out plans to introduce a 20 per cent limit on top slices for adult skills provision when devolution kicks in next year.

It follows sector-wide concerns that in many cases cash meant for learning has been diverted as prime providers levy what are widely seen as excessive management fees to cover administrative costs.

The Department for Education’s decision about introducing a cap was kicked into the long grass in August – delaying any verdict until at least the end of 2018 despite calls for a quick

outcome.

But while ministers continue to mull over their decision, London mayor Sadiq Khan has made up his mind and is currently changing the GLA’s funding rules.

A briefing document published ahead of a GLA meeting about the adult education budget this month states two “key proposed changes in our approach, compared with that of ESFA” regarding “conditions of funding”.

The main change includes a “requirement for providers to seek approval for any in-year changes to subcontracting and a proposed cap of 20 per cent on subcontracting fees”.

The briefing document also provides an interim analysis report of the consultation responses gathered through the GLA’s ‘Skills for Londoners Framework’.

“There was majority support for a 20 per cent cap on subcontractor management fees, providing higher or

varied fees could be negotiated where required,” it said.

A GLA spokesperson told *FE Week* the cap will apply to all funding, both procured contracts and grant awards.

The news of the limit is likely to send alarm bells ringing at London providers that charge higher than 20 per cent top-slices as it will make a heavy dent in their income.

Using ESFA subcontracting data for 2016/17, *FE Week* identified eight colleges that entered arrangements where they charged more than 20 per cent fees.

At Capital City College, for example, it had subcontracting deals totalling £1,159,424 last year and top-sliced £486,280, or 42 per cent.

If the GLA’s 20 per cent cap had been introduced last year the college would have lost £254,391.

The college group said its member, the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London, would be most affected by the limit.

“The college negotiates its management fees with sub-contractors based on the extent of services it provides,” said CONEL’s interim principal Kurt Hintz.

“Any caps, although well intended, will interfere with this process and make sub-contracting less flexible and potentially disadvantage or exclude especially unique or small providers from accessing the support they need from a large ‘prime’ contractor.”

New City College, which had top-slices of up to 34 per cent in 2016/17 for AEB deals, told *FE Week* it did not support the proposed cap as it believes it is “motivated by the wrong reasons”.

“Some smaller providers need substantial support to build their capacity and this justifies a higher subcontracting fee,” a spokesperson said.

Richmond upon Thames College had management fees reaching 31 per cent last year.

Its principal, Robin Ghurbhurun, said that while a 20 per cent cap is “not unreasonable” and it poses no problem for the college “as we have planned to move” to the

amount, there should be the “flexibility to locally negotiate a higher per cent rate if additional services are provided”.

Given the college responses, it came as no surprise that the Association of Colleges wasn’t supportive of the plan.

“We are not convinced that establishing a ‘norm’ on subcontractor fees would be helpful,” said Mary Vine-Morris, the AoC’s area director for London.

“Subcontracting receives misleading attention. It can be an enabling mechanism that allows smaller organisations and niche providers to contribute to the delivery of a comprehensive package of learner support.”

Several FE sector representative groups, with the notable exception of the AoC, published best practice guidance in March stating that management fees in subcontracting should not be more than 20 per cent.

Mark Dawe, boss of the AELP – which led on the guidance – welcomed the GLA’s cap.

“This means more taxpayers’ money reaches frontline delivery for the benefit of London’s businesses and adult learners,” he told *FE Week*.

Sadiq Khan



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News

College pension contributions increase could cause 'financial crisis' in FE

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The contributions college employers pay towards teacher pensions look set to rise and could cost an extra £100 million a year, leading one sector leader to warn it could spark a "financial crisis" in FE.

The outcome of a valuation of teachers' pensions suggested public sector workers will get improved benefits from April 2019.

New draft directions for the Teachers' Pension Scheme published last week said "early indications are that the amount employers pay towards the schemes will need to increase".

The Association of Colleges said it could cost colleges an extra £100 million a year on top of the £350 million they already contribute annually.

The Department for Education has committed to providing additional funding to maintained schools and academies in 2019-20 in view of "unforeseen costs" but said it was only "looking at" how it can "support FE colleges with the additional costs involved where necessary".

College teachers will welcome higher employer pension contributions following the DfE's decision not to fund a salary rise despite doing so for school teachers.

But it is likely to trouble college leaders struggling with tight budgets and funding cuts.

Bill Watkin, chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association, warned a significant increase in employer contributions to the teachers' scheme "has the potential to lead to a financial crisis in our sector".

"The government must find the funding to cover any increase in employer contributions and this funding must be for the long term," he said.

Julian Gravatt, deputy chief Executive of the Association of Colleges, added: "We've been highlighting to colleges and government since 2016 that the teacher pension valuation is likely to result in cost increases which will be hard to manage given current funding levels."

College leaders to be consulted on new senior staff pay policy

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From front

Exclusive

The Association of Colleges is developing new guidance for setting senior pay at colleges and will launch a consultation imminently.

Top level pay in the education sector has been a hot topic in recent years following the rise of chief executive salaries in multi-academy trusts and vice-chancellor wages in universities, which often exceed £150,000 – an issue that the government has taken action on.

But to date college earnings have been untouched by any official intervention, and in the growing number of college group structures several staff members could be earning over £150,000.

Now, the AoC wants to make the process of deciding senior pay more fair and transparent and is making the first amendment to its 'code of good

governance' since its creation in March 2015.

"The AoC Governors' Council will shortly launch a consultation on a new code to help governing bodies set senior pay," David Hughes, the chief executive of the association, told *FE Week*.

"The code draws on the good practice in colleges and from other sectors and will help colleges show that they are acting responsibly, fairly and openly."

He claimed that a private AoC survey shows that total senior pay "fell slightly" between 2016 and 2017 and "we believe that the college financial statements distort the pay position".

"That distortion comes when mergers result in some overlap in principals and a larger than normal number of interim

appointments in the lead up to mergers," Mr Hughes added.

He continued: "We don't believe that there is a particular problem with senior pay in colleges, with the ratio between median pay and top pay being around one to five.

"That looks reasonable compared with any private sector and most public sector comparators."

Andrew Harden, head of FE at the University and Colleges Union, said the "huge and seemingly arbitrary pay hikes" enjoyed by some college heads in recent years have "exposed the lack of transparency when it comes to senior pay".

A remuneration code is "overdue and needs proper teeth if it is to restore confidence in the sector".

FE Week analysis on college principal pay, which excludes the significant rises following mergers, shows that salaries have risen by six per cent on



David Hughes

average in the two years to July 2017.

Meanwhile, principal pay for those in sixth form colleges only went up by one per cent. According to the University and Colleges Union, the pay for lecturers has failed to keep up with inflation.

Research by the union in April of 2016/17 college accounts showed a third of all principals enjoyed a bumper pay rise of more than 10 per cent in that year while 17 earned salaries of over £200,000.

It comes at a frustrating time for college staff, after the DfE decided to fund a 3.5 per cent pay rise for school teachers while ignoring FE lecturers. UCU has since launched a ballot for strike action to take place later this year.

"The sector's case for greater funding would be a lot easier if it didn't have to keep explaining pay rises for a handful at the top that are way out of step with what college staff are paid," Mr Harden said.

In December 2017 the UCU said colleges should justify staff who are paid over £150,000 a year.

It came after the ESFA began to crack down on high pay for academy chief executives and university vice-chancellors by ordering both types of institution, which often pay salaries of more than £150,000 a year, to justify the remunerations.

Apprenticeships update: June starts down 40%

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Apprenticeship starts for June are down 40 per cent on the same month in 2016 – but up 57 per cent on last year, according to the latest figures from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

And *FE Week* analysis has revealed that the government is now 23 per cent off the trajectory to meet its three million apprenticeships target, with 22 months remaining.

The provisional figures for June 2018 show 22,300 starts, compared with 37,000 in June 2016, according to the ESFA's monthly apprenticeship statistics update, published Thursday (September 13).

That's a drop of 14,700 or 40 per cent.

The 2016 figures are final, whereas the 2018 figures are provisional. June 2016 is a better comparator than June 2017 given that there was a huge drop in starts following the introduction of the levy the previous month.

Comparing first recorded starts for June 2018 to final figures for June 2017 gives an increase of 57 per cent.

But there were only 14,200 starts in June 2017, a drop of 62 per cent on the previous year, according to final 2016/17 statistics.

For the first time in 2018, levy-

funded starts fell to less than half of the month's total.

June's 10,500 starts at levy-paying employers represented 47 per cent of all starts for the month.

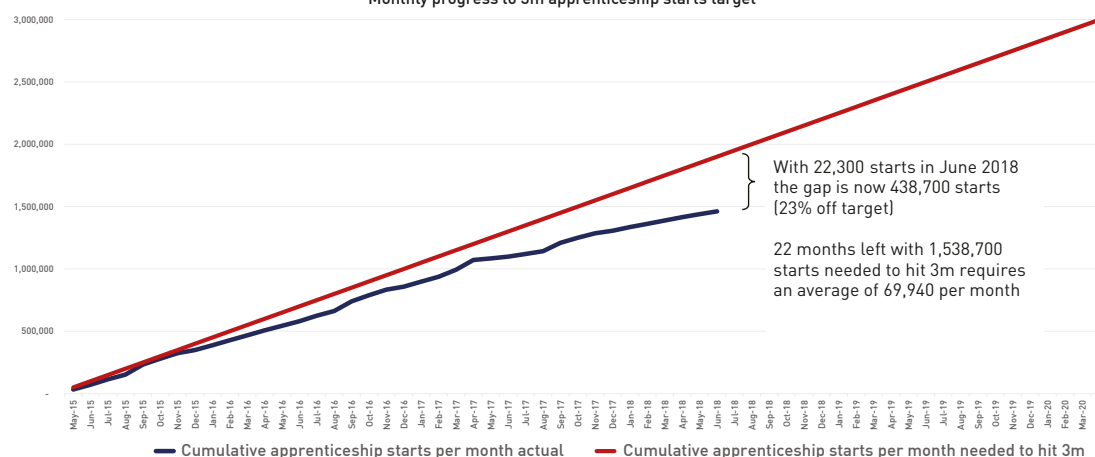
That's a drop of around four percentage points from the previous five months, when the proportion stood at just over 50 per cent.

Overall, starts for the year to date stand at 341,700 – over 150,000 short of 2016/17's final total of 494,400.

There have been 1,461,300 starts since May 2015, when the target was launched – meaning a further 1,538,700 are needed to reach three million.

With only 22 months left until the target end date, in April 2020, that's an average of 69,940 starts per month – more than three times June's total to

Monthly progress to 3m apprenticeship starts target



date.

"The latest apprenticeship statistics appear to show a new 'steady state' of apprenticeship starts of around 20-30,000 per month", said Stephen Evans, chief executive of the Learning and Work Institute.

He urged the Department for Education to do more work on "boosting quality and widening access and tackling the barriers to participation that too many groups of people face who would like to take up an apprenticeship".

Over the summer the government appeared to walk away from its oft-repeated three million target.

A spokesperson for the prime minister reportedly refused to back the target, despite being asked about

it multiple times during a Downing Street lobby briefing in August.

And the DfE subsequently told *FE Week* it had nothing further to add.

However, in response to a parliamentary question this week from Robert Halfon asking if the target was still in place, skills minister Anne Milton said it was an "ambitious goal" that "remains our ambition".

