

## Lancashire Forum Bulletin November 2015



### Lancashire apprentices and apprentice employers celebrate success at prestigious Apprenticeship awards

This year's Liverpool, Cumbria and Lancashire Apprenticeship Awards were held at the splendid Blackpool Tower Ballroom on Monday 12 October 2015. Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) were proud to be sponsors of the awards and especially proud of the calibre of Lancashire apprentices and apprentice employers who were successful on the night.

The National Apprenticeship Service challenged the nation's top apprenticeship employers and apprentices to come forward and show how Apprenticeships have made a real difference to them. The ceremony was a wonderful opportunity to showcase Lancashire's exceptional finalists and apprenticeship success stories. Lancashire won in five out of the 10 categories demonstrating the incredible level of quality apprenticeships that are being delivered on our doorstep.

The following Lancashire apprentices and employers beat off the competition from entrants across the region to win in the regional final.

**Adam Huddleston, Dr Oetker UK Ltd.**, who is the McDonald's Award for Intermediate Apprenticeship of the Year

**Paul Haynes, BAE Systems (Submarines)**, who is the EAL Award for Advanced Apprentice of the Year

**Joanne Sharples, BAE Systems**, who is the Nuclear Decommissioning Site Licence Companies Award for the Higher Apprentice of the Year

**A & G Precision and Sons Ltd.**, who won the E.ON in partnership with the National Skills Academy for Power Award for Medium Employer of the Year

**Silentnight Brands.**, who won the BAE Systems Award for Large Employer of the Year

Lancashire highly commended were:

**Craig Eccles, Paradigm Precision**, for the McDonald's Award for Intermediate Apprenticeship of the Year

**Liam Hogan, Cathy at Image Hair and Beauty**, for the City & Guilds Apprenticeship Champion of the Year

**Arthur Padgett Limited**, for the Unilever Small Employer of the Year

**Driscolls Antiques Ltd.**, for the EDF Energy Award for Newcomer SME of the Year

The very best employer entries will have the additional bonus of featuring in the prestigious Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers list. The list of Top 100 employers is compiled annually by the National Apprenticeship Service in partnership with City & Guilds and recognises excellence in businesses that employ apprentices. It features the most exceptional apprenticeship employers from all of the National Apprenticeship Awards employer categories and showcases the breadth of employers who now offer apprenticeships.

[Click here](#) for a list of winners, highly commended and Training providers linked to those apprentices and employers.

Photographs from the evening are available on the National Apprenticeship Service's Flickr account. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/apprenticeships/sets/>



Lancashire winners and Highly Commended

### **Former Nelson & Colne College apprentice beats tough competition to scoop top accolade...**



An inspirational hairdresser, whose dedication and commitment has seen him go from apprentice to salon owner, is celebrating after being recognised in the regional finals of a national competition.

Liam Hogan (26), from Burnley, was given a Highly Commended accolade in the regional final of the National Apprenticeship Awards.

Liam completed a Level 3 in Hairdressing and Level 3 in Barbering during his time at Nelson and Colne College, and after voluntary work secured his apprenticeship at Image Hair and Beauty, in Burnley. He went on to win the College's Young Barbering Apprentice of the Year at its annual awards ceremony in 2013, buy Image, and expand the business to include The Old Fashioned Barber Shop.

Liam said: "When the awards process began I didn't expect to get through, so to be named as 'Highly Commended' was unreal for me!

"For anybody thinking of doing an apprenticeship I would say 'stick at it, as it is definitely worth it' – it is more hands on than some qualifications, you can learn while working, and you are getting paid as well.

“I am now actively helping my own two apprentices to develop their own talents and creativity, mentoring them each day in the salon and supporting them throughout their apprenticeships. I would not be where I am today without an apprenticeship and I am committed to helping more aspiring hair stylists achieve their ambitions with my company.”

## **Provisional statistics show that more people than ever are doing an apprenticeship.**

- provisional statistics show continued growth in the number of people doing an apprenticeship
- record number of people starting high level apprenticeships
- the government is committed to delivering 3 million quality apprenticeships by 2020

The [October Statistical First Release](#) (SFR) showed that more people than ever are doing an apprenticeship, with strong growth in the number of higher apprenticeships.

