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# Cameron hits the roof

The Prime Minister reached new heights when he visited a Nottingham provider to find out more about apprenticeships, writes Rebecca Cooney.

David Cameron took a tour of Skills Funding Agency-registered East Midlands Roofing College and tried roofing for himself.

And he wasn't slated for his efforts either — 26-year-old former apprentice Linden Blackwood said: "He was actually quite good, so I told him he could start on Monday. He said it was nice to know he had options."

Mr Blackwood said Mr Cameron had been keen to hear about his experience. "I told him how, without an apprenticeship, I'd either still be hunched over a book studying something I hate or in a dead-end job," he said.



Former roofing apprentice Linden Blackwood shows Prime Minister David Cameron how to lay a roof. Top: Mr Cameron with students and staff at East Midlands Roofing College. Bottom: Mr Cameron with, from left, Jason Wright, East Midlands Roofing College managing director, and Mr Blackwood



# FINANCE DIRECTORS TARGETED IN SCAM

@REBECCA COONEY  
REBECCA.COONEY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

College finance directors have been targeted in a bailiff scam involving a chilling "long series" of phonecalls with the con artists themselves.

Staff in at least eight colleges, including the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London and City of Southampton College, were subjected to the rip-off attempt this month.

So far, *FE Week* understands, no college has fallen for the scam.

However, it is thought that the fraudsters are employing the same tactics on each occasion, centring their bogus story on Northampton County Court, to which a non-existent debt running into thousands of pounds is meant to be owed.

A man calling himself Brian Hall contacts the college, claiming he was a bailiff coming

to collect £7,000 — £3,995 of which the college owes to fictional company Studio Media and £3,000 owed in court costs over the debt.

When the college says it has no idea about the case, the man offers to help them gain a temporary court order while the issue is resolved, giving a phone number he claims is for Northampton County Court's bailiff department.

Stewart Cross, vice principal for finance at College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London, which was targeted on January 6, said: "He was very plausible. He put a lot of pressure on and it was quite a long series of conversations."

Michael Johnson, vice principal for finance at City of Southampton College, which was contacted on the same day, said: "He bombarded us with calls suggesting he was getting closer and closer to the college — but he was very pleasant. He tells you he's giving

you a direct number that's not on the website to help you avoid getting stuck in a queue."

The person who answers the phone, introducing himself as Simon, says he can grant a temporary order — if the college transfers the original £3,995 debt to a holding account while the case was be re-examined.

The Association of Colleges (AoC) and also Action Fraud — a national fraud helpline operated by the City Of London Police force — have issued warnings.

An AoC spokesperson said: "We are aware that eight college finance directors have received a phone call from the same person about the same debt at Northampton County Court. Colleges have reported the matter to the police which is the right thing to do if there is any suspicion of fraud."

Pauline Smith, head of Action Fraud, said colleges should phone Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 if they are targeted.

## Dr Sue

will see you now



The sector's new  
agony aunt brought to  
you by *FE Week*

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CRITICAL UPDATE: UPCOMING LSECT WORKSHOPS LED BY NICK LINFORD

# 16-19 FUNDING WORKSHOPS

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## FE WEEK TEAM

Editor:	Chris Henwood
Head designer:	Nicky Phillips
Designer:	Rob Galt
Sub editor:	Paul Offord
Reporters:	Freddie Whittaker
	Rebecca Cooney
	Billy Camden
Photographer:	Ellis O'Brien
Financials:	Helen Neilly
	Victoria Boyle
Sales manager:	Hannah Smith
Sales executive:	Negar Sharifi
Administration:	Frances Ogefere Dell
Sales administrator:	Jasmin Fergus-Aghamiri

<b>Contributors:</b>	Dr Sue Pember
	Dr Lynne Sedgmore
	Michael Woodgate

## Managing director: Shane Mann

And tweet us your thoughts @feweek or with the #feweek

## Contact the editor

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Please include the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is.

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

## NEWS

## INDEFINITE STRIKE WOES SET TO HIT FOR SECOND TIME IN A YEAR

@REBECCA COONEY  
REBECCA.COONEY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Lambeth College staff look set for their second indefinite strike over new contracts in less than a year — this time with the backing of a group of MPs who accused college management of “provoking” the dispute.

University and College Union (UCU) members at the college have taken part in a series of escalating strikes since early last month, due to culminate today (January 19) with open-ended industrial action.

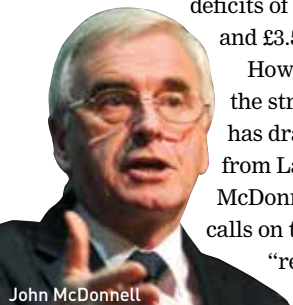
Staff had walked out for five weeks in June, calling off their indefinite strike just before the start of the summer holidays.

They claim new contracts will leave colleagues with longer working hours and less annual leave and sick pay.

And they have won the support of Labour MPs who put their name to an Early Day Motion (EDM) in the House of Commons that claims college management “provoked” the dispute with the new terms.

Principal Mark Silverman has said the new contract, introduced from April 1, was “in line with sector norms”. He said they were part of the college’s recovery plan following financial deficits of £4.1m in 2012/13 and £3.5m last year.

However, the cause of the striking staff has drawn support from Labour MP John McDonnell, whose EDM calls on the college to “resolve”



John McDonnell

the



Mark Silverman

dispute to “avoid jeopardising its current Ofsted status”. At the time of going to press, four other Labour MPs had signed the EDM.

“Staff are adamant they will not accept the management’s disgraceful attack on staffing provisions and their employment conditions,” he told *FE Week*.

However, the college said it had put a proposal to resolve to dispute to the union and Mr Silverman — who described the EDM as a “very one-sided view” — said the college and the union had been in discussions.

“In these meetings we did discuss a proposal for resolving this dispute,” he said.

“If there are existing staff who want to reduce their hours a bit to resolve this dispute then we’re happy to do that and we made some minor changes to the first year of sick pay.”

UCU regional official, Una O’Brien, said: “We remain committed to resolving the dispute. However, as things stand, we are still set for indefinite walkout.”

Mr Silverman said the college had managed to stay “up and running” during the recent strikes and would “remain open for students”.

“We will continue making sure that learners are not damaged and hopefully we can resolve this dispute —

which has been and is very distracting — soon,” he said.

“I hope UCU will recognise it is in everybody’s interest to draw a line under this and try to move on.”

## Apology over SFA’s shock clawback warning

@PAULOFFORD  
PAUL.OFFORD@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Skills Funding Agency (SFA) director Keith Smith (pictured) has apologised to providers about a shock clawback warning email that caused “sleepless nights” among sector staff, *FE Week* can reveal.

More than 700 providers were contacted by Una Bennett, deputy director for funding systems for the SFA, before Christmas with warning that they would have to repay against “provision that has been incorrectly claimed”.

It provoked an outraged response on the SFA’s Feconnect online forum, where a number of users complained that the correspondence was sent after the SFA’s own auditors signed-off provider accounts last autumn and did not specify how much needed to be repaid.

But an emailed apology to providers from funding and programmes director Mr Smith has since been sent and, like the original email, leaked to *FE Week*.

It stated: “We are sorry that within this [Ms Bennett’s] letter, issued so close to the Christmas break, the issue of recovery of funds was raised. This was premature since the

main issue we wanted to highlight was the importance of accurate data.

“We were not clear that this is about establishing if your data was accurate and not about recovery of funds.

“The letter was intended to give you advance notice of the possible data coding errors.”

The email also identified mistakes that could have been made with ILRs, including the minimum length of 16 to 18 and 19+ apprenticeships and eligibility for 24+ advanced learning loans.

It asked providers to take these into account when double-checking their ILR data and to tell the SFA themselves before the end of January if they needed to make any repayments.

The latest email saw the SFA come under fire once more on Feconnect, where one user complained that she had suffered “sleepless nights” by the initial email over what was likely to turn out to be just a £150 discrepancy on her original ILR claim.

Julian Gravatt, assistant chief executive at the Association of Colleges, said: “It’s important that data errors are corrected but it was wrong to introduce a new over-claim process



## FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

## Apprentice pay offender

More than a dozen employers who failed to pay the apprentice minimum wage have been named and shamed by the government.

Of 37 businesses named by the Business Minister Jo Swinson last week for underpaying employees by a total of £177,000, 15 had failed to pay apprentices the £2.73 minimum wage.

The businesses have been charged financial penalties totalling more than £51,000.

Visit [www.feweek.co.uk](http://www.feweek.co.uk) to find out which businesses were named.

## Challenge heats up

More than 700 apprentices have entered this year’s Brathay Challenge — a gruelling annual test of mental and physical stamina.

The regional heats, taking place over the next four months, will see 80 teams of nine apprentices from across England tested on team building, logistical, leadership and community skills.

Then eight teams will be picked to compete in the final at the Brathay Trust’s headquarters by Lake Windermere, in the Lake District, from July 6 to 8.

## College role evidence

MPs have called for evidence on the role of the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL).

The Education Select Committee wants brief written comments for its inquiry into the NCTL, by Monday, February 2.

The committee is also expected to hold a one-off evidence session with NCTL chief executive Charlie Taylor on Wednesday, February 11.

Those wishing to contribute should visit the Education Committee’s page on the [parliament.uk](http://parliament.uk) website.

five months after the year end.

“It is good that the SFA has adjusted its approach and is providing colleges with a chance to discuss the evidence so that a sensible decision can be reached about the final funding amount.”

Stewart Segal, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said: “We recognise that error reports through the year should have been picked up issues to be addressed but equally in our view, there have been data collection problems and therefore it’s right that individual providers should have the opportunity to discuss matters fully with the SFA.”

Dr Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group executive director, said: “We are pleased the SFA has acted swiftly in contacting providers and allaying some of the fears the original communication will no doubt have provoked.

“We will be looking to address some of the lessons to be learned from this episode with the SFA over the coming weeks and it is a good sign that they are now seeking active provider engagement in resolving any outstanding issues.”

The SFA declined to comment.

Do you know how much have you got to pay back? Email [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk) to tell an *FE Week* reporter.

## NEWS

# Apprenticeship reforms 'not in long grass' — Boles

BY FREDDIE WHITTAKER & REBECCA COONEY  
NEWS@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Skills Minister Nick Boles denied apprenticeship reforms had been “kicked into the long grass” after the government went back to the drawing board with plans to route funding through employers.

Mr Boles was quizzed by MPs on the House of Commons Education Select Committee on Wednesday (January 14) — the day after the government said more research was needed on its proposals to route apprenticeship funding via employers either through the PAYE system or a credit account.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills said it would be holding “discussions and workshops with key stakeholders” rather than a third formal consultation on reforms.

And, although Mr Boles admitted this would mean a delay until after the election, he denied the reforms were indefinitely on hold.

“You will be aware that we are running into the buffers somewhat in terms of the election. It is definitely not long grass,” he told MPs

“My personal ambition is to make it as short grass as possible but I make no promises about whether we’ll be able to make the chair’s [Graham Stuart] request of getting a solution announced by May 8.”

He also claimed the initial proposals, drawn by predecessor Matthew



Nick Boles

Hancock, had not been fully formed.

He said: “You’ll understand if we do more homework. Bluntly, we don’t want to go off half-cock [sic] again, because frankly it’s not been ideal to come forward with two proposals and then decide not to go ahead with either of them.”

His concession came after a three-month technical consultation on the proposals from March attracted 1,459 responses, and an earlier consultation that uncovered wide-spread opposition to employer-routed funding in 2013.

However, Mr Boles emphasised that he still wanted employers to contribute to training costs.

Teresa Frith, AoC senior skills policy manager, said: “We are pleased to hear the Minister has reiterated the message from his consultation response earlier this week that he plans to take his time and get these reforms right. There are big changes ahead for apprenticeships and these need to be made in a controlled way.”

Stewart Segal, Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) chief executive said: “We are very pleased that Mr Boles has listened to our submissions, and his honest admission to MPs about the weakness of the original funding reform models confirms our view

that policy was not constructed on evidence properly gathered from employers of all sizes and learners.”

The pushing back of the reform agenda was further welcomed by organisations across the FE and business sectors, including the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (Niace), Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and Federation of Small Businesses (FSB).

Niace chief executive David Hughes said: “It is complex to get this right though and I am pleased with the caution about how quickly a simple system can be established.”

Neil Carberry, CBI director for employment and skills, said: “Government and businesses need to get their heads together to hammer out how the system will work. We need as many companies as possible to be offering apprenticeships, but that can only happen if the system is simple and flexible enough to meet the needs of smaller businesses.”

Mike Cherry, FSB policy chairman, said: “Successful businesses spend money on training and recognise that apprenticeships are a smart investment. But to feel confident in that outlay, businesses must have trust in the apprenticeship framework. This is why we are pleased that the government is taking the time to get this right, including the decision not to adopt a PAYE-based funding model.”