According to the commentary published alongside the statistics, "caution should be taken" in interpreting the figures as they are not final and "it is not possible to determine how complete or incomplete the information returned is so far".

First reported figures for 2016/17 were "as much as 18 per cent" below the final figures, it said.

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News

Schools falling short of new DfE rules on career guidance

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Exclusive

Schools are failing to comply with new careers guidance rules, further fuelling concern from FE providers that the Baker clause is being ignored.

FE Week analysis found the 10 biggest multi-academy trusts in England have not conformed to a new requirement that says all schools must publish detailed careers information online.

And in a survey of FE providers commissioned by the Department for Education, only five per cent of respondents said they found all schools have been compliant in their area in allowing providers to enter schools to speak to learners.

The DfE said it plans to begin auditing schools and will directly intervene where necessary to ensure all schools are complying with the Baker clause. Skills minister Anne Milton has encouraged providers to report on schools that are not following the new regulations by contacting her directly.

From September 1, academies, free schools and colleges should publish details about the careers programme delivered to pupils from Year 8 until Year 13, contact details for their careers leader, how the school measures the success of the careers programme and when the published information will next be reviewed.

However, none of the 10 biggest

Academy trust	Number of schools*	Number of secondary/all through schools	Schools complying
Academies Enterprise Trust	58	25	20
United Learning Trust	49	33	17
Oasis Community Learning	47	19	6
Kemnal Academies Trust	43	14	8
Delta Academies Trust	42	17	12
Ormiston Academies Trust	35	31	14
Plymouth CAST	35	2	1
Harris Federation	33	26	24
David Ross Education Trust	32	11	2
Greenwood Academies Trust	31	8	5

*Data according to Department for Education open academies and academy projects August 2018 statistics

trusts in England have 100 per cent compliance from all of their secondary schools. FE Week's investigation has unearthed empty careers webpages, expectations that the "vast majority" of pupils will simply attend university and some websites that do not mention careers at all.

A spokesperson for the DfE said if a school does not provide this information, the department "will write to the school and ask for evidence of compliance".

She added: "If this is not followed, we will take appropriate action." But she would not give details on how

compliance is being monitored or what action will be taken against schools.

Oasis Academy Don Valley, run by Oasis Community Learning, has a blank careers page, while Oasis Academy Enfield and Oasis Academy Hadley have only published careers information in a section for post-16 learners, which states: "We expect that the vast majority of our Year 13 students will go on to university when they leave."

An Oasis spokesperson said its academies will publish new information "in the coming weeks".

Less than half of the 31 secondary

schools run by Ormiston Academies Trust have followed the requirements for publishing careers guidance, and as have only two of the 11 run by the David Ross Education Trust.

A spokesperson for Ormiston said the trust would ensure its complete compliance by the end of September, and added that its careers guidance "has not been driven by a need to meet website regulation, which is not an indication of quality, but by a firm belief that best-practice careers guidance transforms life chances".

Kemnal and Greenwood academies trusts said their schools were working

towards being fully compliant, and Delta Academies Trust said new websites for all of its academies will go live this month. A spokesperson for Academies Enterprise Trust said the trust expected all its academies to be compliant and was supporting them to make sure they were.

Mark Dawe, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said it had to be asked "whether the schools failing on careers guidance are really serving the interests of their students."

"They should surely be explaining that apprenticeships are now available up to and including degree level with top employers, good salaries and no debt."

FE providers have also revealed that schools are not fully complying with the Baker Clause requirement, which says schools must open their doors to providers to speak to pupils about technical and vocational training.

AELP carried out a survey of 74 providers on behalf of the DfE in June. Although the government has not made the results public, FE Week has obtained them through a freedom of information request.

They showed that just five per cent of respondents said they had experienced full compliance in their area, while nearly 20 per cent found no compliance at all.

Mr Dawe said the survey results "demonstrate why this is such a vital issue", and said local networks of apprenticeship providers should be "fully engaged in the fulfilling of the Baker Clause requirements".

Chartered Institution for Further Education on the ropes?

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Exclusive

The head of the Chartered Institution for Further Education has insisted its survival is not hanging in the balance, even though the government failed to provide any funding for it in this year's budget.

Dan Wright's defence of the CIFE also comes despite having just 14 members – far fewer than the 80 he previously said it needed to become self-sustaining.

FE Week started asking questions about the institute's future after the Department for Education last month published its executive agency spend

for March which included a £220,000 payment to the CIFE.

The DfE said this was the second and final payment going to the institute under their 2017-18 grant funding agreement following a payment of £210,000 in October.

A spokesperson then confirmed that the government had no further commitments to fund the institute.

Last year's £430,000 DfE prop-up was given on top of £1 million in payments to the institute since it was conceived in 2012, as FE Week revealed in January.

Although Mr Wright, the institute's chief executive, told FE Week that conversations with the DfE about additional subsidy for 2018-19 were ongoing, he admitted no decisions had yet been made.

Considering the CIFE is 64 members off the number it needs to become self-funding, it appears unlikely that the institute will be able to continue without more government grants.

But Mr Wright was keen to play down the possibility that his institute is on the ropes, saying discussions with the department were continuing with meetings scheduled in the near future and a number of new members joining.

He told FE Week: "We are looking forward to the government giving every support as we expand our membership."

"We do have a growing income stream from membership and it has always been the intention to be self-funding."

The CIFE, the brainchild of the

former skills minister John Hayes, was created to get high-achieving FE providers Royal Charter status.

But six years after its conception, it is still being funded by public money, with payments to date totalling nearly £1.5 million.

In January Mr Wright told FE Week the institute needs 80 members to be "completely free" of government subsidy.

He had a plan agreed with the DfE setting out how the institution will be self-sufficient by mid-2019.

Mr Wright would not comment on whether the institute would achieve the goal.

The DfE would also not comment on the CIFE's progress to becoming self-funding.



Dan Wright



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College**

News

Great debate on T-levels: an an

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The motion: This house believes the T-level reform implementation timeframe is ambitious but not reckless

More than 200 figures from across the FE and skills sector gathered at the Houses of Parliament on Monday, September 10 for FE Week and Pearson's second Great Debate, this time on the implementation of T-levels.

Just a week after the launch of the

controversial invitation to tender to find a single awarding organisation for three T-level pathways, the debate focused on whether the government's timetable for offering T-levels by 2020 was ambitious or reckless.

It was hosted by Robert Halfon, chair of the education select committee and facilitated by Shane Mann, managing director of FE Week's publisher LSECT.

Speaking for the motion was Catherine Sezen, the Association of Colleges senior policy manager for 14 to 19 and curriculum, while FE Week editor Nick Linford argued against it.

The panel also featured Susan Lovelock, deputy director of the technical education implementation division at the Department for Education, and Rod Bristow, Pearson's UK and core countries president.

Ms Sezen faced an uphill struggle in the debate, with only Ms Lovelock voting in favour of the motion at the start. Nonetheless, she managed to win over one audience member by the end, as did Nick Linford.

The rest of the audience remained as they had been, the majority against and some still undecided.

For the motion

The Department for Education's timetable for introducing the first T-levels in 2020 is ambitious – but it has to be, argued Ms Sezen.

"We need to be ambitious for our young people, for our economy and for our future," she urged as she set out her case as a champion for the government's approach.

"You could argue that it's reckless to keep the status quo," she said.

This was the central theme of Ms Sezen's arguments, as she focused on the need for everyone involved – providers, employers, assessment organisations and government – to unite behind the DfE's timetable.

Nowhere was this more the case than with industry placements, which have so far proved to be the most contentious element of the new qualifications.

In the face of many concerns about employers' ability to offer enough placements to meet demand, Ms Sezen struck a more aspirational note.

"Think how attractive it is for young people to experience the workplace, be part of a team and involved in a project," she said.

"It is incumbent on all of us to make that work. We all need to make sure we're offering opportunities for those placements."

There is "no doubt" that meeting demand will call for "thinking outside the box", she said.

"Colleges are currently embracing this challenge, and so must we all."

The government is taking a "measured approach" to the overall implementation of T-levels, Ms Sezen told the audience.

"It is being managed to allow for gradual implementation," she said.

"There are just 54 providers, all of which are outstanding or good, who will

be delivering in 2020."

And while the timeframe for implementation is undeniably tight, "currently the timelines that were published in May are being kept to", Ms Sezen pointed out.

"I don't doubt there will be challenges as we go forward," she admitted, but "all our energies should be centred on getting it right".

Speaking on behalf of the government, Ms Lovelock insisted it was "making very strong progress" against its "undoubtedly ambitious" timetable, and was "monitoring delivery and managing risks at every stage".

She acknowledged that industry placements were the "part of the programme that's going to test and challenge the most".

But, she said, "we've got a comprehensive programme of work in place to support" their delivery, including "research and evaluation and analysis, lots of new guidance and support material that's available for employers and providers, and a pilot programme that we ran last year".

"I think this is an area where we are genuinely investing years ahead of delivery," she said.

"We're investing in capacity this year so that we can really test out and start to work through some of the challenges."

The department was working closely with the first 54 providers to "really get into the detail of implementation" and to "use their experience with the planning", Ms Lovelock said.

"We're learning at every step of the way from what they do at a local level to see how we can support providers at a national level," she added.

The DfE's requirement for those first providers to have "existing provision in those subjects" they'll be delivering in

2020 will "really make sure we've got the right workforce and the right facilities in place to teach T-levels in a high-quality way".

Ms Lovelock acknowledged that there may be challenges in recruiting skilled people to teach the new courses – particularly in digital and construction – but insisted that the government was "investing in those areas" to encourage more people to get into FE.

"If we are setting off on a big reform programme it clearly makes sense to do that in those subjects where we know there are skills gaps and we want to plug those gaps," she said.

In his opening speech as host of the debate, Mr Halfon also appeared to back the government's approach – although he recognised that there were problems that needed to be ironed out.

"I am keen to get them introduced sooner rather than later because I believe that we're so far behind many other countries in terms of skills that I don't think we can delay introducing T-levels," he said.



Catherine Sezen



The panel [l-r] Rod Bristow, Catherine Sezen, Robert Halfon, Shane Mann, Nick Linford and Susan Lovelock



Audience



Mark Dawe

Chief executive, Association of Employment and Learning Providers

In many sectors a classroom-based programme with very little on-the-job training will not lead to progression onto level 4. It will be back to level 3 again, on an apprenticeship with everyone else, and that seems wrong. I don't think there's been enough debate about progression, particularly into work, and I think that could undermine the whole programme.



Alan Woods

Chief executive, VTCT

I just wanted to make some comments on the bridging provision for the young people moving from level 2 to level 3, given that 99,000 out of 137,000 people who had to retake their GCSE English failed. Just how prepared are we in the bridging provision, moving somebody from those level 2 qualifications to level 3?

ambitious or reckless timetable?

Against the motion



Rod Bristow and Catherine Sezen

The government's timetable for introducing the first T-levels is "reckless", according to *FE Week* editor Nick Linford, because a rushed process raises the risk that "bad decisions are made".

Furthermore, he said, it was reckless because the government is "not being honest with you about the systems they are designing".

Following on from education secretary Damian Hinds' decision in May to overrule his most senior civil servant's request to delay the introduction of T-levels by a year, there had been a number of "speedy consultations" with "unheard of" short deadlines, Mr Linford said.