More than 872,000 people were employed on government funded apprenticeships during the 2014 to 2015 academic year, with almost 30,000 people working to gain the high value skills British businesses need via higher and degree apprenticeships. The government is committed to building on this success and launching more degree apprenticeships that combine a high quality degree with an apprenticeship.

Skills Minister Nick Boles said:

Our apprenticeship reforms are helping to build the modern highly skilled workforce British businesses need. We are committed to delivering 3 million apprenticeships by 2020 because that means more opportunities for our young people, more growth for our businesses.

Through protecting apprenticeship quality, reforming funding and working with top universities to launch new degree apprenticeships, we are making sure apprenticeships deliver for individuals, businesses and the economy.

The government reforms will ensure that every big company plays their part in developing the next generation of skilled workers and put an end to low quality apprenticeship courses. Reforms include the introduction of an apprenticeship levy to increase investment in apprenticeships, protecting the term ‘apprenticeship’ in law and ensuring large value government procurement contracts have a commitment to hire apprentices.

An apprenticeship delivers high returns to the economy, with £26 to £28 being returned for every £1 of government investment.

The statistics also show that 2.38 million apprenticeships were delivered in the last parliament. The government is now committed to the ambitious target of delivering 3 million apprenticeships by 2020.

The provisional figures further reveal that 19,200 people started a traineeship in the last academic year, a strong increase over the previous year. Traineeships provide the experience and work skills to progress into an apprenticeship or other job.

## **Learners who take Higher Apprenticeships earn more than university graduates**

A recent study has shown that learners who have taken Higher Apprenticeships earn more than university graduates.

The research published by The Sutton Trust shows that the lifetime earnings of those who had undertaken a Higher Apprenticeship outstrips the money earned by university graduates. Former apprentices can earn around £100,000 more than their university counterparts over a lifetime by taking an Apprenticeship at level 5.

The results of this research contribute to the ever-growing evidence of the value that vocational education provides to learners. A recent report commissioned by the 157 Group

and led by Peter Urwin showed that level 2 qualifications increased a learner's earnings by 12%, dispelling the argument from Baroness Wolf in her 2011 report that "many low-level vocational qualifications...do not bring their holders any apparent income gains whatsoever." Further to this, research carried out by the IPPR last year indicated that many of the jobs expected to drive economic growth and mobility in the future will be accessible with, or even require, a vocational qualification. By 2022, there are expected to be a further 3.6 million jobs available in occupations that require or accept vocational qualifications at level 3.

Most existing Apprenticeship programmes are at an intermediate level (level 3), as the study explored, which is positive in terms of the potential vacancies over the coming years outlined above. However, the research also backed up fears of the widespread perception of Apprenticeships as less valuable than degrees. If Apprenticeships are to be seen as a genuine, credible alternative to university, there must be a focus on the creation of higher-level Apprenticeships. The Sutton Trust backed this up in its concluding recommendations. Whilst intermediate and advanced Apprenticeships offer so much value to learners, Higher Apprenticeships are a true equivalent to a university degree at level 5.

With the government's pledge to create 3 million new Apprenticeships by 2020, now is the perfect time to focus on the creation of quality, employer-backed Higher Apprenticeships. The Sutton Trust also recommended that the government should launch a bigger Apprenticeships awareness campaign. Whilst those of us in the education world are aware of their Apprenticeships push, parents and learners may still be under informed.

The research also concluded that "elite" and higher-level Apprenticeships were most likely to be undertaken by those from privileged backgrounds. With university often seen as a route designated for the privileged, plus the removal of maintenance grants for university students from a disadvantaged background, it's important that higher level study does not become reserved only for those more fortunate than others.

<http://www.suttontrust.com/researcharchive/levels-of-success/>  
Report by David Grailey Chief Executive ncf

### **Apprenticeship Grant for Employers: 2015 to 2016 Growth**

There is funding available for you to increase your 16 to 18 Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) facility. This is for 16 to 18 apprenticeships eligible for AGE that will start before 31 December 2015. Funding for 19 to 24 AGE is also available.

