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EDITION 287

'SHOCK' NEW FUNDING RULE

- › **Government demands all subcontracting fees listed and justified from August**
- › **Thousands of contracts will need to be rewritten by hundreds of providers**
- › **Slammed as 'immensely bureaucratic' as well as 'shockingly late in the day'**



NICK LINFORD NEWS@FEWEEK.CO.UK

See page 8

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Exclusive: Former Dragon hits out at IfATE over cut to level 3 and 4 standards

Page 10



Dudley chief exec calls for support in navigating complex auditing system
Page 4



Clearing up misconceptions about the new inspection framework
Page 12



Why FE colleges need 'big' data in the battle to recruit apprentices
Page 13

Sudden closure of DfE's Apprenticeship Delivery Board is slammed as 'surreal'

BILLY CAMDEN
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Exclusive

A board that was set up by government to increase apprenticeship starts has been quietly binned – with officials claiming its objectives have been “fulfilled”.

This reason “borders on the surreal”, according to shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden, especially after a new co-chair was appointed as recently as July 2018, who described the board’s work as “so important” at the time.

The Apprenticeship Delivery Board (ADB) was launched four years ago and had representatives from high-profile employers, including the likes of Barclays, Fujitsu and the NHS as members.

Its key purpose was to: “Implement an employer-engagement strategy to deliver an increase in high-quality apprenticeships starts, and to support a greater volume and more diverse number of people applying for and starting apprenticeships to meet growing demand.”

But after months of inactivity, and with no board meeting minutes published since October, *FE Week* asked if it was still running.

After initially stating that there would be an update “in due course” two weeks ago, a Department for Education spokesperson has now said: “The Apprenticeship Delivery Board fulfilled its objectives and was dissolved on June 24.”

Trudy Harrison, MP for Copeland and the board’s co-chair, told *FE Week* the decision was taken “by both chairs in conjunction with the ESFA after extensive thinking about the remit and functions of the board”.

The board’s other co-chair was Claire Paul, the director of leadership development and new talent at the BBC. She only attended two meetings after joining in July. She declined to comment on its closure.

The minutes of the board’s last meeting in October suggest there was no plan to shut it down, especially as it was agreed to change its name to the “Apprenticeship Sector Development Board with immediate effect”.

They also state the co-chairs had

asked that “board member sector delivery plans be completed by the end of December 2018”.

“Claire and Trudy also plan to arrange individual meetings with each board member before the next board meeting in February 2019,” the minutes add.

Furthermore, minutes from the meeting in July state how Harrison reported that her experience in her constituency “is that there is still a need for more employers offering apprenticeship positions” – another clear sign that the board had not yet fully achieved its objectives.

Marsden said the situation “borders on the surreal”.

“We know there have been all sorts of problems with the delivery board, with its management, with the people appointed, and the fact they were not transparent with their minutes, and now we’re told it has fulfilled its objectives.”

The controversial board member Marsden referred to was David Meller, former co-chair of the Presidents Club, which faced allegations of sexual harassment by guests at its January 2018 charity dinner. He was co-chair of the ADB at the time, but stood down shortly



Claire Paul

after the scandal.

Marsden continued: “This doesn’t exactly give employers, or indeed anybody, wanting to engage around apprenticeship delivery much confidence.

“When the new government comes in, and whoever is education secretary or skills minister, they need to work very hard at engagement and also engagement with apprentices themselves. Again, we have an apprentice group but use of it by officials and ministers has certainly in any formal sense been negligible.”

He said he will table a parliamentary question to find out what the criteria was for the board “having fulfilled its



Trudy Harrison

objectives”, as he believes their impact has been “barely on the radar”.

The ADB’s closure comes hot on the heels of the education secretary Damian Hinds admitting the government will miss its target of 3 million apprenticeship starts by next year.

“If you look only at the number of people starting an apprenticeship, then that target is not going to be reached,” Hinds told the education select committee last week.

Hinds did not give a fresh timetable for reaching the starts target, which was set in the Conservative Party’s 2015 election manifesto. Instead, he said the focus ought to be on the quality of apprenticeships.

Energy Coast becomes second ‘outstanding’ UTC

BILLY CAMDEN
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A university technical college in Cumbria is celebrating after becoming only the second of its kind to be rated “outstanding” by Ofsted.

Energy Coast UTC opened in 2014 and got off to a shaky start when the education watchdog first came knocking and graded it “requires improvement”. It also currently holds a financial notice to improve.

But in a glowing report released on Thursday, the 14-to-19 college received a grade one in every category judged.

Inspectors praised the principal, Cherry Tingle, who has “systematically and very skilfully developed high-quality leadership skills in all school leaders and managers”.

They added that the senior leadership team “has ensured that all aspects of the school have improved considerably and rapidly”.

Tingle took over the helm in September 2016. “When I started, there was a range of problems, from results to the need for improvement in

every area,” she said.

“My mantra was, and still is, everything has to be ‘good enough for my child’.

“There’s enormous satisfaction going from there to becoming one of the highest performing UTCs in the country.”

The only other UTC to be rated “outstanding” is UTC Reading. The pair have bucked the national trend of poor performance for the troubled programme. The majority have been hit with poor Ofsted ratings and low recruitment numbers, leading to deteriorating finances since launching in 2010, and ten have had to close.

The grade one for Energy Coast UTC comes despite it running at 54 per cent capacity, with only 300 on roll out of a possible 560.

The UTC’s financial notice to improve was first issued in March 2017. *FE Week*’s sister paper *Schools Week* reported at the time that the UTC had outsourced its teaching.

Lord Baker, who created the UTC model and set up the Baker Dearing Trust to promote them, said Energy Coast UTC “leads a revolution in



Principal Cherry Tingle with jubilant Energy Coast UTC students

technical education”.

“This UTC provides what its chain of local suppliers needs most – skilled technicians and engineers at 16 and 18,” he added.

Inspectors noted how many students “start at this school disillusioned with what they have achieved in their key stage 3 education at other schools”. Some are “resentful about schooling” but through “excellent support and guidance, staff

transform the negative attitudes of these pupils in a remarkably short period of time”.

Ofsted said all staff at Energy Coast have “nurtured very effective relationships with a range of high-profile employers in the region” – including construction giants Morgan Sindall Infrastructure, Iggesund, Sellafield, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, Jacobs and Nuvia.

“The employers and the UTC have developed excellent work-placement programmes that enthuse and engage students in STEM careers,” inspectors wrote.

“Consequently, almost all students who leave the school at the end of Year 13 progress to STEM-related apprenticeships in the local community.”

The Ofsted report continues: “Working with the principal, governors have created a highly positive school ethos which raises pupils’ aspirations to be the best they can be.

“The encouraging, professional and supportive culture of the school now enables the vast majority of pupils to achieve very well. They catch up with any learning they may have missed at their previous school.”

Tingle concluded: “I’m thrilled by the report, but not surprised. What goes on here is extraordinary, but it’s happening every single day. It is absolutely the norm that we expect – and get – a high degree of commitment and excellent levels of achievement.”

News

'Sorry' Dudley college boss calls for support and advice as auditing system gets ever more complex

BILLY CAMDEN
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Exclusive

The leader of a high-profile college has called for greater support in navigating the government's increasingly complex and high-stake audit system, after falling foul of data rules.

Lowell Williams, chief executive of Dudley College, says there is a "spectrum of issues" arising out of audits that have created an environment that doesn't encourage "people to work together to solve the core problem".

"I'm a national leader of further education and we go in and work with colleges on teaching, learning, engaging staff, communication and strategic planning, but I'm not aware of an equivalent line of support available for people getting the data systems right," he said.

"I would like the possibility for the sector to sit down openly with the Education and Skills Funding Agency and the audit firms and say, 'We are having difficulty with some of this stuff, and feel they can do that if they have made mistakes and that they won't be castigated for it.'"

Williams was speaking exclusively to *FE Week* just months after Dudley College had to pay back more than £500,000 to the Department for Education after an audit exposed numerous late withdrawals of learners, non-compliance with breaks in learning, and overstated achievement rates.

The chief executive of the Ofsted grade one college apologised for the "blunder" at the time and said he had even considered resigning over it.

But since then, his team has made a catalogue of significant improvements in their data tracking and recording processes, which will help to prevent the errors that have occurred in previous years.

Williams is now planning to share the results of the "action plan" with the wider sector, and wants a tripartite partnership between government, audit firms and providers to tackle the complex system.

He said the range of providers falling foul of audits go from "very serious calculated fraudulent activity at the extreme end, to, at the other end, mismanagement of complex data".

One of the most "difficult things" for Dudley was that it "has been associated in the same breath as people who are doing some of this stuff for profit and

personal private profit, in a way which warrants investigation by the police", Williams said.

