## **NFEC REGIONAL SEMINAR – Midlands**

**Friday 12th October 2018**

**Birmingham Metropolitan College**

There is a separate attendance list available.

1. Welcome and Introduction to the seminar

Kevin Whitehouse welcomed everyone to the seminar on behalf of NFEC and Birmingham Metropolitan College. Introductions were made around the room.

1. Current matters of Concern

Kevin detailed the changes in apprenticeships, number of standards, levy and HE which are all happening together. There is a target for 3 million new apprenticeships, and there has been 114 000 start this year across all sectors which is 27% down on previous years. This is not being seen in Engineering as the Colleges detailed such as:

* more higher apprentices at Solihull College using the levy to develop these
* there is a small drop in Engineering numbers at Walsall College but an increase in Construction
* an increase on higher levels at Shrewsbury College
* there are more companies approaching the EEF and they are struggling to fill all vacancies.

It seems that companies are getting more levy savvy and are using the money and that large companies are putting money into their supply chains. This will be improved if an increase in the allowed percentage, time to use the money in and number of companies they are able to work with does happen. There are still some non levy apprentices being taken on. The administration is causing problems with companies with amount and time consuming.

Funding cuts in FE which is around 8% cut in real numbers whilst HE budget has increased slightly. There is a petition beginning on raising the awareness of the issues in FE. Discussion took place on funding caps for apprentice standards going through IfA.

1. “Know How” Electrical, Electronic, Product Service and Installation Engineer (level 3) Apprenticeship

Adrian Smith who manages the white goods academy for companies such as Samsung gave a short presentation to explain the apprenticeship and Academy. The Academy started at BMet in 2011 and has the latest technology goods on which to base the training. Not all of the delivery covers full qualifications but the College accredits skills which are gained. Samsung only have sub contracted engineers. The Academy is also able to train sales people on new features such as those at Currys and John Lewis.

There is an apprenticeship for Know How or independent repair companies. The old framework had lapsed and the new standard wasn’t ready so there is a cohort doing a Performing Engineering Operations level 2 apprenticeship. The new level 3 has an EAL qualification as part of the new standard agreed. Many have progressed onto the gas/electric goods side.

Two apprentices, Denny and Peter, spoke about their experiences as apprentices on this programme Denny Locker talked about the typical day in the life as a white goods engineer:

* Van checks every morning
* Morning jobs such as route, paperwork and fault and diagnosis, check parts and telephone the customer
* When at a customers’ location, fault find and test using knowledge from the customer, and they do have to cope with all appliances and makes and age.
* Always try to give some advice
* Some days may be an earlier finish than others and can do around 1000 miles a week.

Peter came from Nigeria and wanted to become an engineer. He enrolled on a degree course but was not doing any practical experience and by talking to friends, he realised that this approach didn’t work. So he took the opportunity with Know How to learn these skills. He now understands the processes of the equipment and is able to disassemble and assemble the appliances. He does want to progress as an gas/electrical engineer afterwards and knows that these are all useful skills for working in any country in the future.

The College is looking to grow provision maybe on other campuses and having brown goods apprenticeships with TV and then printers. This initiative has raised the profile of the college with the names of Samsung etc. College staff are trained with Samsung as “train the trainer” and then they cascade the information. Staff have also visited a detergent company to learn information from them. Due to the changes in technology the engineers also have t deal with issues with location of wifi in houses, networking and routers, security and protective systems. Older equipment which has been replaced has been given to the academy for training in older equipment as well as those in bad condition.

1. Discussion around apprenticeships with the Association of Electrical and mechanical Trades (AEMT)

Thomas Marks spoke about the Trade Association AEMT. They have members who are more industrial based repair companies with requirements such as control panels, transformers, motors and combinations of these. A lot of the work is rewinding motors and this skill is being lost with an aging workforce. The AEMT started after WW2 with repairing excess war equipment so that it was able to reused in industry. Many companies are using mechatronic or maintenance engineer standards to train new employees in this area. AEMT want to make films of the skills to help future training and help grow the industry. Anyone who wants to get involved please contact him on [thomas.marks@aemt.co.uk](mailto:thomas.marks@aemt.co.uk).

1. Updates from Awarding Bodies

David Lee and Jason Davis– Pearson

Adult training using short courses have been developed as one week courses as part of an Explorer course. Construction and Civil Engineering are part of the first phase which is now released, and Engineering is part of the second phase. BTEC firsts have been extended until 2024.

Level 2 Tech Awards and Certificates have been available since September 2017. There was a discussion on where these sit with other qualifications and how would employers know if the academic standard would enable level 3 progression onto BTEC National.

BTEC RQF qualifications have controlled assessments and exams, the NQF versions will be available until 2019.