Teresa Frith



Mike Cherry

See page 12 for an expert piece from Dr Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group executive director

## FE COLLEGES GET £700K WINDFALL FOR HIGHER ED COLLABORATION

@FCDWHITTAKER  
FWHITTAKER@FEWEEK.CO.UK

More than £700,000 will be handed shared among 74 FE colleges to encourage young people to progress into higher education.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (Hefce) has announced that £714,772 will be allocated to FE colleges with higher education provision between now and 2016 in a bid to improve collaboration with schools and other colleges.

The FE sector share is less than 6.5 per cent of the £11.020m total allocated to individual universities and colleges, and grants range from £2,534 for South Gloucestershire and Stroud College to £53,280 for Blackpool and The Fylde College.

It comes less than four years after Aimhigher, a scheme which had the same goals but had a much larger budget, was scrapped by the government.

The grants are part of Hefce’s new national networks for collaborative outreach (NNCO), set up with initial Department for Business, Innovation and Skills funding of £22m for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Thirty five local networks will get £240,000 each over the two years, with further grants for individual providers.

Some networks will be led by existing Aimhigher regional initiatives that survived the

scrapping of the national service in 2011 by seeking funding from schools and universities.

Nick Davy, Association of Colleges higher education policy manager, told *FE Week*:

“Hefce is right to invest money to encourage more young people into higher education and the NNCO is a useful scheme. However, it has been led by universities in sub-regions and that has meant that in some regions colleges are not involved in the networks.

“We have been in discussions with Hefce officers to address these gaps to ensure that could ensure the vast majority of colleges are involved in networks.”

As well as the local networks, three more national networks will give advice and support to specific groups of students, including adult learners and care leavers. Hefce has also launched a website for colleges to find their nearest network, and individual networks will run their own sites with information about outreach activity.

Hefce chief executive Madeleine Atkins said: “We set out to establish coverage of state-funded secondary schools and sixth form colleges and, through the support of the sector, this will be achieved.

“As well as providing co-ordinated coverage of outreach activity, we are keen that the NNCO scheme contributes innovative approaches to the interaction between higher education institutions and colleges.”



Madeleine Atkins

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## Confusion as official websites return different apprenticeship results

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Concerns that two official apprenticeship websites could be causing confusion have emerged with identical vacancy searches returning vastly different results.

The Skills Funding Agency is keeping its old vacancy matching website running until April while its replacement, which has already gone live, is being tested and developed.

However, with an example search on the old site uncovering 2,444 apprenticeship vacancies in London compared to just 71 on the new site, Andy Gannon, 157 Group director of policy, public relations and research, warned information needed to be "easy to find, navigate and understand".

An SFA spokesperson said the differing figures were down to the old apprenticeship vacancies service automatically searching for vacancies within a 10-mile radius of the requested location.

The new site, however, operates a two-mile radius default, unless users change the radius.

The SFA launched the new webpage on the gov.uk central government site, where a link to the old website, on an lsc.gov.uk address, is also available.

Mr Gannon said: "The critical thing about information about any form of education

is that it is easy to find, navigate and understand.

"We hope this move of information is underpinned by research that indicates it will definitely achieve a greater level of accessibility, as gov.uk does not seem intuitively to be a place learners might be browsing for such information.

"Of course, wherever the information is, people do need to know what it is about in order to look for it in the first place."

David Hughes, chief executive of the National Institute of Continuing Education (Niace), said: "Unfortunately there are certain groups who are massively under-represented and if all the vacancies aren't being posted properly [for the new vacancies search service] then this will reduce fair and equal access to apprenticeships."

The SFA spokesperson said: "The new 'Find an apprenticeship' application system is currently in Beta [development] phase, which includes parallel running of both old and new systems, to allow for testing, user feedback and any necessary adjustments.

"We have user-tested the search capabilities of 'Find an apprenticeship' and will be continually improving the search capabilities over the course of the public Beta phase."

Visit [www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship) to view the new and old vacancy search services.

## Principal says borrowing to blame for finances issue

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PAUL.OFFORD@FEWEEK.CO.UK

A Basingstoke sixth form college was today expected to present a draft financial recovery plan to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) after being issued with a financial notice to improve.

Queen Mary's College (QMC) was issued with the notice on December 12, after it was assessed as "inadequate" for financial health by the EFA.

It must now present a draft financial recovery plan by today's deadline to EFA territorial director for the South Alan Parnum, including student number and monthly cashflow projections, as well as savings, expenditure, income and risk management plans.

According to the notice: "The EFA will determine when the college has made sufficient progress for the notice to be lifted. This will usually be when the college's financial health grade has improved... to at least satisfactory [by the end of 2015/2016]."

Ali Foss (pictured), principal of the 2,200-learner college, rated as good by Ofsted in May 2010, said the notice was

imposed because of recent increases in her college's borrowing levels compared to its income.

The college has borrowed £5.4m, of which £4.1m still needs to be repaid, since 1997, helping fund £29m of infrastructure projects, with the rest of the cash coming from government funding, sale of land, and the college's own cash reserves.

Among the new developments the cash went to were an English and modern languages block at £2m in 1997, a sports centre at £1.8m in 2003 and a teaching block for subjects including science and foundation learning at £13m in 2010.

Mrs Foss said that year-on-year funding had "fallen sharply" since 2010 with cuts of 12 per cent across the period. "The investments in infrastructure have allowed the college to focus its spending on teaching and learning rather than on repair and renovation," she said.

It comes with the 3,370-learner Totton College having this month launched a consultation on merger after Sixth Form College Commissioner Peter Mucklow warned it could not function alone.

In October, he inspected Hampshire college, deemed by Ofsted to require improvement in March, after concerns about a lack of improvement since it was issued with a financial notice to improve in the spring.

Formal expressions of interest should be submitted by 4pm on Friday, January 23. Full proposals must be submitted 4pm the following Friday.

Visit [www.totton.ac.uk](http://www.totton.ac.uk) or email corporation clerk Pam Robertson — [probertson@totton](mailto:probertson@totton).



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# Internet block on LGBT websites 'sends out wrong message'

@REBECCA COONEY

REBECCA.COONEY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

A Midland college has been warned its internet software was sending out the "wrong message" after it blocked learners from accessing lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) websites.

Henley College Coventry students who tried to view websites related to the LGBT community, such as the site for the Birmingham Pride march, have been met with a pop-up stating the sites had been blocked due to being "Gay or Lesbian or Bisexual Interest" sites.

National Union of Students LGBT officer Aimée Challenor warned of fears it could lead to "homophobic bullying," while gay rights group Stonewall said young people were potentially being stopped from "accessing vital support and advice".

The college said the block was caused by automatic settings on the software, and the wording in the pop-up was "definitely not the college's".

However, Ms Challenor, a 17-year-old creative digital media production student, said the response "wasn't good enough".

"By installing that software, the college has a responsibility to ensure it complies with equality legislation and guidelines," she said.

"I echo the concerns of other

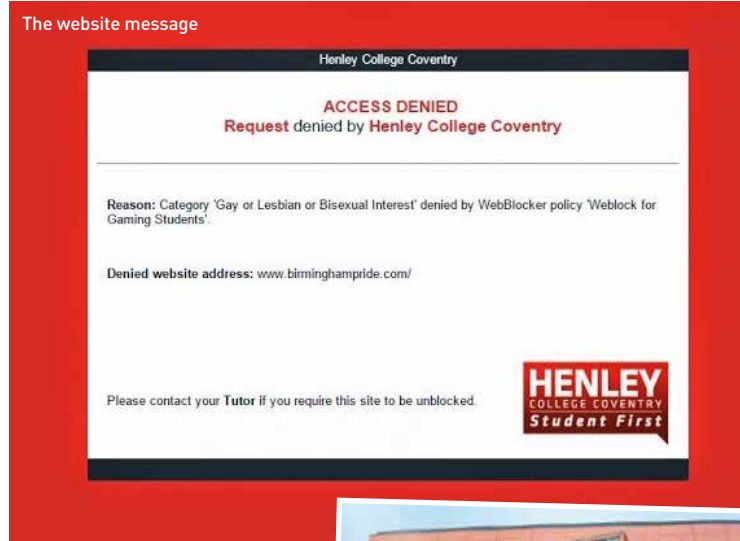


Aimée Challenor

students who have said that by blocking sites for simply having LGBT content it puts the wrong message out to students who are either LGBT or who are questioning their sexuality or gender identity.

"It basically says we should hide it and be ashamed, which we shouldn't. There are also fears that this could lead to a rise in homophobic bullying within the college."

Stonewall senior policy and campaigns officer Hannah Kibirige said: "Blocking access to websites with LGBT content not only sends



Henley College Coventry

Coventry principal Ray Goy said: "The issue arose after the college changed its content-filtering software which, unfortunately, filtered out LGBT content.

"This then generated an automated message denying access to the site being requested. Henley College Coventry is proud of its record of tolerance and celebration

a negative message to students, but could prevent LGBT young people from accessing vital support and advice.

"We know that many colleges are inadvertently blocking sites by using 'catch-all' internet filters.

"Every college should check their filters regularly, encourage students to report blocked sites and report any issues to their service provider."

Henley College



Ray Goy

of diversity and would never set out to offend anybody or set itself up as a moral arbiter on issues of sexual orientation; indeed, we proactively challenge all forms of discrimination, and have a longstanding LGBT group, Henley's Rainbows, at the college."

He added the LGBT site block was removed "within 20 minutes of being brought to our attention by a student".

However, Ms Challenor said many sites — such as Birmingham LGBT centre and London Pride — were still being blocked by the filter system for "uncategorised" reasons.

She said she was "pleased that it's not the college being homophobic".

"My message to other colleges would be to tell them to make sure their software meets the law as well, to make sure this isn't repeated," said Ms Challenor.

Mr Goy said ongoing website blocks of LGBT sites were caused by the software's interpretation of the website, not necessarily because of the college itself.

"Not all sites — and particularly many of the smaller ones — are 'categorised' within the content-filtering software," he said.

"As a matter of safeguarding, we block such uncategorised sites as we have no idea what material they might contain."

But, he said: "These sites can be unblocked by request as were the LGBT sites."

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# British Gas cutting flow of 16 to 18 apprentices

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British Gas failed to deliver a massive 89 per cent of its £2.5m initial allocation for 16 to 18 apprenticeships last academic year.

Skills Funding Agency (SFA) data shows the energy giant, which started 13 times more apprentices over the age of 18, was ultimately paid £2.2m less than its July 2013 allocation for the programme.

According to *FE Week* research comparing July 2013 allocations for 704 providers with final funding figures, British Gas received just 11 per cent (£287,606) of its original allocation — the lowest proportion among providers who fell short of their allocation by more than £1m.

A spokesperson for British Gas, which was rated outstanding following its last full Ofsted inspection in July 2007, said: “We received an allocation of £2.5m [16 to 18 apprenticeships] funding from the SFA for 2013/2014. This allocation was based on our previous two-year contract performance data held by the SFA.

“The average age of an apprentice at British Gas has been rising and now stands at 25.

“However, the allocation [for 16 to 18 apprenticeships] was not used as, in addition to recruiting 33 SFA-funded apprentices aged 16 to 18 [and five not funded by the SFA], we recruited a number of apprentices from other age groups [428] including a large number [151] who are not funded by the SFA.

“The money that was not used was clawed back by the SFA and reallocated to other providers throughout 2013/14.”

Initial allocations on the 16 to 18 apprenticeship programme often vary from final allocations (with 10 months of the year having passed) as the SFA makes in-year adjustments as part of its quarterly performance management process.

However, in the same process the typically larger and more predictable adult skills budget allocations tend not to be adjusted to such a great extent.

The British Gas spokesperson added that its non-SFA funded apprentices were paid for entirely by British Gas and worked towards level two qualifications in dual fuel smart metering.

Nevertheless, the two other two worst offenders, among providers who missed their July 2013 16 to 18 apprenticeships allocations by more than £1m, were Sheffield City Council which only received 18 per cent (£604,319) of its £3.4m allocation and Carlisle-based logistics training provider System Group Limited which was paid 36 per cent (£881,355) of its £2.4m allocation.

System Group Limited declined to comment on why it missed its 2013/14 allocation.