"The consequence of that, and the reason why I think reckless is an appropriate word here, is that bad decisions are made. Ill-informed," he said.

"You in this room, you are the experts. Yes, we have employer groups, but they are not the experts on assessments. They are not the experts on teaching 16-year-olds in classrooms."

There is still so much to do before September 2020, Mr Linford added.

This included the seven-and-a-half week tendering process for the single awarding organisation that will deliver each T-level, which requires awarding organisations to plough through "over 500 pages of legal documents".

"That's before you start responding by putting in what I hope are going to be extremely high quality bids, because it's then down to the officials to make sure that they choose wisely," he said.

Once the awarding organisations have been chosen, they'll have a year to design the qualifications – leaving providers just three and a half months to get up to speed with the content before delivery begins.

"I accept they're being briefed, but they don't have the content yet, they don't have the awarding organisations – they don't even know who they are yet, they're still to be picked," he said.

All of this raises the chances that the first T-levels will be "not the best qualification", delivered by an "under-developed, unprepared workforce" in September 2020.

As a result, "rather than being gold standard in the first few years, we

actually let down our young people".

The damage to the T-level brand would be "immediate", and "there's no going back from that sort of damage", he said.

Points made by members of the audience, around bridging, progression and switching between T-levels and other courses, showed just how much uncertainty still surrounds the reforms.

Many of these same questions were first raised in the skills plan that set T-levels in motion back in 2016.

"All of these the government is very familiar with, but we haven't moved on. We're asking the same questions, with not even a clue as to what are those answers," Mr Linford said.

"My fear is because of the speed we now need, all energy will be on September 2020" and there will "no energy" left over for these other challenges.

One final reason why the timetable was reckless, Mr Linford argued, was because the DfE was not being honest about its design – which, he said, was "to only have T-levels where in that locality there is progression to skilled employment where there are currently gaps".

In some areas of the country there is "no one to sell the work placement concept to".

"Now, if the department were being honest with you, that is the design," he added.

"One of the things the department needs to decide very quickly is whether the industry placement needs to have been determined at the start of the course" otherwise there was a risk that providers will "recruit young people with the best intentions and never find an employer – because they're not there".

Panel member Mr Bristow expressed his concern about the DfE's decision to grant exclusive licences to awarding organisations to develop T-levels, warning that the approach risked stifling innovation.

"We've got a lot of people in this room, all of whom have a lot of expertise, and make a big contribution to the success of T-levels and technical education, and it's vital that we use that expertise and we build on the capacity in the system that we've got, because we need all the help we can get to make this work," he said.



Nick Linford

comments



Simon Martin

Executive consultant, Academy Transformation Trust Further Education

We are facing a serious ultimate problem with workforce capacity. If you look at the kind of salaries that people with the skills and industry experience that T-levels are looking for could demand in industry, and then you look at some of the salaries in the FE sector, then it's quite difficult to see how some of those initiatives are going to work in practice.



Lucy Hunte

National programme manager for apprenticeships, Health Education England

We have been involved in some of the pilots for industry placements, and the feedback from the young people and the employers has been really poor – so it is a huge concern for us. In an NHS hospital we're all massively understaffed. How are we going to support these placements at the volumes that we're being asked to do?

Investigates

College makes media star of learner with

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From front

Colleges hit the headlines this summer – but for all the wrong reasons.

Louis Makepeace, an 18-year-old with dwarfism, claimed to have been rejected for a catering course at Heart of Worcestershire College because his height would make him a health and safety risk.

His story was reported nationally, prompting criticism of the college and the way it handled the situation.

We outline what happened – and offer advice for other colleges that might find themselves in a similar media storm.

In the space of less than a month, 18-year-old Louis Makepeace has been catapulted from wannabe

chef to working in the kitchen of a Michelin-starred restaurant, with an apprenticeship with Gordon Ramsay on offer – and the subject of a Channel Five documentary.

Just how did this happen?

The saga started on August 16, when Louis went for a one-on-one interview with the course leader of the level one introduction to professional cookery course at Heart of Worcestershire College.

“The first thing he told me in the interview room was that I’d never get any future employment if I wanted to be a chef. There was no point in me going to the college and learning the trade,” Louis alleged.

He said he asked about having a kitchen adapted to his needs, but was told “it would be far too much work to put in” and “it would disrupt the other students”.

“I said, well, can’t I just use a stool in the meantime? And he said it’d be a health and safety risk to have a stool in



Louis in action on ITV’s This Morning

“I think it’s outrageous the way they’ve treated me”

the kitchen,” Louis told *FE Week*.

The college interview left him “heartbroken”.

“I’d never been discriminated against like that before – I didn’t even think that was acceptable.

“This is my education they’re ruining. I want to be a chef, and they’re stopping me from getting a chance a train,” Louis told *FE Week* last month.

He said he’d been told by the course leader that he had a conditional offer of a place, subject to a health and safety check.

But he claimed he never heard back from the college – and when his mother chased it up a few days later she was told by the course leader that Louis should look for another course.

However, the college has refuted Louis’ version of events [see below].

The apparent rejection prompted the pair to go to the newspapers, with his story featuring on the BBC, Daily Mail, the Sun and the Daily Star, and on ITV’s *This Morning* show on August 29, among others.

Celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay even muscled in on the action, with a tweet that he would “offer him an apprenticeship any day”.

That wasn’t the only apprenticeship on offer, with Michelin-starred restaurant Pied-a-Terre also inviting him to train with them.

Meanwhile, the college still hadn’t said whether it would be able to offer Louis a place.

He told *FE Week* on August 30 he’d been treated “appallingly” by the college, and wouldn’t accept a place even if it was offered to him.

“I think it’s outrageous the way they’ve treated me, making me wait so long just to get an answer if I could be in their kitchen or not. It’s just disgraceful,” he said.

Earlier this month the college confirmed that Louis had told it he no longer wished to study there.

“We wish Louis the best of luck with his future career,” a spokesperson said.



Louis Makepeace

‘NINE TIMES OUT OF 10 YOU SHOULD COMMENT’

Ruth Sparkes is managing director of EMPRA, an education sector communications agency.

She offers her advice to colleges what to do if – like Heart of Worcestershire College – they find themselves at the centre of a media storm.

“Being called by a journalist out of the blue to corroborate a negative story is always difficult,” she said.

But the best thing to do in most situations is “get as much information as possible” and then “put together a response”.

If the information being asked to comment on has come from someone willing to be named “then the story will run and nine times out of 10 you should comment”.

“Remember, journalists have a job to do, and if you don’t engage with them, they may well run with commentary from anyone who appears to be in the know or even moderately informed, however inaccurate they turn out to be.”

Ms Sparkes has five top tips:

1. What to ask the journalist

Get as much information as you can from the journalist, Ms Sparkes advised. Ask them what the story is, where it has come from, what proof they have of what you’re being asked to comment on, and if anyone else has been asked to comment.

Ask the journalist to send you a list of their questions. You don’t have to answer all of them, but it can be helpful to see them as it can give you a clue on the line they’re hoping to take.

And be clear on their absolute deadline.

2. What to do

Find out what actually happened, who was involved, who was consulted and what the current state of play is.

3. What to share

Your statement should be short and clear, without using waffle or ‘eduspeak’.

It must highlight that you understand and accept the situation, and apologise if appropriate

– although you may need to take legal advice here depending on the issue.

It should show there is a positive journey ahead – that you’ve learned lessons, implemented training or engaged an expert external organisation to ensure this sort of thing won’t happen again.

4. What to expect

If the story has the potential to be picked up nationally you should plan for the worst.

One clear indicator that a story is going to go national is if the journalist works for a news agency rather than a local paper.

If it’s a local journalist but they work with a news agency, or the local paper is part of a large newspaper group, there’s a high chance the story will be syndicated.

Monitoring social media in these circumstances is important.

Keep an eye on readers’ comments or the social media sites for the papers that

have covered the story, and respond where appropriate.

If the story is covered on the TV or radio, you should only put forward a spokesperson that has had media training.

Make sure they know the public statement and key message – and give them practice answering the most horrible questions you can think of.

5. What do other people need to know?

You may need to think about learners, parents, staff, feeder schools and wider community: what do you need to tell them, and how?

Your website and social media channels can be useful for this, but they should be monitored and any comments or questions responded to if appropriate.

Think about whether anyone else needs to know what’s happening before publication, for example the chair of governors, staff, student union president or relevant MPs.

dwarfism - but for all the wrong reasons



Celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay's tweet offering Louis an apprenticeship



The front page of the Daily Star, August 29

Louis has yet to decide exactly what his next move will be, describing the interest in his future as “overwhelming”.

He told FE Week this week that he'd been for a training day with Pied-a-Terre in London, working alongside its head chef in the heat of the kitchen.

He used a stool – the very thing the college had said would be a health and safety risk.

“It was a busy kitchen with other chefs around me, and they adapted very smoothly,” he said, with “no collisions, no hazards”.

“I worked in the busiest part of the kitchen, too, so it proved a point.”

He has one more training day at the restaurant, when he will be preparing canapes for a food festival. After this shift he expects to be told if they want to take him on or not.

Regardless of the outcome, Louis is upbeat about the experience: “I've definitely had a very good time working in the restaurant. Even if they

don't ask me back, I've done it and I've learned from it.”

As for Gordon Ramsay's apprenticeship offer, Louis said that talks with the celebrity chef's agent haven't moved forward, although he hasn't yet ruled it out.

Another unexpected outcome from the media frenzy is that Louis will star in a Channel Five documentary focusing on “people with restricted growth trying to create a career for themselves”.

It's being filmed at the moment, and is expected to air some time in 2019.

“I feel it's really important for me to show that even though I've been knocked back from the college I've been able to turn that into a positive and carry on trying to gain as much experience as I can and to create a career,” he said.

If the offers from Pied a Terre and Gordon Ramsay don't work out, Louis has his sights set on doing an apprenticeship elsewhere “working in

the kitchen alongside real chefs”.

He wouldn't go back to college because “I think it'll set me back”.

“I've got so many opportunities and I don't really want to be wasting time in a college environment.”

The college's side of the story

When Louis first hit the headlines, the story was told entirely from his perspective.

According to the first articles published on August 27, the college said “we do not wish to make a comment” as “the student's place is still under discussion”.

It was only the following day, August 28, when the college belatedly tweeted a statement refuting the allegations.

That statement said it was carrying out a “review process” to “ensure all the appropriate adjustments to the kitchens that Louis needs to allow him to safely and successfully commence his course” and to meet his needs throughout his course were “in place in time for the start of his studies”.

“We would like to state that at no point has Louis been told he could not attend his course but both Louis and Mrs Makepeace have been informed that the adjustments Louis requires will need to be agreed before an unconditional offer can be given.”

It also told FE Week that the course leader had not made the comments that Louis and his mother alleged he had made.

The college had attempted to make contact with Louis' mother but had been unable to speak to her and she had not responded to messages asking her to make contact, a spokesperson said.

But by the time the college responded to the allegations it was too late.

Following the widespread coverage of Louis' story, the college was condemned on social media for its treatment of the teenager.

And tweets by Gordon Ramsay and Warwick Davis, an actor and TV presenter who also has a form of dwarfism, helped stoke that outrage.

“This is so sad,” Warwick Davis tweeted.