He continued: "There is virtually nowhere you can go if you are a college principal with a data issue which doesn't end up in difficulty for you, and that is the problem.

"We gave back half-a-million pounds which we hadn't anticipated doing. Our financial health was in a place where we gave it back and that was OK, but for others, that could have been a destabilising number. There is no incentive for people to be open about the difficulties they have.

"We're going from no support to audit of the nth degree, in the most complex and difficult funding system that one could imagine, with huge consequences at the end of it."

Williams said the fault does not just lie with ESFA staff, because their capacity has been "diminished over the years".

"There was a time where if you did have an issue you could ring somebody up and they would come in and have a chat and give support and advice," he explained.

"I sense the agency has pushed themselves to ensure they're not held accountable for public funds being wasted."



Lowell Williams

FE Week revealed in February that several dozen providers had been hit with recent mystery audits, after the ESFA raised concern about the reliability of their data. They not only faced a funding clawback, but were also removed from the official achievement rate tables.

Dudley College is planning on sharing its follow-up audit report, conducted by auditing firm RSM last month, with the sector from today (July 3).

"We will invite any college that wants to discuss it further to have a discussion

with us," he said.

"We're quite happy to make that report available and the formulas and everything that goes with it if other people would like to use it."

Williams concluded: "At the end of the day it was the college's error, it is our responsibility to get the administration right as well as Ofsted right. We have now learnt a hard lesson about not being complacent for the need to check and double-check every aspect of your individual learner records management to get it right."

East Riding College planning merger with Grimsby Institute

BILLY CAMDEN
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A college in the Humber area has announced plans to merge with one of the largest FE providers in the country in a bid to "safeguard their long-term sustainability".

East Riding College will join the TEC Partnership, formerly known as the Grimsby Institute Group, in the summer of 2020, subject to a public consultation.

The decision has been made following a review of East Riding's "strategic plan", which was conducted with the Department for Education and the FE Commissioner "at the college's request".

A spokesperson said: "Not only will joining the TEC Partnership provide East Riding College with added sustainability, it will also provide scope for the college to continue to thrive and

maintain its high performance."

East Riding is rated "good" by Ofsted and teaches around 4,000 learners every year.

Its latest accounts, for 2017-18, show a deficit of £982,000. Its cash outflow for the year was £141,000, which was "largely" due to the large deficit as well as cash clawbacks by the Education and Skills Funding Agency of £305,000 "relating to the previous year's performance".

As part of the TEC Partnership, East Riding said it will retain its "independence and identity".

The Grimsby Institute is rated "outstanding" by Ofsted and teaches over 10,000 learners every year.

A spokesperson for the college said the current funding climate for FE is "affecting the whole sector, and many organisations are considering ways to safeguard their long-term



East Riding College

sustainability".

Mike Welsh, principal of East Riding College, said he believes the merger is "the right thing to do".

"Joining such a strong and influential partnership as an equal partner gives us the means and resources to increase opportunities for our communities and

realise our ambitions for the region," he added.

"East Riding College continues to perform extremely well, with overall achievement rates putting us in the top 15 per cent of general further education colleges nationally."

Gill Alton, chief executive of the TEC

Partnership, said: "I'm delighted with today's news.

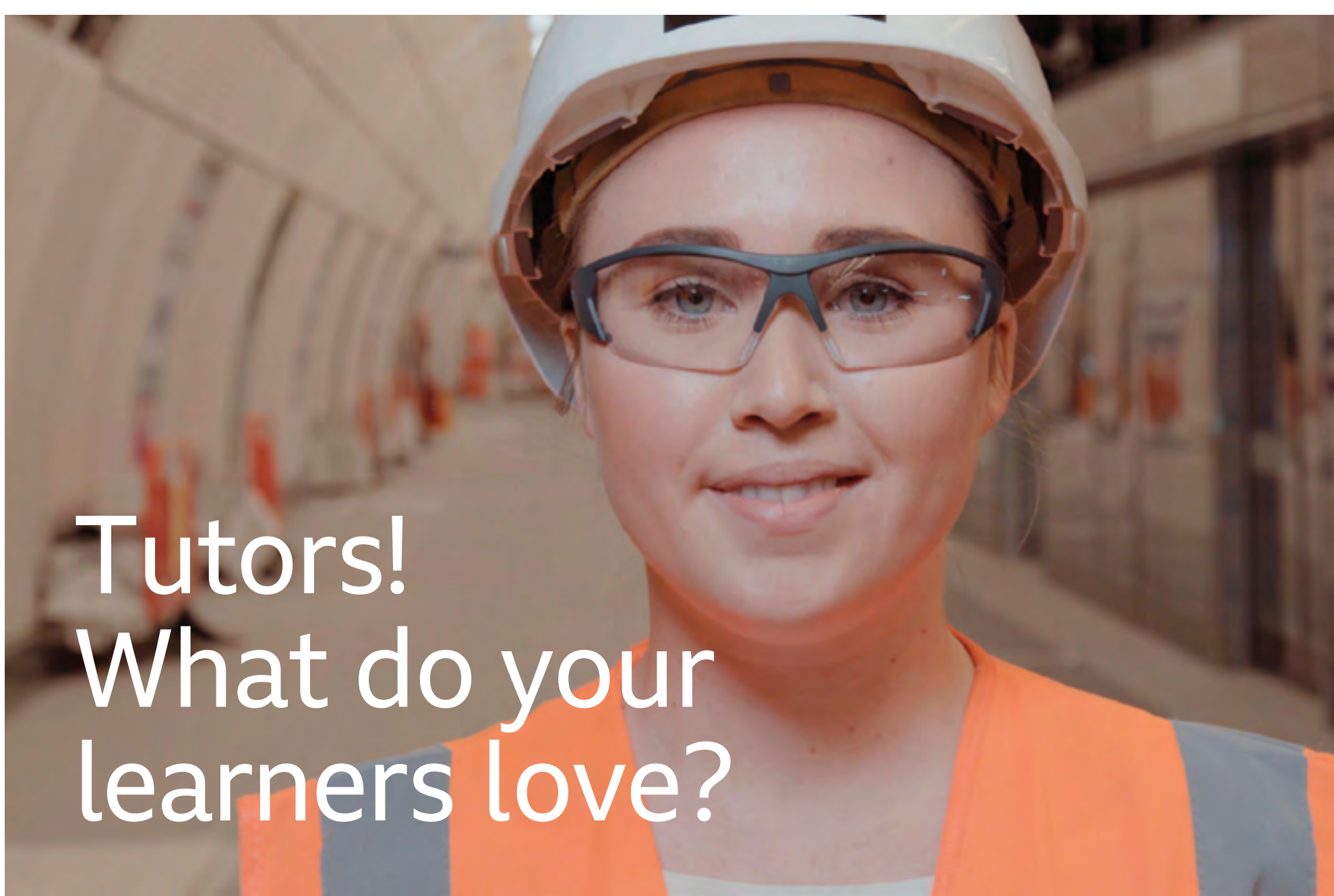
"We will now work together over the coming months to help East Riding College integrate with the Partnership whilst maintaining our absolute focus on our learners and our colleagues in both organisations."

The colleges expect to finalise the merger towards the end of 2019-20 "after public consultation and consultation with their stakeholders".

The TEC Partnership currently comprises the Grimsby Institute, University Centre Grimsby, Scarborough TEC, Skegness TEC, The Academy Grimsby, Career 6, Modal Training and National Employer Training.

Simon Wright, chair of East Riding College, said: "We are gaining the opportunity to be part of a high-performing visionary organisation leading the way in the wider education sector, both regionally and nationally.

"We will be able to build on our existing strengths and we will continue to be a driving force in the economic success and social development of our region, which has always been an integral part of our mission."



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News

BTEC Awards 2019 sees hugely talented youngsters rewarded across 20 categories

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The winners of the ninth annual BTEC Awards have been recognised at a ceremony featuring performances, celebrity appearances and a bucketload of vocational talent.

Awards were presented to 21 winners in 20 categories, following deliberations by an expert panel of 52 judges, including the managing director of FE Week publisher Lsect, Shane Mann.

The winner of the creative media student of the year award, Sam Pope from The Bath Studio School, was described by his teacher as a "serious talent" who "goes beyond what is expected" while mentoring classmates too.

His short films have even landed him a role in an upcoming professional feature film by award-winning director Kae Bahar.

The awards were held in central London and run by Pearson, whose president in the UK, Rod Bristow, said: "All those who won this year deserve huge congratulations and stand every chance of continuing that success into the careers they are now ready to start.

"This year's awards are a fantastic

celebration of them, alongside the schools, colleges, universities, training providers and employers, who have underpinned their efforts."

Hosting the awards was TV's Steph McGovern, and the ceremony was also attended by Olympic gold medallist gymnast Max Whitlock, presenting the award for school of the year.

