



WELCOME

Theresa May's government has pledged to put social mobility at the centre of its administration. But as Gordon Marsden, Shadow Minister for HE, FE and Skills, pointed out at our recent Access to Higher Education conference, these remain fine words unless backed with action. He cited cuts to the further and adult education budgets, along with the removal of funding for NHS bursaries and the replacement of education maintenance grants with loans, as examples of how educational opportunities for many students from non-traditional education backgrounds have been thwarted.

Fortunately, supporting progression through learning is not exclusive to the education sector, as demonstrated by the recently announced winners of the Learning at Work Impact Award for 'Inspiring Learning for All', sponsored by OCN London for Learning at Work week earlier this year. First Bus put on an impressive programme of learning activities for their staff, many of whom work shifts and have had no engagement with learning for a long time. The Tinder Foundation provided learning opportunities for a large but geographically dispersed group through innovative use of technology. All winners demonstrated how learning at work can be easy, fun and hugely beneficial to both employee and employer.

Jacquie Mutter, Chief Executive, OCN London



NEW MULTI-PATHWAY PRE-ACCESS QUALIFICATIONS - IDEAL FOR JANUARY STARTS!

Following requests from colleges we have created two NEW 'multi-pathway' Pre-Access qualifications that are designed to provide the academic study skills learners require for progression to an Access to HE Diploma. Our **Level 2 Certificate** and **Level 2 Diploma in Preparation for Academic Study** qualifications have the additional benefit of enabling learners to study subject specific units without the restriction of opting for a single pathway. [Find out more.](#)



ACCESS TO HE DIPLOMA IN DIGITAL MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We have added a NEW Access to HE Diploma in Digital Marketing and Social Media to our expanding portfolio of qualifications. It is intended to offer progression to higher education in areas such as in marketing, digital communications and web media management. Units include website design and creation, website optimisation, content management systems, handling digital images, multimedia authoring and understanding social media technologies. The new qualification is available for January 2017 and September 2017 starts. [Find out more here](#) or contact Michelle Wood on 020 7278 5511.



MICHAEL SARGENT ACCESS TO HE BURSARY AWARD WINNERS

Achievements in health and medicine dominated the Michael Sargent Bursary Awards at this year's Access to Higher Education conference on 12 October. Winners and runners up are now studying nursing, pharmacology, occupational therapy and midwifery at university. [Find out more.](#)



WINNERS OF LEARNING AT WORK WEEK IMPACT AWARDS

OCN London were the proud sponsors of the 'Inspiring Learning for All' category in the Learning at Work Week Impact Awards, organised by the Campaign for Learning earlier this year. These awards are designed to recognise employers who inspire people who would not otherwise engage in learning. The winners, First Bus and the Tinder Foundation, were announced this month.

[Find out why they won.](#)



24-HOUR CERTIFICATE TURNAROUND!

We have significantly reduced the time it takes to get certificates out to you. Once results have been externally moderated, we are on average operating a 24-hour certificate turnaround. This means that in the majority of cases, certificates reach a centre the day after the results have been approved.

Another example of how we are continually improving our services to meet the needs of our centres and their learners.



SEEKING SUBJECT SPECIALIST MODERATORS FOR ACCESS TO HE

We are seeking to appoint enthusiastic, motivated and attentive subject specialist moderators to contribute to the work of our Access to HE Diploma team. In particular we need specialists in engineering, science, nursing, humanities and social science, business studies or computing. To find out more about the role and download an application form, click [here](#).



CENTRE PROFILE: THE LLC RECOVERY COLLEGE

Drug and alcohol addiction can have a devastating effect on the lives of individuals. A pioneering social enterprise, the [LLC Recovery College](#), shows how learning can not only release people from addiction but also help them to improve their cognitive skills, find employment and rebuild their lives. The College delivers our [Qualification in Progression](#) which has all the flexibility required to meet the specific needs of individual learners. [Find out more.](#)



CENTRE PROFILE: FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

We have been working with the well-known environmental campaigning charity [Friends of the Earth](#) since 2013, accrediting their training programme for local organisers. A new venture this autumn is a qualification in community campaigning which is now running in selected schools and colleges across the country. [Find out more.](#)

News



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

PARTY CONFERENCES. WHO SAID WHAT ABOUT EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SKILLS?

The government has stalled on making a decision about providing maintenance

loans for higher level learners studying in the further education sector. A three month consultation, which closed in June, set out to test whether support for the introduction of maintenance loans in FE was on a par with the level of support available in higher education. It also looked at whether this support should only be made available to 19+ learners studying level 4-6 technical courses at specialist providers and if part-time learners should be supported as Apprenticeships, skills and social mobility featured prominently at the **Conservative party conference** in early October. Education Secretary Justine Greening pledged to make skills a high priority. She also announced six 'social mobility opportunity areas' in England. Theresa May mentioned the apprenticeships target in her keynote speech and Robert Halfon, the new skills minister, was prominent at fringe events. The **Labour party conference** paid less attention to education, training and skills, although Gordon Marsden, Shadow Minister for HE, FE and Skills (who spoke at our recent Access to HE conference) worked tirelessly across the fringe events. **The Lib Dems** announced proposals to improve 14-19 learning and lifelong learning, including maintenance loans and mandatory skills training. Read more [here](#).