“In a world that is supposed to promote diversity, equality and inclusion, Louis Makepeace has the right to access this cooking course with the proper adaptations and the college has a duty to provide.”

FE Week asked the college if it wanted to comment on the media coverage of Louis' story and how it handled the situation, but it declined to do so.

WHAT IS THE COLLEGE LEGALLY REQUIRED TO DO?

Colleges, like other education providers, are covered by the Equality Act 2010, which means they can't discriminate against disabled learners.

They're also required to put in place ‘reasonable adjustments’ so that disabled learners are able to access the same standard of education as other learners.

“Everyone must have the opportunity to reach their potential through education and education providers must make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled students are not discriminated against or treated unfairly,” a spokesperson for the Equality and Human Rights Commission said.

This duty applies to the college's policies, procedures and activities. It also applies to physical features including entrances, exits, toilets, lights, flooring and furniture, and to any auxiliary aids such as supportive equipment or staff.

Examples of reasonable adjustments include giving a learner more time to complete an exam if their disability causes them to write more slowly, or providing a sign language interpreter for deaf students.

There are a number of factors that colleges and other education

providers can take into account when deciding if a particular adjustment is reasonable, including its cost and practicability.

In Louis' case, the course leader allegedly said that he would present a health and safety risk to the other students.

According to the EHRC, health and safety is a “relevant factor to take into account when assessing the needs of a disabled student” but it “must not be used inappropriately to avoid making reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs”.

Guidance published by the EHRC in 2015 on reasonable adjustments for pupils says “there might be instances in which, although an adjustment could be made, it would not be reasonable to do so because it would endanger the health and safety either of the disabled pupil or of other people”.

However, “health and safety issues must not be used inappropriately to avoid making a reasonable adjustment”.

The Ofsted inspection handbook states colleges will be judged on how well they “prepare learners who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to become more independent in their everyday life”.



Following the recent coverage surrounding Louis Makepeace and his place on our Hospitality and Catering course, we would like to release the below statement.

Statement

Heart of Worcestershire College prides itself on being an inclusive and diverse organisation that endeavours to offer opportunities to all.

The College has previously worked closely with Louis Makepeace during his time on our Performing Arts course in 2016/17 where he successfully completed his first year.

Following Louis' recent application to our Hospitality and Catering course which begins in September 2018, the College has undertaken a review process, as it does with all of its students, to ensure all the appropriate adjustments to the kitchens that Louis needs to allow him to safely and successfully commence his course, and to ensure his needs are met throughout his time at College are in place in time for the start of his studies.

Due to the timing of Louis application, this process is still ongoing and after further discussions have taken place both at the College and with Louis himself, we hope to have a final outcome by the end of this week.

We would like to state that at no point has Louis been told he could not attend his course but both Louis and Mrs Makepeace have been informed that the adjustments Louis requires will need to be agreed before an unconditional offer can be given.

The College has previously seen students with conditions similar to Louis succeed both academically and in industry and we have no doubt that Louis will too succeed in his chosen field.

Investigates

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Exclusive

By 2020, when the apprenticeship reforms will have taken full effect, there are likely to be around 500,000 end-point assessments carried out every year.

Sally Collier, chief regulator at exams watchdog Ofqual, told a room full of training providers at the Association of Employment and Learning Providers' conference in June, that she was "concerned" over assessors' capacity and capability to meet this surge in demand.

In July, *FE Week* reported on Ofqual's plans for capacity audits at the end-point assessment organisations they oversee as an external quality assurance provider.

But what is affecting EPA organisations' ability to recruit qualified assessors? Are they confident they'll be able to meet demand?

FE Week spoke to more than a dozen organisations delivering those all-important final exams.

End-point assessments are still in their infancy.

According to Department for Education statistics, there were just 1,210 achievements on standards, including end-point assessments, in the first nine months of 2017/18 compared to 180,180 on the old-style frameworks.

Nonetheless, many EPA organisations are already facing

challenges in recruiting enough assessors – prompting the boss of the largest one to say he is "very worried" about the sector's ability to meet demand as it grows.

NOCN is signed up to deliver the final exams for 44 standards – more than any other organisation.

Its managing director, Graham Hasting-Evans, said it was able to meet current demand across all those standards, but that "this is against a background of very low numbers of apprenticeship starts", with only a slow increase predicted.

Downward pressure on funding was also likely to bite, he warned.

"We are therefore very worried that, in the next year, the sector will find major challenges in sourcing sufficient EPA assessors," he said.

Mr Hasting-Evans is not alone. While almost all of those *FE Week* spoke to were confident about their ability to meet demand now, many admitted to sleepless nights about continuing to do so in future.

Understandably, not everyone was willing to go on the record about their fears. But those that did highlighted a range of issues that should give officials cause for concern.

"We're working pretty much in the dark"

A number of assessment organisations said they could meet demand for the assessments they knew about – but it was the assessments they didn't know about that were worrying them.



Providers and employers are "reluctant" to indicate when an apprentice will be ready for assessment, according to Terry Fennell, chief executive of FDQ, which is registered to deliver the final exams for five food industry standards.

While the rules say that the employer or provider must inform the EPA organisation once they've been chosen, "this is not happening in reality".

As a result, organisations "have to speculate take-up figures, so building adequate capacity for EPA is a precarious exercise", Mr Fennell said.

Combined with a lag in when starts are reported, this means they are "working pretty much in the dark".

It's a situation playing out across a number of assessment organisations.

Tim Hattersley, apprenticeship director at DSW Consulting, which is on the register for 23 standards across the business sector, said many providers and employers didn't know they had to register with the EPA organisation.

"That could throw a spanner in the works if there is a lot more out there than any of us believe," he said.

For some of the "very, very large

volume standards" there will be a "certain pace of registration that will come as a bit of a shock", he said.

"At that point we'd need to know what would we do if we got 1,000 more learners arriving and they're going to reach gateway in three months' time and they've all got to be assessed," he said.

The 'occupational competency' struggle

Many standards have strict rules on who is qualified to deliver the

WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT DOING ABOUT THIS?

Ofqual's chief regulator Sally Collier first voiced concerns over end-point assessment capability and capacity at the AELP annual conference in June.

Just a month later the exams watchdog confirmed it would be carrying out a series of audits "to help understand how the EPA organisations we regulate are mitigating risks" around this issue – audits that are now underway (pictured).

But Phil Beach, Ofqual's executive director for vocational and technical qualifications would not be drawn on any specific concerns that had prompted the visits.

Instead, he told *FE Week* they were part of its "business-as-usual activity" designed to "make sure that, in a period of significant transformation, we look at those areas where we think the change will bite".

"We do recognise that this is a new world,

therefore having an audit programme early on in the process is really important, to inform the Institute for Apprenticeships and other external quality assurance providers, so that we can take a systemic response," he said.

Once the audits are complete, which is expected to be in 2019, Ofqual will share its findings – "issues and good practice" – with other EQA providers and the IfA.

It will also "disseminate points of good practice across AOs, and where we find limitations, we will seek to address them through our regulatory powers," he warned.

Heather Akehurst, chief executive of Open Awards, which is contracted to carry out EQA on behalf of the IfA, said it had not yet "identified any EPA organisation who lacks the ability and capacity to carry out their role".

"We are however aware of the concern and will be vigilant in our ongoing monitoring," she said.

Both the Department for Education and the IfA said they were "aware of the challenges" that EPA organisations were facing and were "working with them and their representative bodies to address the issues that they raise with us".

"We are also working with individual EPA organisations to provide support and advice on dealing with the changes in demand for end-point assessment," both said.

The IfA said it was also "doing work to ensure that employers engage with EPA organisations in a timely manner" and that assessment organisations "are able to gear up to meet the demand from employers".

is also published... We have pleased to engage with EPAOs and employers on our EQA approach, and will continue to do so. With these rules in place, we are now beginning a programme of work on the delivery of EPAs. This will include a programme of audits to help understand how the EPAOs we regulate are mitigating risks around the capacity and capability of EPA assessors.

Where an apprenticeship trailblazer group has select

Could they be able to cope in the long-term?

Charlotte Bosworth, managing director of Innovate Awarding, which is signed up to deliver assessments for 26 standards, said she was struggling to recruit assessors for two healthcare standards due to the requirement for them to be a currently registered nurse.

"It's really challenging to find someone in that position who is willing and able to put in the time to do the assessments," she said.

Innovate had only managed to attract a small number of assessors for these standards, despite going out to recruit "a number of times".

It's not just recruiting assessors – it's keeping them

Many of the assessment organisations told *FE Week* they'd managed to recruit large banks of assessors. But because assessment numbers are so low at the moment, these are mostly on a freelance basis – and as demand grows, there's no guarantee they will all still be available.

Ms Bosworth told *FE Week* they were having to work to keep their assessors "warm", as they "aren't working at full capacity yet".

Nonetheless, she said it was "challenging" to retain them, and some had dropped out to take up a full-time job, while others had left as EPA "just isn't for them".

"It is new and very different to assessments many have carried out previously," she said.

In addition, as a number of assessment organisations pointed out, there is only a limited pool of qualified assessors out there – and the same ones may be signing up with multiple organisations.

"Clearly that could mean, in due course, that once those people are starting to be tied up then they're not available to another one that they're registered with," said Mr Hattersley.

Is Ofqual's concern valid?

It's almost impossible to predict the picture for assessor capacity and capability once numbers have hit their peak – given the uncertainty over apprenticeship starts.

The assessment organisations *FE Week* spoke to were all doing the best they could to plan ahead, but this was for the next year when numbers are still set to be relatively low.

According to Mr Fennell, while "every chief executive of an EPA organisation out there" is working hard to overcome these challenges, "most of us are in uncharted waters trying to predict the market forces and delivery of new services".

"It's going to be an interesting ride in the next couple of years."

CAN ASSESSMENT ORGANISATIONS AFFORD TO DELIVER EPA?

The Institute for Apprenticeships is currently reviewing the funding bands for 31 popular apprenticeships.

Though the results are yet to be confirmed, we know a number of standards are facing cuts – and this downward pressure on funding is likely to make issues with EPA even worse.

Education and Skills Funding Agency guidance stipulates that EPA costs "should not usually exceed 20 per cent of the funding band maximum", so if this rate is reduced, so too is the amount available for the final exams.

Many EPA organisations are already struggling to make ends meet on the assessments they're carrying out.

According to Graham Hasting-Evans, managing director of NOCN, end-point assessments costs are "mainly driven by the daily rate that must be paid to the assessor".

For some of the higher level, specialist standards, he said this fee could be as high as £1,000 a day, which far outweighs the funding available.

Even when they were paying assessors standard rates, some organisations said they were barely making any money – if at all.

The cost to the assessment

organisation for delivering the final exams depends on many factors, including location.

An assessment taking place in a rural location, far from the nearest available assessor, will inevitably cost more to deliver – due to increased travel costs.

However, some felt this situation would improve once numbers picked up, as they'd be able to assess more apprentices in one go, or have more assessors available to them, which would bring the cost down.

Alternatively, they'd be able to take on assessors on a full-time or permanent basis, if there was a guarantee of frequent work.

Others were less optimistic, with one organisation, which wanted to remain anonymous, believing that "only time will tell if it's worthwhile" to deliver some assessments.

Mr Hastings-Evans urged the government to do more to support EPA organisations with assessment costs.

"If we are to attract the large numbers of high quality assessors that are going to be needed, we will need to be able to adequately reward them and also be able to recover the substantial recruitment and training costs the EPA organisations have to bear upfront," he said.