The winner of the business and enterprise student of the year award, Tanya Sachdev from Braeburn International School Arusha in Tanzania, earned her award after starting her own tuck-shop business for teachers and students.

Performing at the ceremony were the four winners of the Showstopper Challenge, groups from schools and colleges offering BTECs in the performing arts: Deanery High School, D16 Performing Arts College, Jackie Palmer Academy and Bury College.

In a recent poll, Pearson has found that two-thirds of medium-sized businesses have hired BTEC graduates in the past five years. One such graduate is the winner of the hospitality, travel and tourism student of the year award Luke Bearpark from Exeter College, who has landed himself a job on the

international cabin crew for British Airways.

Another college winner was East Surrey's Francesca Horn, winner of the art and design student of the year award, whose work has previously

been featured on BBC News.

The winner of the child, health and social care student of the year award, Teanna Maguire from Sir John Deane's Sixth Form College was described as a "shining star" with an

"exemplary work ethic".

Kasra Soltani only came to England four years ago, yet his time and effort at Croydon College earned him this year's construction student of the year award.

Shalini Rajan, the winner of teacher of the year, was said to be "empowering her students by embracing modern teaching and learning strategies" at The Winchester School in Jebel Ali in the United Arab Emirates.

LIST OF BTEC AWARDS WINNERS

BTEC Art and Design Student of the Year:

Francesca Horn, East Surrey College, UK

BTEC Business and Enterprise Student of the Year:

Tanya Sachdev, Braeburn International School Arusha, Tanzania

BTEC Child and Social Care Student of the Year:

Teanna Maguire, Sir John Deane's Sixth Form College, UK

BTEC Construction Student of the Year:

Kasra Soltani, Croydon College, UK

BTEC Creative Media Student of the Year:

Sam Pope, The Bath Studio School, UK

BTEC Engineering Student of the Year:

Ryan Kimber, Isle of Wight College, UK

BTEC Hospitality, Travel and Tourism Student of the Year:

Luke Bearpark, Exeter College, UK

BTEC Land-based Student of the Year:

Chloe Rochester, Bishop Burton College, UK

BTEC Music Student of the Year:

Katie Cherry, Holmer Green Secondary School, UK

BTEC Performing Arts Student of the Year:

Millie Davey, Scarborough TEC, UK

BTEC Public Services Student of the Year:

Ryan Jolly, East Surrey College, UK

BTEC Science Student of the Year:

Abbie Densham, Exeter College, UK

BTEC Sport Student of the Year:

Dominika Bzdou, Nelson and Colne College, UK

BTEC Apprentice 16-18 of the Year:

Connor Coupland, Leeds College of Building, UK

BTEC Apprentice 19+ of the Year:

Christopher Meredith, Leeds College of Building, UK

BTEC School of the Year:

Milton Abbey School, UK

BTEC College of the Year:

Sunderland College, UK

BTEC Teacher of the Year:

Shalini Rajan, The Winchester School, Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates

BTEC Tutor of the Year:

Gwyn Williams, Abingdon and Witney College, UK

BTEC Students of the Year 2019:

Josephine Kiaga, Braeburn International School Arusha, Tanzania and Christopher Meredith, Leeds College of Building, UK

Turning lives around: the winners at the 2019 Festival of Learning

FRASER WHIELDON
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A man who left school without being able to read or write, and a woman who went from staying in a care home to studying for the operating theatre, are among the 12 winners of the 2019 Festival of Learning awards.

FE Week went along to the glitzy London ceremony on Tuesday to see them pick up their awards.

The recipients include Marie Smith, winner of the Learning for Health award – a survivor of sexual abuse, who left school with no qualifications and has suffered from severe depression.

Yet after she was referred to Adult

Education Wolverhampton's Like Minds pottery course, her self-esteem grew and she developed close friendships.

She is now studying for a degree in glass and ceramics at the University of Wolverhampton.

Asked how it felt to win, Smith described it as "enlightening" and it empowered her to carry on pushing herself and not to stop learning: on top of her degree, she wants to do both a Masters and a PhD.

Another winner of the Return to Learning award is Stuart Ferriss who struggled with severe dyslexia at school and did not learn to read or write.

He went on to work as a joiner then as a school caretaker, but knew his lack of literacy was holding him back; for

example, he was "frightened" to order off the menu when he went for a meal as he did not know whether he would enjoy the dish.

But the school supported him on to a dyslexia study skills class run by Oldham Lifelong Learning Service, and a functional skills English course.

After being made redundant from the school, he was able to secure a job as a caretaker at a local community centre, thanks to his improved literacy skills. He can also sit and read with his granddaughter now.

Also taking to the stage this week was Diana Omokore, the winner of the Outstanding Individual Award, who was taken into care as a teenager but excelled at school and achieved 10 A* - B



Festival of Learning winners

grades at GCSE.

Omokore is now studying for a BSc (Hons) in medical science at De Montfort University, alongside helping the NSPCC and Childline.

"I think it's a really good achievement and I'm just happy I've come so far," she said.

One of the winning providers, President's Award recipient City Lit, started off in 1919 teaching lip-reading to soldiers whose hearing had been ruined by shelling during World War One.

It now has more than 1,000 tutors teaching 5,000 courses every year over

a range of different subjects; including languages, visual arts, humanities and music.

"To get the award during our centenary is brilliant," said principal Mark Malcomson.

The winner of the Project Award is Nurturing Recovery, which offers level 1 practical horticulture courses for people with addictions and mental ill health and is run by Bridgwater & Taunton College and North Somerset Council.

But, as curriculum manager Nigel Cox explained: "The award is not just for us as a college, it's for the over 150 people we've put through that programme."

LIST OF FESTIVAL OF LEARNING WINNERS

Patron's Award: Michael Shakil

President's Award: City Lit

English Language Learning Award:

Seong Chua

Learning for Health Award: Marie Smith

New Directions Award: Vicky Seagars

Learning for Work Award: Emma Searle

Return to Learning Award: Stuart Ferriss

Outstanding Individual Learner Award:

Diana Omokore

Social Impact Award: Peter Shukie

Tutor Award: Fiona Pickett

Project Award: Nurturing Recovery

Employer Award: Keoghs

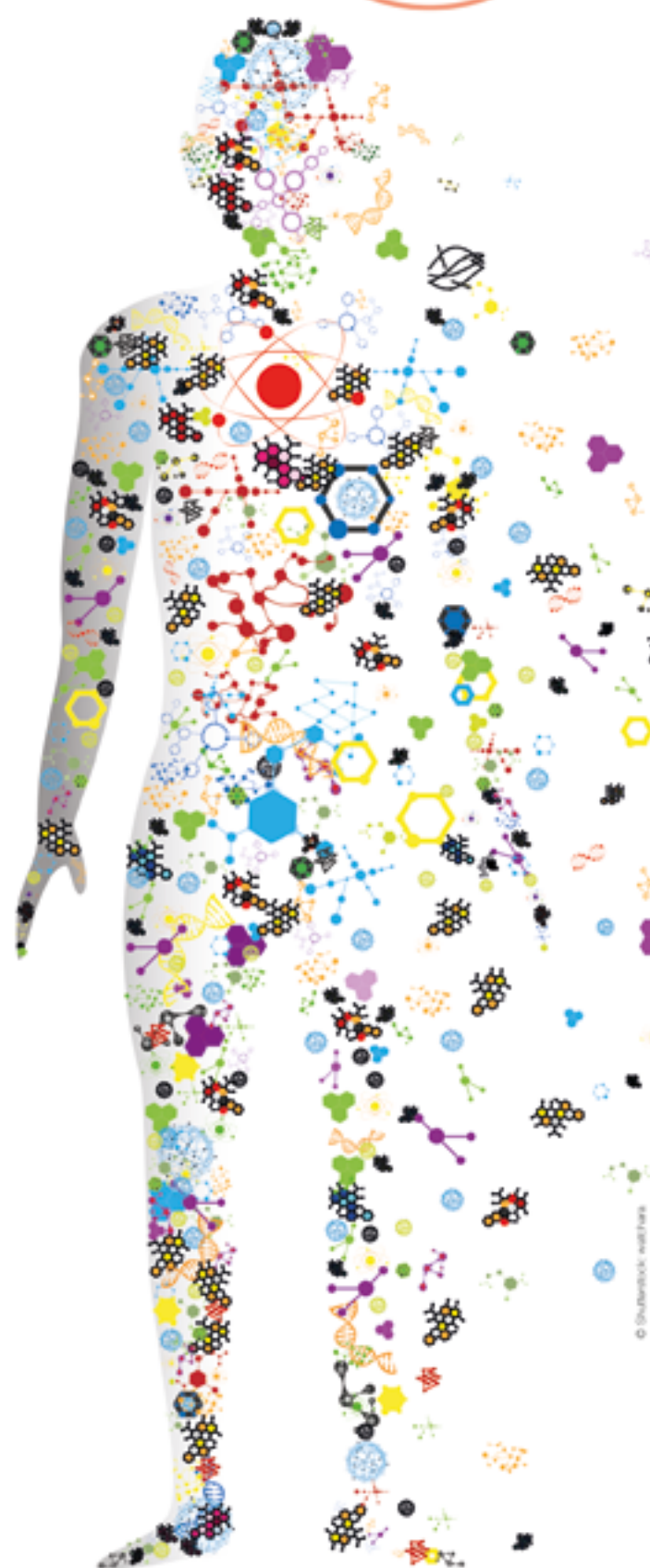
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News

New subcontracting funding rule slammed

NICK LINFORD
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From front

Exclusive

The Education and Skills Funding Agency has “shocked” hundreds of providers by requiring thousands of subcontracting contracts to be rewritten just four weeks before the new academic year.