THE HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH BILL HOT DEBATE

The [Higher Education and Research Bill](#), currently progressing through various stages in Parliament, covers far reaching proposals that include the Teaching Excellence Framework, the Office for Students, an expansion in the number of organisations offering HE degrees and increased social mobility. It is being scrutinised in detail and attracting hot debate with numerous proposals for amendments, some of which are set out in a recent [Guardian article](#). For more thoughts about the debate [read here](#).

REVIEW SAYS POOR STUDENTS SHOULD BE ALLOWED ENTRY INTO UNIVERSITY WITH LOWER GRADES

The government's Social Mobility Advisory Group argues that bright students from poorly performing schools in disadvantaged areas should be given lower entry offers by universities. In its recent review it says that higher education institutions should take account of "contextual data" so that students that have been "held back by poverty" can be given better opportunities. [Read more](#).

CHANGES IN FUNDING FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

The government has pledged extra financial support for 16 to 18-year-olds in deprived areas following widespread anger about planned cuts and the #SaveOurApprenticeships campaign launched by *FE Week* newspaper. This a summary of the funding changes.

1. An extra 20 per cent of funding band limit for 16-18 year-olds (in addition to

the £1,000 provider and £1,000 employer incentive). This is a one-year transitional measure designed to support stability whilst providers adjust to the reforms.

2. Additional support of £60m in areas of disadvantage. This reverses plans to exclude the extra money for “disadvantage” which paid up to 32 per cent more funding for apprentices living in the most deprived areas.

3. The expiry of funds in digital accounts extended from 18 to 24 months. The original plan was that an employer would lose levy funding if it was not used within 18 months.

4. The reversal of government plans to reduce subcontracting. This means that some subcontractors will not need to be on the new Skills Funding Agency Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers. [Read more.](#)

CHANGES TO APPRENTICESHIPS LEVY, FOLLOWING PRESSURE FROM CHARITY ORGANISATIONS

The government has announced changes to the apprenticeship levy, including increasing the amount of time organisations such as affected charities have to spend their levy funds, following pressure from the sector. The levy, due to come into effect in April 2017, will force employers with wage bills of at least £3m to pay a levy of 0.5 per cent of their overall payroll to the government. Each employer will receive £15,000 to offset costs of implementing this. The [Charity Finance Group](#) and [Charity Tax Group](#) have both previously [called for the levy to be delayed](#) to allow charities to prepare for its introduction, including to develop apprenticeship programmes of sufficient quality to benefit. [Read more.](#)

NO APPROVED ASSESSMENT ORGANISATIONS FOR OVER 40% OF NEW APPRENTICESHIP STARTS

There are no approved assessment organisations for over 40 per cent of new apprentices, according to an analysis of government data. This applies to 1720 out of the total number starting apprenticeships. The analysis also shows that 33 standards with at least one start have no-one assigned to run the crucial tests. [Read more.](#)

ADULT EDUCATION CONTRACTS WITH PRIVATE TRAINING PROVIDERS WON'T BE AUTOMATICALLY RENEWED

Private training providers have been told, in a letter from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), that their current adult education contracts will end next July, rather than be automatically renewed as before. This means that current contracts will automatically terminate at the end of July 2017 and be subject to competitive tendering for the adult education budget funded provision. Further

education colleges that contract with the SFA through a grant funding agreement are not affected by the changes. [Read more.](#)

Upcoming Training

INTRODUCTION TO ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION

Tuesday 15 November, 10am-4pm

The aim of this training day is to prepare participants to deliver credit-based qualifications. It covers how to assess and build learner portfolios, and how the internal and external moderation process works. The morning session will cover assessment and building learner portfolios. The afternoon session will cover the role of moderators and models of moderation.

[BOOK NOW](#)

DEVELOPING YOUR INTERNAL MODERATION SKILLS

Thursday 24 - Friday 25 November, 10am-5pm

This two-day accredited course will enable internal moderators to develop their knowledge and practice, with an emphasis on covering the essential practice expected from OCN London internal moderators. The course will be assessed and successful completion will lead to the achievement of three OCN London credits at Level 3. Around 15-18 hours of private study will be required to complete all the assignments. Learners successfully completing this course can become the approved internal moderator for their centre, if it has been recommended for direct claims status (DCS) by their centre moderator.

[BOOK NOW](#)

Click [here](#) to visit our website and find out more about our qualifications and bespoke accreditation options.

Contact us to discuss your needs on 020 7278 5511 or email us at enquiries@ocnlondon.org.uk.



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