WHERE ARE EPA ORGANISATIONS RECRUITING THEIR ASSESSORS FROM?

When it comes to recruiting assessors, there's no one-size-fits-all approach.

A number of the assessment organisations *FE Week* spoke to said they were drawing from existing pools of assessors.

These could be external verifiers, internal quality assurers, on-programme assessors or those with an external quality assurance background, who perhaps currently work for training providers or awarding organisations.

However, as Graham Hasting-Evans, managing director of NOCN, pointed out, the difficulty with this approach is the Institute for Apprenticeships' insistence on "occupational competency and continuing professional development" in assessors – requirements that are "difficult for existing assessors to match".

Because of this requirement, some organisations have taken a different approach and are recruiting from industry and then training them up to be assessors.

Ben Cressey, director of apprenticeships and work-based learning at Highfield Qualifications, said they saw the new requirements as "an opportunity to explore even further what recruiting from industry looks like". It then provides its own training to equip the assessors

with the relevant assessment skills.

He said that approach, one of a number it has taken to recruitment, was "working really well" for Highfield, which is registered to deliver the final assessments for 25 standards across a number of industries including transport and logistics, and health and social care.

Chris Young, managing director of Future Qualifications, told *FE Week* he was drawing on the resources of 10 different NHS trusts the organisation worked with to recruit assessors for the level four associate ambulance practitioner standard.

To avoid any possibility of conflict of interest, an assessor from one trust would assess apprentices at another, he said.

Other organisations that aren't traditional awarding bodies are able to take advantage of their existing links with industry.

Tony Howard, director of training at BESA Group, which is on the register for nine standards, the majority of which are in the construction industry, said that "as a trade association we are not finding resourcing qualified assessors an issue" as "we do have in-depth resources effectively available to us".

Apprenticeship achievements Aug 2017 - Apr 2018

Standard	Level	Achievements
Dual Fuel Smart Meter Installer	2	340
Infrastructure Technician	3	110
Professional Accounting Taxation Technician	4	110
Public Service Operational Delivery Officer	3	50
Hospitality Team Member	2	50
Insurance Practitioner	3	40
Senior Financial Services Customer Adviser	3	40
Surveying Technician	3	40
Associate Ambulance Practitioner	4	40
Digital and Technology Solutions Professional	6	40
Financial Services Customer Adviser	2	40
Power Network Craftsperson	3	30
Investment Operations Specialist	4	30
Property Maintenance Operative	2	30
Broadcast Production Assistant	3	20
Railway Engineering Design Technician	3	20
Butcher	2	20
Commis Chef	2	20
Retailer	2	20
12 other standards with 10 achievements		120
Total		1,210

Sally Collier

Profile

Introducing...

TOM BEWICK

Chief executive, Federation of Awarding Bodies

CATH MURRAY
CATH@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Tom Bewick recently took over the top job at the membership organisation Federation of Awarding Bodies. *FE Week* caught up with him four months into the job, to find out what led him to where he is today

"You're not going to write one of those profiles where you dissect my food choices, are you?" asks Tom Bewick, scanning the menu nervously.

Having had nothing but breezily confident emails from the new chief executive of the Federation of Awarding Bodies, his apprehensiveness takes me by surprise.

It's been a big couple of months for Bewick. In fact, everything is coming to a head on the day we meet, with the federation threatening to take the government to court over their decision to allow only one awarding body for each T-level pathway.

"I'd barely finished my induction when we were thrown into this," he admits, with a candour that suggests he's not one to blag.

It's not the first time Bewick has wrangled with government ministers. In 2005, together with Tony Hall, now director-general of the BBC, then chief executive of the Royal Opera House, he persuaded the government to fund the country's first creative and cultural apprenticeships, apparently by "banging down the door" of then minister for vocational education Phil Hope. "It was quite a battle, because the Learning and Skills Council said they would only fund existing apprenticeships. It's not like these days with the Institute for Apprenticeships. There was no process."

The apprenticeships were part of Bewick's masterplan as founding chief executive of the Creative and Cultural Skills council, to end the "grossly

unfair" practice of unpaid internships in the creative industries. "It was out of control. It was almost being used - sometimes by quite prestigious public and private arts organisations - as a way of satisfying their recruitment needs."

This was towards the end of the Blairite years. A decade earlier, Bewick had been on the inside, slogging away for the party he joined as a teenager.

"I was drafted into Tony Blair's Labour Party dream in 1997," he says.

"It's almost like your solemn vows, you make a lifelong commitment to a political party - it's very hard to leave, even if things change around you"

In other words, he landed a job as national policy officer for education and employment, working in Milbank Towers under Matthew Taylor - then Labour's director of policy, now chief executive of the RSA. "It was the classic 'boy from Nuneaton, been a member of the party, done a bit of student politics, socks it to them as to why he thinks he's the best person for the job in education and employment policy'", he jokes of his interview technique, self-effacingly.

This was only Bewick's second job after a couple of years in a building just across the river, as European policy officer for the Training and Enterprise

Council.

From the age of 17, the Labour Party functioned as a "surrogate family" to Bewick, who grew up in care. "It was like the family I never had," he explains. "It was a great place to go for further education in a way - people who were passionate about politics. But also for mentors - people who you looked up to in the community, who could give you a bit of a steer and a helping hand."

He remains loyal to Labour to this day as a councillor for Brighton and Hove, despite reservations about current in-fighting. "It's almost like your solemn vows, you make a lifelong commitment to a political party - it's very hard to leave, even if things change around you".

Bewick's early childhood was marked by the sudden death of his mother, followed by multiple foster placements. "Dad was what we'd call him an addicted gambler now, but basically, there wasn't any money in the house to pay for anything, so it was only a matter of time before I became the subject of a care order," he confides. He was seven years old.

"I obviously didn't react to school as a system very well, as I was in care," he adds, with heart-breaking fatalism. Indeed, school left him woefully unprepared for a world in which the care system used to spit children out at 16 and expect them to make a life for themselves.

"David Cameron went to Eton, I went to Eton comprehensive in Nuneaton and I left with just one O-level in English," he quips. "So at least I learned to read and write."

Luckily for Bewick, his foster parents allowed him to live with them for an additional two years. By day, he applied himself to the arts of shelf-stacking and trolley-gathering at a Kwik Save supermarket. By night, he slogged through four GCSEs and two A-levels at what was then North Warwickshire College.

"Getting into further education - a different approach to learning, really transformed my life," he says. "That's why I'm so passionate about it."

Despite his dedication to the Labour Party, five years "being at the end of a pager 24 hours a day" burned him out. "You're not just working for an employer - this is a mission - this is an all-consuming thing in your life and it feels like that from the day you're in it".

Drained, he "decided to up-sticks, bugged off" and spend all £30k of his hard-earned savings "chasing the sun". Bewick's usually careful language deteriorates at this point, as if to better illustrate the degenerate character of what he calls his "early mid-life crisis". He went to stay with a friend in Cape Town, "did tennis lessons, bought a classic 1970-something Vespa and pissed around on that for six months and watched the bank balance drop". A further six months in Ibiza just about did it for him - "you'll appreciate," he confides candidly, "I don't have a lot of memories of that period" - and he duly returned to East London in late 2003, making it back with barely enough funds to turn up looking respectable for his new job as a director for Thames Gateway at the Learning and Skills Council. "With hindsight, running on empty like that was taking it a little bit too far," he says, all too aware of the fact that he, like many care leavers now helped by the charity of which he is a trustee, had no family support to fall back on. "You can be £200 away from disaster."

This was Bewick's third year abroad - the other two had been more obviously purposeful. He'd spent a year in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on an Erasmus exchange in the early nineties, post-Balkan conflict - somewhat against his will, as Bath University's sole condition of offering him a fully-funded masters in European public policy analysis.

He remembers arriving fresh from the Aeroflot jet in early January, climbing to the 14th floor of a grey,

dank, concrete tower block "that wouldn't have looked out of place in Warsaw, Poland or Walsall in the West Midlands" and bursting into tears.

But living in care had made him resilient. "It wasn't that unusual to rock up somewhere completely strange where you don't know anybody, you've got a few pennies to your name and few worldly possessions." By the end of the year, he knew basic Slovenian - or at least "the words for beer and pizza,

Profile

CV

Mar 2018 – Present

Chief Executive, Federation of Awarding Bodies

Jul 2015 – Present

President of the Transatlantic Apprenticeship Exchange Forum (TAEF), Atlantic Apprenticeships

May 2015 – Present

Council member, Brighton & Hove City Council

Jul 2016 – Mar 2018

Co-Founder, Franklin Apprenticeships LLC

Jul 2011 – May 2015

Chief Executive Officer, INSSO

Apr 2010 – Apr 2011

Chief Executive, Enterprise UK

May 2004 – Feb 2010

Chief Executive, Creative and Cultural Skills

Sep 2003 – Sep 2004

Director of Skills, Thames Gateway, LSC

Jun 2001 – Nov 2002

Adviser to the Minister for Adult Skills, Department for Education and Skills

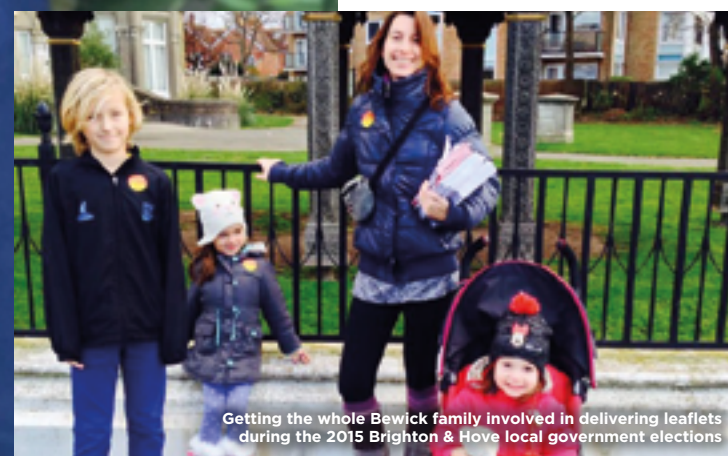
2001 – 2002

Director of Communications, Sector Skills Development Agency

1997 – 2001

Labour Party then government advisor on skills policy

“I obviously didn’t react to school as a system very well”



Getting the whole Bewick family involved in delivering leaflets during the 2015 Brighton & Hove local government elections

you know, all the key social ones” – and had made one of his best friends to this day, who now works for the OECD in Paris, and to whose children Bewick is godfather.

His first year abroad was several years earlier, at the flighty age of 18, when he checked out of his foster home, packed up all his worldly possessions in a backpack, and jetted off to Canada on “the equivalent of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’s

golden ticket” – and almost never came back.

It was a fully-funded programme he’d found through his local library – for volunteers from backgrounds like his own, to go and work with disadvantaged teenagers from indigenous communities in Canada. He learned to drive, play baseball and teach functional skills. “It was the making of me,” he says. “It made me realise that my vocation in life

was going to be working to advocate on behalf of communities, that I had this skill to get on with people from all different backgrounds at all levels of seniority. That was something that people around me told me: ‘You’ve got a natural talent for that.’”