The agency is demanding that all subcontracting contracts, for both adult education budget and apprenticeship funding, include for the first time a “list of individually itemised, specific costs for managing the subcontractor”.

In addition to listing the services, the contract must include “how each cost contributes to delivering high-quality training” and “how each specific cost is reasonable and proportionate to delivery of the subcontracted teaching or learning”.

These costs are typically referred to as a management fee or “top-slice” and have proven controversial for many years.

Nearly all providers currently charge their subcontractor a percentage of the funding, with some

colleges still charging in excess of 30 per cent.

The ESFA committed to considering a per cent cap last year, but this new rule, requiring costs to be listed, appears to be a different solution and could force providers into a very different pricing model.

“Administration to these updated requirements seems overly onerous”

Training providers have reacted angrily to the requirement, which appeared on Thursday afternoon in a new version of the funding rules for 2019-20.

Mark Dawe, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said: “We proposed a 20 per cent cap solution to end extortionate subcontracting management fees. But once again, a simple solution has been ignored and instead, this immensely bureaucratic process appears both out of the blue and shockingly late in the day.

“The ESFA should implement a percentage cap and bin this complicated rule of listing and justifying management services immediately, before thousands of providers spend even more scarce resources with lawyers and accountants rewriting contracts or worse, start looking for obvious loopholes.”

And a spokesperson for Learning Curve Group, a provider that operates as both a prime and subcontractor, told *FE Week*: “We would always support additional scrutiny on management fees as there have been a series of examples which would not be regarded as beneficial either to the subcontractor or the learner.

“However, the administration connected to these updated requirements seems overly onerous and ambiguous from an audit perspective.

“The investment needed to monitor subcontracted activity tends to be fairly standard across Primes, so a capped percentage rate would be something we support. It is also hugely unhelpful that the publication of the rules is so late.”

According to ESFA figures for 2017-18, there were over 3,292

105. You must include in your contract with each delivery subcontractor:
- 105.1. reference to your delivery subcontracting policy and where it can be found on your website
 - 105.2. your reason for subcontracting with them
 - 105.3. a list of all services you will provide to them and the associated costs for doing so. This must include a list of individually itemised, specific costs for managing the subcontractor, specific costs for quality monitoring activities and specific costs for any other support activities offered by you to the subcontractor
 - 105.4. a description of how each specific cost is reasonable and proportionate to delivery of the subcontracted teaching or learning and how each cost contributes to delivering high quality learning

New AEB funding rules for 2019/20

subcontracting contracts involving 516 main contractors and 1,032 subcontractors.

“This bureaucratic process appears shockingly late in the day”

The new rule reads, in full: “You must include in your contract with each delivery subcontractor a list of all services you will provide to them and the associated costs for doing so.

This must include a list of individually itemised, specific costs for managing the subcontractor, specific costs for quality-monitoring activities and specific costs for any other support activities offered by you to the subcontractor.

“You must include in your contract with each delivery subcontractor a description of how each specific cost is reasonable and proportionate to delivery of the subcontracted teaching or learning and how each cost contributes to delivering high quality learning.”

The Department for Education was approached for comment.

IfATE blasted for introduction of ‘unfair’ apprenticeship fee

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Exclusive

Assessment organisations have hit out at the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education’s “unfair” decision to start charging £40 per learner for apprenticeship quality assurance from September.

Tom Bewick, chief executive of the Federation of Awarding Bodies, has penned a letter to the institute’s boss, Sir Gerry Berragan, about the issue after his members “raised several concerns”.

They are particularly aggrieved at the way the charge was announced and the subsequent lack of formal communication about its planned implementation.

FAB has now called for external quality assurance (EQA) of apprenticeships to be treated as a “national infrastructure cost”.

“The inconsistency and lack of clarity for employers of EQA charges threatens the integrity of the entire apprenticeship reforms,” Bewick told *FE Week*.

“It should be paid for out of a central budget, for example, in the same way that Ofsted inspections are

currently funded.”

There are currently 18 approved EQA bodies that monitor end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs), to ensure the process is “fair, consistent and robust”.

The EQAs are allowed to apply a charge as long as it is on a “cost-recovery basis”. *FE Week* revealed the “ridiculous variability” in these charges in February, which were criticised by sector leaders for ranging from a free service to £179 per apprentice.

Robert Nitsch, the IfATE’s chief operating officer, announced at the Association of Employment and Learning Providers conference last week that the institute will soon start applying a £40 charge for the EQA it delivers, which is currently offered for free.

On the same day, Ofqual’s director for vocational and technical qualifications, Phil Beach, confirmed that his organisation would continue to offer the service for free – which has left the sector bemused as to why the institute needs to charge.

FE Week analysis shows that of the 212 apprenticeship standards for which the IfATE is the EQA provider, 137 had started totalling 52,840 in the first six months of 2018-19. This means that



Tom Bewick

when the £40 charge is applied, the institute will claim over £2.1 million for that period.

The government expects there to be around 500,000 starts every year when the apprenticeship reforms hit steady state. If the IfATE continues to deliver EQA for 40 per cent of the market, as it has done for the past two years, they’ll be claiming around £8 million in assurance charges annually.

FAB’s letter to the institute, seen by *FE Week*, says that levying a £40 charge at the point of EPA sale has the “potential to load significant transactional charges on the system and confuse employers”.

The letter continues: “There does not appear to be any formal published confirmation or notification of this intention.

“The announcement was delivered at a conference a week ago and we would have hoped for formal notification to all affected EPAOs before or shortly after that time.”

It is understood that the IfATE’s intention is to begin applying the £40 charge to all end-point assessments that are EQA’d from September 2019, irrespective of when the apprentice started their apprenticeship or was registered for their EPA.

“We do not believe it is fair to retrospectively apply this charge to those apprentices who are already on programme,” FAB’s letter said.

“What is being proposed has all the hallmarks of a bureaucratic nightmare, where massive amounts of public resource will be put into issuing and chasing potentially thousands of individual invoices,” Bewick told *FE Week*.

“Meanwhile, those standards where Ofqual is the EQA will see no charges introduced from September. The whole thing is a mess and needs sorting out urgently.”

A spokesperson for the institute said: “It has always been government’s intention that the EQA service is funded on a cost-recovery basis by charging and we have been clear about this.

“The institute’s power to charge has been set out in legislation for almost a year and a half, but we haven’t charged to date to allow the market time to develop and mature.

“The legislation states that the maximum possible charge is £56, but we are mindful of potential impact and have kept the cost down as much as possible.

“We will be writing to EPAOs formally in the coming days.”

Hinds blames colleges as their share of apprenticeships slumps to 26 per cent

JESSICA FINO

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Exclusive

Apprenticeships delivered by colleges fell to just 26 per cent last year, according to analysis by FE Week, and education secretary Damian Hinds has accused colleges of “not winning enough” funding.

When asked by the education select committee last week about financial constraints within the FE sector, Hinds blamed colleges for failing to secure more apprenticeship funding.

“The cash available for apprenticeships is doubling over the course of the decade,” he said. “I want FE colleges to be winning more of it.

“They are not winning enough of it today. No one is stopping them winning it, but it is not happening enough and I would like it to happen more.”

This is not the first time colleges have been urged to increase their uptake in apprenticeships. In 2015, the then skills minister Nick Boles told the Association of Colleges conference to stop letting private providers “nick your lunch”.

Our analysis of starts in the year to July 2018 found colleges’ market share for apprenticeships has shrunk from 31 to 26 per cent.

The official statistics also reveal that colleges are particularly struggling to win

business in the new world of standards and large levy-paying employers.

They only delivered 19 per cent of all starts with levy-paying employers in 2017-18, while private providers delivered 66 per cent.

And in terms of standards, of the total starts on these new apprenticeships in 2017-18, colleges delivered just 18 per cent of them. Private providers delivered 72 per cent.

