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## **NFEC REGIONAL SEMINAR – South West**

**Weston College, South West Skills Campus, Weston Super Mare**

**Friday 5th May 2017**

There is a separate attendance list available.

1. Welcome and Introduction to the seminar

Steve Caldwell welcomed everyone on behalf of Weston College and Chris Miller welcomed everyone to the seminar on behalf of NFEC. Introductions were made around the room.

1. Current matters of concern

Hugh Phillips stated that TWI and awarding bodies are working to upgrade the funding bands for welding from £12 000 to the higher levels.

A discussion took place on how a level 4 standard in Advanced Manufacturing is required as well the level 6 degree apprenticeship. There is a gateway at level 4 but you can’t start on this and many employers want someone with a level 4 qualification before allowing them to progress to the level 6. Funding has already been reduced in many cases and qualifications are being chosen which may not be ready due to the funding situation and employers are wanting information now. Success rates are going to be affected, either due to employers restricting progression at gateways or by those struggling to achieve the higher levels. Success rates need to be taken into account at achievement of a gateway not just at the end point assessment. Mapping needs to be done for providers. Providers need to be careful on developing unit choice for qualifications so that learners achieve a worthwhile qualification such as those doing HNC and FD in stages. SEMTA are considering a level 4 Advanced Manufacturing / Engineering Team Leader higher technician. Bill Lockyer will find out more about this and feed back to the group.

Nationally there is a problem in recruiting lecturers and tutors. Some lecturers and Colleges have issues with needing contracts written to cover teaching to level 5 etc and a lack of salary in teaching in comparison to industry is a big issue. There used to be time allowance for mentoring to help train new lecturers and many do not appreciate the administration which goes with the job. City of Plymouth are advertising evenings to learn what lecturing is about and then to start people as assessors and build them up but they are finding that the pool reduces quite quickly. It is getting harder to find people for the higher level teaching especially. Market rate supplements can be offered and starting off new lecturers at slightly less teaching hours. Construction trades are in the same situation. One thought was to offer to pay for FD and degrees as incentive. It was asked if NFEC could help do inspirational type activities on an evening basis around the country at different colleges, a little like a road show.

1. Levy Funding

Liz Redwood is responsible for the development of new qualifications and apprenticeships at Weston College. The changes are due to the remit to grow apprenticeships by 3 million starts. The reforms are to be employer driven but be rigorous and credible to the academic alternatives. There are still not enough standards to cover everything.

Co-investment and the levy are now the 2 money options with employers. Small employers with over 50 employees will have to pay 10% of costs but this can be waived for employers with less than 50. Colleges will have budgets for Invitation to Tender (ITT) but these are looking less than previous allocations, it is these that non levy paying employers can use for funding. The rest will have to come from the levy paying employers. There are 15 funding bands £1 500 to £27 000 but employers can negotiate on these. The payment for end point assessment must come out of this amount as well as any extra qualifications. Negotiation can be by a reduced percentage or as a whole package approach. Sales team must be more savvy. For non-levy payers, this is maximum price which Government will co-invest up to but co-investment can be waived if small employers take on 16-18 year old apprentice. English and Maths functional skills will not require employer contribution. Levy funding can pay for training in other areas. At least 20% off the job training must be carried out, this doesn’t have to be in college but must be relevant practical training such as shadowing or mentoring.

In some cases, there are still no end point assessors ready. Some assessor bodies will test only whilst others will provide activities as well. They cannot charge more than 20% of the funding band for EPA. Levy funding cannot be used for such things as wages, any statutory licenses to practice or travel costs. Colleges need to set up robust processes for employer contacts, they need to know how to deal with non levy and levy paying employers. Weston College have set up a Levy Solution Service which has 3 parts- it looks at employer training needs and recruitment; it has a talent pool and traineeships available at the college with programmes for all ages and development of skills in English and Maths; it looks how employers can maximise their return on investment including staff development of existing staff.

Non levy paying companies are least aware of the changed situation, but also employers with parent companies in countries such as America and Italy or they are a subsidiary of a larger national company and they are now bidding against other offices around the country for training money. Colleges will be levy paying so use why not have their own apprenticeships as trainee posts within departments. Salaries can be used as incentives for apprentices but this will still be cheaper for colleges whilst the training is ongoing. Negotiations are making employers look at how much something is worth but it is expected that some employers and providers will go for cheapness and some for quality.