The charity, Frontiers Foundation, helped him secure a scholarship to the prestigious McGill University in Montreal, but the pull of “home” was too great and he threw his lot in with

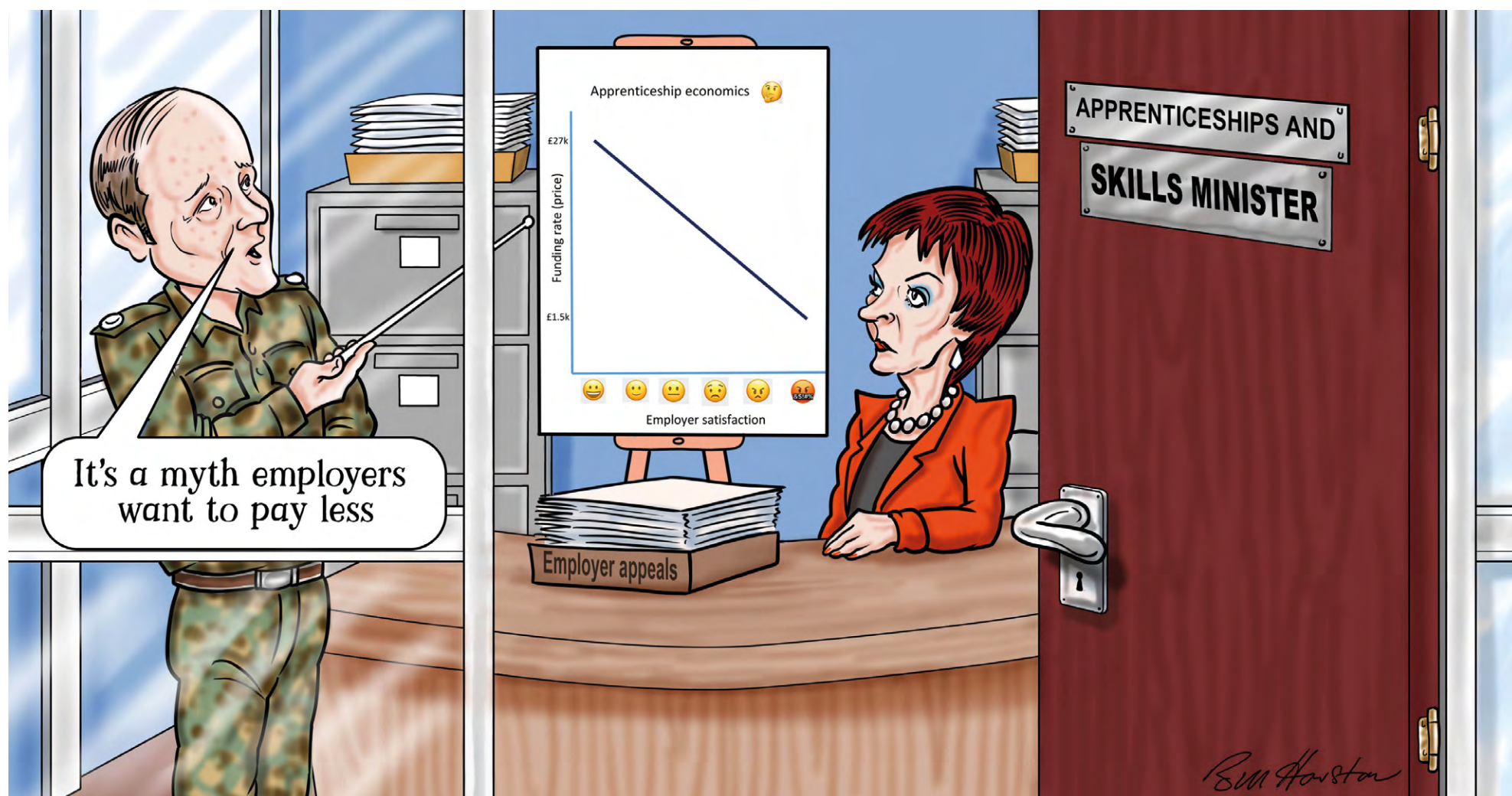
the great British clearing system, coming out with a place at Brighton Polytechnic to study social policy and administration. After a year, he wangled a transfer to Bath University (for a girlfriend, not the prestige) where he became Labour club president and editor of the student magazine.

The way he speaks about his first job at the Training and Enterprise Council is indicative of an attitude of general

gratitude that he seems to apply to other areas of his life: “I remember reading the job advert and feeling ‘somebody up there is really looking out for me’ as it was like they’d written the job for me,” he says.

Bewick feels incredibly lucky to have the job, life and family he has now – his wife and three children live with him in Brighton: “Frankly, I wake up now every working day and just feel brilliant to be alive.”

News



Major cuts to apprenticeship funding bands to be confirmed 'shortly'

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
PIPPA@FEWEEK.CO.UK

The Institute for Apprenticeships will soon confirm controversial changes to dozens of apprenticeship funding rate bands, according to the skills minister.

Writing in her monthly column in *FE Week*, Anne Milton said the rate changes will be published online "shortly" and further reviews will take place in the Autumn.

To date, the IfA has refused to publicly reveal the recommendations from its funding band review, and said last month the details are subject to change until a final decision is made by the Department for Education.

Rate changes, according to the IfA, need to be signed off by the Secretary of State for Education, Damian Hinds.

However, the IfA has been communicating with the relevant employer groups about the changes in order to give them a chance to appeal, and several have come forward to reveal the planned outcomes of the review.

The Chartered Management Institute is currently fighting to overturn plans to slash the maximum funding rate to three popular management apprenticeship standards, including one that is set to lose

Standard	Level	Starts August to May 2017/18	Current funding band	Proposed funding band	Change	Percentage change
Team leader/ supervisor	3	12,080	£5,000	£4,500	−£500	−10%
Customer service practitioner	2	6,500	£4,000	£3,500	−£500	−13%
Operations/ departmental manager	5	5,530	£9,000	£7,000	−£2,000	−22%
Hair professional	2	4,940	£9,000	£7,000	−£2,000	−22%
Retailer	2	2,750	£5,000	£4,000	−£1,000	−20%
Senior healthcare support worker	3	1,820	£3,000	£5,000	£2,000	67%
Chartered manager (degree)	6	1,750	£27,000	£22,000	−£5,000	−19%
Healthcare assistant practitioner	5	1,160	£12,000	£12,000	£0	0%
Aviation ground specialist	3	40	£3,000	£6,000	£3,000	100%

The picture so far on rate changes in the IfA's funding band review

£5,000. An online appeal, led by the CMI, has received backing from more than 150 employers.

Petra Wilson, director of strategy at the CMI, said the "overwhelming outcry" against the plan demonstrates that the government's plans to reduce the funding "makes so little sense".

Other popular apprenticeships are also in the firing line. The level two customer service practitioner standard – which had the third most starts of any apprenticeship in the first nine months of 2017/18 – is set for a 13 per cent cut to its funding rate, while the level two hair professional

standard and the level two retailer apprenticeship standard are both in line for 20 per cent cuts.

However, some Trailblazers have received more welcome news. The funding band for the level three aviation ground specialist standard is set to be doubled, while the level three senior healthcare support worker standard is in line for a massive 67 per cent increase.

Mark Dawe, the chief executive of the Association of Employer and Learning Providers, has warned the level of uncertainty created by the review is having serious negative repercussions for

the sector, and said the "complete lack of transparency and evidence is unjustified".

Writing in the association's newsletter, he said: "Employers and providers are now saying it is incredibly risky to plan, invest in resources, invest in staff, design programmes, etc, if at a whim the IfA can adjust funding with no warning. This will lead to less investment and ultimately lower quality."

"At a time when everyone is working so hard to deliver high quality programmes with employers it is astounding that the organisation that is tasked with maintaining quality is actually

undermining the system and wanting to pay less for ultimately poorer quality.

"No one can deliver this amazing apprenticeship policy if the organisation at the heart of the system has lost the trust and respect of everyone operating within the system, and their actions are working against the fundamental principle of high quality apprenticeships."

As previously reported in *FE Week*, the IfA has committed to implementing rate increases with immediate effect and providing at least two months notice before a confirmed rate reduction would apply.



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Exeter College

Assistant Principal Quality and Student Experience

London South East Colleges

Head of Teacher Development, Improvement and Innovation

The Henley College

Director of Finance and Estates

The Sheffield College

Assistant Principal Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment
Head of Quality and Compliance

West London College

Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality
Executive Director Finance and Resources
Director of MIS

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Access and Continuing Learning
Salary: £68,298 per annum

The College is seeking to appoint a highly motivated, skilled Assistant Principal, who as a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for leading the Faculty of Access and Continuing Learning. The Faculty's curriculum includes ESOL, General Education, Additional Support for Learning, Employability Skills and Community Learning and Development.

This is an exciting and challenging opportunity to contribute to the strategic development and overall operational effectiveness of the College. The successful applicant will be responsible for portfolio development and delivery, management of curriculum areas, learner experience, faculty budget control

and contributing to the community planning. The post holder will ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations, the Freedom of Information Act and all other rules and regulations that govern the work of the College.

The ideal candidate will meet the following criteria:
Direct relevant experience of strategic planning processes particularly in relation to the areas covered by this post
Proven ability to lead and initiate change
Substantial leadership and management experience at a senior promoted level
Evidence of contribution to academic development projects in the FE Sector.

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Construction and Land-Based Industries
Salary: £49,603.50 per annum

Within the Faculty of Engineering, Computing and the Built Environment, the School of Construction and Land-Based Industries has an outstanding reputation for working with employers, delivering relevant and up to date qualifications, ranging from NPA to HN level, with articulation links with the university sector. Our unique, curriculum portfolio includes Construction, Carpentry and Joinery, Painting and Decorating, Horticulture, Floristry, and Landscaping.

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For further details on the role and person specification, please view the Job Description.

Location: Glasgow, Scotland. You will be required to travel and work within all Glasgow Clyde campuses

Relocation: a limited relocation allowance may be negotiable in certain circumstances
Closing Date: 7th October 2018

Interviews will be held on Wednesday 24th October 2018

If you meet the requirements of this post, please visit <https://www.glasgowclyde.ac.uk/workwithus> to complete the application form and an equal opportunities monitoring form and send to: humanresourcesrecruitment@glasgowclyde.ac.uk

Further information can be obtained from the College website at www.glasgowclyde.ac.uk or: **Human Resources Unit, Glasgow Clyde College, 690 Mosspark Drive, Glasgow, G52 3AY**

Telephone: **0141 272 3232** E Mail: humanresourcesrecruitment@glasgowclyde.ac.uk

Are you our new trustee?



VTCT

Location: Aspire House, Annealing Close, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 9PX

VTCT is recruiting three new members to join the Board of Trustees, and is inviting applications from individuals with a background in the further/higher education sectors or those with business or marketing skills obtained within our core areas of hair, beauty, complementary therapy and sports.

The Vocational Training Charitable Trust (VTCT) is one of the UK's largest technical and vocational awarding and assessment organisations. VTCT seeks to advance education for the public benefit by enabling learners to gain new skills through vocational education and apprenticeships for a direct line of sight to a job.

It's an exciting time to join VTCT as the Government implements major reforms to technical and vocational education. New trustees will be expected to support VTCT's strong growth as we expand our portfolio of more than 1,900 education centres across both the UK and worldwide.

Applications deadline: 21st September 2018. Interviews will take place on 4th October.