FE Week approached a number of colleges that have experienced sharp declines in apprenticeship numbers in recent years, and the majority blamed their reductions on the move away from subcontracting.

The rules for subcontracting changed in May 2017, and main providers can now no longer subcontract entire apprenticeship programmes. Instead they must “directly deliver” more than a “token” number of apprenticeships to each employer.

In addition, many providers that were previously subcontractors are now on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers and so are able to contract directly with levy-paying employers.

Several colleges also mentioned the impact of the wider apprenticeship reforms in 2017, namely the controversial 20 per cent off-the-job training requirement, which is widely cited as the biggest barrier to apprentice recruitment.

A closer look at individual examples shows how

Newham College had 890 non-levy starts last year, but only 40 that were levy funded. And of all of its starts in 2017-18, Newham only did 20 on standards.

Elsewhere, data for East Sussex College Group shows that it had 1,470 starts last year, of which just 120 (8 per cent) were levy funded. And figures for Croydon College reveal that of its 140 starts in 2017-18, none was on standards.

“Colleges exist to fulfil their mission, not to make profit.”

FE Week contacted all three colleges to try to find out what was stopping them from offering training to large employers and apprenticeship standards, but they did not respond at the time of going to press.

Teresa Frith, senior skills policy manager for the AoC, said that competing for large, national contracts with levied employers is “outside” of colleges’ mission to “support specific communities”.

“It’s possible that some organisations are making large surpluses from apprenticeships (particularly degree apprenticeships) but where colleges are growing their apprenticeship activity, they’re spending the revenue on training,” she told FE Week.

“Colleges exist to fulfil their mission, not to make profit.”

She added: “The main reason for the reduction in colleges’ market share is the low levels of non-levy funding allocations which are

Levy funded starts - just 19% at colleges last year (34% non-levy)

Provider type	16/17 Starts		17/18 Starts	
College	2,120	10%	34,960	19%
ITPs	14,610	69%	122,510	66%
Other	4,300	20%	29,330	16%
Total starts levy funded	21,030		186,800	

Starts on standards - just 18% at colleges last year (33% frameworks)

Provider type	16/17 Starts		17/18 Starts	
College	3,310	13%	29,830	18%
ITPs	19,670	80%	118,620	72%
Other	1,620	7%	16,000	10%
Total starts on standards	24,600		164,450	

All starts - fallen from 31% to 26% at colleges last year

Provider type	16/17 Starts		17/18 Starts	
College	152,050	31%	99,490	26%
ITPs	300,300	61%	228,810	61%
Other	42,720	9%	48,680	13%
Total starts	495,070		376,980	

Source: ESFA data

severely restricting colleges’ ability to recruit new apprentices, and this in turn is forcing colleges to turn away employers.”

Colleges are, however, attempting to reverse this trend.

The Collab Group, for example, has launched a range of partnerships in an effort to boost the number of apprenticeship starts for its 35 college members.

In March, the group announced a “strategic partnership” with the Association of Professional Sales and developed the “sales academy programme”, based on the level 4 B2B sales executive apprenticeship standard.

“We have built a set of innovative training materials to guide and develop the skills of professional salespeople, helping them to be significantly more productive and effective as sales ambassadors for their companies and UK industry,” it said at the time.

Collab’s chief executive, Ian Pretty, said the group’s colleges “will benefit greatly from this partnership”.

In February, Collab also partnered up with the UK Parliament to launch a programme that will see its colleges train “25 apprentices to work in the most important buildings of the UK government, including the House of Commons, House of Lords and the iconic Elizabeth Tower/Big Ben”.

One month earlier, Collab and its colleges had formed another partnership, this time with the Housing Associations’ Charitable Trust.

In this alliance, the parties will “collaborate to provide digital apprenticeships to local housing associations”.

In the same month, Collab also partnered with Energy & Utility Skills to “connect leading UK colleges with the country’s leading energy and utility employers to inspire more learners into industry apprenticeships as they develop a sustainable workforce for a post-Brexit economy”.



Damian Hinds

Colleges with some of the biggest drop in starts	14/15 Starts	15/16 Starts	16/17 Starts	17/18 Starts	Shift in 17/18	Shift in 17/18
CHICHESTER COLLEGE GROUP	2,780	1,850	2,860	1,280	-1,580	-55%
DERWENTSIDE COLLEGE	2,980	3,620	3,140	1,610	-1,530	-49%
EASTLEIGH COLLEGE	5,660	4,710	6,720	1,630	-5,090	-76%
GATESHEAD COLLEGE	2,520	2,390	2,450	750	-1,700	-69%
HEART OF WORCESTERSHIRE COLLEGE	1,980	2,250	2,070	1,030	-1,040	-50%
HULL COLLEGE	3,050	3,090	4,120	1,480	-2,640	-64%
NEW COLLEGE SWINDON	480	840	1,490	290	-1,200	-81%
RNN GROUP	360	360	3,320	1,250	-2,070	-62%
WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE	6,610	9,210	6,830	1,440	-5,390	-79%

Source: ESFA data

News



Former Dragon hits out at IfATE over cut to level 3 and 4 standards

FRASER WHIELDON
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Exclusive

The chair of major high-street employer Ryman, ex-Dragon's Den star Theo Paphitis, has accused the Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education of "damaging" apprenticeship quality.

This follows IfATE's decision to cut funding to the level 3 retail team leader and the level 4 retail manager standards, from £5,000 to £4,000 and £6,000 to £5,000 respectively.

Paphitis told FE Week that reducing those funding bands is "damaging to the quality apprenticeships we want to offer", as it will mean training providers could struggle to provide learners with the breadth of learning experience that Ryman would prefer.

Both are popular standards, with 5,119 starts for the retail team leader

standard, and 2,369 for the retail manager standard, according to latest ESFA starts data to January 2019.

The stationery giant may be forced to pay top-ups to finance the programme it wants providers to deliver, Paphitis said.

"The cuts are damaging to the quality apprenticeships we want to offer"

He added: "We are great believers in quality, not quantity. Reducing the costs will make it even harder for some companies to spend their pot in the way it was originally intended."

The retail apprenticeships were

two of 17 standards that had revised funding bands published this week, following a review by the IfATE.

This latest stinging criticism of IfATE's decision-making will not be welcomed by skills minister Anne Milton, who told FE Week she wanted the quango to have a much more "collaborative relationship" with providers.

There is little sign of that this week, with hospitality apprenticeship provider HIT Training accusing the institute of engaging in a "race to the bottom".

Two level 3 hospitality standards have been cut from £5,000 to £4,000 this week: hospitality supervisor and senior production chef.

A spokesperson said the institute "always call on us for support when there is a funding band review, but frankly, it seems that in spite of providing a significant evidence base, they invariably choose the cheapest option".

"We will cut our cloth to suit, but it is a real pity high-quality provision will be removed from the sector," they added.

People 1st, which represents the standards' trailblazer groups, appealed against IfATE's decision to cut the four standards.

All four appeals were rejected by IfATE, as were two against cuts to the level 3 bus and coach engineering technician standard, which was cut from £18,000 to £16,000; and the level 3 heavy-vehicle service and maintenance technician, which was cut from £18,000 to £15,000.

The cuts may mean training providers decide these two standards are not viable to run, warned the standards' trailblazer group representative, head of fleet at First Bus Jon Harman.

Of the 17 new funding bands published this week, only one standard had an increase: the level 3 highway electrician/service operative, from

£9,000 to £12,000.

Six remained the same, while ten have had cuts.

There have been two funding band reviews, in May last year and the following December, which have led to several standards having funding cuts, including the popular chartered manager degree apprenticeship.

Three funding band reviews from December are outstanding.

An IfATE spokesperson said: "The aim for all standards reviewed is to ensure they have the most appropriate funding band to support high-quality delivery, and provide value for money for employers and taxpayers.

"It is a real pity high-quality provision will be removed from the sector"

"Each standard has been considered on its own merits following the same approach used throughout the review process to ensure consistency."

The spokesperson said IfATE had worked collaboratively with trailblazer groups and collated evidence that was used fairly and in a balanced way.

"We welcome feedback and will assess the impact of any changes to funding bands over the coming months, taking action where appropriate."



The Northern College is an outstanding adult residential college set in beautiful parklands just south of Barnsley www.northern.ac.uk. It is an exciting time for the college, with a real focus on promotion, innovation and diversification to further grow and develop the offer.

HEAD OF STUDENT SERVICES

Salary: £32,112 - £36,123 per annum - Working 36 hours per week

Working in this exciting role you will be responsible for providing an outstanding and comprehensive student services offer which meets the needs of students and is linked to local and regional priorities. With proven experience in providing information, advice and guidance, you will promote clear progression routes and ensure students are recruited to the right courses resulting in positive progression and destination. With a focus on the student journey and outcomes for students you will put the student at the heart of everything you do ensuring flexible, responsive and accessible services for all students.