You can increase your 19 to 24 AGE facility for apprenticeships that will start before 31 December 2015. The growth requests are subject to availability and we will process them on a first-come, first-served basis.

To apply for either, please complete the AGE growth request form. For further information, please contact your Central Delivery Service adviser.

### **City & Guilds – Making Apprenticeships Work The Employers Perspective**

The City & Guilds (C&G) Industry Skills Board (ISB), which has AELP CEO Stewart Segal as a member, was set up to help education better meet the needs of employers. It has now published its first report *Making Apprenticeships Work* which sets out a 25-point action plan that government, business, employer groups and others can take to make Apprenticeships work effectively for all. Follow the link below to take you to the full report and the Executive Summary.

[https://www.cityandguilds.com/~/\\_media/Documents/Courses-and-Quals/Apprenticeships/Making%20Apprenticeships%20Work\\_Full%20report\\_web%20version%20pdf.ashx](https://www.cityandguilds.com/~/_media/Documents/Courses-and-Quals/Apprenticeships/Making%20Apprenticeships%20Work_Full%20report_web%20version%20pdf.ashx)

[https://www.cityandguilds.com/~/\\_media/Documents/Courses-and-Quals/Apprenticeships/Making%20Apprenticeships%20Work\\_Executive%20Summary%20pdf.ashx](https://www.cityandguilds.com/~/_media/Documents/Courses-and-Quals/Apprenticeships/Making%20Apprenticeships%20Work_Executive%20Summary%20pdf.ashx)

## **Apprenticeship Reform**

### **Trailblazer's Apprenticeship Standards: New List Published**

Following feedback from the sector, the SFA have published a new list of all the apprenticeship standards that employer-led trailblazers are currently developing. The list shows all the standards that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has approved for development.

It allows you to monitor progress and confirm if a standard is ready for delivery.

For further information, please refer to the Apprenticeship Standards section on GOV.UK or contact your Central Delivery Service adviser.

### **Trailblazer query regarding GCSEs**

At the Executive Group meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 15 we had a guest speaker from The Education Training Foundation Lorna Freakley. Lorna stayed for the meeting to listen to the discussions about Trailblazers. Members discussed the requirements for GCSEs in the standards. Lorna offered to seek out guidance. See response below from Lorna.

### **Trailblazer Guidance March 2015**

The standard includes details of the English and maths requirements, either at the minimum level set by government for all apprentices, or above the minimum level if required by the Trailblazer.

For apprentices that have not yet achieved level 2 English and maths, as a minimum they must:

- For level 2 apprenticeships, achieve level 1 English and Maths and take the test for level 2.
- For level 3 to 7 apprenticeships, achieve level 2 English and Maths.

Lorna posed the question with colleague at SFA and this is her reply:

"English and maths, achievement of the apprenticeship is dependent on achieving the relevant level of English and maths as you set out above. Current guidance says English/maths must be completed before the end-point assessment. The next set of Trailblazer guidance will ask employer groups to detail English and maths in the assessment plan as well as the standard for consistency.

There is an employer leaflet and useful list of all the standards on:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-changes>

This indicates that it is the level not the qualification route that is important, ie Functional Skills is acceptable, provided of course that the Standard and Assessment do not specifically request a GCSE Grade C+, which apparently they can do.

### **CBI calls for 'clarity' on Trailblazer assessments AELP warns against new starts without knowing costs**

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has hit out over fears that companies and providers could be hit by costly new apprenticeship exams with big awarding organisations (AOs) yet to say what they'll charge.

Three AOs have so far been approved by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) but none has so far set a price.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) chief executive Stewart Segal has cautioned members, saying they “should be aware of the cost of assessment before they take on any new starts”.

Mr Carberry CBI director for employment and skills said: “What is important is giving businesses and providers clarity as soon as possible on the new assessment system and associated costs.

“Companies are concerned that assessment costs for trailblazers are proportionate.

“We have been getting more worried that government inspired end assessment criteria are driving up costs for trailblazers.”

It comes with provisional government figures in October showing 400 starts under the new standards in 2014/15.

