



## NFEC REGIONAL SEMINAR – Midlands FRIDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2014

### The EEF, Birmingham

There is a separate attendance list available.

#### 1) Welcome and Introduction to the seminar

Malcolm Hindle welcomed everyone to the seminar on behalf of the EEF. Kevin Whitehouse, as Chair, also welcomed everyone and introductions were made around the room.

#### 2) Current matters of concern

BMet College reported robust recruitment especially in HE numbers. Developments such as HS2 are expected to provide further opportunities for providing training courses and increasing recruitment.

This was backed up by Dudley College who are seeing a 12-15% increase. These numbers are causing staffing issues with new groups being added so part time staff are needed. Warwick Hall will be representing NFEC members on a newly formed Cutting Edge committee which will address Engineering skills shortages following the Perkins review.

Bob Millington stated that NFEC are addressing membership equity with being, or not being a member, at National Conference and the regional seminars. From now on new exhibitors /delegates may attend one seminar for free and get a month's free trial on the website to see what happens and then make decision if they want to become a member and be able to attend all seminars for free. If not, after that a charge of £200 for a delegate or £365 for an exhibitor will be charged per attendance.

Bob Millington and Bob Clarke will be retiring from the NFEC Board at National Conference in December. Warwick Hall now looks after the business affairs of NFEC. Bob will remain part of NFEC in an advisory capacity and will continue to sit on various committees and trailblazer panels. Mike Bristow has been employed to set up the National Conference and Jill Mustard to run the seminars with the co-ordinators. There is now "new blood" on the Board of Directors and anyone interested in joining at this level is welcomed, please contact Bob.

The National Conference will take place on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> December at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham University. The full programme has been published and is available on the NFEC website. The programme is taking on new initiatives, with no breakouts, but a more focussed

programme such as the training of apprentices on undergraduate and teaching technicians' routes at university level and Richard Hamer will update on trailblazers and SFA funding.

### 3) Qualifications/Awarding bodies

Pearson – Bryony Leonard. There has been a lot of involvement with 2 Engineering trailblazer qualification developments and the work required for 2016 National level 3 changes. Sample assessments and specifications should be available by September 2015. These will be NQF and will meet league table requirements and have external assessment included. If you would like to be involved in any consultations please contact Bryony directly on [bryony.leonard@pearson.com](mailto:bryony.leonard@pearson.com) or Adam Barrigan on [adam.barrigan@pearson.com](mailto:adam.barrigan@pearson.com). Changes for HNCs will be about 2 years away. Apprenticeship frameworks are still available. Apologies on the confusion for BTEC Firsts, their funding should happen from February 2015 from SFA for NQF versions. There will be a year of dual operation for level 3 QCF change to NCF. There will be provision to transfer 90 credits from QCF to NCF.

AQA – Philip Bryant. AQA are working on a programme of new training qualifications, especially for 16-19. There are currently mechatronics, power networks and design being developed; the power network has been written with the technical certificate of apprenticeships in mind. All three will count towards the Eng Tech qualification. AQA are looking to close the skills gap, on a long term commitment, providing deliverable qualifications which will link industry and young people. Phil would like to talk to colleges on their ideas / needs for future qualifications and developments, closing these skills gaps and can be contacted on [pbryant@aqa.org.uk](mailto:pbryant@aqa.org.uk)

### 4) Eng Tech Now

Phil Horsham gave a presentation about the Eng Tech qualification. A target of 100 000 registered Engineering technicians has been given by 2020, with just 14 000 current registrations out of 1.2 million working Engineering technicians. They are looking for employers and training providers to work together for apprentices and workers to gain registration to Eng Tech, recognising and enhancing their careers. Phil is able to visit training providers and arrange briefing sessions in regions to give more details on how this would work for individual training providers.

### 5) Trailblazer

Bob Millington gave an update on his involvement with the Aerospace and Automotive mechatronics panels:

- Any points NFEC give are based on the NFEC response to the Richard Review.
- Funding is up to £24 000 for advanced Engineering apprentices. Engineering has the maximum funding contribution from Government. £2 from Government for every £1 from employers.
- Employers can ask for bids from providers and contracts will be set up.

- Money will go to employers, who will then pay the training providers. The administration of money for employers is a worry especially for small companies.
- There is a suggestion for SMEs to use training provider/GTA to do all of the administration for them. Government is taking SME as 50 or less not European standard of 250. There are no decisions yet if this situation may occur.
- There maybe more money during the Foundation phase, as the training is more extensive at this stage. There are 11 mandatory units and a minimum of 2 optional units.
- There are 2 phases, foundation and development. Assessment at the end of the foundation phase will be different between sectors. Automotive are planning a 3 day assessment session with simulated and integrated practical and theory tests. These gateways to development must be passed, although they can be retaken if needed.
- During the development stage, there will be NVQ formative assessment.
- The apprentice will be in the position to register for Eng Tech after the development stage.
- C&G, EAL and Pearson are working together to develop the qualifications.
- Industry are standing up to BIS to get what industry want in the detail especially in teaching and assessment matters.
- Transferability between apprenticeships is a worry as apprenticeships are very focussed on a pathway or even a company.
- Warwick Hall will represent NFEC members on the Electrotechnical Trailblazer panel, Automotive and Digital industries are just starting work now.
- Apprenticeships will be reviewed every 3 years.

There needs to be stronger engagement with providers because so far involvement has only really come from Midland Group Training Services, Birmingham Metropolitan, BMW, NW Training Council and JLR. NFEC is going to work with GTA England to host 3 information events, including as broadly as possible all Engineering sectors, covering quality, provision and funding across the country. These will take place at BAE Systems in Preston, Toyota Manufacturing, Derbyshire and an employers premises in the South, still to be confirmed. The sessions will be run by the same team to ensure parity and will take place around March/April 2015 to ensure that draft specifications are available and that information is not changing as quickly as it is at the moment.

SEMTA is taking on commercial activities so are not so involved. It is currently not known who will now take on this role, looking after standards and rigour over the various apprenticeships. A regulatory body is being looked at which industry will fund.

If you have comments or anything else, as a provider, you want covered please let NFEC and Bob Millington know.

A tour of the facilities at the EEF took place.

## 6) Forum

Kevin Whitehouse showed the NFEC website developments with the forum now set up. This is to try to get providers talking to each other in different regions. Members have automatic access to this,

non members may request a months' free trial by logging onto Join NFEC tab on the website and registering their email address.

#### Items for NFEC

Eng Tech –Kevin Whitehouse will see if he can book a room at Birmingham Metropolitan College to host a meeting of interested colleges so Phil Horsham can give guidance of what is actually needed now, and in preparation for Trailblazer apprenticeships, for colleges to work with employers to offer Eng Tech within their provision. A date of Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January was suggested.

AQA could also be involved at this meeting to cover changes to vocational qualifications during vocational reform.

Maybe NFEC could investigate putting links to Trailblazer information on the NFEC website

#### Topics for next seminar

Walsall College on obtaining a Grade 1

Trailblazer updates

Forming co-operation links between colleges, what contacts and how

LEP - role of LEP and taking control of funding

Bid writing

#### Venue

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March has been suggested and thanks to John Lockley for offering to host this at the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Technology Centre, Dudley College.

Please remember the National Conference, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> December at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham University.

Kevin Whitehouse thanked everyone for attending and to Malcolm and the EEF for hosting this seminar.