



## NFEC REGIONAL SEMINAR – North West

### FRIDAY 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014

### Trafford College, Manchester

There is a separate attendance list available.

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

Steve Jones welcomed everyone to the seminar on behalf of Trafford College and Steve McAloone, as acting Chair, on behalf of NFEC. Introductions were made around the room.

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.

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 or £200 for a delegate or £365 for an exhibitor will be charged per attendance.

The National Conference will take place on 4th 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.

#### 2) Current matters of concern

Study programmes and traineeships are causing a lot of debate. There is Ofsted focus on these and yet less than half are taking it up. One major problem is the high quality work based learning itself and providing this work experience. Larger companies are worried with H&S and making it a worthwhile experience for learners within a work environment but simulated work experience does not count. Skills Solutions and Tameside College worked with 26 young learners on pre-

apprenticeships with successful outcomes but the SFA are showing opposition to their model. Maybe if Ofsted can see the benefits and industry could back the need for simulated work experience that there could be a turn round in view. Hugh Baird College reported that the LEP are receiving too many college applications for work experience opportunities.

Level 1 learners should not stay on a level 1 programme all year so need fast tracking to level 2 as soon as possible and colleges, such as Hugh Baird, are looking at ways to respond to this. There is a document on 14-16 review on traineeships and this led to discussions on the best approach for these learners, to give them confidence and not moving them on too quickly but still meeting the need to move to level 2 work quickly. Valid IAG needs to be carried out to enable building levels of Maths and English during this time as well.

Colleges are struggling to fit in vocational work as well as Maths and English into 540 GLH on these study programmes. One college reported over 600 hours was required.

There has been a large growth in numbers in Manchester, with this trend being backed up in Liverpool and Carlisle too. But there is not the staffing and resources to meet demand so some colleges have not been able to take on the learners. Warwick Hall will be representing NFEC members on a newly formed Cutting Edge committee which will address Engineering skills shortages following the Perkins review.

### 3) 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 and by embedding the Eng Tech into their programme.

There may need to be an additional qualification based on what they have already or experience already gained. So the time needed by an individual may vary. 3 qualifications from AQA can lead for apprentices getting Eng Tech. At the end, the learner will need to complete a form, comprising of 2000 words covering 5 areas of work/commitment. There is a cost to the individual of £20 for IET a year, this rising on completion to £60 for the IET and to £120 for the IMechE but employers often pay.

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.

A tour of the facilities at Trafford College took place.

4) Experience of delivering English and Maths of Engineering Apprentices, Clare Loftus, Trafford College

Clare described the differences between the delivery of GCSE Maths to Functional Skills which can be more flexible with on line exams as well as paper based exams. It is a similar pattern with GCSE English requiring a controlled assessment and an exam, whilst Functional Skills English requires 2 exams and 1 assessment, available on paper and online.

Different models of delivery are available for completing Functional Skills with their apprentices which may be on a weekly basis or as a block release. Comparison tables of Functional Skills content to GCSE were also discussed for both Maths and English. Please contact Clare on [clare.loftus@trafford.ac.uk](mailto:clare.loftus@trafford.ac.uk) should you have any queries.

This led onto discussions about learner's ability who have gained a grade C at foundation level. Consensus of opinion thought that it is their application of skills which seem to be missing.

The new qualifications are going to be tougher to pass as the pass threshold mark is currently lower than it will be in the future. It is hoped that being employed will motivate apprentices to gain the GCSEs required of them.

Trafford College have a central team who deliver to all areas, but this year they have started to be more focussed on working with one area. They have base rooms in departments but these are not specifically for the sole use for Maths and English teaching. Trafford College have upskilled their staff to be able to teach both GCSE and Functional Skills. It is assumed that benchmarks will fall this year as everyone has to be enrolled on the course, rather than working towards. Trafford offer teaching of 2 hours FS and 3 hours GCSE for each subject as well as some workshops to support weaker students. There are group sizes of around 28. It is hard to recruit suitable staff.

Pearson offer Active Learn, which is an online activity including teaching and homework on line. This can be set and marked online. Maths covers just Edexcel syllabi but English covers Edexcel and AQA.

<http://www.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk/globalpages/activelearn/activelearn-online-homework-and-revision.aspx>

5) Qualifications/Awarding bodies

Jacqueline Longworth and Jackie Allen– Pearson. Should any colleges have any problems with the new assessment rules please contact Jackie Allen or Amanda Murphy. Sample assessments and specifications should be available by September 2015 for the revised level 3 Nationals. 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 Adam Barrigan on [adam.barrigan@pearson.com](mailto:adam.barrigan@pearson.com). Changes for HNCs will be about 2 years away.

Jacqueline suggested providers could look at Active Learn which is available through Pearson to help with the delivery of Maths and English. Currently maths is ½ price at £5 per learner but covers online material and assessment.