Each Trailblazer group has to include an estimate of costs when they submit their assessment plans — but this information is not published.

However, a number of published assessment plans include some reference to potential costs.

The level three electrician standard includes an AM2 test which “will be approximately £700”.

Meanwhile, the Tech Partnership, the employer-led network behind both the network engineer and software developer Trailblazer apprenticeships said in its assessment plan that “our aim is that assessment costs will be 10 to 15 per cent of the total cost of the apprenticeship”. This would give a “direct cost of assessment of three days of assessor per apprentice”.

Terry Fennell, group operations director at the Food and Drink Training and Education Council Group of Companies, said that the Butchery Employer Trailblazer group had estimated the end point assessment cost for the butcher standard to be around £600. Despite the uncertainty over assessment fees, providers are expected to include costs when claiming funding from the SFA.

A City and Guilds spokesperson said: “We are still working with trailblazer groups to decide the pricing structure for end assessment apprenticeships.”

A spokesperson for Pearson said it was “too early at this point” to have information about how much they would charge.

An OCR spokesperson said: “It’s too early to say what OCR will be charging as nothing has been finalised.”

## **CBI comes out against the Apprenticeship Levy**

The CBI has told the government that it does not support the Apprenticeship levy ‘due to the risk that it will be unsuccessful’. In its response to the BIS consultation, the employer body said that a rate of 0.5% of a company’s payroll would be far too high with the argument that the cost would leave businesses with less money to spend for other forms of training for their staff. CBI wants a politically independent levy board, based on the Low Pay Commission model, to set the rate. The submission calls for funds levied from large businesses to only ever be used to fund Apprenticeship training for levy-paying firms although these firms should be able to spend their levy money on training within their supply chains. CBI is critical of the government using only off-the-job training data in its consultation document when an Apprenticeship is an epitome of work based learning, firmly rejecting the view that the data implies a move away from quality training by employers. The submission says - “the right outcome is an increase in training that is relevant to the business and the individual learner, not merely a tick-box process that delivers three million interventions and reduces the call on government funding”. The full CBI response can be read [here](#).

## **The Staff Support Programme**

As Lorna Freakley from AELP mentioned at the Forum meeting in October, the Apprenticeship Staff Support Programme has produced some new resources to support understanding and implementation plans for the apprenticeship reforms:

- A 'Resources for Planning and Action' document, which includes a section on planning for the delivery of apprenticeship standards.
  
- Four free podcasts:
  - i. An overview of the reforms.
  - ii. Learning from providers.
  - iii. Understanding the changes to assessment.
  - iv. The changing employer-provider conversation.

These are available on the Apprenticeship Staff Support Programme website. Attached below is the resource flyer with information of where to access the resources

### **Attached: ASSP Resources flyer-Sept2015**

Resources produced by providers are available from [www.apprenticeship-staff-support.co.uk](http://www.apprenticeship-staff-support.co.uk)  
Latest standards and assessment plans – [www.gov.uk/further-education-skills/apprenticeships](http://www.gov.uk/further-education-skills/apprenticeships)

Latest funding guidance – [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/skills-funding-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/skills-funding-agency)

For Apprenticeship providers looking to feed into the funding development and testing contact: [trailblazerfundingenquiries@sfa.bis.gov.uk](mailto:trailblazerfundingenquiries@sfa.bis.gov.uk)

For Apprenticeship providers looking to feed into Trailblazer development of standards contact: [trailblazers@aoc.co.uk](mailto:trailblazers@aoc.co.uk)

# **Skills Funding Agency**

## **FE Choices: 2015 to 2016 Learner Satisfaction Survey**

The 2015 to 2016 learner satisfaction survey will run from Monday, 2 November to 1 April 2016. The SFA will write to all eligible colleges and other training organisations participating in the survey. They will inform of the steps providers need to take to maximise their response levels. The survey is an opportunity for existing learners to rate their learning or training: The SFA have asked that you please encourage your learners to complete the survey. Their feedback helps future learners make informed choices about where to study or train.

The SFA will publish the results on the FE Choices section of their website on GOV.UK and the National Careers Service website.