1. Update on Welding Trailblazer developments

Large companies have been involved in the development of this and not SMEs. In 2014, there were 43 different apprenticeships and levels of standards in England for welding and fabrication. When asked what they wanted, employers said that “the welder needs to be able to pass a trade test and get welding”. Unfortunately this has been proved by German system that this does not work, as underpinning knowledge is needed to know when there is a problem. Trade test means coded welded.

The 2 page standard includes a level 2 general and level 3 multi positional welding, both with at least one arc process. There are 3 areas of assessment: a multiple choice question paper, 2 or 3 practical tests and oral examination (pass or fail, welds to standards) and a professional interview as the end point assessment (including knowledge and behaviour) . Grading is pass, merit or a retest/retraining. The recommendation is to made to ensure that the apprentice is ready to be tested due to the cost, this includes being ready in Maths and English requirements. The assessment organisation is responsible for ensuring that equipment and facilities required for EPA are in place, regardless of where the assessment is carried out. It may be better to have assessors come to where the apprentices have been trained rather than to give apprentices a different environment for their tests.

Level 2 Employer selects 2 options from a process / materials table and 2 posiitons

Level 3 Employer selects 3 options in all welding positions. This will give a “pick and mix” type of apprenticeship.

Simulated training can help the apprentice achieve a coded level of standard. Destructive and non destructive tests will be carried out on their work. There is a clause to say that an individual assessor may not have full paperwork to cover their qualifications if the client is happy to allow this assessor to be used in the EPA process.

SMEs may find the standard too limited in number of processes and it may be restrictive for job opportunities in the future for the apprentices. The funding band is insufficient and it does not include fabrication.

A discussion took place on who is doing EPA. Make sure that the third party is authorised and registered. The charges for using TWI are not known and many feel that we are 16 months away from EPA, without even knowing who as yet can do EPA. Providers need names of who to approach quickly.

Hugh reported that the SW branch of the TWI covers Bristol to Penzance and they relaunched on 4th May at a meeting in City of Bristol College. Their next meeting will be at Exeter College on June 8th. Professor Steve Jones will be the main speaker that night. Any colleges who host these meetings may invite employers and students to attend as well. If you are interested to commit as a centre, please contact Hugh and he is happy to come to visit you to talk to you about the branch.

Hugh McPhillips getstraining@googlemail.com

1. Feedback from GKN Aerospace Apprentices studying on a trailblazer programme, Joe Martin and Finn Hitchcock

Joe is working towards the fabricator pathway after studying A levels at school and Finn as a fitter as a 16 year old with GCSEs. Both apprentices confirmed that they had had a positive experience considering that the programme is new and that it has flowed well. Last year, as first years, they attended college 3.5 days a week and one day in company, but this year they are only attending college one day a week. Their company monitors how they are doing with the use of a mentor for NVQ work and many emails between college and work if they require help. They have found that college work has been relevant to work place and they have covered background knowledge on aero, H&S and BIT which has helped. They are able to progress to FD and HNC afterwards if they would like to. Behaviours have helped them in the workplace professionally. They have also learned a lot from the companies’ Lean managers, so that they understand the lean requirements and they have been able to help older employers understand the changes. They have now started on the level 3 BTEC course.

1. Qualifications/Awarding bodies

Bill Lockyer – EAL

Bill explained the qualifications for areas such as Business Improvement Techniques, Construction, Plumbing, Rail and Engineering. Some have UCAS points allocated to them and they can be mapped into league table tech qualifications. These are listed on the website or via the links on the accompanying slides. There are qualifications for 14-19 for schools and colleges at KS 4 and 5. EAL have been working with 45 employer groups on apprenticeship qualifications e.g. level 3 Aerospace Manufacturing Fitters, level 3 Machinist, level 3 Rail Engineering. There is a wide range and some include qualifications and others do not. It will be employers who decide which programme the apprentice is put on. Technician level are ready for teaching with new standards. Work is ongoing for supporting standards for automotive engine testers and maritime defence suite. EAL are on the assessment register for End Point Assessments. Please contact EAL customer services for any further information on End Point Assessment.