But Andrew Hartley, business development director for the provider rated good by Ofsted in October 2012, said: “It is pleasing to report that interest in apprenticeships in the logistics industry has really picked up in the last few months as companies look to bring

## Three quarters fail to deliver £136m of provision

	Number of providers	Proportion of providers	Variance
Exceeded July 2013 allocation	200	28%	£32.7m
Fell short of July 2013 allocation	504	72%	-£136m
Total providers	704	%	-£103.3m

Sources: SFA 2013/14 initial allocations (<http://bit.ly/1C5lFdv>) and SFA final funding year values (<http://bit.ly/1FtMQmb>)

Almost three quarters of FE providers failed to deliver on their initial 2013/14 16 to 18 apprenticeships allocation by a total of £136m.

The SFA data shows that, of providers for whom comparison can be made, 704 were earmarked a total of £685.6m cash for 16 to 18 apprenticeships in July 2013.

But final funding figures for last academic year showed that while 200 providers (28 per cent) got a total of £32.7m more than they had been allocated, 504 (72 per cent) were paid £136m less than their combined allocation figure.

It means the sector was £103.3m down on the 16 to 18 apprenticeships it had been expected to deliver.

Julian Gravatt, assistant chief executive for the Association of Colleges, said better pre-apprenticeship training and careers advice was needed to help providers hit future allocations on a key priority by the government.

He said: “There are a number of reasons specific to 2013/14 which will have contributed to under-19 apprenticeship recruitment shortfalls, for example the tighter funding rules.

“However, this is not a new problem and illustrates the need both to develop a better pre-apprenticeship offer for young people and also to improve the careers advice given to school pupils in Years 10 and 11.”

The Statistical First Release published in November last year showed that 16 to 18 apprenticeship starts were up on 2012/13, from 114,500 to 119,800 (4.6 per cent).

young people into their organisations in order to develop and grow.

“We are very busy launching a number of programmes with clients at this moment in time and there is a very positive outlook. We will certainly achieve our 2014/15 allocation.”

There was nobody available to comment at Sheffield City Council, which received a good Ofsted rating for its training programmes in February last year.

An SFA spokesperson said: “We do not comment on individual providers. When determining provider allocations we continue to apply, to all our providers, our published performance management processes

according to the type of funding agreement.

“We will maximise participation funds by identifying delivery that is below funding allocation or contract value and redistributing funds to providers with a good track record and evidence of demand from employers or learners.”

It was the first annual increase for the age group in two years, with the 2010/11 number of 131,700 having been 12.8 per cent up on the previous year.

The same set of official figures for 2013/14 showed there had been 10,400 traineeship starts during the programme’s first year.

A spokesperson for the Association of Employment and Learning Providers said: “We believe that providers could have done even better if the traineeships programme had begun earlier because this would have placed more young people in a position to progress on to an apprenticeship.

“We need to throw more weight behind traineeships to maintain the increase in the number of apprenticeships starts that we saw for teenagers last year.”

All-age apprenticeship starts at 440,400 last academic year, down 13.7 per cent, having been at 510,200 the previous year, and 520,600 in 2011/12.

Within the fall in the 2013/14 figures, were decreases from 165,400 to 159,100 (-3.8 per cent) for the 19 to 24 age group and 230,300 to 161,600 (-29.8 per cent) among those aged 25+.

Shadow Business Secretary Chuka Umunna (pictured) said: “Recently,



we learned that the number of apprenticeships is falling, while there are real concerns that apprenticeship quality has been badly eroded.

“Now it emerges that the number of apprenticeships being delivered for 16 to 18 year olds has fallen far short of the government’s own expectations.

“We badly need more decent apprenticeship opportunities, which is why the next Labour government would act to ensure all apprenticeships are of high quality and would use government procurement to create thousands of new apprenticeships.”

Labour has said that all apprenticeships should start from at least level three and last a minimum of two years and the number of school leavers applying for apprenticeships should match the number starting university by 2025.

It has also pledged that all public procurement contracts would include a requirement to hire one apprentice for each £1m awarded in the contract if it won General Election in June.

A Skills Funding Agency spokesperson said: “In line with government priorities, we have maintained our investment in high quality apprenticeships and traineeships to support people to enter and progress in work.

“Applying our published performance management policy has meant that we have been able to fully fund all high-quality 16-18 apprenticeship delivery.”

No one from the government was available for comment.



## College with biggest £1m-plus underdelivery comes fourth overall

The college that saw the greatest £1m-plus underdelivery on its initial 16 to 18 apprenticeship allocation hit just 38 per cent of its July 2013 target.

Northbrook College, in Sussex, fell £2.1m short of the £3.4m it had been earmarked by the SFA.

It recorded the fourth biggest underdelivery percentage among all providers who missed the sum earmarked for them by more than £1m.

A spokesperson for Northbrook College, which was rated as good by Ofsted in November 2013, said: “As part of its risk

strategy review, the college took the decision to decrease the number of partner providers [for 16 to 18 apprenticeships] from August 1, 2013.

“This was in full consultation with the SFA as part of the funding reconciliation process. The SFA had automatically increased the 2013/14 allocation, based upon the prior year’s delivery with growth increases.”

He added: “The shortfall between delivery and funding allocation was planned by the college, as it was not prepared to compromise the quality of learning that its students receive.”



# Local authority one of just three to win a glowing Ofsted report

@REBECCAKCOONEY

REBECCA.COONEY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

A Midland council is celebrating after its adult education provision was rated outstanding across the board by Ofsted.

Wolverhampton Adult Education Service (pictured) was given a grade one rating in all headline areas following inspection last month.

And staff at Stockport College also received good news from Ofsted this month with inspectors having found it had made “rapid improvements” in its first full inspection since it was slapped with a grade four in September 2013 — which had been down from outstanding.

Inspectors, who visited the college in December, moved it up a grade to “requires improvement,” thereby taking it out of the administered status FE Commissioner Dr David Collins recommended last year.

Meanwhile, Wolverhampton Adult Education Service, which has around 4,000 learners aged 19-plus, becomes only the third local authority to have achieved the clean sweep of grade ones for adult education provision under Ofsted’s current common inspection framework, following councils in Kirklees and neighbouring Walsall.

Wolverhampton City Council cabinet member for schools, skills and learning Phil Page told *FE Week*: “This is an incredible achievement for our Adult Education Service



and I’d like to pay tribute to the staff and students whose hard work has helped secure this excellent result.

“The Adult Education Service is exceptional in how it both values, and invests in, the individual, whatever walk of life they come from, and it’s great that Ofsted recognises the tremendous learning opportunities that the Adult Education Service provides.”

The Ofsted report, published on Thursday (January 15), said: “Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding, which is reflected in the very high number of learners who acquire very good personal, social and

employability skills.”

It also described the service’s leadership and management as “excellent” with a “clear vision of the needs of the community, which is shared by all staff”, and said the organisation has “very well thought-out and very extensive partnerships with local organisations”.

Coun Page added: “I’d like to pay tribute to the commitment and dedication of our hard working Adult Education Service staff who have achieved this recognition.”

Stockport College went from grade fours across the board to grade threes across the board amid a programme of job cuts that

has seen the 690-worker college, which had already shed 235 jobs in the past three years, set to cut another 150 posts after Dr Collins recommended it shave £2.5m off staff costs.

Principal Ian Clinton, who took over the 7,000-learner college in February and was given an OBE in the 2015 New Year Honours for services to FE, said: “I am really proud of the staff at my college and pleased that the good work and attitude by students has been reflected in this Ofsted report.”

“To be out of special measures is something I am especially pleased about, as it is recognition of the hard work everyone has put in while working under constantly scrutinised conditions.”

The report said the “considerable commitment of the new leadership team to bring about rapid improvements” had “improved staff morale and raised learners’ aspirations” and the board of governors had been “strengthened” by new members.

However, it also said that success rates in some areas were “too low” and “progress in some subject areas is too slow”.

“We are not complacent and we realise that while this is a positive step forward, there are still issues to address,” said Mr Clinton.

“We have made many improvements in the last year and will continue to improve the college to provide a quality curriculum.

“The college is totally committed to further improvements and we will continue to work with our education partners to do this.”

## PRESENTED BY NICK LINFORD

AUTHOR OF THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO FUNDING APPRENTICESHIPS, AND BOTH THE HANDS-ON GUIDE TO POST-16 FUNDING AND THE HANDS-ON GUIDE TO POST-16 PERFORMANCE AND DATA.

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10:00	Registration	13:00	Break for lunch
10:30	Welcome and introductions	13:50	Making Study Programme funding efficiencies Includes: hint, tips and strategies to reduce costs without reducing income, and increase income without increasing cost
10:35	EFA funding in 2015/16 Includes: allocation calculation, the funding formula, rates and the Eng & math condition of funding	14:50	Taking account of the performance regimes Includes: Ofsted’s approach to Study Programmes, the new success rates (OSR) reports and the DfE’s 16-19 performance table plans
11:40	Break for refreshments	15:30	Workshop end
12:00	Study Programme curriculum planning for 2015/16 Includes: designing a course file, use of LARS and planned hours, core aim and the latest on Tech Levels and Tech Bacc		

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## A4e gives assurance that fraudsters ‘don’t work for us anymore’

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A4e chief executive Andrew Dutton has revealed that none of the staff who ripped off a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) welfare-to-work scheme were still working for him.

Ines Cano-Urbe, aged 38, of Madrid, Matthew Hannigan-Train, 30, of Bristol, and Hayley Wilson, 27, of Milton Keynes, were found guilty of conspiring to make false instruments on the Inspire to Aspire contract to cover up fraudulent claims.

Cano-Urbe was also found guilty, with Zabar Khalil, 35, of Slough, of a separate count of forgery. A further six defendants had already pleaded guilty before the 13-week Reading Crown Court trial, which ended on January 14, to 48 counts of forgery and related conspiracy offences.

They were Dean Lloyd, 38, of Milton Keynes — 13 counts of forgery, Julie Grimes, 52, of Laleham, Surrey — nine counts of forgery; Aditi Singh, 31, of Slough — three counts of fraud and forgery, Bindya Dhaliwar, 28, of Slough — seven counts of forgery, Nikki Foster, 31, of Wokingham — eight counts of fraud and one conspiracy, and Charles McDonald, 44, of Egham — six counts of fraud and one of conspiracy.

Andrew Dutton, A4e Group chief executive, said: “We are obviously very disappointed and sorry a number of people who worked on this contract behaved so dishonestly.”

He added: “None of the people who were convicted remain in our organisation.”

Between 2008 and 2011, Wilson, Lloyd, Grimes, Singh, Dhaliwar, Foster and McDonald worked as A4e recruiters in the Thames Valley, together with account manager Cano-Urbe, deputy business manager Hannigan-Train and contract administrator Khalil. Thames Valley Police said the recruiters claimed they had found work for people, many of whom either did not exist or had not found work, to fraudulently receive bonuses. They then forged documentation to support false claims. When the DWP asked to see files in March 2011, Cano-Urbe, Hannigan-Train and Wilson were involved in making the files appear to be in order, including fraudulent ones.

It came to light when documentation completed, and purporting to be signed by candidates and employers to show successful job outcomes, was found to have been produced and signed by staff themselves.

Mr Dutton said A4e would pay back all the money that had been fraudulently claimed, adding that DWP and Skills Funding Agency audits found no evidence of fraud in current A4e contracts.

The defendants are due to be sentenced on March 30 at Reading Crown Court.

Sarah Hawkins, 32, of Bagshot, Serge Wyatt, of Richmond, and Yasmin Ahmed, both 40, of Southend on Sea, faced similar charges, but were cleared of all counts.

See [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) for more.



# Value for money question on Gazelle

BY FE WEEK REPORTER  
NEWS@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Gazelle chief executive Fintan Donohue has said that it's for colleges to decide if his organisation delivered value for money as he unveiled an impact review containing no assessment of how it had spent £3.5m-plus of public funds.

The former North Hertfordshire College principal spoke exclusively to *FE Week* about the positive Gazelle-commissioned report and said colleges' ongoing membership showed they thought there was sufficient return on their taxpayers' investment.

In a frank interview that touched upon his future plans for the organisation, he sought to address the report's omissions of public spending issues and also Ofsted grades as he conceded that there wasn't a "direct correlation between an Ofsted grade and Gazelle membership".

However, the report has already been attacked by the University and College Union (UCU), which said it "fails to detail how a college might benefit from being a member and there is no proper evidence of why being a Gazelle member might represent good value for money".

The Policy Consortium, which helped to conduct and analyse an *FE Week* FE & Skills survey last year, was commissioned by Gazelle to produce the 24-page Gazelle Impact Report: December 2014.

It concludes that Gazelle has "had a significantly positive impact on its member colleges and on the wider sector," having assessed the organisation under the five themes of impact on the sector, on colleges, on learners, structure, and communications.

The organisation claims to "develop innovative new learning models and new partnerships with business to deliver an improved outcome for students, their communities and the economy" — but the report does not consider whether that impact was worth the £3.5m-plus it collected in public finances from colleges through set-up, membership and other fees since 2012.