## **Subcontractor Declaration Form 2015 to 2016**

The SFA have written to all in-scope organisations with an SFA funding agreement. They will send instructions on how to access and complete your subcontractor declaration form for the first time for the 2015 to 2016 academic year. Organisations must submit completed forms **by Friday, 13 November**; they will suspend payments to any organisation that does not submit their form by this date.

The Funding Rules 2015 to 2016 (paragraph 52) state that you must ensure your subcontractor declaration form details your current subcontracting arrangements; if you do not currently subcontract, you will need to submit a 'nil' return.

For further information, please contact your Central Delivery Service adviser

## National Statistics: Further education and skills: statistical first release

Final further education and skills data for 2013 to 2014 and provisional further education and skills data for the full 2014 to 2015 academic year.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/learner-participation-outcomes-and-level-of-highest-qualification-held>



Follow the link below to access the Education Funding Agency e-bulletins

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/executiveagencies/efa/efaebulletins>

### Traineeships eligible provider list

EFA and Skills Funding Agency have published the [latest version of the 2015 to 2016 eligible providers list](#) for traineeship delivery.



## National Careers Service Event at Preston North End FC on 19<sup>th</sup> November - Inspiring Our Young People

If you are interested in the future prospects of Lancashire's young people this event is for you!

**Where?** Preston North End FC, The Invincibles Suite, Sir Tom Finney Way, Preston, PR1 6RU

**When?** Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> Nov 09.30– 13.30 including free lunch with Tea/Coffee available from 09.00

**Who should attend?** Teachers, careers advisers, training providers and employers

**What's happening?** Learn more about:

- The National Careers Service and the Government's Inspiration Agenda
- Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership views on the local Labour Market and its future direction
- Resources and organisations that can support Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance
- Examples of good practice in using employers to help inspire young people happening locally

And the opportunity to network.

**Key note speaker:** Professor Peter Hawkins, Author of the Art of Building Windmills

To register for a [free place](#) please go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/inspiring-our-young-people-tickets-19162900752>

For more information please e mail [Iain.Logan@manchestergrowth.co.uk](mailto:Iain.Logan@manchestergrowth.co.uk)



## **A summary of local network issues October 2015. (Comments by Stewart Segal)**

**Area Based Reviews** is a top concern for local networks;

ITPs are in a position to contribute to the area reviews but the networks are asking whether the right people are involved at a local level, and questions whether the voice of the smaller provider will be heard. Also concerns were raised regarding tight timescales for collating responses for the LEPs?

### **Comment**

*Attached is a copy of our note that we sent to BIS nationally and to local review committees. We have had a number of responses accepting that ITPs need a route through to the review groups to ensure they have a full picture of local provision and can make comments that affect the local skills environment. We continue to work with local groups to ensure we have that input.*

<http://www.aelp.org.uk/news/general/details/area-reviews-independent-provider-input/>

## **Apprenticeship Levy**

Local Networks expressed concern that the levy proposal lacks clarity with uncertainty specifically regarding the voucher system, what constitutes a larger employer and questions whether SMEs will miss out? What is the likely impact on the drive to reach 3M new apprenticeships in this Parliament?

### **Comment**

*Our working assumption is that large employer will be defined at 250 employees. There is a danger that the focus of the programme will be shifted to larger employers and the public sector. We have attached our response to the consultation.*

<http://www.aelp.org.uk/news/submissions/details/submission-21-consultation-on-apprenticeship-levy/>

**Learner Recruitment** continues to be a very big issue for providers with ongoing difficulties filling apprenticeship vacancies with suitable applicants. A couple of networks also raised concerns regarding a lack of referrals to DWP funded provision.

### **Comment**

*It's now a very common issue for providers to have more vacancies than candidates for apprenticeship especially at 16 -19. The improved job market may mean that employers will have to pay higher salaries which may attract higher applications. It is still disappointing that DWP referrals are low especially for programmes like Traineeships. This is still very patchy.*

## **Spending Review (November)**

Some local networks voiced their concerns regarding the forthcoming Spending review in terms of impact on funding for 16-18 education, adult funding and the apprenticeship levy.