For more information about this role, please visit www.vtct.org.uk/trustee, or, call us on 023 8068 4500 and ask for Leanne Hobbs.



Executive Director of Finance and Resources

Salary: £54,242 up to £76,250

Are you a qualified accountant with a strong commercial skills set and board level experience? Are you interested in joining a dynamic and progressive organisation, with a clear vision to become the best College in the North East region? If the answer is yes, then Derwentside College would like to hear from you.

We are looking for an exceptional candidate to meet the expectations of this significant finance and resources role; a person with an unrelenting enthusiasm to improve the learner experience and, the knowledge, skills and experience to make a real impact from day one.

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With a turnover of £13m, we are already one of the largest and most successful providers of apprenticeships in the country. Our track record of success and growth is impressive, and with a strong emphasis on success and achievement, we are well on our way to becoming an outstanding College.

The College's financial performance is strong and despite the challenges that lie ahead, we are well placed to continue to grow and expand the business over the coming years.

Our strategy is clear. We want to be an outstanding College. If you would like to join us on this journey, then please get in touch.

Application packs can be obtained by visiting our website www.derwentside.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can email HR@derwentside.ac.uk or telephone (01207) 585963 to request a pack.

For an informal discussion regarding the role, **please contact the Principal and Chief Executive (Chris Todd) on (01207) 585940.**

Closing Date: Sunday 30th September 2018



Community Learning in Partnership (CLIP) is a well-established social enterprise which strives to widen participation in learning and support positive progressions by people in rural and coastal Lincolnshire. We have learning centres in Market Rasen, Gainsborough and Mablethorpe. With an Ofsted Grade 2 and provision for 16-18s, qualifications for adults, GCSEs, Access to HE, employability and an extensive community learning offer, we are seeking hard-working, talented and creative individuals who can make a significant impact on the further development of our organisation.

In return, we can provide great opportunities for career development, encouragement to get involved in new projects and tangible evidence that you are making a difference.

To support our steady growth and commitment to quality development, CLIP has created three new posts:

- Deputy Chief Executive – Business Performance and Innovation Manager **£30-32k**
- Deputy Chief Executive – Partnerships Manager **£30-32k**
- Careers Education and Aspiration Coordinator **£24-26k**

All posts are available as full-time or 0.8 fte.

Please visit our website www.cliplearning.com/jobs-volunteering for full details. The closing date is 24 September 2018.



City & Guilds Vacancies - Technical Qualifications



We currently have some exciting vacancies for Principal Moderator, Moderator, Assessment Development Consultant and Examiner roles for our Technical qualifications.

This is an excellent CPD opportunity, giving you the chance to learn about the City & Guilds Technicals, gain an in-depth knowledge of requirements and the moderation process and really get to grips with the marking of the synoptic practical assessment.

We would like to hear from you if you are interested in applying for the following roles:

Principal Moderator

Professional Cookery - Qualification No: **6100**

Moderator

Professional Cookery - Qualification No: **6100**
 Food Preparation & Service - Qualification No: **7178**
 Food & Beverage Service - Qualification No: **6103**
 Cookery and Service for the Hospitality Industry - Qualification No: **6106**
 Theatrical & Media Makeup - Qualification No: **6010**
 Land & Wildlife - Qualification No: **0173**
 Constructing the Built Environment - Qualification No: **6720**
 Project - Qualification No: **2935**

Assessment Development Consultant and Examiner

Hospitality & Catering - Qualification Nos: **6100, 7178, 6103**
 Construction - Qualification Nos: **6720, 7905, 7906, 7907, 7908**
 Building Services Engineering - Qualification Nos: **8202**
 Land Based Services - Qualification Nos: **0170, 0171, 0172, 0173, 0174, 0175, 7863**

How to apply

If you are interested in the Principal Moderator or Moderator role, please visit the below website for application details: <https://www.cityandguilds.com/techbac/technical-qualifications/moderator-vacancies>

If you are interested in the Assessment Development Consultant or Examiner role, please visit the below website for application details: <https://www.cityandguilds.com/delivering-our-qualifications/exams-and-admin/examiner-vacancies>

Be brilliant, deliver prosperity, live in Cornwall



Director of Cultural & Visitor Economy

We are seeking an outstanding curriculum leader with a track record for developing focused and ambitious strategic and operational plans. They will lead a broad curriculum area including 14-19, adult, employer and higher education provision. Curriculum areas covered by this role are hospitality and catering, tourism, hair and beauty and creative arts.

The ideal candidate will be able to demonstrate excellence in partnership working, people skills, innovation and will seek to further develop the quality of provision, alongside motivating a geographically dispersed team.

Reporting to the CEO, as a member of the executive leadership team, key measures of success are learner numbers; the quality of learning, teaching and assessment; the customer and learner experience and attainment of financial and budgetary targets.

For the opportunity to live in Cornwall and contribute to a regionally important curriculum area, with a competitive salary, please get in touch.

For an informal conversation please contact Jayne Nines, HR Director on 01209 616131.

For an information pack and application form please visit www.cornwall.ac.uk

Closing date: 14th October 2018

The Cornwall College Group is a disability confident employer Charity by statute



Pearson

Pearson have exciting opportunities for teachers to become Standards Verifiers for our BTEC qualifications!

This role is a part time role which can be carried out alongside any full time commitments you may have and from the comfort of your own home.

Becoming an SV is a great opportunity to:

- Gain an invaluable insight into assessment
- Develop your career in education
- Boost your income
- Network with like-minded professions in your field

To find out further information, please visit www.edexcel.com/aa-recruitment or raise a query at associate.pearson.com



illustration by Lucy Vigrass



Deputy Principal / CEO

Salary £90,000 per annum

Hull College Group is recruiting a Deputy Principal / CEO to lead the strategic control of the Colleges curriculum, including its future development as a leading institution in the region. Our CEO is in the process of appointing key members of her new Senior Leadership team and this is an exciting time to be joining the College and working with the new team.

We are now seeking an appointment to the role of Deputy Principal/ CEO and looking for an individual with the inspiration, wisdom and strategic insight to take the College forward in the next few years. Reporting to the Governing Body, and supported by a new and enthusiastic Executive Team, you will be responsible for the overall academic, strategic and operational performance of all our FE and HE curriculum.

This post will be crucial in guiding the Colleges strategic direction, and for further developing our links with our local, regional and national partners and stakeholders

To apply, please visit <https://www.hull-college-careers.co.uk/Vacancies/CurrentVacancies>

Closing date for applications: Monday 17th September (12 pm)
Interviews and assessment will be held on Wednesday 26th September



Vice Principal Quality

Salary £75,000 per annum

As a member of the Executive team our new Vice Principal Quality will play a key role in achieving our goals. The new post holder will deliver the performance framework to support our overall strategic plans and ensure consistently high-quality provision across the College.

We are looking for an individual to provide inspirational leadership which encourages innovation and continually develops and improves teaching and learning practice in the next few years.

Our successful candidate will bring a track record in the leadership and management of teaching and learning, curriculum development and quality assurance and improvement in FE. You will demonstrate experience of consistently driving up academic standards and delivering excellent achievement rates while inspiring innovation and developing staff across a wide spectrum.

To apply, please visit <https://www.hull-college-careers.co.uk/Vacancies/CurrentVacancies>

Closing date for applications - Friday 21st September (12pm)
Interviews and assessment will be held on Monday 1st October



Careers Event - Teaching Opportunities

Location: Milton Keynes

Reference: SEP20186543

Salary: £18,015.00 - £32,232.00 Per Annum

Benefits: Excellent Benefits

Milton Keynes College are looking for professionals within the following curriculum areas - Care Professions, Business, Higher Education and Digital Technologies. We have exciting opportunities for lecturers as we see these schools developing and would love to be able to show you why Milton Keynes College should be the career choice for you. We are welcoming candidates that are interested in both flexible working hours and full time hours as we will have a range of temporary and permanent opportunities.

You will have a background in Care Professions such as; Care, Nursing, Health, Childcare. Digital Technologies such as; Computer Science, Cloud Computing, Cyber Security and Internet of Things (IoT) Digital & Technology. Business such as; Retail & Logistics, AAT, Customer service and Business Administration. We also welcome candidates with degrees in Higher Education across all subject areas to support within our Access to Higher Education courses.

We are holding an open event to give you the chance to learn more about working for Milton Keynes College and how you can be a part of the students learning experience. This will be a 2 hour event where you will hear more about each curriculum area, have the opportunity to have a tour around the campus and spend time networking with other attendees and staff from the college.

Event details: Friday 16th
November 2018 to be held at
our Chaffron Way Campus

For more information, please visit
[https://www.mkcollege.ac.uk/
jobs/our-vacancies](https://www.mkcollege.ac.uk/jobs/our-vacancies)

Closing date: Friday 2nd
November 2018

Should this event be suitable for
you we will go on to send further
information nearer the date.

EDITORIAL



Clapping the capping of subcontracting fees

The Greater London Authority should be applauded for planning to introduce a cap on the subcontracting top-slice, something the DfE has so far shied away from.

As reported in *FE Week* (see page 4), once the GLA gets control of just over £300m in Adult Education Budget funding from August 2018 they plan to enforce a 20 percent limit on prime provider top-slices.

FE Week has been exposing these rip-off fees, upwards of 40 percent, since launching in 2011.

In response the

government has now come a long way in terms of transparency, introducing rules to force providers to publish their policies and fee values.

They also worked with the sector to produce a best practice guide to subcontracting, published in 2013 by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service.

Yet the sky high fees continue.

In fact, one college principal recently took to twitter to defend high fees on the basis they were good value for money because they only passed on the

minimum they thought a subcontractor needed.

Let that justification sink in – the college proudly kept the public money for delivering no corresponding service...

So the FE sector, particularly some colleges, have failed over many years to act responsibly with the funding they have received.

The 20 per cent cap may result in some low fees rising to the cap, as feared by some, but this would not necessarily be a bad thing as responsible subcontracting management should not

be done on the cheap.

Like with all new rules, the main problem will come from providers trying to exploit loop-holes or circumvent them altogether.

The GLA should be on the look-out for prime providers charging their subcontractors fees on top of the 20 percent, such as for mandatory training or materials.

And a most concerning of all, would be providers that leave the subcontracting radar and rules altogether by reclassifying themselves as 'associate partners', a practice that has been

exposed by *FE Week*.

The cap will be blunt and imperfect, but managed and audited wisely, it should immediately put more resources into front line delivery.

It is a long overdue policy that will only apply to AEB in London, but watch this space, as the DfE is due to announce their own approach to subcontracting and value for money in the coming months.

Nick Linford, Editor
news@feweek.co.uk

Readers' reply



EMAIL



TWITTER



FACEBOOK



WEBSITE

On the eve of the controversial T-level tender – when, how and why?

The panels have done some sterling work and, in the case of Construction: Design, Surveying and Planning, produced a specification that will meet employer and professional body requirements.

Given the short timescales, the awarding body that wins the tender will need to engage in dialogue with the relevant professional bodies to ensure that the specification is translated into a qualification that meets professional body approval and registration standards. This is crucial for successful take-up – probably more so than IfA approval.

Andrew Stanley

We must tell the chancellor FE needs more, not less funding

From 2010 we have been told by government and by sector leaders that we must accept austerity in the sector and endure 25% funding cuts as we are over-

funded and education of post-16 is not a priority.