"The difficulty with the concept of saying Gazelle has had this money is to suggest that there is an organisation that gets this money and does what it likes with it," said Mr Donohue.

"The Gazelle membership group determines its priorities, it determines its expenditure, it evaluates its own impact, it decides what it wants to spend that money on, and it determines whether it has been a value for money return or not."

The report covers the issue of the five colleges to have left Gazelle — the most recent of which was Lewisham Southwark College — saying that former members remained "positive about the value provided by Gazelle."

It says that the departures were "not a criticism of their experience to date but a recognition that, in the present economic climate, a £30K investment requires tougher scrutiny and an appraisal of alternative returns on that investment."

Mr Donohue said: "The report seems to



## Gazelle chief executive Fintan Donohue speaks to FE Week editor Chris Henwood

### What do you take from the impact report?

It reinforces the impact that Gazelle has had on the sector as a whole and on the colleges that we've been working with over the last three years. Gazelle colleges themselves who have received the report view it very positively. I think it makes it very clear that we have made significant inroads to innovation in the sector. We have I think created a significant agenda around enterprise and entrepreneurship that didn't exist before we started.

### Is the report telling you anything that you didn't already know?

It highlights areas around our

communication, our structure, our clarity that we need to improve, and it also highlights the fact that our sector is changing, and with it, we need to be ever more relevant to that sector, particularly with its funding crisis and so on. That's very helpful as well because it tells us we can't stand still, we need to continue to evolve — and I think that is an important message for us to take on board.

**Given there's no mention of Ofsted or value for money in relation to membership of Gazelle, how would you answer the criticism that this report is just glossy marketing?**

Criticism of Gazelle and the amount of public money it has had received emerged last year after an *FE Week* investigation found that its five founding colleges dished out more than £530,000 each to Gazelle, according to figures obtained from Freedom of Information Act.

More than 20 current and former member colleges were asked what they had spent on the organisation, with standard annual membership priced at £35,000.

"I don't think you can set out to say what did this penny buy, what did this penny buy and what did this penny buy, what you do get in this impact report was that here's a group of colleges who chose to share investment

This report is a very clear statement from Gazelle that it is very open to investigative research done by a wholly independent organisation into its impact, its approach, its value for members. It's directly the opposite to glossy production. It's fairly balanced. It's very clear about the areas we need to improve upon.

### How much did the report cost to commission?

That's a commercial and confidential issue for the people who provided the report. It's not something that I can give, but what I can say is that I think that it was necessary, having done an impact report ourselves in the previous year, to commission an independent report that could provide a higher level of objectivity about what Gazelle has been about.

they would have made in those activities in any case, and the evidence would suggest it's had a positive impact, both for the colleges and for the sector as a whole by doing it that way," said Mr Donohue.

"And I'm fairly certain that the Gazelle Impact Report suggests that, by spending it collaboratively, we have had more impact."

However, the Policy Consortium report also makes no mention of Ofsted grades of which, taking into account most recent inspection reports versus those immediately prior to membership, four resulted in no change to grades. A further four did result in overall grades going up, and by a total of four grades — but four also resulted in overall



# spending 'answered by memberships'



## How do you feel about the fact Gazelle recently lost five of its 23 member colleges?

That is a function particularly of financial/funding issues, and I think it's a function of the fact that the discretionary spend of colleges is becoming more contracted, and our colleges have got to think very clearly about what they can spend and how they can spend it.

And I believe that, if we go the way we want to go, which is to become essentially an organisation which helps colleges to grow new income, to develop new products, to distinguish their curriculum offer, other colleges will want to join with us in different ways, but I wouldn't rule out the fact that in these times, and in these

difficulties, colleges will have to make those decisions.

## Are you looking to expand Gazelle?

Colleges need to be very clear that their strategy is consistent with what Gazelle is trying to achieve. If a college came to Gazelle now and said, "We think that we very much want to embrace a strategic approach to putting enterprise and entrepreneurship more centrally as a plan for development in our college," we would be very open to talking to them.

We have never sought, we have never recruited colleges, we have no expansion plans - we never have had. I've never actually gone out at any point ever and looked for college members.

See [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) for more

grades going down, and by a total of eight grades. The picture for teaching and learning was largely the same.

Gazelle, looking at colleges inspected while members and taking into consideration recent departures, has been left with five colleges rated overall as good and four as 'requires improvement'.

Nevertheless, the impact report says: "The Policy Consortium's overall conclusion is that Gazelle has a good story to tell and individual Gazelle colleges have some solid achievements that deserve more widespread recognition.

"These include the development of new and exciting approaches to teaching and learning

in individual institutions, and an increase in the reputation of the sector nationally in relation to an emerging policy focus on enterprise and entrepreneurship.

"Gazelle also deserves credit for demonstrating a sector-led approach to curriculum and leadership development."

However, UCU head of FE Andrew Harden attacked the report. He said: "If this report is supposed to be a defence of the Gazelle Group, its work and its value then it fails to make a convincing case."

He added: "It fails to detail how a college might benefit from being a member and there is no proper evidence of why being a Gazelle member might represent good value for

From left: FE Week editor Chris Henwood interviews Gazelle chief executive Fintan Donohue



## Report claims it's 'too early to tell' if Gazelle is worth it

The Gazelle impact report assesses the organisation under five themes — the impact on the sector, its member colleges and learners, structure of Gazelle and communications.

Further sections offer an executive summary conclusions and recommendations, bibliography and organisations interviewed.

While it contains much praise for Gazelle, it does also criticise the organisation, identifying "issues concerning the structure, strategy and purpose of Gazelle".

However, it does not consider whether Gazelle has delivered value for public money nor the effect of membership on Ofsted grades, claiming "there is a valid 'too early to tell' argument".

It adds that member colleges are "all at different stages on the journey and are moving at different speeds".

It has led to criticism from University and College Union head of FE Andrew Harden that, "the report simply lists excuses why Gazelle

cannot and should not be properly judged".

He said: "Saying Gazelle is a young organisation is no excuse. Five colleges have already decided to end their "journey".

"The remaining Gazelle colleges need to explain why they continue to pump

thousands of pounds of public funds into a group that opts for buzzwords and excuses ahead of any kind of proper audit."

Mick Fletcher, a member of the Policy Consortium, which published the report, said:

"An overall value for money analysis would not be valid, nor practicable, since different funders have put differing amounts in and got different things out each case would need to be treated separately.

"Many things affect

Ofsted gradings and separating out the impact of Gazelle membership from everything else going on in individual colleges would be a very big piece of work beyond the scope of this study."

See [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) for analysis of Gazelle colleges' Ofsted grades



money.

"There is no evidence Gazelle membership enhances Ofsted or exam results, nor is there any way of determining if the thousands spent on Gazelle membership is good for the college."

Mr Donohue said: "A number of Gazelle colleges, in their Ofsted reports, have been highly commended for some of the stuff that Gazelle is doing, and I wouldn't want that to get lost in the fact that there isn't a direct correlation between an Ofsted grade and Gazelle membership.

"What it isn't fair to say is, for example, that all the stuff that we're doing with Gazelle hasn't impacted on students, on staff and

teaching and learning, and that that's not reflected in a number of the Ofsted reports."

He added: "It would be a very serious mistake to suggest that being part of Gazelle hasn't improved teaching and learning, or hasn't actually enhanced student experience, or doesn't lead to a more positive Ofsted report, because many of the colleges that have excellent Ofsted reports would actually say it has, and the Ofsted reports would be very clear on that in terms of their comment.

"If you want to say there isn't a consistent impact of Gazelle membership across the board on teaching and learning, across all the colleges, I would say that's absolutely right."

See editor's comment page 10



## FE WEEK COMMENT

## Hopeful for a change

It's clear that Gazelle chief executive Fintan Donohue is passionate about his innovation project, and that he is willing to make 'we have lessons to learn' noises.

And with the interview it seems at least one of his impact report's recommendation for change has been enacted.

But all along, the key question has remained the same — where's the evidence to show a value for money (VFM) return on investment?

What is the evidence that Gazelle benefits college balance sheets? What is the evidence that it improves teaching and learning? What is the evidence that it improves opportunities for students?

Yet much remains unanswered around the issue of whether principals and governors should sanction a £35k spend on membership.

If, as Mr Donohue suggests, the fact that colleges retain membership shows it delivers value for money, then what does it show that five members have left?

If Gazelle wants to prove itself then the VFM question needs addressing, and it must be open to the possibility that the answer will not make members, who have already poured in hundreds of thousands of pounds, comfortable.

However, nobody could wish for an organisation that aimed to benefit learners to succeed more than this newspaper, and so we are open, indeed hopeful, that Gazelle could yet answer that question positively.

**Chris Henwood**

chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk



## Certificate conman gets 80 hours' unpaid work

@FCDWHITTAKER  
FWHITTAKER@FEWEEK.CO.UK

An online conman who sold fake City & Guilds and OCR certificates from his Darlington cul-de-sac home has been sentenced 80 hours of unpaid work.

Edexcel, AQA and Ofqual logos were also used by Martin Bowman as he produced the counterfeit paperwork.

However, Darlington Magistrates' Court heard that most of his customers asked for refunds because the certificates were of such poor quality.

The 26-year-old, who has moved to Gosforth since the crimes, was sentenced at Darlington Magistrates' Court on Wednesday (January 14) to 80 hours of unpaid work and ordered to pay costs of £567.97, including a £60 victim surcharge. He had, at an earlier hearing, admitted two counts of selling goods with a sign which was likely to be mistaken for a registered trademark.

Andrew Swan, defending, said there was a statement on the website that the certificates were for novelty use.

Most of the certificates were for GCSEs and A-levels, and an Ofqual spokesperson said it acted after discovering Bowman's website, [www.fakequalifications.co.uk](http://www.fakequalifications.co.uk). She said: "Ofqual discovered this website and investigated. We monitored conversations online and purchased a number of certificates. We also discovered the address linked to the website and referred the matter to Trading Standards officers at Darlington Council."

Michelle Meadows, executive director for strategy, risk and research at Ofqual, said: "Fake certificates for qualifications will not be tolerated and we have ensured that the website no longer provides these. We want people to feel secure in the knowledge that a qualification accredited by Ofqual is valid."

Alison Lewis, AQA's director of quality and customer standards, said: "Selling or using fake certificates is unacceptable. Students work hard to gain their qualifications and we want them to feel secure that their certificates will be highly valued by universities and employers."

"There are security features on all AQA certificates and if any employer has a concern

about an AQA certificate they can phone us to check it is valid."

City & Guilds PR officer Wendy Anstead said: "City & Guilds was aware of the qualification forgery, and we've been assisting the investigation."

A spokesperson Pearson, which owns Edexcel, said: "The integrity of our qualifications is of paramount importance to us and we welcome the news that this issue has now been brought to a close. We take the security of our qualification certificates very seriously and have measures in place to protect against fraud. For example, our certificates are printed on customised, tamper-proof paper with inbuilt security features both visible and invisible to the naked eye."

Chris McEwan, Darlington Council's cabinet member for economy and regeneration, said: "The jobs market is tough and it may be tempting to make false claims but anyone using a fake qualification certificate to get a job will be found out and ruin their employment chances." He added: "Qualification claims should always be verified."

OCR declined to comment.

## TOP APPRENTICE FUNDING REFORM TWEETS



@JasonEParnell  
at last finally some realisation!

@GrahamHoyle2  
Does this mean AELP was right not to have accepted the Richard proposals 'on block'?

@MarcOzholl  
Glorious opportunity for 'Minister saves apprenticeship employers from being screwed by half cock reforms' headline

@SteveHewittMIS  
I still like "Hancock? Half-cocked more like!"

@tonyparkin  
Hancock's half-cocked hour?

## COMMENTS

## SFA hits providers with shock funding clawback warning

The SFA is becoming more and more dysfunctional. It has a lot of well-paid people working for it, none of whom appear to have any common sense, or experience in the 'real world'.  
James Gilmore

## 'Extraordinary' former Lambeth College vice principal dies, aged 68

I am deeply saddened at the news of Ruth Nixon's passing. She was an inspiration to all.

I had a lot of admiration for her and I thoroughly enjoyed working with Ruth at Lambeth College.

My deepest sympathies to all of her family.  
Tracey Atkins

## Masochism and trust in the board and principal relationship

Congratulations, Lawrence — an excellent article that should be in every new governor's induction pack to show them the scope of the role.

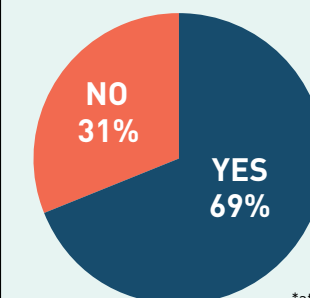
I particularly like question 1 (an area Ofsted touched on in the last Annual Report, unnoticed), and I'd ask a further question: "And what happened to them?"