### **Comment**

*There is clearly a major risk to funding as a result of the Spending Review. Apprenticeship funding will be preserved but there is likely to be further cuts to non-apprenticeship budgets from 2016/17*

**Other key issues** include, a lack of IAG in schools, devolution of adult skills budget to LEPs and Trailblazers/funding.

### **Comment**

*My guess is that non apprenticeship budgets for ITPs will not be devolved to LEPs but Colleges will be. This may change for 17/18.*

*IAG in schools is a major issue which will continue to be on the agenda and discussions continue with the SFA and EFA about how this can be improved.....it's a very big issue!*

## **Association of Employment and Learning Providers: Autumn Conference Information**

The Association of Employment and Learning Providers' (AELP) Autumn Conference took place on Tuesday, 20 October at the Ricoh Arena, Coventry.

This year, the conference focused on apprenticeships and traineeships. Sessions covered growth, employer engagement, quality and funding. Kirsty Evans, Deputy Director of Funding Policy Implementation spoke at the event, with Officials from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) giving an update on programme reforms.

All presentations can be found on the members' page of the Forum website.

## **Lancashire Forum Update**

### **European Social Fund: 2014 to 2020 Programme**



We have been informed that there will be yet again a delay in the launch of the first procurement round as scheduled for NEET in October and is now likely to be November.

## **Sub Groups Quality Improvement Sub Group**

### **Prevent Training**

Nigel Lund who is the North West Regional Co-ordinator for FE and HE attended the last Forum QI Sub group meeting and offered to run a workshop for members early in the New Year.

The date of the Workshop is Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2016 10am – 12noon. Please could someone offer a venue and provide refreshments. T/C. Please let Jane know how many places you would like reserving on the workshop. Full details will be sent out nearer the time.

The aim of the Workshop is to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) package –

"Safeguarding individuals who may be susceptible to extremist messaging and preventing them from moving towards extremism and terrorism".

The package uses a mixture of presentation, video and interactive exercises to cover :-

- Freedom of Speech issues
- What makes someone susceptible/vulnerable to this messaging
- Behaviours of concern that individuals might display, and
- Rationale for early identification, support, and if necessary intervention
- Provision of support, advice and guidance to the individual

It will also cover the relevance of travel to Syria for FE & HE Institutions in the North West and the new Prevent Duty.

This workshop will be ideal for new members of staff, those who would benefit from a refresh and CPD. All Training organisations should ensure that all their staff has access to training.

We will shortly be writing out to members with a number of questions in order to personalise the training.



### **The Lancashire Skills and Employment Conversation for Providers and Partners**

The Lancashire Skills Hub is part of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP). We are a strategic unit who aim to work in partnership with Lancashire businesses and stakeholders to build a skilled labour market, improve economic well-being and stimulate economic growth across our area.

#### **What's important to you about skills and employment?...**

Developing training and qualifications in collaboration with employers to improve productivity.

Influencing the priorities for discretionary funding, e.g. European Social Funds, in Lancashire

Delivering inspirational Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to attract people to stay and come to Lancashire.

Working with employers to take full advantage of the proposed Apprenticeship Levy.

**...to take advantage of opportunities and influence skills and employment policy we need you to be part of the conversation.**

Come and have a conversation with the Lancashire Skills Hub and your fellow Lancashire Providers and Partners on:

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015

1:00pm -3:00pm

Samlesbury Hotel, Preston New Rd, Preston, Lancashire PR5 0UL

To join the Conversation please book here: <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/lancashire-skills-hub-8555616001?s=467324455>

**Follow us on Twitter: @LancsSkillsHub**



The Ofsted report that has been widely reported to in the press and by Stewart Segal in AELP Countdown is attached below via the link. I attended the AELP Autumn Conference on Tuesday and it was debated and remarked upon about how such reports are damaging the brand of Apprenticeship and is counterproductive. It was suggested that we need to shout about good practice out there and there needs to be data as produced by the Universities about progression, earnings etc.

Amidst all the bad news the report mentions that Group Training Associations, of which Training 2000 in Blackburn is the largest in England, are singled out as a model of good practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-developing-skills-for-future-prosperity>

[Click here](#) to access a brief summary of the document from Policy Watch –Pearsons.



