



WELCOME

This year around half a million students entered higher education — a record number. But whilst the volume of students with 'A' levels remains fairly constant, there has been a significant rise among those with qualifications other than 'A' levels. Last academic year the largest ever number of students with Access to HE Diploma qualifications — a total of 25,480 — successfully entered higher education in England and Wales. This was an increase of 10 per cent in the previous year.

Research carried out by the University of Greenwich provides overwhelming evidence that learners from disadvantaged areas of the country are benefiting considerably from alternative routes into higher education.

At our Access to HE conference this year we will be hearing from a champion of further education and second chance learning. Gordon Marsden MP, Shadow Minister for HE, FE and Skills, campaigned to achieve the loan waiver for Access to HE Diploma learners and has more recently challenged the removal of the HE maintenance grant. To hear his thoughts on the role of Access to HE in social mobility and inclusion, make sure to book your place at the conference which is less than two weeks away on Wednesday 12th October. [Book Here.](#)

Jacquie Mutter, Chief Executive, OCN London



TEMPTING TASTER AT 14+

Deciding what subject to study at 14 plus is a tough challenge for many young people. To address this we have developed a **Level 1 Award in Skills for Vocational Studies** as a 'taster' qualification for learners who want to explore vocational study alongside essential learning skills. The size of the qualification makes it ideal for those who may not have decided on a specific area, or are not yet ready to commit to a larger qualification. [Find out more.](#)



FREE ASSESSMENT MATERIALS FOR ACCESS TO HE NURSING AND BUSINESS

We know how precious your time is. So we have produced a range of assessment materials for the most popular units on our **Access to HE Nursing** and **Access to HE Business Studies Diplomas**. These are FREE to centres delivering our Access to HE Diplomas. For each unit there is indicative learning content, a suggested reading and resource list, assessment guidance, an exemplar assignment brief and, in some cases, assessment materials such as an exemplar exam or instructions for a laboratory practical. OCN London member centres can access all the materials and exemplars [here](#).



COURSES WITH HORSES GET NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The benefits that many people with disabilities and mental health issues have gained through programmes that enable them to have contact with horses is well documented. We have been working with [EAQ \(Equine Assisted Qualifications\) Ltd](#) to create a new national qualification — a **Level 4 Certificate in Equine Assisted Learning**. This is designed for people such as education and mental health professionals, teachers, social workers, psychologists and others who want to combine their love of horses with their professional skills and training. The

qualification will be available from 1 October.

SHORT COURSE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR NEW TEACHERS

OCN London Training is offering a new short course in education and training for people who are new to teaching. It will cover planning and delivering learning sessions, motivating learners, carrying out assessments and record keeping. The course leads to the [OCNLR Level 3 Award in Education and Training](#) (replacing PTLLS) and will be run as a one day session over four weeks in Jan/Feb and March/April 2017. Keep an eye on the website or call David Watson on

020 7689 5867.



FORMER LORRY DRIVER STARTS JOURNEY INTO MEDICINE

Bradley Moon has had a long-distance journey from lorry driving to starting a degree course in bio-medical sciences at the University of Westminster. Through an Access to HE Diploma course at City and Islington College, he has overcome a number of barriers to achieve his dream of entering higher education and, eventually, training to be a doctor or bio-medical scientist. Read his inspirational story [here](#), showing how someone with no credible GCSE grades can achieve against the odds.





HILLCROFT COLLEGE

Hillcroft College, which was mentioned briefly in *Downtown Abbey*, was the first education institution in the UK to offer women a chance to bridge the gap between leaving school with no qualifications and entering higher education. Today, nearly 100 years later, it has built up a firm reputation as a provider of Access to HE courses. Find out more about its achievements [here](#).



THE COOKERY SCHOOL

Our national obsession with food has seen the burgeoning of cookery courses across the UK. [The Cookery School](#) in central London has built a reputation for quality and a focus on eco-friendly practices, evidenced by its award of runner up for Most Sustainable Cookery School 2014. Students at the school have the option of taking an OCN London Level 3 accredited course in Food & Wine — a bespoke programme developed especially for the School. [Find out more](#).

News



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

NO DECISION ABOUT MAINTENANCE LOANS

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 well. Feedback from the consultation and focus groups indicated that the offer should be made on the basis of the qualification studied rather than the institution where the learning took place. The Department for Education said that it would make a full statement about its plans in November. [Read more.](#)

GENDER GAP WIDENS AS MANY MORE WOMEN THAN MEN ENTER UNIVERSITY

Women are now 35 per cent more likely to enter university than men with the number increasing to 50 per cent in some parts of the country — the largest gap since records began. Women now exceed men at leading universities, with 36,000 men ‘missing’ from higher education. The figures also showed white teenagers were the least likely to enter higher education with an entry rate of 28 per cent, compared to 41 per cent for Asians, 37 per cent for black students, 32 per cent for mixed ethnic groups and 58 per cent for Chinese students. Mary Curnock Cook, Chief Executive of UCAS, says: “But with further increases in the gap between men and women entering higher education, we can now see clearly that concentrating outreach efforts on young men, particularly white men, would make a significant contribution to diminishing the rich-poor gap.” Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS MORE LIKELY TO GO INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

A [report from the OECD](#) shows that children of immigrants living in England are more likely to enter higher education and get a degree than their peers from non-immigrant families. More than half (58 per cent) of people with parents born outside Britain have gone into higher education, compared with less than half (46 per cent) of those with British born parents. The reasons are unclear, but greater motivation amongst immigrant families seems to be a significant factor. [Read more.](#)

NEW SKILLS MINISTER SETS OUT VISION FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

Robert Halfon MP, minister for apprenticeships and skills, sets out his case for “boosting social justice, economic productivity, and our country’s skills base”. As the first MP to hire a full-time parliamentary apprentice he has a long standing belief in the value of apprenticeships in helping to get people onto the ladder of opportunity. [Read his article here.](#)

HOME OFFICE FUNDING FOR CHARITIES TO HELP TACKLE EXTREMISM

Charities and other front-line organisations are being invited by the Home Office to apply for funding to tackle extremism under the [Building a Stronger](#)

[Britain Together](#) programme. In-kind support could include social media training, help setting up a website, or advice on media activity. Grant funding of up to £75,000 (applied for online) will be given for clearly defined proposals. [Find out more.](#)

If you are not already a subscriber and would like to receive monthly e-newsletters from us with lots of information about new qualifications, sector-wide news and ways in which we can help you, please sign up [here](#).

Upcoming Training

EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT DAY

Tues 4 October, 10am-4pm

Designed for tutors who are new to formal assessment or OCN London accreditation and qualifications, the day will cover all the essentials. Starting with the principles of assessment and building learner portfolios it will then move on to explain the characteristics of credit-based learning, how to select appropriate assessment methods, provide examples of assessment tasks and more.

[**BOOK NOW**](#)

INTRODUCTION TO INTERNAL & EXTERNAL MODERATION

Tue 18 October, 10am-1pm

The aim of this one day course is to provide training for people who wish to be an internal moderator for OCN London courses or who have to design and operate a moderation system for their organisation. The three hour session will include the purposes and benefits of internal and external moderation, the role of the internal moderator and external moderator, learning to record outcomes and the purpose of quality engagement reports.

[**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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