Students make mistakes; colleges make mistakes. Is it possible to re-direct at least some of the students who "drop out" on to a course which suits them better? That's good for the college (stats, £) and — most important — helps fulfil our responsibility to them.

Iain Mackinnon, chairman of Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College, 2010-15

## VOTE RESULTS

Hand back the knighthood, Sir Peter



\*at time of going to press

Former Barnfield College leader Sir Peter Birkett should give back his FE knighthood, according to *FE Week* readers. The poll has been running on [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) since last week's coverage of the Barnfield College inadequate Ofsted grading. The result has been reported to the Honours Forfeiture Committee. Sir Peter was unavailable for comment.



Email [DrSue@feweek.co.uk](mailto:DrSue@feweek.co.uk) with your questions. Dr Sue will hand out a £100 Amazon gift card for her favourite question



# Dear Dr Sue

How do you handle your new principal's demands? Is the managing director refusing to budge? Dr Sue Pember, the former head of FE and skills investment at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), who was awarded an OBE for services to the sector in 2000, puts her extensive sector knowledge to good use in a new section for *FE Week*.

On the third Monday of every month she answers your questions, backed by the experience of almost a decade as principal of Canterbury College, in addition to time served in further senior civil service posts at the Department for Education and Employment, Department for Education and Skills, and Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills.

In Dr Sue's first section, she answers some of the questions she gets asked most often. Email [DrSue@feweek.co.uk](mailto:DrSue@feweek.co.uk) to ask her your question.

WHY DO WE NEED A STUDENT GOVERNOR ON THE BOARD?

A LOT IS BEING ASKED OF CHAIRS AND GOVERNORS — SHOULDN'T THEY BE PAID?



The simple answer is that this is one of the few statutory requirements around board membership and it is there because the last two governments have thought it really important that the student voice is heard. But why wouldn't you have one anyway?

Student governors have a special and unique role which needs to be nurtured and developed by the college. Learner perspectives can be the most insightful form of information the board will receive. Students often know about issues which, if left to escalate, can have dreadful consequences for the college. Students are the defining stakeholders in decisions made by governors and, as such, should be supported to maximise the impact they can have as student governors.

There is much good practice where the board and college have a strategy to bring on new student governors. The students are supported and given training on public speaking and making an impact.

Furthermore, student governor impact has improved where colleges have actively reviewed and adapted their practice and procedures to ensure greater accessibility for student governors.

These colleges are proud of their students' ability to be active board members and they see this as part of the employability skills their students require in the future job market.

GOVERNING BODY PAPERS ARE VERY CONVOLUTED. WHAT SHOULD I FOCUS MY ATTENTION ON?

My answer is quite straightforward — governors should set the strategy, approve an affordable funding plan, determine a set of key performance indicators, monitor performance by scrutinising the information that is presented to them and ensure management action is taken swiftly when targets are not met.

It is vital to focus on the real business of the college — the students. How many applied and enrolled? Are they recruited in line with the forward plan? Are they staying on and enjoying their courses? Did they achieve the qualification(s) they signed up for? And, did they go on to further study, university and/or find a job in an area they trained for? If you do this, then you will not go far wrong.

You must be clear that governance is the act of governing — not managing. Governance provides strategic leadership and direction to a college. The governing body sets and approves policies and the budget, defines expectations, delegate's powers, and verifies performance towards delivering its strategic aims and objectives.

The most important aspect is to get the relationship and appropriate division of responsibilities between strategic governance led by the governing body and operational management led by the principal and the senior management team right.

large educational trust should be paid; agreeing that to encourage diversity the organisation can advertise the role as paid; and agreeing that the charity can cover loss of earnings. See the BIS document for details.

This question divides governors. We have a long history in the UK of the voluntary principle with governance of public services and charities being provided through an unpaid route and, in most instances, it has worked well.

Everyone agrees that good people should be supported to attend meetings through claiming for travel and other expenses (such as child care) but, whether college governance is improved if the chair is paid has yet to be tested.

Under Charity law, trustees should not profit from the office they hold unless authorised by the governing document (Instrument & Articles, statute or Principal Regulator). College governing bodies are subject to Charity law and governors are the equivalent of trustees.

However, there are circumstances when payment is allowed. BIS and the Charity Commission have introduced guidance on how boards can apply.

This guidance has been around since 2013 but no one, as yet, has applied. That should not stop anyone trying, however. The BIS document provides several case studies where the Charities Commission has agreed to pay. The Charity Commission considers requests for permission to make payments on a case-by-case basis. Examples include: agreeing that a chair recruited to set up a

## PROFILE



I looked around and I thought it wasn't fair that life chances were so different in different places



## TO THE DEFENCE OF FE'S ACRONYM C

@REBECCAKCOONEY  
REBECCA.COONEY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

The first thing many people entering the FE and skills sector notice is the number of acronyms.

Telling your EFA (Education Funding Agency) from your ETF (Education and Training Foundation) can be daunting, but new Junior Shadow Education Minister Yvonne Fovargue, who has previously served time shadowing defence, isn't fazed.

"You can't beat the strange world of defence for acronyms — it's completely impenetrable," she tells me as we walk through the maze of buildings to her office in the heart of the houses of Parliament.

In some ways, she reflects, "it probably more difficult to have a portfolio in opposition because you don't have civil servants to ask for information — it's about you and your knowledge and opinions".

"And when you change jobs it is a quick learning curve, reading up on everything," she says.

The 58-year-old MP for Makerfield, in Lancashire, took up the job of shadowing Skills Minister Nick Boles on 16 to 18 education and training, among other

responsibilities, in October.

Her predecessor, Rushanara Ali, MP for Bethnal Green and Bow, resigned the shadow role after refusing to support her party's stance on military action against Islamic State (Isis) in Iraq.

But changing jobs is a relatively new experience for Fovargue, who worked for the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) for 23 years before entering politics.

She was elected to Parliament for the first time in 2010 and has since spent time in the Labour Whip's office and as a Junior Shadow Transport Minister — yet she doesn't see herself as a career politician.

"I don't think I'd been to London more than five times before I was elected," she says.

"But I suppose the party needs a mix of both — people who have that rigour in the political and policy background and people like myself, with real life experience as well."

Initially she had wanted to be a teacher — inspired by mother Irene.

"It was because of my mum that I went to university, really," says Fovargue.

"Because my dad, Ken, was a lot more traditional and very practically minded — you know, 'you're a woman, you'll probably get married so what's the point?'

"But my mum insisted it was the right thing to do. And they struggled and they did send me to university."

After studying English at Leeds University, Fovargue signed herself up to a PGCE but her teacher practice in a comprehensive in a deprived area of Manchester gave her second thoughts.

"I discovered that actually, at the age of 21, having gone straight from school to university I didn't have a lot I could offer the pupils. Academically, yes, but in terms of experience of life, it just wasn't there."

Instead, she went to work for the Manchester housing department, managing a housing estate in Moss Side.

"I loved it," she said. "I discovered I could relate to a wide range of people and I helped form the first ever tenants' group in Manchester and that's where the interest in getting people their rights came from I think."

Fovargue developed the interest, she says, by joining the Labour Party — a process she took very seriously.

"Working in Moss Side and then going back home to Sale, I looked around and I thought it wasn't fair that life chances were so different in different places," she explains.

"So I looked around, I interviewed the

Liberal Democrats and the Labour Party local councillors, asking: 'What are your policies, how are you promoting fairness?'"

In 1984, daughter Vicky was born and Fovargue took up voluntary work for the CAB, but she had to find paid work when she and her husband split up just 18 months later.

"I realised I wanted to stay at CAB and I was lucky enough to get the job as manager at Newton-le-Willows CAB, which then four years later merged with St Helens and I took over as chief executive of the borough," she says.

She certainly learned a thing or two about pushing for funding in her time there, taking the office from two part-time staff and a £9,500 budget, to 29 paid staff, a host of trained volunteers and a budget "£70 short of a million".

As a single parent with a small child, it was says Fovargue, "a balancing act".

"The job was 30 miles away from home and there are still things I remember like the time she [Vicky] cut off the tops of her fingers in the toilet door at school, and I couldn't get home in time to take her to hospital," she says.

"Fortunately she doesn't seem to hold it against me — she's grown up very balanced."

But Fovargue still found some time for politics.



## It's a personal thing

### What is your favourite book, and why?

I read a lot. I like a lot of crime novels, particularly by Jeffery Deaver and Reginald Hill. I think what I like is probably the total relaxation away from work, something completely different

### What do you do to switch off from work?

I read and watch DVD box sets — we've worked our way through the West Wing and I'm watching Scandal at the moment

### What's your pet hate?

Intolerance. Having worked at CAB for a long time I don't like people who are very judgemental. I always think there but for circumstances — the grace of God, whatever you'd call it — go I

### If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be?

Oscar Wilde, Tony Benn and Tony Blair

### What did you want to be when you grew up?

An English teacher



Fovargue and husband Paul on their wedding day in 2009

From left: Fovargue's mother Irene, who died last year, Fovargue and her daughter Vicky



Fovargue at Little Rock High School, Arkansas, USA, a key site in the civil rights movement in the 1950s



Fovargue aged 4



# COUNT

"I remember delivering leaflets in the pram — they're very handy for putting leaflets underneath," she says.

In the late 1990s Fovargue met husband Paul, who was a councillor on Warrington Council, and in 2004 he persuaded her to also stand for the council. The move to Parliament, she says was "the next logical step".

"With CAB we did quite a lot of policy work, trying to prevent problems by writing to the government and saying this policy isn't working," she says.

"In my career I've always dealt with people and their problems — for me the best policy and the best comes from talking to the people on the ground."

Although she's still finding her feet in the education role, she says: "I think my experience dealing with young people, training volunteers who've come from universities and school is helping me to settle in — I'm enjoying meeting young people again and getting to grips with the sector."

"I think education isn't just about academic achievement, it's about giving people the resilience so that they know how to deal with problems they will inevitably face — nobody's life runs completely smoothly, and it's giving them the character to deal with those

problems, and if they can't deal with them themselves having the ability to ask without feeling ashamed and knowing where to go."

And knowing where to go in the form of careers guidance is an issue in which Fovargue, having passed the 11-plus, has depressingly familiar experience.

"It was basically if you're bright you go to university, slightly less bright teacher training college and if you were even less bright you got a job," she says.

And she describes the system of today as "failing," with her view of the Careers Company announced by Education Secretary Nicky Morgan last month being that "the devil will be in the detail".

"One of the things that concerns me is it's all very well having upfront funding now, but there are issues about getting employers to fund it in the future," she says.

Meanwhile, having one of the most unpredictable elections in modern times on the horizon is, as she puts it, "unfortunate for life planning".

But what role would she like to be waking up to on May 8?

"Hopefully carrying on with the education role in a Labour Government," she says, without missing a beat.



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## DR LYNNE SEDGMORE

Executive director of the 157 Group

### Apprenticeships are the 'major casualty' amid funding uncertainty

The government has said more research was needed before it could take its apprenticeship funding reform plans any further. Lynne Sedgmore considers where this leaves the sector — and the programme.

The announcement from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills on apprenticeship funding reform clearly illustrates a setback for government.

The statement that its commitment to 'putting employers in control' of apprenticeship funding is 'non-negotiable' seems to obfuscate with strong words the fact that neither of its two options for routing funding directly to employers are any longer on the table.

Beyond the words of the formal statement, Skills Minister Nick Boles spelt it out even more clearly at this week's Education Select Committee — he doesn't want to "go off half-cock" again.

It is also worth noting that what is now being described as 'non-negotiable' is the aim of 'putting employers in control' of funding and not routing funding directly through them.

In other words, not only are the preferred options ruled out, but other means to the same end may have been ditched as well.

This is good news and reflects what colleges, independent learning providers (ILPs), commentators and, most importantly, very many employers have been telling Whitehall all along — managing public funding is an unwelcome extra task for small businesses not a valuable reward.

It is good news when a policy based more on ideology than evidence is sent back to the drawing board. It gives grounds for hope that those who understand the practicalities on the ground may be listened to more carefully in the future. But this misconceived policy has led to a wider raft of unfortunate consequences.

The major casualty is the apprenticeship system itself which now remains in a further period of limbo. Apprenticeships are the centrepiece of skills policy, yet all those who have to make it work on the ground have now to go forward without any clear idea of the longer term funding arrangements for the sector.

Uncertainty about rates, mechanisms and even vital matters like employer cash contributions would be unsettling at the best of times, let alone when apprentice numbers are falling and when the practices behind previous headline growth have been called into question.