Working collaboratively with curriculum teams your knowledge and experience will enable you to design, implement and embed student journey processes across the college. You will have a proven ability to develop excellent working relationships both internally and with external partners, promoting the college and widening our reach and impact. You will oversee the work of partner agencies delivering support services for the college, students and stakeholders and ensure the team delivers the service within the agreed budget.

You will be committed to the mission and values of the college and to providing outstanding customer service. You will be resilient and able to manage change effectively, with the ability to analyse data and statistics that drive change

and lead to service improvements. You will have a minimum qualification of Information, Advice and Guidance at level 3 and the willingness to work towards an IAG Level 6 is essential or relevant equivalent along with a level 2 in English and Maths or equivalent.

The benefits of working for the College include: access to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), free on-site parking, family friendly policies, health and well-being schemes and opportunities for professional development. To find out more information about the College, view the job description/person specification and to download an application form please visit the jobs page at www.northern.ac.uk/jobs. For any queries about this vacancy please contact the HR department on 01226 776000.

Northern College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners and expects all staff to share this commitment. We are an equal opportunities employer, applications are particularly welcome from disabled, black and minority ethnic groups as they are currently under represented within our staff group. Northern College promotes the welfare of all students and is fully committed to safeguarding and to fulfilling its obligations under the Prevent duty. The college expects all staff to share these commitments.

Application forms must be submitted by: 12 July 2019

To apply, please visit: <https://www.northern.ac.uk/about-us/jobs/>



Vice Principal 14-19 and Business Skills

Salary Grade FE pay scale points 51-53
£56,313 - £59,738

City College Peterborough is an Adult and Community Learning college based in Peterborough that is part of Peterborough City Council but operates with a Governing Board, under an arms-length delivery model. Alongside the college's delivery of the Adult Education Budget, it maximises the skills sets of its staff and knowledge of working within the local community and businesses to deliver other aspects of the skills sector, including Study Skills to 14-19 year-olds and apprenticeships.

Due to the successful promotion of the current post holder in becoming a Head of Service within a different Local Authority, we now have a vacancy for a Vice Principal for 14-19 and Business Skills.

This is an amazing opportunity for the right individual in what is an exciting time for the College. We are looking for a talented professional to take up this key role in which, as

a Vice Principal, you will also sit on the College Senior Leadership Team, helping to steer the Service.

Experience of working in a comparable service, college or educational provider is required alongside exceptional interpersonal skills and experience of fostering and working in partnership.

To succeed in this role, you must also be ambitious and enjoy working to high standards in a fast-paced, ever-changing environment whilst treating all students, staff, colleagues and partners with humanity and respect.

You will need to:

- be brave, discovering what's possible, pushing the limits and seeking out new opportunities.

- commit to each and every student, ensuring they are supported to achieve their potential and be inspired to achieve.
- understand the new Education Inspection Framework and the importance of curriculum design, delivery and impact, knowing what outstanding looks like.
- understand and be committed to the local skills agenda, including an understanding of employer needs.

This is an exciting and innovative time for the College and we are seeking to appoint a Vice Principal who is equally excited and motivated by this opportunity and challenge. In return, we offer a diverse and stimulating work environment in which no two days are the same and where you will have exceptional educational opportunities to guide and inspire learners and staff.

For more information and to apply for this is post, visit www.citycollegepeterborough.ac.uk

Closing date: 5.00pm Tuesday 9th July 2019 | Interviews will be held on Monday 15th July 2019



Langley College is part of the Windsor Forest Colleges Group and is its centre for technical and vocational training and apprenticeships. It has benefited from a £30 million investment in its

campus and is equipped with the latest industry standard equipment, workshops and studios – including its own multi-trades bungalow and mock hospital ward.

Head of Apprenticeships and Assessment

Langley, Berkshire

It's an exciting time to join our team. We are looking for an inspiring and ambitious Head of Apprenticeships and Assessment to deliver outstanding leadership and play a key role in the strategic delivery and quality of the Apprenticeship provision at the Windsor Forest Colleges Group.

Our College is at the heart of exciting industry developments. With Heathrow and Crossrail on our doorstep, this is a fantastic opportunity for an ambitious person who is committed and

dedicated to lead us into the future.

As the Head of Apprenticeships and Assessment, you will ensure the high quality of education for all aspects of an apprentice's journey. You will also play a key role in preparing for and taking part in future OFSTED, External Audit and other quality assurance or monitoring visits and ensure the successful transition from Apprenticeship frameworks to Standards in line with Apprenticeship reforms.

Contract type: Permanent role

Salary: Up to £50,500 per annum depending on qualifications, skills and experience

Closing date: midday on Friday 12th July 2019.

Interviews will be held on 23 July 2019.

Please apply at <http://www.windsor-forest.ac.uk/jobs-a-careers.html> and complete an online application form.



Part of the Windsor Forest Colleges Group



WEST LONDON COLLEGE

Apprenticeship Manager

West London College (WLC) has an exciting opportunity to lead on and manage, the delivery of Apprenticeships across all sectors, providing a positive, pro-active approach which delivers outstanding outcomes for apprentices and employers.

Responsible for driving forward quality improvements and maximising achievement, including oversight of the internal and external quality assurance processes for Apprenticeship provision. This is a great opportunity to lead on cross-college apprenticeships and training areas to positively impact on the strategic direction of the service.

The successful candidate will be passionate about Apprenticeships and have a strong track record of ensuring Apprentices have an outstanding experience. They will have the leadership skills to drive and manage change and to design innovative and flexible delivery models to complete the transition to the new apprenticeship standards.

The successful candidate will be responsible for monitoring the progress of apprentices and the delivery of outstanding timely achievement rates and progression opportunities, as well as helping to continue to grow the Apprenticeship offer.

Your commitment to the values of our College - Excellence, Ambition, Focus, Accountability, Inclusion and Integrity - will be evident in everything you do.

Hours: 36 hours per week

Tenure: Permanent

Salary: up to £50,000 dependant on experience

Closing Date: Wednesday 10th July 2019

Interviews to be held: 17th July 2019

We are committed to equality and diversity and expect our staff to share this commitment.

The safety and welfare of our staff and learners is extremely important to us and is why we pride ourselves on our Safeguarding procedures.

All positions are subject to (formerly CRB) and your start date will be dependent on receipt of satisfactory DBS clearance.



Gliddon Road, Barons Court, London W14 9BL



The Green, Ealing, London W5 5EW



Beaconsfield Road, Southall, Middlesex UB1 1DP



Unit 1, Nucleus Park, Central Way, Park Royal, London NW10 7XT



Southall Waterside, 170 Brent Road, Southall UB2 5LE



Senior MIS Report Writer

We have an exciting opportunity for a Senior MIS Report Writer to join our MIS Department. This role will play a vital part in achieving the Colleges Mission and Vision as this post will support the essential functions of the MIS & Reporting Team, which play a key role in accurate management of College data.

Hours: Full time - 37 hours per week

Salary: £32,500 per annum

Closing date: 14/07/2019

About Us:

Macclesfield College is a leading provider of Further Education and Higher Education in the North West of England. Macclesfield College is part of a modern, inspiring campus providing education to learners of all ages and abilities. Based in East Cheshire, the College offers free secure campus parking and excellent transport links.

Recognised as a 'Good' College at its November 2017 Ofsted inspection. Our mission is simple- "Empowerment through learning".

Macclesfield College has just been confirmed as the overall best- performing FE institution within the key Cheshire and Warrington sub-region, according to the latest statistics published in the National Achievement Rate Tables.

Furthermore on 5th April 2019, Macclesfield College was proud to be awarded winners of the 'Business and Education' category of the East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce Awards.

The Role:

We have an exciting opportunity for a Senior MIS Report Writer to join our MIS Department.

This role will play a vital part in achieving the Colleges Mission and Vision as this post will support the essential functions of the MIS & Reporting Team, which play a key role in accurate management of College data.

Main responsibilities will include:

- Supporting the production of accurate, timely and accessible data reports / dashboards.
- Supporting the development, implementation and maintenance of in house systems.
- To work with the Director of MIS and Examinations to ensure delivery of reporting and data supports the strategic direction of the College.

Applicants should ideally have proven experience of working with MIS at an education establishment.

Closing date for receipt of completed applications is midnight on Sunday 14th July 2019

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

All appointments will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and satisfactory references.

The College is committed to equality of opportunity. We welcome applications from all sections of the community, particularly from members of ethnic minority groups.