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). AQA are starting on a long term commitment provision in this sector

C&G - Andrew Hewison. C&G are working on 14-19 qualifications, meeting the DofE requirements of technical knowledge, externally graded, synoptic tests with at least 5 supporters. The Level 3 Tech Bac offer was launched on Monday for Engineering. The New Engineering Foundation have helped develop this and includes the technical qualification, an extended project and a work placement. This is a pioneer year so C&G are working with pioneer centres. To register for further information, go to [www.techbac.com](http://www.techbac.com).

EAL - Mark Shepherd with Paul Kerwin. New qualifications and developments are available (at different levels) in motorsport, welding, preparing to work, rail pathways/frameworks, building services such as gas, plumbing and H&S. Schools qualifications are also available as well as qualifications suitable for Traineeships and their induction programmes. The Webinars and on line system has been improved to make the online system easier to use. Paul and Mark are willing to come out to look at strategic planning and talk through new developments, please get in touch if they can help, [mshepherd@eal.org.uk](mailto:mshepherd@eal.org.uk)

## 6) 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. There are incentive payments available such as for SMEs £2700, taking on 16-18 apprentices £5400 and £2700 for completion.
- 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 may be 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.

Shane Parkes from the North West Training Council spoke about their experiences with the logistics of delivering the Automotive Mechatronic apprenticeship with JLR for 22 apprentices from Halewood. 5 are higher apprentices, the rest advanced.

Everything is based on the new standards, the employers' expectations are high and providers are accountable. The Foundation stage is similar to PEO, but units have increased from 65 hours per unit to around 150 for the off the job training. BTEC will increase to the Extended Diploma and maths must be included in this. The providers cannot claim any money from the SFA until the employer has paid their share.

Behaviour is included in this apprenticeship. It will be assessed on quarterly basis, with more tutorials with instructors throughout the course. There will be an independent assessment at end of foundation stage, being completed by another provider off site. For this apprenticeship, it looks like another training provider based in the Midlands are looking to set themselves up to become the independent assessor on behalf of JLR. The assessment will be like an AM 2 practical and theory test as well as behaviour being taken into account. C&G are also looking to set themselves up as an independent assessor for this purpose. It means that all teaching needs to cover everything in the units. Learning is being developed in small chunks, repeated and extended over the year. There will

also be a knowledge based qualification which will be covered by an exam at end of foundation stage. There are no Functional Skills involved just GCSEs.

Employers are able to dismiss learners if they are not performing as required. JLR are coming into NW Training Council every 4 to 5 weeks to see the progress of their apprentices.

There is concern that the variety of employer requirements and too many pathways may mean that many providers may not be able to cover all of the requirements.

Higher apprenticeships take 6 years, an advanced 4 years. This two tier system may only be possible at larger companies and smaller employers probably couldn't cover all the options required. They have also had to adopt the same 5S principles as JLR to encourage the apprentices into the JLR methods before reaching the workplace.

Please get in touch with Shane on [Shane.parkes@nwtc.co.uk](mailto:Shane.parkes@nwtc.co.uk) if there are any questions.

## 7) Forum

Steve McAlone 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 – Jill Mustard will work to organise 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 in January was suggested and a room at Waterside Training has been offered.

### Topics for next seminar

Trailblazer updates, with a practitioners view from NW Training Council

Higher Apprenticeships and HNC growth, running and developing a FD

LEP - role of LEP and taking control of funding

### Venue

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May has been suggested and thanks to Julie Jackson for offering to host this at the Business Centre in Ashford, part of Tameside College.

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

Steve McAloone thanked everyone for attending and to Steve and Trafford College for hosting this seminar.

Name	Organisation	Other info
Paul Rudd	Deltatecnix	
Dave Porter	Boxford	
Amanda Murphy	Pearson	
Andrew Wood	Cussons	
Ashok Kumar	Bradford College	
Simon Hesbrook	Skills Solutions	
Phil Holmes	Festo	
Kay Bennett	Lakes College West Cumbria	
Julie Jackson	Tameside College	
Peter Redfern	Tameside College	
Jill Mustard	NFEC	
Richard Lunt	South Cheshire College	
Peter Stott	St Helens College	
Anis Ahmed	Water-side Training	
Christopher Partington	Matrix Technology Solutions Ltd	
Tim Quarmsby	Emco	
Cath Brierley	Trafford College	
Doug Pinch	Hugh Baird College	
Paul Smith	Hugh Baird College	
Steve Jones	Trafford College	
Steve McAloone	Deputy NFEC North West Regional Co-ordinator	

Bob Millington	NFEC Director for Regional Co-ordination and National Liaison	
Phil Horsham	Eng Tech	
Clare Loftus	Trafford College	
Mark Shepherd	EAL	
Paul Kerwin	EAL	
Jacqueline Longworth	Pearson UK	
Andrew Hewison	City and Guilds	
Phillip Bryant	AQA	
Shane Parkes	North West Training Council	
Jean McCormick	North West Training Council	