Yet this continuing instability is not the

worst problem. The most damaging aspect of this whole affair is that the focus on how to route public funding to employers has distorted the entire debate about employer ownership.

Developing apprenticeships risks being seen as a matter of chasing state subsidy rather than building a competitive business. Offering apprenticeships is now positioned as a public service rather than a business investment supported by government. This has been reinforced by the disproportionately large funding of the current trailblazer schemes.

## The major casualty is the apprenticeship system itself which now remains in a further period of limbo

Almost nobody disputes the idea that apprenticeships should be led by employers — an apprenticeship is a contract of employment and to be viable must meet employers' needs. To help develop employer ownership in a true sense, therefore, the government needs to step back and let local solutions flourish. As providers work harder and harder to engage more employers in delivery, the routing of public funds has only served as a distraction.

There is a simple, if radical, solution to apprenticeship funding. Employers could be told that any apprentice (or perhaps any within an approved age range) can receive up to a maximum period of off-the-job training free at a college or approved training provider of their choice. After that it's up to them. They won't have to manage or account for public funding, bother about staged or outcome payments or complicate their PAYE returns.

Colleges and ILPs will be left to teach and firms will be left to run their businesses and train their staff. Mr Boles told the Education Select Committee that finding a solution to apprenticeship funding to suit everyone was possible and could be simple. Here we propose a practical solution to his problem.



## MICHAEL WOODGATE

Independent skills consultant and former employee of the Road Haulage and Distribution Training Council from 2002 until it was subsumed into Skills for Logistics in 2003. He remained with Sfl until 2009

### Logistics skills council 'offered solutions to non-existent problems'

Michael Woodgate considers what went wrong for Skills for Logistics (Sfl) with the sector skills council having this month announced it was set to close.

So farewell then, Sfl. It prospered when government funding was plentiful, but its inability to convince people to pay for its services proved fatal.

At the beginning, Sfl's reason for being was simply 'to be a sector skills council' at a time when these were being rapidly established across the industrial landscape.

But, once this valuable status had been secured, there was an almost immediate feeling of 'now what?'

Consistently poor leadership, at both executive and board level, ensured this question was never properly asked, let alone convincingly answered.

The challenge Sfl faced, right from the start, was the lack of a significant vocational skills problem in the logistics sector.

It takes five days to train a new lorry driver and the lead time to full competence can be measured in weeks, rather than years.

A functioning market works well to deliver basic training in things like fork lift driving, truck driving and operating ancillary equipment.

The technology used for tracking consignments and warehouse picking is well-designed and easy to use.

At the higher level, the UK has well established universities like Aston and Huddersfield that turn out world class logisticians.

But Sfl chose to behave as if the opposite was true.

In a bid to raise the profile of the sector it started talking about "logistics craft" and set about creating "solutions" for the supposed shortage of these skills.

## The irony is that the logistics sector does have skills issues to address, just not the ones Sfl chose to focus on

These solutions — the Interactive Stairway, the Logistics Guild, the Foundation Degree — constituted little more than answers

desperately searching for questions. Each one had thousands spent on it with no discernible return.

The irony is that the logistics sector does have skills issues to address, just not the ones Sfl chose to focus on.

Firstly, and most obviously, there are significant opportunities to improve levels of English and maths across the industry, among middle and junior management as much as anywhere else.

When it was set up, one of Sfl's core remits was to address this issue, yet in its 11 years of existence it did virtually nothing in this area.

Secondly, while the industry is awash with instructors and assessors, there is a shortage of people who can teach.

The Logistics Academy was established to raise the quality and quantity of teaching in the sector. But this also had absolutely no sense of direction and closed down without having generated a penny of commercial income in its short, troubled life.

But the biggest issue facing the sector is that it is not that good at managing people.

A skilled workforce depends for its existence on effective recruitment and effective management.

Searching for "training solutions" while ignoring the need to manage people well is a tempting and easy path to take, but ultimately a futile one.

None of this is particular to logistics, nor does it require a "sector solution".

What's needed are well-run organisations, where progressive workplace cultures and practices enable people to do their jobs well.

But all Sfl's attempts to attract new blood into the sector focussed on the shortcomings of the recruits, the training and perceptions of the industry — not once was an admission that perhaps employers needed to up their game.

Had this admission been made, Sfl would have finally unearthed a question for which they would have been in a strong position to answer.

With Business Link disappearing into cyberspace, and the relevant trade associations focussing on compliance issues, there is a real need for business support to the logistics sector.

Not to design its supply chains, or train its fork lift drivers, but to manage its people better.

If, at the same time, workforce English and maths skills had been developed as well, the logistics industry would increasingly be made up of well-run organisations staffed by people able and willing to learn.

Such a sector would, I suggest, have few serious skills gaps or shortages.





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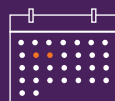


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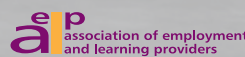
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## CAMPUS ROUND-UP

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# Creative designs inside and out at Notts college



Pictured, from left, are: West Nottinghamshire College student Gorge Boyle, aged 18, Chris Kowalenko, from J Tomlinson Limited, student Maisie Smith, 17, principal Asha Khemka, student Kurtis Klegg, 18, head of creative industries and digital technologies Steve McAlone, and curriculum manager Helen Wood. All three students study the extended diploma in art and design at the new centre (pictured inset)

Creative art students from West Nottinghamshire College can now learn their craft in a new £2.3m facility.

The new two-storey Visual Arts and Design Centre was designed by architects Ibi Group and built by J Tomlinson Limited.

It includes a range of state-of-the-art studios, modern teaching space, and bright exhibition areas.

A college spokesperson said the project

represented the final stage in its £40m investment programme to upgrade its estate across Mansfield and Ashfield.

Dame Asha Khemka, principal, said: "I am immensely proud to see this centre come to fruition. The building has a real energy and buzz, and it's great to see students working hard and enjoying their studies in this modern, 21st Century learning environment."



From left: Charles Hargreaves, Jo Oliver, both aged 18, tutor Craig Leach, Josh Ralph, 16, and Dan Smedley, 19. All students study level two intermediate apprenticeship in wood occupation

## Construction students help the 'neigh' bours

There was no horseplay when construction students from East Riding College worked with a local business on a recycling project.

The joinery apprentices turned old wheelie bins into winter feeders for horses after being contacted for help by nearby Meaux Livery.

Tutor Craig Leach said: "It's a small scale project, but the work required accurate measurements and cutting and drilling, and

the safe use of portable power tools is an important element of the course.

"It's also good experience for the learners to work with clients outside college environment and they were really pleased to be making something permanent that would be well used."

Hannah Caley, from Meaux Livery, said college learners would be asked to help build a Meaux Livery cross country course later in the year.

# College staff get on their bikes in memory of colleague

More than £1,000 was raised by a group of cyclists from Weston College in memory of a loved colleague who died during a trip to Italy last year, writes Billy Camden.

The diabetes-related death of grandmother-of-two Heather Wood during a Weston College trip to Italy last year hit her construction colleagues hard.

The 53-year-old resource-based learning coordinator at the college's construction and engineering centre of excellence (CECE), where she had worked for 15 years, was a "popular" workmate — and one whose unexpected death resulted in a charity bike ride.

Thirty five cyclists — made up of former colleagues, friends and relatives, including husband Dave Wood, who works at CECE as a technician — raised more than £1,000 in aid of Diabetes UK.

They travelled from CECE along Weston Seafront and on to Sand Bay, then back through Worle, Weston-super-Mare.

"It was hard work but very worthwhile. It is a great charity to give to and I'm sure Heather was looking down on us and laughing as she watched us set off," said Mr Wood.

"It means a lot to me that the people here would do this in her memory."

On the day of the ride, staff and fellow riders loosened their muscles with a workout at the nearby Virgin Active fitness club. The journey was then officially started by Weston



The team of cyclists from Weston College ready for their ride in memory of colleague Heather Wood. Her Husband Dave Woods, is front centre-left

College principal Dr Paul Phillips.

CECE staff are now planning several more fundraising challenges for Diabetes UK, including a "Tough Mudder" obstacle event and the possibility of a longer bike ride later in the year.

Mr Wood said: "This is the start of a number of fundraising events and it's very touching.

"Heather was very popular at college and people were shocked by the suddenness of her death.

"If people really knew how hugely diabetes

affects someone I am sure a lot more would be done to fund research into finding a cure."

Ben Hodder, carpentry lecturer and one of the event organisers, said: "It was a cold day and quite hard-going, especially the bit from the seafront to Sand Bay, but we battled on and up to now we've raised £1,381.20 for Diabetes UK, which is a fantastic amount.

"Heather was an incredible person and highly valued member of our team. Her sudden death was a massive blow to all who work and learn here.

"We're delighted to have raised so much

money for Diabetes UK and on behalf of everyone I'd like to thank all those who donated and made it happen."

CECE lecturer Matt Postins, who is also the regional chair of the Guild of Bricklayers, said: "I was going to give my old bones a rest this year, but after the tragic events that unfolded on our recent Italy trip I just felt compelled to do my little bit in memory of a truly unique and wonderful lady.

"Heather touched the lives of so many people, be it friends, colleagues and of course students."

Visit [www.justgiving.com/theteamatCECE](http://www.justgiving.com/theteamatCECE) to donate to the charity effort.

Heather Wood



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# & MOVERS SHAKERS

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

**S**outh Thames College principal Sue Rimmer has been elected the new chair of the Principals' Professional Council (PPC).

She takes over from Mike Hopkins, who stepped down last month after his chief executive role at the Gateshead and Middlesbrough College Confederation was made redundant when it was split up after just over 12 months. He had stepped down as principal of Middlesbrough College to take on the job.

Ms Rimmer, who has been the South Thames principal for nearly 15 years and has more than three decades' experience in the FE and skills sector, said: "I believe the work PPC does in representing the voice of principals, as well as supporting individual members, is unique and extremely important in these challenging times."

Nick Lewis, PPC secretary, said: "Sue has been an active member of PPC for several years and I am delighted at her election as chair. She is well-respected throughout the sector and brings a wealth of experience to the role."

He added: "PPC has been very fortunate to have benefited from Mike Hopkins' energy and his experience of FE and we wish him the best for the future."

And at Ofsted, the remit for plans to merge all education inspections under a single framework from September was passed to schools director Sean Harford last month.

It had previously been the responsibility of Mike Cladingbowl until he left the education watchdog to become executive principal of a new multi-academy trust in North West England.

Meanwhile, former Bradford College principal of ten years and Association of Colleges president of 2013/14 Michele Sutton has become interim principal at Birmingham's Bournville College.

It follows the retirement of Norman Cave, who left late last year due to ill health after 12 years at the helm.

Ms Sutton, who added a CBE award to her existing OBE in the 2015 New Year Honours, started this month and is expected to remain in post until a permanent successor is recruited



Sue Rimmer



Mike Hopkins



Sean Harford



Alan Birks and Michele Sutton



Norman Cave

later this year.

It marks a return to the Second City for Ms Sutton with one of her first FE and skills sector jobs being a lecturer at Handsworth College (now part of South and City College Birmingham), where she rose to vice principal.

"I'm delighted to be back in Birmingham and honoured that the board have asked me to take up the interim principal role. I look forward to working with staff, students and the

wider community over the next few months to consolidate and build on Bournville College's reputation," said the former principal of Rochdale's Hopwood Hall College.

Alan Birks CBE, governors' board chair, said: "We are very pleased that Michele is joining us and have every confidence in her skills and experience to lead the college forward until the permanent principal is appointed."

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

## Tongues will be wagging...

Making sure **you get seen** and **talked about** in all **the right places** is crucial. Whether that's **through the material you produce** or **the stories you tell**. And it's even more important that you have **the right support** from **an organisation that really understands your market...**

We are an award winning marketing communications company who have been helping schools and colleges get the best results from all their marketing communications for more than 10 years, whether that's branding, design, PR, marketing campaigns, websites or social media and all the bits in between.

**And because we only work in education we understand the language, issues and pitfalls you face, so we can help steer you in the right direction and make sure you're seen and talked about in all the right places, for all the right reasons!**



FINALIST



Call 01264 729581 Email [hello@empra.co.uk](mailto:hello@empra.co.uk) Visit [empra.co.uk](http://empra.co.uk) @empra

# Are you passionate about education?

**FE Associates is the UK's leading provider of interim management and consultancy support through a unique blend of knowledge, skills and experience, dedicated to the post-16 sector.**

**Working closely with colleges across the UK, our expert team of full-time employed consultants and self-employed associate consultants provide advice, guidance and support in the following areas:**

- **Interim Management**
- **Quality Improvement**
- **Mock Inspection**
- **Partnership Services**
- **Strategic Consultancy**
- **Financial Efficiency Analysis**
- **Business Development**
- **Recruitment**

## Interim and Consultants

### Curriculum Consultants

#### **INTERIM CURRICULUM CONSULTANTS**

##### **Nationwide (self-employed)**

We provide colleges with interim management support from curriculum manager through to Senior Management Team level.