Contact Details: For any further details contact Human Resources – Tel: **01625 410007** Email: **recruitment@macclesfield.ac.uk**



Lecturer in IT

We have an exciting opportunity for a Lecturer to join our IT Department. This role will deliver high quality and innovative teaching, learning and assessment to learners within the IT Faculty.

Hours: 37 hours per week

Salary: £24,641-£32,475 per annum (depending on qualifications and experience)

Closing date: 07/07/2019

About Us:

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Furthermore on 5th April 2019, Macclesfield College was proud to be awarded winners of the 'Business and Education' category of the East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce Awards.

The Role:

We have an exciting opportunity for a Lecturer to join our IT Department.

This role will deliver high quality and innovative teaching, learning and assessment to learners within the IT Faculty.

Applicants should have a full teaching qualification to current national standards. A Degree or

equivalent/professional qualification in the subject area is also essential.

The successful candidate will ideally have a specialism in either:

- Hardware & networking (PC maintenance and support), IT system & troubleshooting, and network configuration and administration

OR

- Software development and programming (ability to programme in Python, VB.net, C # or C++) with knowledge of advance database system, information systems and MIS systems

It would also be desirable for the candidate to hold vendor qualification (e.g. Microsoft Cisco).

Key Responsibilities:

- To plan teaching, learning and assessment for college programmes using the appropriate college format to ensure effective learning.
- To deliver teaching and learning to at least a consistently good or outstanding standard to achieve high success rates.
- To assess accurately learners work both formatively and summatively against appropriate awarding body criteria to ensure learners achieve their qualifications.
- To support learners progress through personal tutoring and parent/carers evenings to help learners achieve their full potential and progress appropriately.

Closing date for receipt of completed applications is midnight on Sunday 7th July 2019

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

All appointments will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and satisfactory references.

The College is committed to equality of opportunity. We welcome applications from all sections of the community, particularly from members of ethnic minority groups.

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To Russia with love: WorldSkills 2019 Team UK gets send-off from Parliament

JESSICA FINO

JESSICA.FINO@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Skills minister Anne Milton told 37 of the UK's best and brightest young skilled people they are about to face the "biggest challenge" of their lives during a special send-off event ahead of WorldSkills 2019.

In the House of Commons on Tuesday, Milton told the Team UK competitors and their families she was "incredibly proud" of them as they set off for Kazan, Russia, next month.

She said the event, which will bring together 60 countries competing for bronze, silver and gold in 56 skill disciplines, "needs to be seen to be believed", adding that "it's quite extraordinary what you are about to do".

The minister said that all the competitors are about to become ambassadors not just for their chosen skill but for all young people across the country.

"Dedication matters, and you've got to be at the top of your game, because

handling the pressure is a very critical thing."

The event was introduced by Will Torrent, a former competitor and now a famous chef, who inspired competitors by saying that when he attended the same send-off event in 2007 before going to Japan, he was "about to embark on a journey, a test of character, an adventure that would springboard my career into heights I only had dreamed of".

Shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden, who hosted the event, said this was a good time for the competitors to be going to Russia "with love". Marsden advised the young talents "not to be undersold" and to do their best, because that's "all you can always do".

Meanwhile, WorldSkills UK chief executive Neil Bentley-Gockmann told the remaining competitors: "We are just one month away from the challenge of a lifetime. So I am delighted that we are here today to celebrate you, your achievements so far, and your potential as you gear up for your Russian adventure."

Team UK originally comprised 39 members, but two competitors have since dropped out. Patisserie competitor Connor Stow had to withdraw earlier this year for health reasons, and more recently, jewellery competitor Samuel McMahon announced his withdrawal.

At the last WorldSkills, which took place two years ago in Abu Dhabi, Team UK retained its top-10 position, after our competitors bagged one gold, three silvers, three bronzes, and 13 medallions of excellence.

Bentley-Gockmann said the goal this year is to retain a top-10 position. But, he added, getting this far "means you are the best in the UK in what you do", which is a massive achievement in itself.

Landscape gardening competitor Sam Taylor told FE Week that he and team-mate Shea McFerran experienced a "bad start" in EuroSkills Budapest last year, after failing to win a medallion of excellence. But since then, the team has been training hard: "We have



Left to right: Collette Gorvett, Thomas Lewis, Sam Everton, Neil Bentley-Gockmann, Christopher Caine, Thomas Thomas, Kyle Woodward, Phoebe McLavy

been out in China during Easter and we have done really well there," he said. "It was a good pressure test for us.

"I am pretty confident. I want to smash it and get the gold medal."

Callum Knott, training manager of Jack Dakin and Danny Slater, who are competing in mechatronics, said that training two people is about finding people with "complementary skills".

"They need to have not only technical ability but be able to work

together. They have to spend more hours together than with their own partners, so they need to get along quite well."

He added: "We are hoping to achieve a medal. We would be very disappointed if we didn't come back with a medallion."

The team will fly to Kazan on August 18 in preparation for competitions that will run between August 22 and 27, where FE Week will be joining them.

Readers' reply



EMAIL



TWITTER



FACEBOOK



WEBSITE

IfA's second funding band review: Another 17 standards signed off

I wonder how much consideration is given to the implications of a reduction for training providers and EPAOs which have costed on original funding bands?

Katie Orr

Festival of Learning award winners 2019 honoured

Superb examples of the power of adult learning and the need for the opportunities to be available everywhere

Jenny Sims

ESFA to stop funding apprentices without an assessment organisation

All well and good but if there is no EPAO and the framework is withdrawn how does that help anyone?

Tez Collier

What about if you have an EPAO in place at the start then they decide to stop offering that standard???

Caron Goreham

IfA rejects level 2 business admin apprenticeship leaving employers 'disappointed' and 'upset'

Some young people want to move straight into an apprenticeship after leaving school. They are not ready for level 3! This is disappointing and morally wrong.

Lucy Victoria

This folk seem very happy to consign many young people to employment in which they will have little opportunity to receive training in skills that will offer the prospect of betterment. Makes you

wonder what accountability and to whom the IFA is acting on behalf of.

Jon Thompson

It's a shame we have to put unsuitable L3 Admin learners onto Customer Service L2 as an alternative when it doesn't always fit.

Gordon Window

Really don't like this decision as it hits the entry point to the market, but if a learner has ANY prior learning this wouldn't be deliverable as an apprenticeship anyway. I would argue that most 16-year-olds will have some IT knowledge. Under the current rules, you would have to reduce the apprenticeship length, making it less than 12 months and as such, no longer an apprenticeship

Garrie Owens

REPLY OF THE WEEK

IfA rejects level 2 business admin apprenticeship leaving employers 'disappointed' and 'upset'



Absolutely fuming. It's as if the government doesn't want level 2 apprenticeships or for 16-18 years to leave full time education to get a job with training. This is such a shame and very short-sighted, especially in areas where there is high deprivation and poor attainment rates. Perhaps the focus now needs to be on proving the level 3 isn't appropriate because it stretches across both level 2 & level 4 and doesn't allow progression.

Kate Brady

Experts

SANDRA KELLY

Director UK Skills and Policy,
People 1st International



How we can get the talent pipeline flowing properly

Only by employers and educators working closely together can the UK's chronic and increasing skills gap be closed, says Sandra Kelly

Employers must take ownership of the skills agenda to ensure that vocational programmes reflect what industry really wants and needs. The recent funding-band cuts across multiple sectors just go to show how important it is for employers to be proactive and to work in partnership.

The importance of this employer-led ethos really hit home when we invited the head of the Food Teachers Centre (a 5,000-strong self-help group for secondary-school teachers) to one of our quarterly Hospitality Skills & Quality Board meetings.

The idea was to exchange ideas to address the vastly reduced number of students on food-related courses at schools, which is set to have a profound impact on the talent pipeline, apprenticeships and full-

time college hospitality and catering courses.

It's no exaggeration to say that some of them looked shell-shocked to learn that fewer than 50,000 students in the UK are now taking GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition – 50 per cent less than a decade ago.

Budget cuts and the new Ofsted inspection framework offer nothing to guarantee food education. This challenge is amplified by the fact that hospitality and tourism have one of the highest levels of skills gap of any sector.

It is estimated that by 2024, they will need to recruit an additional 1.3 million people ('People & Productivity', People 1st report, 2017).

On another occasion, we arranged for last year's AA College Restaurant of the Year, Milton Keynes College, to meet with the Hospitality Skills and Quality Board to share what works well, and to set out why they refuse to work with employers that fail to

provide a quality student experience.

The employer-led approach at the heart of both these initiatives highlights the need to encompass the whole talent pipeline. There's no reason why this approach can't be applied elsewhere.

“Hospitality and tourism have one of the highest levels of skills gap”

FE colleges, for example, could be invited to meet with employer-led boards in other sectors where curriculums are being delivered. After all, why would you not want to influence and collaborate with employers who are actively investing in apprenticeships and further

education in their workplaces?