Slides are available separately and links on these will give you the pages on websites for the information on slides.

There is an EAL specific event for networking in the SW. It will cover standard delivery of EAL qualifications and tech cert overview at Bridgwater and Taunton College on Friday 9th June. Please email Bill if you are interested in attending.

EAL would need numbers for a commercial pipework qualification but the answer should be that they would be interested if demand is there. Contact the product team.

Please email Bill on blockyer@eal.org.uk if you have any queries.

Bridget Stait – Edexcel

The new graded BTEC level 1 Introductory qualification has been available from September 2016. It is based around skills rather than knowledge with 180 and 360 GLH. Assessments are internally set but should be run under the rules of the other BTEC levels.

BTEC firsts have been extended to December 2018. BTEC level 2 technicals will be available for first teaching from September 2017, focussed on getting post 16 learners work ready. Practical units allow for flexible roll on roll off programme if required. There are some externally assessed units and some internally set and assessed.

BTEC level 3 are fully developed and available.

There are different pathways and the possibility to customise units for the HNC under RQF. Centres can write units or ask Pearson to write them for a charge. Nigel Lofthouse is now responsible for the apprenticeships in this region and Jason Davis in Gloucestershire. Ian Moores will be in charge of HNs.

Two sets of slides are available separately. Please email Bridget on bridget.stait@pearson.com if you have any queries.

Simon Yorke – C&G

Simon introduced the level 2 technical award which is now available. These are based on engineering sectors providing choice for learners in STEM style subjects. Scheme number is 1145-20. There are level 2 Technical Certificates for full time learners with 4 pathways although there are 3 generic units on all pathways with 3 specific units to the named pathways. KS 5 level 3 technicals are available for 360, 540 and 720 GLH with mandatory and optional units. Schemes of work, delivery plans and sample assessments are available for all of these including external exam and synoptic assignment. Apprenticeship developments are for various sectors such as aerospace, maritime and food/drink. C&G 2850 is suggested to support the welding standards.

Slides are available to support this. Please look on the website for further information or Simon can be contacted on Simon.Yorke@cityandguilds.com.

Martin Webber – OCR

OCR now have an Engineering suite of qualifications available now in the vocational routes as well as schools/colleges. The Nationals are good for school programmes for 14 – 16 year olds. There are 4 pathways, each the size of a GCSE and can easily be delivered in a year. Delivery guides and resources are available to help delivery and model assignment brief for mandatory units.

Cambridge Technicals at level 2 and 3 are more suited to 16+ college provision, ready for first teaching in September 2017. Resources with model assignments are available to help support delivery as well as which books are recommended for use. All qualifications line up with RQF. For level 2, there are 360 GLH and 180 GLH qualifications available. For tech level and applied general, there are 5 mandatory units included such as application of engineering principles, mechanical engineering – machine operations, fundamentals of mechanical, electronic/electrical and fluid power engineering, engineering systems control. These lead to 3 pathways as Design Engineer, Production Engineer and System Engineer. All level 3 Technicals meet the current guidelines for applied general and tech level with various option pathways for higher apprenticeships and university in mind. All are available for use now. There is an extended diploma with 18 units; 2 extra units, project management and promoting continuous improvement, have been added. Maths and Science are examined separately and the level is appropriate to meet HE requirements.

Slides are available to cover this summary and Martin can be contacted on martin.webber@ocr.org.uk

Dean O’Donoghue - AQA

Dean sent his apologies that he was unable to attend but slides are available in the links supporting these notes.

Any queries, please contact Dean on DODonoghue@aqa.org.uk.

1. Plenary Session

A day conference is being organised for Basingstoke on Friday 23rd June. Information will be going on on this shortly. It looks likely that National Conference will be back in Coventry around 7th and 8th December.

Date and Venue for next seminar

The date suggested was Friday 10th November and to be hosted maybe at City of Plymouth College but this will be confirmed.

Chris Miller thanked everyone for attending and thanks were given to Ross, Steve and Weston College for hosting this seminar.

A tour of the facilities then took place.