The must pass rule for externally set exams has now been relaxed so that if learners are close they can get a near pass with an N grade which is classes as a pass. There are also 2 resit opportunities which will include the current intake of students. Level 4/5 are only RQF HNs. With new specifications but they are not externally assessed. There is less choice in the RQF versions but bespoke additions can be applied for.

There are changes to AME pathways, with 2 specific pathways of Mechanical and Electrical/Electronic and are included on all level 3 SASE frameworks. Engineering Operative level 2 standard is available from November 2018.

Level 4 HNC in Manufacturing will be available from January 2019 and this will fit into the Level 4 Process Leader apprenticeship in food, automotive and textile manufacturing sectors but can be taught separately as a HNC.

HN online is available for HNC Business on Moodle to take separately and supports learners with tutorials as blended learning. The equivalent in Engineering is being developed.

The IFA has reassessed the cost for Engineering Technician apprenticeships and it will be revised to £26 000 instead of £27 000.

Any questions please email David on [david.lee3@pearson.com](mailto:david.lee3@pearson.com)

Jason can help directly with apprenticeships on [jason.davis@pearson.com](mailto:jason.davis@pearson.com)

Other help can be accessed via the quality nominee, Helen Elshaw on [qualitynominees@pearson.com](mailto:qualitynominees@pearson.com)

Louise Attwood – AQA

Louise introduced herself. Design and Technology and Tech levels are available including

Tech levels in Engineering foundation (A level) and 2 in Design engineering (2 A level equivalents).

Any queries please contact Louise directly on [lattwood@aqa.co.uk](mailto:lattwood@aqa.co.uk)

1. BMW apprenticeships and experience of the Gateway assessments.

Annabel Chivers and Ben Hackett are 2nd year apprentices at Birmingham Metropolitan and BMW. They spent 5 days a week last year on practical training in the workshop and 6 units of BTEC. They completed small jobs initially and then carried out maintenance on lathes and milling machines which helped in understanding parts of the milling and turning units. Ben outlined how bench fitting had helped them with behavourial objectives. They also carried out VPS training in Oxford and Hams Hall and this helped with the integration of theory of robotics and fluid power which will be used in the workplace.

Gateway assessment took place over 3 days under test conditions. It covered PLCs, electrical and mechanical maintenance and bench fitting. Inspectors were looking at how planning took place to deal with the large workload using time, quality and problem solving skills, balancing with right first time whilst ensuring that things went smoothly and reviewing what you were doing. It is expected that you monitor your resources to ensure that you can complete a job. It did test pressure and being able to cope with these type of working conditions. Parts were enjoyable but some parts were stressful. Quality of job wasn’t the main thing being assessed so this did help. It has prepared them for the next stage of work and assessment. The business does try to prepare them with this problem solving and dealing with the pressure of keeping things perfect. Resilience is important. BMW put all apprentices through the same pathway even for Quality and Logistics.

A discussion took place on encouraging females to apply. BMW hold an event to cover this and sometimes it works, other times not so successfully. This year there are 2 girls in an intake 12. Data shows that primary school children show interest in engineering but not so much when in secondary school.

1. Discussion around T levels and Apprenticeships

Peter Winebloom gave an update on the context of T levels which are to become the 3rd leg of technical and vocational learning, with 2 years of learning and a work placement which will be comparable to 3 A levels. 15 routes have evolved from occupations and there are 2 involving Engineering - Manufacturing, Design and Maintenance and Repair. The brief for each panel is to outline the subject and pass this on to an AO. Engineering is to be introduced in 2022, although Maintenance Installation and Repair is going to be fast tracked through for a 2021 start. Approval will be done at the IFA. It has been asked if levy money can be used to support workbased training for T levels.

There are 3 round the table discussions on work placements taking place; 30th October in Sheffield, 5th November in Coventry and 12th November in London. These are being organised by the Department for Education.

Providers are responsible for the work placements. The 45 days can be spread at any point of the 2 years, but it should consolidate the learning. Discussions took place on standards, core subjects and specialism and the need to lead to apprenticeships and allow HE progression.

1. Plenary session

Bob Millington will write a letter on behalf of NFEC to state requirements for a generic core at the initial stages of T level and send to the Gatekeeper, ready for the consultation response.

The NFEC Annual National Conference is taking place on 29th / 30th November at the National College for High Speed Rail in Birmingham.

Friday 29th March was suggested for the Midlands seminar. Jill will ask if Dudley College would be kind enough to host but if not Walsall College will be the venue.

Topics could include:

End point assessment – EEF and perhaps Malcolm could talk about process leading up to this.

Neil Withey EAL on the delivery of and management of EPAs

T levels status at that point

Pilot of placement strategy – talk to Andy Lee / Karen Haywood in February to see what is happening at Shrewsbury College.

Kevin Whitehouse thanked everyone for attending.

A tour of the College facilities took place.