We have been informed as a sector that we are so inefficient that one college administration can run the affairs of two or more providers so we must merge into a variety of hybrids cutting student opportunity – preached by college and sector leaders.

Staff are getting paid less and less in real terms each year.

Another sector leader wakes up and says we need more funding – where have these leaders been for eight years, asleep?

Mike Daykin

The funding band reviews are a good model for the future

This is crunch time for the apprenticeship reforms. Are apprenticeships going to be employer-led or bureaucrat-led? Employers, apprentices, trailblazer groups and industry bodies are united in their opposition to the funding cuts being proposed. These cuts will decimate quality. They will

catastrophically undermine the apprenticeship reforms. So who should we listen to? An unelected quango led by a man who seems to be completely divorced from reality or the employers who are actually using the system? It's choice time.

Sean Williams

T-level placements 'likely' to reduce apprenticeship offers



This is a worrying finding... suggests Gov't must do far more to get employers – and providers – on board with T Levels as a concept, not just a brand. Piles more pressure on Damian Hinds for his decision to ignore advice of chief civil servant for an extra year for implementation.

@GordonMarsden



Have not read the report but would seem a real need to think through link with T levels and apprenticeships, particularly entry level ones.

@griffinskill

REPLY OF THE WEEK

Ofqual investigating provider after inspectorate found copy and paste assessments



Over the years this kind of assessment practice has lessened but sadly still goes on. What it does demonstrate is the lack of rigour and quality of external quality assurers for awarding bodies who should be spotting this kind of practice on their annual visits. What was noticeable about this inspection was that the three Ofsted inspectors have really good work-based backgrounds, which are necessary if inspectors are to spot this kind of practice – however this is too often not the case. Ofqual needs to examine the effectiveness of external quality assurance measures by awarding bodies so that qualifications are earned by the work of individual learners and not rogue assessors and inadequate internal quality assurance systems.

Phil Hatton

Experts



MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

Anne Milton, Minister for skills and apprenticeships

Apprenticeship funding bands needed reviewing to be fair

A new approach to funding apprenticeships will provide better value for money so that people can benefit from the training opportunities on offer and progress in their careers, says Anne Milton

I have spoken a lot about the important changes we are making to improve the quality of apprenticeships in this country. One of the biggest changes has been to introduce apprenticeship standards – new, high-quality apprenticeships replacing the older “frameworks”. I’m really pleased the number of people starting on new, high-quality apprenticeship standards is now over 40 per cent compared to just 2.5 per cent this time last year.

Apprenticeship standards are designed by employers themselves. By putting employers in the driving seat, we make sure that apprentices receive the training they need and make sure people have the skills businesses are crying out for, so they can get on and

grow their career.

Since its creation in April 2017, the Institute for Apprenticeships has been responsible for managing the development of these new apprenticeship standards. Their work includes advising me about the right funding level for each new standard that is approved.

As more and more standards have been created, the Institute has been learning what a quality apprenticeship looks like. They have also been looking at how we can make sure apprenticeship training provides value for money.

In February the Institute introduced a new approach to recommending apprenticeship funding bands as part of its Faster and Better programme. This approach means a wider range of evidence will be used to help decide which funding band to recommend. It also means standards are decided more quickly, so that there are fewer delays.

I have also made changes to the funding band structure, increasing the number of funding bands to 30, and narrowing those bands.

But all this positive change means that there is now a difference between

of 31 standards, in line with their new approach and using the new 30-band structure.

Over the summer the Institute has been working with trailblazer groups of employers to review these

value for money. Others will see their funding band increased, if evidence suggests the original band was set too low. And for others, the funding band will be reduced.

Changes will shortly be made available on the IfA’s website and on the government funding bands page (<https://bit.ly/2jVbFyo>).

I have asked the Institute to continue its work to bring more standards into the new 30-band structure. Further information on these reviews will be available later in the autumn.

I think that it is right that we price all apprenticeships fairly, whether they were developed first or last. As the apprenticeship market develops, I will keep working with the IfA to make sure we get this funding right. We want people to benefit from the amazing opportunities apprenticeships offer, get the fantastic training providers give and get on in their careers.

“It is right that we price all apprenticeships fairly, whether they were developed first or last”

how older and newer standards were allocated funding bands.

Our intention has always been to review standards regularly, to make sure that they remain fit for purpose and that there is a fair approach – no matter when a standard was developed. That is why I asked the Institute to review the funding bands

31 standards. They have applied their new funding approach to recommend to me what they think the right funding band is for these apprenticeships.

This means for some of the apprenticeships, the funding band will remain the same, as the original funding band still represents the best

VICKY DUCKWORTH

Reader in education, Edge Hill University



It is time for more joined-up thinking on adult education

If we want young people to have aspirations for their education and career, we first have to educate parents, says Vicky Duckworth

Much of the talk about adult education has been around the devolved budget and whether it’s being spent effectively. With 72 administrators hired to manage the London adult education budget – to the tune of £3 million – these are important questions.

However, less well discussed are the issues of why adult education is often relegated to the very bottom of the pile of government priorities – even within the technical education sector, in which it sits.

Apprenticeships, T-levels and careers strategies are all of vital importance, but the government often seems to overlook one vital complement to young people’s education.

All the research shows that parental education levels correlate with child development – from the earliest days. By the time children arrive at nursery, the disadvantage gap is already well established. And indeed a survey carried out by MORI (2001) revealed that more than two thirds of twelve to sixteen year olds consider that their parents are the strongest learning influence in their lives.

Lack of parental understanding of their children’s education and career choices is often a factor that prevents disadvantaged young people from being aware of and indeed accessing aspirational further and higher education pathways. Aspirational routes into education and employment need to be placed firmly within the world picture of all communities and not left to those with the right social networks or cultural capital.

Role models matter; the very first

role models children have are often their carers. However, there seems to be little understanding as to the importance of family influence and the logical next step in redressing inequality, seems often to be missed: investment in good quality flexible adult education that reaches within communities and into homes. This is surprising when the socio-economic factors which the government is so keen to address correlate closely with educational attainment.

A recent research project carried out by myself and a colleague, Rob Smith of Birmingham City University, illustrated just how much of an impact adult education can have on parents and their children. The transformative power of adult education, including literacy classes, was shown to be a catalyst in breaking the intergenerational cycle of inequality.

For example, Jade a young mother who attended adult literacy classes

run by a charitable trust in the north west of England was motivated to attend classes after becoming a mum. These classes raised her aspirations for her future and that of her young son. She also talked at length about how she encouraged other friends in a similar situation to access the classes.

Motherhood was a motivational force for Jade as an adult learner. It is important not to underestimate this affective dimension of the learning experience. Becoming an adult learner enabled Jade to take back agency in the face of poverty and unemployment. For her, there was a relationship between these aspects of her life and her mental well-being. The classes enabled her to reconnect with society more broadly and on a different footing. She acquired agency and a view of a new possible future for her and her son.

Importantly, acquiring adult education and indeed social literacy

is about being able to navigate the complexities of different social groups; it’s about being able to move without feeling like a fish out of water between different contexts: home, the classroom, the school on parents’ evening, the doctor’s surgery, the police station with a sense of agency.

Adult education and literacy education can be transformative. It can offer spaces in which individuals and their families can take charge of their own life and widen the possibilities and choices for their future: an enjoyment of learning and success as learners that connects with their lives in the outside world, including through employment.

Clearly, it’s time for a strong drive in policy and funding that recognises that the attainments of young people are intertwined with the achievements of their families and communities. It is time to have some joined-up thinking that places the family at the centre.

STEVE FRAMPTON

President, Association of Colleges



Six ways to start building a collaborative college culture

Good leadership is all about relationships and taking people with you, says Steve Frampton, President of Portsmouth College for 13 years and now President of the Association of Colleges

I firmly believe that the fundamentals of good leadership are all about relationships – you have to take people with you.

With this in mind, here are six things I've found crucial to building a positive, collaborative college culture.

Interview everyone personally

I used to interview all my staff, and now my successor at Portsmouth College is doing the same. What we're looking for is cultural fit and people who really sign up to our core values, what we're trying to do and where we're trying to go.

Involve staff in decision making

If you involve the staff and students in the decision-making process, you all own it together. It's not dependent on one person and their vision and their ideas – it's a massive, collective responsibility so everybody feels part of the college. At Portsmouth College we had a real family culture. Everybody had their role and no-one was more important than anyone else.

Involve students in decision making

I think we've over-relied on the voice of employers and under-relied on the voice of students in education for too long. I think the students are much more sophisticated than we give them credit for.

It's not just about focusing on employability skills. We want to produce well-rounded citizens

who are capable of achieving their potential.

“Never underestimate how important it is to enjoy what you're doing”

Work with students before they apply

It's a good idea to work with students and their parents while

they're still in their secondary schools. We would run revision skills sessions in the evenings at schools, as well as head boys' and head girls' training in Year 10 and 11 assemblies.

Then when students come for open days, it helps to run sessions laying out the expectations. Since any rules that we had were agreed by the students' union, along with the governing body, it was easy to explain that these are ground rules that everyone has agreed to.

Students also need to know that they're going to be safe, respected and valued. So it's important to emphasise that there will be zero tolerance of bullying. Then the students buy into that and reinforce it.

Get involved in the local community

I've been a chair of governors for a local school, on the board of a

community radio station and head of the volunteers' association for Portsmouth City football club.

It's vital to plug into all of those networks, so that you can pick up what the voluntary sector is saying, what the secondary education sector is saying, and what the local authority is saying. It makes your job as college principal so much easier.

Enjoy your job!

Never underestimate how important it is to really enjoy what you're doing, even though the pressures in the sector have never been bigger.

If you can create a dynamic, positive, creative culture, despite all the things that we're trying to deal with, it will have an impact on your staff and your students.

NOT TO BE MISSED

UPCOMING EVENTS

ESSENTIAL UPDATE – APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING FOR 2018/19

BIRMINGHAM

26 SEPTEMBER 2018

NEWCASTLE

3 OCTOBER 2018

BRISTOL

10 OCTOBER 2018

LIVERPOOL

17 OCTOBER 2018

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Bulletin



Phil Sayles

principal and chief executive,
Selby College

Start date September 2018

Previous job

deputy principal, RNN Group

Interesting fact

When Phil was doing his A-levels at South Nottinghamshire College, his part-time jobs included 'Chilli juggling' and 'cheese sprinkler'



Chris Todd

principal and chief executive,
Derwentside College

Start date September 2018

Previous job

Acting principal, Northumberland College

Interesting fact

Chris claims to be the strongest FE principal in the sector, with a powerlifting total of 655kg

Movers & Shakers

...

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



Alan Pease

deputy principal, Suffolk New
College

Start date August 2018

Previous job

Assistant principal, South Essex College

Interesting fact

Alan had trials with Norwich City Football Club in his youth and is a keen music lover



Bill Meredith

principal and chief executive,
Bishop Burton College

Start date August 2018

Previous job

Deputy principal, Bishop Burton College

Interesting fact

Bill began his career as a field trials officer in North Wales and claims he can still identify every native grass species.

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

FEWEEK

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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

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

Difficulty: Easy

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

Difficulty: Medium

Solutions: See right

Spot the difference To WIN an FE Week mug



Spot five differences. **First correct entry wins an FE Week mug.** Email your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to: news@feweek.co.uk.



Solutions

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

Difficulty: Easy

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

Difficulty: Medium

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