One of the challenges with change initiatives is that to succeed they must be deeply embedded at a cultural level. Whilst it's true that infrastructures and frameworks provide a platform for colleges to develop innovative partnerships, a sound strategy and effective communication at all levels helps to set the tone.

Our employer-led college accreditation board is an approach that can be mirrored in other sectors. Similarly, the partnership we have established with the AA for the AA College Restaurant of the Year award for student-run college restaurants is an idea that can be replicated in other sectors.

We need more initiatives like these to give the colleges an opportunity to be creative and really stretch the boundaries of what's possible.

Another way to do this is to collaborate with the government and

other key stakeholders. The Aviation Industry Skills Board, for example, is working closely with the Department of Transport to ensure the Aviation 2050 strategy delivers a ready supply of talent to meet current demand and future need.

Ultimately, these types of initiatives can only succeed if employers are fully engaged and working in partnership with education. Having industry around the table to develop entry-level standards for apprenticeships and the future T-levels simply isn't enough.

We need to capitalise on the energy and passion of committed employers. This means not only unearthing what's happening to their talent pipeline, but also taking collective responsibility to finding a sustainable solution.

Skills shortages are without doubt one of the biggest challenges currently facing the UK economy. It's time to take action now.

PAUL JOYCE

Deputy director of FE
and Skills, Ofsted



Clearing up misconceptions about the new inspection framework

The new EIF will be wholly fit for purpose when it comes into effect in September, says Paul Joyce

One of Ofsted's core strategy promises is to improve the validity of inspection continually. As part of meeting that commitment, last autumn we carried out research on lesson visits and work scrutiny. Our aim was to test whether inspectors reliably assess the right things when they observe lessons and look at learners' work.

Unfortunately, when the research was published last week, there was some misunderstanding about its findings. This was particularly the case with regard to the validity of our methods for observing lessons or training in further education and skills (FES) providers.

I want to clarify those findings and hopefully provide reassurance that our new education inspection framework (EIF) will absolutely be looking at the right things when it comes into effect

in September.

Lesson visits and work scrutiny are just two important methods in our inspection toolkit. They help inspectors gather evidence and reach a judgment about the quality of education in a school or college. But we have not judged or graded individual lessons for some years now, and we will not do so under the EIF.

For the lesson visit research, inspectors were given a set of 18 measurable indicators and asked to evaluate independently the training or lessons they saw, against a five-point scale. The indicators covered three areas of interest: curriculum, teaching, and behaviour.

It's important to clarify that these indicators were developed for the research study only. They will not be used on actual inspections under the new framework.

Our findings are encouraging. They show that inspectors are able to assess behaviour, teaching and

the curriculum separately when they observe lessons or training. This has given us greater confidence about the validity of our new inspection framework, which has separate judgements for the quality of education and behaviour and attitudes.

“Our research model wasn't designed to take account of the complexity of FE providers”

But what we also found was that the research model did not quite fit the FES context. This meant the likelihood of two inspectors rating any of the indicators exactly the same was lower in colleges than it was in schools.

This does not mean that the way we gather evidence from lesson visits in FE colleges is flawed, or that it leads to unreliable judgments. Only that our research model was not designed to take account of the complexity of further education providers.

With that in mind, we will be conducting a further research project later this year, specifically designed to test the validity and reliability of further education lesson and training observations. We have also established a research group of academics with expertise in this area and will be publishing a series of blogs and a literature review in due course.

But that doesn't change where we are now with the EIF and shouldn't cast any doubt on its suitability for further education and skills contexts.

We need to make sure our inspection tools are suitable for the uniqueness of each provider, as well as sufficiently reliable. That's why we developed a flexible

inspection methodology. We tested this methodology in a variety of FE providers as part of our piloting work, which is set out in our further education and skills inspection handbook.

Under the EIF, evidence from a number of different observation activities will be drawn together alongside meaningful discussions with leaders, governors, trustees, staff and students, as well as scrutiny of curriculum documents, learner records and published national data. We are confident this will enable inspectors to collect a secure evidence base on which to judge a provider.

The EIF will be the most tested inspection framework Ofsted has ever introduced. We recognise there is more to do, but that should not stop us from doing what we know is right – shifting our focus to the real substance of education and training, for the benefit of all children, young people and learners.

RICHARD ALBERG

CEO, MWS Technology and a former college chair



Why FE colleges need 'big' data in the battle to recruit apprentices

Smart technology that transforms data management is available in an FE college near you, says Richard Alberg

Big data is everywhere; it enables the analysis of how we shop, vote and even make our way around cities. But what can it do for further education, particularly when it comes to the highly competitive apprenticeship market?

Technological innovations have amplified our capacity to store large data sets and use them to understand human behaviour. Whether by default or design, FE colleges, like education in general in the UK, have yet to fully embrace the potential of big data to help recruitment, retention, completion, career, course innovation and business development, to name but a few benefits.

The reluctance in some quarters is understandable. Data, as the academic Rebecca Eynon points out, comes with ethical dilemmas over privacy and its potential use to whittle out failing students, teachers and institutions.

Furthermore, making sense of the vast amount of raw data out there is a huge job. You can download local apprenticeship market data from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), but these come as massive spreadsheets. Understanding the trends that can inform decisions elude all but the most motivated.

However, I would argue that data should be essential to the work of the FE sector, since apprenticeships are one of the fastest-growing post-16 training routes. Apprenticeships are complicated. Each learner is an individual with her/his idiosyncrasies. Programmes generally last for more than 12 months and are split between workplace and training centre. Add in compliance, audit and Ofsted, and it is easy to see how, with multiple learners, there are many moving parts where things can go wrong.

Colleges must also decide which programmes to offer. Apprenticeship standards require curriculum development, an expensive undertaking.

Ensuring that the college invests its scarce resources in the right areas matters.

Using data to analyse learner progress is also a challenge. Data has to be exported from several systems – CRM, ePortfolio, LMS and funding – and then brought together. It can take an analyst

“We are on the threshold of using artificial intelligence in education”

several days, so unsurprisingly it is rarely done. Since there are often errors in the data, management can become sceptical about the information and revert to gut instinct.

Is there a solution?

For a while now, some of the more sophisticated training providers have

been investing in very smart technology that transforms data management. Two elements are available, and we are on the cusp of a third.

The first is end-to-end delivery in a single technology platform and one database, which helps administrative efficiency and eliminates double-keying of data. And it means that any required information can be generated instantaneously from this single database. There is no need to bring diverse data sets together because it is all in one place. Many industries, from medicine to banking, use this kind of structured data to help with regulatory compliance.

The second element is about interpreting and processing the data. Business intelligence tools, such as Microsoft's Power BI and Tableau, are becoming popular. These allow you to select fields from a database and then view them visually, drilling in and out as required, making the intelligent business management decisions that

lead to success.

For example, we created an interactive mapping project from ESFA apprenticeship data, that shows which apprenticeship standards and frameworks are being delivered in localities across all providers. Data like this enables college managers to plan around growth areas and market gaps with greater ease.

Finally, I believe we are on the threshold of using machine learning or artificial intelligence in education. Much of how it will evolve is still speculation, but machine learning can draw on the vast array of structured data to identify institutional patterns around efficiency, retention and completion rates.

And much like the recommendations we receive from Spotify or Netflix, algorithms can target students with courses or career options and can deliver personalised learning.

There is no getting away from the inevitable. Colleges that embrace data will be the colleges that prosper.

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Bulletin



Zamzam Ibrahim

President, National Union of Students (NUS)

Start date July 2019

Previous job

Vice President (Society and Citizenship), NUS

Interesting fact

Even as a baby, she has had a drive to succeed, bypassing the crawling stage by going straight from sitting upright to walking



Dawn Chadwick

Governor, Northumberland College

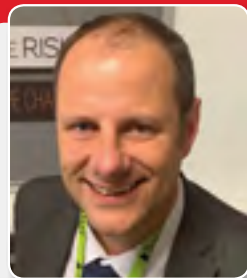
Start date July 2019

Concurrent job

Founder and director, Dawn L Chadwick Insolvency

Interesting fact

In her spare time, she enjoys competing in horse riding events



Garath Rawson

Principal, Doncaster UTC

Start date September 2019

Previous job

Vice principal, UTC Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park

Interesting fact

He is a fluent Spanish speaker



Kerry Patterson

Governor, Northumberland College

Start date July 2019

Concurrent job

Head of HR, Tharsus Group

Interesting fact

She has met Prince Charles at St James' Palace

Movers & Shakers

...

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

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FE Week Sudoku challenge

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

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

Difficulty: Easy

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

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.



Last Edition's winner: Catherine Storey

Solutions

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

Difficulty: Easy

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

Difficulty: Medium

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