Ali-Marie McAllister is the new Jisc Account Manager for Lancashire. Below are a few areas that Jisc are currently working on.

- Ufi Blended Learning Course to be launched on Monday 2nd November. Billed as being 'designed to provide all the essentials for using technology for learning, teaching and assessment in Vocational Education and Training using practical examples from experienced teachers and trainers', this looks really promising. Details here: <http://www.ufi.co.uk/news/blended-learning-essentials-vocational-education-and-training>
- With the focus as always on efficiencies, Jisc's Cloud Computing article might be of some interest. This is a broad article designed to cover the breadth of the topic for all Post-16 sectors but there are some useful nuggets in there, such as Office 365 and Google Apps amongst others <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/reports/the-future-of-cloud-computing>.
- Jisc's Hairdressing Service is currently undergoing a review of its service with a view to updating its content. The deadline for submitting requirements to be considered for this review has now passed but the next phase, in which funds will be available to create the new content for this service, is to follow. Watch this space or contact your Account Manager.

## Training Provider News



### **MANAGER OF NORTH WEST TRAINING PROVIDER EXCEEDS WITH NEW COURSE**

Via Training, a division of Lancashire social business The Via Partnership (Via), has had one of its senior leaders selected to be the only person in the North West approved to deliver a new course offered by the customer service training initiative, Welcome to Excellence.

John Barlow, Operations Manager at Via Training, was nominated by Via and approved by the national administrators to be the region's only trainer authorised to deliver the new Welcome to Excellence course, Exceeding Visitor Expectations. Via holds the North West licence to deliver Welcome to Excellence, regarded as one of the most effective customer service training programmes in the industry.

John said, "I am honoured to be able to deliver this exciting new course and offer it to businesses across the North West to raise the profile of the region. We have already received a high level of interest from our existing customers so there's much anticipation about the launch.

Exceeding Visitor Expectations was launched at the Annual National Conference of Visitor Attractions on 8<sup>th</sup> October by Visit England, the official tourist board for England.

The course has been developed specifically for visitor attractions that are committed to providing a high quality customer experience. It aims to equip front-line staff with the skills to deliver outstanding customer service and will focus on best practice strategies to allow participants to enhance visitors' expectations.

John tells us, "Participants will learn how to provide a great welcome, communicate effectively with internal and external customers and engage and inspire visitors. This is invaluable training that will allow greater benefits for every organisation taking part by enhancing their customers' experience and exceeding expectations as well as building repeat business and word of mouth recommendations".

For enquiries about this course or other Welcome to Excellence programmes please contact Helen Heyworth at Via on 01772 642400 or email [helen.heyworth@via-uk.com](mailto:helen.heyworth@via-uk.com).

### **THE VIA PARTNERSHIP OPERATES AN OPEN DAY FOR SCHOOLS AT BURNLEY HOSPITAL**



Students from three East Lancashire high schools were invited into the Wilson Hey operating theatres at Burnley General Hospital last month to experience a day from a health professional's perspective.

The one day exclusive event was put together for Year 10 students considering a career in medicine and allied health professions. Students aged 14-15 from Sir John Thursby Community College, SS John Fisher & Thomas More RC High School and Blessed Trinity RC College gained real life experience from dedicated NHS professionals from a diverse spectrum of occupations in the hospital's surgical theatre environment.

The taster day was organised by the Via Partnership (Via), a social organisation that works to build bridges between education and business, in conjunction with the Theatres and Workforce Development Teams at East Lancashire Hospitals. The session was developed to enable young people to access a provision of careers inspired learning in the most appropriate way for pre-16s within the hospital environment, allowing them contact with a wide range of job roles and a valuable insight into the world of work.

## **Dates for your Diary**

### **Next Forum meeting,**

When: 11<sup>th</sup> November 15

Where: Preston's College

Time: 9.30 for a 10am start

Chair: Lisa Bloomfield



### **National Apprenticeship Week 2016**

Next year's National Apprenticeship Week will run from Monday 14th March to Friday 18th March 2016.