We are looking to grow our team of self-employed associate consultants at VP, AP and Curriculum Manager level. You will be suitably qualified, with recent college experience and a strong track record in your field. You must be motivated, flexible and conversant with the issues facing the FE sector.

Applicants must be prepared to travel around the UK and stay away from home when required.

For more information and to apply, visit [www.feassociates.com](http://www.feassociates.com) or for an informal discussion please contact Judith Richardson on 07500 798 548.

### Finance Consultants

#### **INTERIM SENIOR FINANCE CONSULTANTS**

##### **Nationwide (self-employed)**

We provide colleges with expertise and support with interim management, preparation of financial recovery plans, financial planning, financial health reviews, Capital Applications, and financial consultancy advice.

You will be an experienced practitioner, who is currently working at Vice Principal or Finance Director level and is willing to share your knowledge and skills.

#### **INTERIM FINANCE CONSULTANTS**

##### **Nationwide (self-employed and permanent)**

We are also looking for experienced and motivated Financial Manager / Controller interims to join our team on a full time, fractional or self-employed associate basis.

For both roles you must be prepared to travel around the UK and stay away from home when required.

For more information and to apply, visit [www.feassociates.com](http://www.feassociates.com) or for an informal discussion please contact Steve Hutchinson on 07500 798 550.

#### **OPERATIONS and DEVELOPMENT MANAGER: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (permanent) £45-55k plus benefits & PRP**

A new and exciting opportunity has been created for a highly motivated and ambitious manager to support the expansion of our services to the post-16 education and training sector.

We are looking to recruit a full time manager based in the South West/Midlands to manage and develop the operations of BW Consultants (Quality Improvement arm of FE Associates) as it expands its client base and bespoke solutions for the sector.

The successful candidate will have detailed experience of the post-16 sector and have a very good knowledge of successful quality improvement. You will be highly organised, have excellent communication skills and be able to build and influence networks and relationships across education and training.

You will be a commercially minded innovator and motivator who can promote new thinking to achieve growth and success and continuous improvement, both within our organisation and with clients.

You will enjoy meeting with clients, be motivated by providing solutions to their problems and happy working in a commercial environment. The role will involve travelling throughout the UK to meet with clients and on occasions staying away from home.

For more information and to apply, please visit [www.feassociates.com](http://www.feassociates.com) or for an informal discussion please contact Elaine Smith on 07725 423 738.

### Quality Improvement & Consultancy

#### **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CONSULTANTS**

##### **Nationwide (self-employed)**

To support the continued demand for quality improvement in both colleges and private training providers, and with growing interest for international support, we are expanding our team of self-employed associate consultants.

You will be a current, registered inspector or have extensive experience in training and development as a successful practitioner; with a strong track record in your curriculum area.

We would like to hear from inspectors/practitioners across all SSAs but are particularly interested in Maths & Science, English, Technology and related areas, and Humanities.

You must be prepared to travel around the UK and stay away from home when required.

For more information and to apply, please visit [www.feassociates.com](http://www.feassociates.com) or for an informal discussion please contact Elaine Smith on 07725 423 738.

#### **MATHS AND ENGLISH CONSULTANTS**

##### **Nationwide (self-employed)**

Due to continued demand for support in maths and English, we are looking to recruit experienced managers and practitioners who could provide:

- training, coaching and mentoring
- interim management
- quality improvement consultancy.

We are looking for highly motivated and flexible professionals who have a strong background and experience in maths and English who can provide high quality practical support to the post-16 education and training sector.

For more information and to apply, visit [www.feassociates.com](http://www.feassociates.com) or for an informal discussion please contact Elaine Smith on 07725 423 738.

**Closing date for all applications  
is Friday 30th January**





## State of the art STEM Training Centre opening in the North East in 2015

Middlesbrough College is **recruiting now** for a £20m STEM Centre of Excellence which will provide top class training in a real work environment.

Designed with industry, for industry this unique Training Centre is the first of its kind in the region.

It will deliver training in a number of disciplines including:

**Process • Logistics • Manufacturing • Oil & Gas • Maintenance • Computer Hardware • Instrumentation • Science • Digital Technologies**

### Positions available include:

- **STEM Operations Manager**
- **Process/Instrumentation Centre Leader**
- **Manufacturing Centre Leader**
- **Technical Trainers/Lecturers**  
(Multiple roles/disciplines)
- **Support Technicians**  
(Multiple roles/disciplines)

We are seeking dynamic professionals who are currently working in industry, in the teaching profession, or who have recently graduated, with a background in Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths.

We are offering a highly competitive salary, a great pension scheme and generous holiday entitlement, as well as an extensive workforce development programme which includes:

- Train the Trainer
- IOSH Managing Safety
- Assessor/Verifier Award
- English and Maths Update
- Work Shadowing
- Technical Updates

**Science • Technology • Engineering • Maths**

Visit: [www.mbro.ac.uk/stem](http://www.mbro.ac.uk/stem) for more details. Email your CV today to: [recruitment@mbro.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment@mbro.ac.uk) or call (01642) 333666

**Come along to our Recruitment Day**  
**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2015**  
**between 4.00pm and 8.00pm**

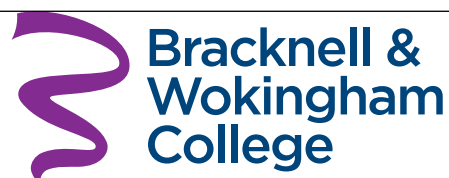
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**Middlesbrough College**  
**Dock Street**  
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Middlesbrough College is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.



### DIRECTOR OF FINANCE: SALARY £60 000 PER ANNUM

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a highly motivated, pro-active and inspiring individual to join our Senior Management Team as Director of Finance. In this senior role you will be responsible for advancing the achievement of the College's strategic plan by leading on overall financial planning, budget setting, financial reporting, financial and management information systems, contracting and corporate business planning. The role will involve liaising with auditors, funding bodies, financial organisations and a variety of other stakeholders as well as being responsible for reporting to governors on the financial health of the College. A 'hands on' approach is essential for this role.

In addition to being CCAB recognised or a CIMA qualified Accountant with significant post qualification experience, which would include financial strategic management at a senior level, we would expect the successful candidate to demonstrate excellent leadership skills. Previous relevant experience within FE or the public sector would be a distinct advantage.

**If the sound of this role excites you and you feel that you meet the requirements of the role, then we would like to hear from you. To apply, please go to: [www.bracknell.ac.uk/workforus](http://www.bracknell.ac.uk/workforus)**

**CLOSING DATE SUNDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2015**  
**INTERVIEWS – WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2015**



### Job Opportunity

Head of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Quality  
Management Spine (points 40-42) £39159 to £41540

#### OVERALL PURPOSE OF JOB

- To support the College in aspiring to excellence in teaching, learning & assessment
- To drive continuous improvement through quality assurance, training & development & procedures, as well as management & co-ordination where required
- To drive innovation through up to date research, development & networking activities

The successful applicant will have a proven track record of the highest quality teaching experience as well as motivation, innovation and creativity and the ability to oversee a thoroughly comprehensive and meticulous system of recording, tracking and follow up.

#### HOW TO APPLY

You can download an application pack from our College website [www.shipley.ac.uk](http://www.shipley.ac.uk) or alternatively to request an application pack, please contact: ShIPLEY College, HR on 01274 327249 or email [jobs@shipley.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@shipley.ac.uk). Completed application forms should be returned to [jobs@shipley.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@shipley.ac.uk) or alternatively by post to HR, ShIPLEY College, Salt Building, Victoria Road, Saltaire, BD18 3LQ.

If you wish to have an informal chat before making an application, please arrange a time to discuss this with Julie Bales (Vice Principal - Curriculum) on [jbales@shipley.ac.uk](mailto:jbales@shipley.ac.uk).

**Closing date - Monday 2 February 2015**  
**Interview date - Friday 13 February**  
**Start date - ASAP**





**Assistant Principal** £55-£60k + relocation

## Create your own Canterbury tale



If you're ready to take the next step in your career and you want to make your mark in a College that's going places, this could be the role for you.

With an income of c.£35million, and 10,000 learners, Canterbury College is one of the largest providers of post-16 education in the South East serving the communities of East Kent and beyond. The brand new purpose built FE, commercial, community and HE centres set in the heart of the city are signals of our commitment to becoming one of the best Further Education colleges in the country. Improving the quality of teaching and learning is a key priority and the recent management restructure, which resulted in the creation of the role of Assistant Principal, has helped to give a stronger focus to this vital area of the College's work.

In addition to leading the curriculum development, management and quality improvement agenda for one of the College's three Faculties, as Assistant Principal you will be an integral member of the Senior Management Team with cross-college responsibilities and an active role in strategic

discussions and decision making. We are looking for a leader with drive, ambition and self-belief; high aspirations for learners; a track record of inspiring teams to deliver success; significant curriculum management and quality improvement experience; and the ability and credibility to work effectively with a range of partners, both internal and external.

If you recognise yourself from the above and you're keen to make your mark in a progressive, values-driven organisation with a strong team ethic and commitment to professional and career development, we're interested in hearing from you.

Visit [www.canterburyap.co.uk](http://www.canterburyap.co.uk) to find out more or contact Trudy Searle or Mike Galloway on **07791 090141 / 07765 595758**. Closing date: 30 January. Initial interviews: week beginning 9 February. Final interviews: 25/26 February.



**YMCA Training is a national charity who aims to transform the lives of young people and adults through work related training and employment support. We believe in setting inspiring goals and working closely with individuals all over the UK to develop personal, vocation and work-related skills.**

### Area Leader (Central London)

YMCA Fit, one of the UK's leading training providers specialising in qualifications for the fitness industry, are seeking to recruit an experienced Area Leader to manage the YMCA Fit training provision nationally.

Based out of the Central YMCA head office in Central London the Area Leader will be responsible for the management of six departments including tutors, quality assurance, guidance assessors, learning support and project management and will work with each of these departments to ensure that the training delivered is 'gold standard', fit for purpose and meets the needs of the industry. You will need to be commercially focused with the drive and passion to deliver exceptional business results, ensuring the training centres deliver outstanding programmes of teaching, learning and assessment and achieve high, timely success rates. The primary objective is to deliver financial management, learner and quality assurance success rates for the YMCA Fit training provision.

### Quality Improvement Practitioner (North West/ North East/ South)

We are looking for passionate and dedicated Quality Improvement Practitioners based regionally to drive forward outstanding programmes of teaching, learning and assessment that meet the needs of our learners. You will support all staff to deliver excellence in every part of the learner journey, co-ordinate and deliver the internal quality assurance programme, offer a programme of continuous improvement as well as maintain records and reports. This is a rewarding and target driven environment, where we seek candidates with a proven track record of developing others as well as possessing the V1 or equivalent qualification.

### Internal Quality Assurer (North West (ft)/ South (ft)/ East Anglia (pt))

We are looking for commercially minded Internal Quality Assurers based regionally to support training staff to deliver outstanding programmes of teaching, learning and assessment that meet the needs of our learners. You will drive forward improvements and support all delivery staff to deliver excellence in every part of the learner journey. To meet the individual and team training and development needs of staff you will help to identify, plan, co-ordinate and deliver a programme of continuous professional development and quality monitoring meetings. You will also regularly maintain effective quality assurance and audit systems. You will have had prior experience of carrying out sampling of learner work and be V1 qualified or equivalent.

### Senior Business Manager (Warrington & Chester/ Oldham/ Eastbourne/ Hove/ London & Welwyn/ Lowestoft & Norwich)

We are looking for proactive and commercially focused Senior Business Managers to manage the day to day operation of multiple YMCA training centres that deliver training, supported teaching and learning across the UK. Responsible for maintaining and delivering learner numbers, accreditations, revenue targets, quality and performance, you will also proactively coach, mentor and lead the Training Advisors to achieve these goals. As Senior Business Manager you will be responsible for ensuring the training centres provide a service of excellence, a positive learner journey and drive for Grade 1 Ofsted. You will also be required to maximise profit and grow the centre and it's offering by securing local business opportunities, new funding and placements for the centre.

**We offer a competitive basic salary plus benefits.**

ResourceBank are a trusted recruitment service provider for YMCA and are currently supporting the business on the recruitment for their YMCA Training vacancies across the UK. We have a dedicated YMCA recruitment team who will individually manage your application through the recruitment process.





## MIS Consultants

**Nationwide | £Competitive + bonus opportunities**

FE Associates is the leading choice for colleges requiring interim management and consultancy support. Our experienced team of MIS and IT full-time employed consultants and self-employed associate consultants have an impressive range of specialist skills in data analysis and interpretation.

We are looking for highly motivated and flexible professionals who have strong technical MIS skills and experience of all aspects of funding and data quality in further education.

You will need to be prepared to travel around the UK and stay away from home when required. In return you will receive a competitive base salary, plus a range of benefits including a contributory pension and performance related pay.

**For an informal chat, please call Mike Craddock on 01823 337655**

**To apply please send your CV with covering letter to [recruitment@feassociates.com](mailto:recruitment@feassociates.com)**

**Closing date for applications is Friday 30th January**



### Operations Manager

Full-time, permanent based in Mansfield, Notts.  
Salary c. £35000 per annum plus pension and healthcare scheme (following qualifying period)

We are looking for an experienced Operations/Contracts Manager to lead our small team and to manage the delivery of our SFA ASB contract with a focus on meeting the milestones of the contract and ensuring the compliance and quality of the provision. Working with the CEO and board you will contribute to the strategic aims of NTN and also have the experience to act as our Ofsted Nominee. You will have held a similar position with a training provider with current knowledge of contracts and the sector and be qualified to a minimum of level 5 in a suitable discipline.

This is an exciting role with potential for career progression for the right candidate. For more information and an application pack please contact Sara Harris on **01623 404341** or email [sara@ntn-wbl.org.uk](mailto:sara@ntn-wbl.org.uk).  
**Closing date 23 January 2015**

### Programme Area Manager in Health, Care and Child Education



Job Ref: MS 788  
£32,189 - £37,537 p.a.

For full details or to apply, please visit [www.lmc.ac.uk](http://www.lmc.ac.uk)

**Closing date: Friday 30th January 2015**

## Assistant Principal – Various Positions

**£58,000 - £65,000 dependent on experience + benefits**



Over the past two years The Manchester College has been on an unprecedented journey to realign its objectives and raise standards and expectations to meet the needs of students and employers across the Manchester region. The College is now well placed to deliver against its objectives of supporting one of the fastest growing cities in Europe, with a broader national agenda, although there is still much to do on the road to becoming an outstanding College. To help deliver this agenda they are now seeking to appoint a number of Assistant Principals to key roles across the College to drive forward the next stage in its development.

You will lead on shaping the strategic and operational development for your curriculum/functional area to deliver outstanding results for learners. As an active member of the senior leadership team you will provide clear line management across a large and diverse environment with direct responsibility for Heads of Department whilst exceeding stretching targets across recruitment, success, retention, achievement, attendance and income generation. The posts to which we are seeking to appoint include; **AP – Communities & Work; AP – Construction & Engineering; AP – Performing Arts; AP - English & Maths; AP – Student Experience; and AP – Supported Learning.**

As a successful Assistant Principal or Head of Department, you will have an impressive track record of success gained within an exceptional FE institution, with a profound understanding of the challenges facing the sector, as well as a clear view on how to develop a College capable of matching future demands. You will be an innovative

leader with a passion for quality and service excellence, who can demonstrate the capacity to influence, inform and raise the bar so others will follow. Additionally, you will possess outstanding interpersonal and communication skills, being able to engage and influence at all levels across a diverse organisation to solve complex strategic challenges through tangible solutions.

This is a unique opportunity with one of the country's largest and most progressive colleges that sits at the very heart of the devolution agenda across Greater Manchester. The Manchester College will afford the right candidates exceptional opportunities for career progression and development, set within a truly diverse group structure. The sector is changing rapidly, perhaps it's time you made that change?

For more information on this role and how to apply, please visit our website at [www.wickland-westcott.co.uk](http://www.wickland-westcott.co.uk) and view your chosen role on our Current Positions page. For a confidential discussion, please call our retained consultants **Andrew White** or **John Dodd** on **01625 508100**. We are keen to receive applications by **Monday 26th January 2015**.



Wickland Westcott

## COMMUNITY LEARNING DATA & PERFORMANCE OFFICER

Grade PO2 - £31,296 - £33,846



The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Adult and Community Learning service supports over 4,000 learners a year and works with eight different sub-contracted providers to deliver a diverse offer of high quality learning.

We are looking for an experienced data and management information practitioner to join the team. You will need excellent knowledge of adult skills programmes, SFA funding rules and the data required to evidence delivery and spend. You will need experience of using MIS systems to record and analyse information and be able to present MIS data in clear, accurate and understandable formats. Experience of submitting data returns to the SFA and of using SFA systems is essential.

For further information please contact Carmen Furlonge-Campbell on 020 8921 3956

On-line applications only via Royal Greenwich website - [www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk](http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

**Closing Date: Tuesday 3rd February 2015**

## ASSOCIATE LECTURERS IN FOUNDATION ENGLISH

**£25.04 - £28.39 per class contact hour**



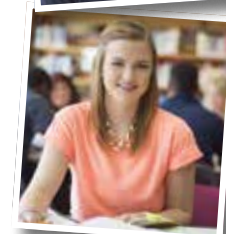
We are looking for outstanding candidates to join our multi-award winning College.

As an Associate Lecturer, you will join a committed and professional full and part time teaching team from a variety of backgrounds who work together to teach across a wide range of curriculum courses and levels. As a lecturer of Foundation English and GCSE English, you will further complement our Skills for Life Section. Teaching will be from Entry level to Level 2 and for learners on programmes ranging from sport, health and social care, equine, agriculture, childcare, computing, arboriculture, animal care, business, music and performing arts, construction, engineering and many more subjects.

Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to inspire, motivate and engage learners is essential.

Closing date: **12 Noon Thursday 29 Jan 2015**

Interview date: **Friday 6 Feb 2015**



For further information visit  
[www.bridgewater.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.bridgewater.ac.uk/jobs)  
or telephone **01278 441221**



## TO ADVERTISE WITH US CALL HANNAH SMITH ON



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## GCSE Maths Teacher



Opened in September 2014 the Dv8 Academy is a brand new 16-19 centre for excellence in the creative industries, where wellbeing and enterprise are at the heart of the curriculum.

Our mission is to improve the lives of young people through high quality training and creative industry experiences. We will have over 300 young people going through our vocational programmes per year as well as providing access to master classes and enterprise qualifications to ensure they can progress to Higher education or employment.

We are looking for someone with demonstrable experience of developing and delivering GCSE Maths to join our dedicated team based in Walthamstow, East London. Experience of working in an education setting and working within the 16-19 age group is essential.

### Benefits of working for DV8

- Supportive, caring and developmental environment
- Creative and innovative approach to education
- A focus on staff wellbeing
- Be part of a new state of the art Academy specialising in the creative industries.

### Salary and days of work

- This is a full time position starting 23rd February (negotiable)
- Salary £28,000
- Holidays 35 days per academic year

For an informal conversation about the role please call Sacha Corcoran on **07846789214**. If you wish to apply please send a CV and covering letter explaining why you would be good for this position to [victoria.spence@dv8academy.com](mailto:victoria.spence@dv8academy.com) by 30th January at 5pm.

To find out more about the DV8 Academy and our approach to education please see: [www.dv8academy.com](http://www.dv8academy.com)



**Post Title:** Lecturer A - Mathematics

**Faculty:** N/A

**Hours:** Full-time, 37 hours per week

**Salary:** Annual Salary up to £31,821

**Details:** Now would be an exciting time to join Wigan & Leigh College.

We are seeking to appoint creative and qualified individuals to teach Mathematics to students aged 16-18 and 19+. The successful candidate will deliver across a range of levels from entry level Functional Skills through to level 2 and GCSE in our new cross College English and Maths team. Applicants need to be committed to working in this setting with our students to achieve positive outcomes with them. Applicants should possess a Degree in Mathematics or Adult Numeracy L4/5 specialism and a teaching qualification. You will need to be an outstanding teacher who has high expectations of learners and of yourself and who can enthuse and motivate 16-19 year old learners.

For more information on this vacancy or to complete an application form, please visit our website:  
[www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/job-vacancies](http://www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/job-vacancies)

**The College reserves the right to interview for this post should we receive suitable candidates prior to the closing date.**

**Closing Date: 26/01/2015**





## LECTURER IN MATHS

- Part Time, 4 hours per week minimum
- £23.02 per hour
- Start: ASAP
- End: May 2015

We are seeking to appoint a part time Lecturer in Maths to manage and deliver GCSE courses within the college from the DMP and GCSE department. This will involve teaching on a variety of different learning programmes as well as carrying out initial assessment, selection and induction of new students. This is a fixed term contract concluding at the end of May 2015.

Other responsibilities include assisting the Learning Area Manager, with the development of the GCSE area, as well as departmental duties and promotional activities.


You must have experience in maths teaching or be trained in specialist maths teaching. The Ideal candidate will have previous experience of teaching, be fully teacher trained and been assessed as good or outstanding in a teaching environment as well as possessing a level 5 or above qualification in mathematics. Excellent communication and organisational skills are another pre-requisite, as is the ability to be an effective team member.

**CLOSING DATE:** Friday 23rd January 2015

**INTERVIEW DATE:** W/C Monday 26th January 2015

For detailed information and to apply for this job, please e-mail [recruitment@centralbeds.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment@centralbeds.ac.uk).

*All roles are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure.*



### Dynamic Maths Teacher

From Spine Point 22 (£22,516) to Spine Point 37 (£35,104)

**Are you:**

- Wanting a change and looking for an exciting new challenge?
- Keen to focus your teaching only on 'D' Grade GCSE students to improve their grades to A\*-C?
- An enthusiastic and imaginative practitioner, who is passionate about teaching and learning?
- Someone who has high aspirations for students?
- Wanting to join a forward-thinking college team?

We are a vocational 16+ College of Further Education and are seeking to recruit to our expanding team of GCSE English and Maths staff. Nationally, learners who are aged 16-19 and who have not yet achieved a Grade C GCSE must undertake resits to reach the minimum C Grade benchmark for success. Therefore, all young people who join us from schools at age 16, with a Grade D in Maths, are given 3 hours of small group tuition.

We are trying creative approaches to ensure that large numbers of these marginal students succeed at improving from their current D Grade. One initiative was to appoint our Deputy Principal from the Secondary sector and now we are aiming to recruit experienced secondary level teachers who just want to focus on motivated borderline learners. Candidates are very welcome to visit our College - You will be impressed by the industrious, focused and purposeful vocationally based learning in a hugely inspiring environment.

At our recent Ofsted inspection we were awarded "Good with Outstanding features" (March 2014). 98% of our teaching staff are graded as Good or Outstanding, and it is now our goal to achieve Outstanding overall.



If you think this sounds exciting, please contact our Deputy Principal, **Rhiannon Hughes** (ex-Secondary School Headteacher) on **01322 629400** or e-mail [rhiannonhughes@nwkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:rhiannonhughes@nwkcollege.ac.uk).

**Closing date for applications is Wednesday 21st January at 12 noon**

**Interviews will be held during week commencing 26th January 2015.**

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. Appointment to this post will require an Enhanced Disclosure via the Disclosure and Barring Service.

**NWKC, Oakfield Lane, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2JT**

NELSON AND COLNE COLLEGE

## A LONG-STANDING TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE


### Part-time Teacher - GCSE and Functional Skills Mathematics

**Hourly rate of £22.67 or annual salary up to £34,090 pro-rata depending on hours offered**

Nelson and Colne College, an Ofsted Outstanding College, are looking for a passionate and experienced GCSE and/or Functional Skills Mathematics Teacher to join their team. With opportunities on a full time temporary, part time temporary and part time hourly paid basis, if you're looking for a new opportunity and have relevant teaching experience then please get in touch!

The candidate will be an enthusiastic and talented Mathematics tutor, who will embrace practical, student centred techniques in ensuring all learners achieve their full potential. They will join the team in having a focus on raising aspirations and encouraging students in the realisation of their ambitions and ensuring they have the skills necessary to gain a mathematics qualification in order to progress to further education or employment.

For full details and to apply, please visit: [www.nelson.ac.uk](http://www.nelson.ac.uk) or telephone: **01282 440363** or email: [humanresources@nelson.ac.uk](mailto:humanresources@nelson.ac.uk)  
**Closing date:** Noon on Wednesday 21st January 2015.



Nelson and Colne College Scotland Road | Nelson | Lancashire | BB9 7YT





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**OCR**  
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

## FE Week Sudoku challenge

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

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

Solutions:  
Next week

## Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## Spot the difference to WIN an FE Week mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an FE Week mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.

The winner of our last edition's spot the difference was Andrew Leckey, information systems director at Scunthorpe's John Leggott College.

