

Issue 11 - October 2011



In this edition of What's Hot we provide links for several consultations currently open for response, including those around:

- [adult learning \(New Challenges New Chances\)](#)
- [the new regulatory framework for HE](#)
- [and also the Department for Education consultation which will help inform the changes in legislation to enable those with QTLS to teach in schools.](#)

There is also a reminder, for those of you who are members of IfL, of the [forthcoming elections to the Advisory Council](#), which represents members' interests and has an important role in IfL's direction and decision making.

Across the Sector change and flexibility continue to be the name of the game, with issues around funding potentially playing a pivotal role in learners' choices over the next few years. In HE the campaign continues to fight the worst possible consequences of the changes currently planned for 2012. We feature a link to the recently published [Alternative White Paper](#).

With on-going challenges ahead for the FE & Skills Sector we feature updated news about the [policy situation for those delivering ESOL](#) and about the possible consequences of the [opening up of the adult skills budget](#), which will require learning providers to be even more flexible than they have always been and to keep the needs of learners, local employers and the local economy at the heart of their offer.

Amongst all the change and turmoil, some recent research provides heartening evidence of the value and impact of the work we do in our sector. [The City & Guilds Vocational Rich List](#) ranks wealth among those who have built their fortunes following an Apprenticeship or other practical qualification and reveals the riches accrued by Britons with a vocational education. Of course, most learners will probably not go on to earn the sorts of amounts of money reported through this list (a collective £17.6 billion!) and we know that success can be measured not only in financial terms. However, this research does provide one small reminder of the value of learning and a validation of the variety of opportunity available in the post-compulsory sector. Let's continue to work to value what we do and to promote our sector as widely as possible.

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If you wish to suggest items for future issues or to comment on this service, please contact:

Elizabeth Yard
Support Co-ordinator
(Prof Dev & SWCETT)

events@learning-southwest.org.uk

at

Learning South West
Bishops Hull House
Bishops Hull
TAUNTON
Somerset TA1 5EP

Tel: (01823) 365440

website:

www.learning-southwest.org.uk



NATIONAL NEWS

FUNDING & CHANGES

[Ofsted proposes changes to inspection of further education and skills to improve learners' employability](#) (Ofsted, 1 Sept '11)

Ofsted has launched a **consultation** on proposals to revise the inspection of further education (FE) colleges, work-based learning providers, adult and community learning (ACL) provision and 'Next Step' provision.

All inspections of the FE and skills sector in England are based on Ofsted's [Common Inspection Framework for FE and Skills](#). Changes will streamline and simplify this framework and focus it more sharply on the areas that have most impact.

Download the consultation document [here](#) and then complete the [online questionnaire](#). The closing date for responses is Thursday 24 November 2011.

[Parliament Week: 31 October - 6 November 2011](#)

Parliament Week is a new national initiative from the **UK Parliament** that aims to build a greater understanding of and engagement with parliamentary democracy in the UK.

The inaugural Parliament Week will take place between 31 Oct - 6 Nov '11. It will involve a programme of activities across the UK that explore how and why the House of Commons and the House of Lords matter to everyone.

Parliamentary Outreach is planning a number of "[flagship](#)" events during the week, as well as many other [local events](#) around the Country.

Re-shaping of the Young Peoples' Learning Agency (YPLA) prior its transfer to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) in April 2012 (YPLA, 14 Sept '11)

Peter Lauener, YPLA Chief Executive, has outlined important changes made to the YPLA's structure, staffing and service offer to enable the Agency to deliver its remit for 2011-12 and improve its service to the growing number of Academies and to support funding changes to the 16-19 system. These changes will also prepare the YPLA for its transfer into the Education Funding Agency (EFA) from April 2012.

Amongst the changes, the nine regional teams have been restructured into **four territorial teams** each with an Academies and Young People's division, as follows:

- *North* - covering North East, North West, Yorkshire & the Humber
- **West - covering West Midlands, South West**
- *East* - covering East Midlands, East of England
- *South* - covering South East, Greater London

[Click here](#) for a copy of the YPLA's new structure.

[Government online petitions system goes live](#) (SWF, 15 Aug '11)

The **Government's** new e-petition website is now live. Any petition on the site which attracts 100,000 signatures would be considered for debate in Parliament.

For more information visit: www.number10.gov.uk

[Tribal awarded LSIS contract for a new sector support](#) (LSIS, 11 Aug '11)

The **Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)** has awarded leading UK education company **Tribal** the contract to jointly deliver a new LSIS support service for the sector. Known as the **Sector Support Service** this new provision will build on the success of the former LSIS Improvement Adviser Service (IAS) in overcoming underperformance and driving sector-wide improvement.

LIFELONG LEARNING

[New Challenges, New Chances for adult learning](#) (BIS, 16 Aug '11)

The **Government** has launched a **consultation** setting out proposals that will promote high quality teaching and learning for adults and strengthen the skills system as part of the next phase of their plans to implement a radical reform of adult learning and skills provision in England.

To take part [click here](#). The closing date for responses is Friday 21 October 2011.

[ACL providers can benefit from the LSIS workforce data collection survey](#) (LSIS, 12 Sept '11)

Adult and Community Learning providers across the Country are being urged to take part in the **[workforce data collection survey](#)** which is now open and **running until Friday 28 October 2011**.

This important exercise will enhance the volume, reliability and clarity of information available for this part of the Sector and comes at a time when more robust data on the FE workforce is seen as a key priority nationally.

[Informal adult community learning - online survey](#) (NIACE, 3 Oct '11)

You can now have your say about the future of informal adult community learning, by responding to a new **[NIACE online survey](#)** as part of the **Government's review of informal adult community learning (IACL)**.

The survey aims to gather the **views of individuals** rather than organisations, and wants to hear about the kinds of learning that you would like in your local area and/or workplace and how you would like to have your say or get involved.

Make sure you take part before Monday 31 October 2011.

[Inquiry's recommendations to improve adult literacy](#) (NIACE, 12 Sept '11)

"Addressing adult literacy needs must be regarded as a moral imperative and the cycle of inter-generational difficulties with literacy must be broken".

These are the main findings of a year-long **Independent Inquiry into Adult Literacy - "[Work, Society and Lifelong Literacy](#)"** (NIACE, Sept 2011) which urges that more teachers must be trained and that there needs to be more innovative and cross-sector partnership work to help the many millions of adults who do not have the literacy skills they need for everyday life.

[English language courses will deliver better deal for learners and the taxpayer](#)

(BIS, 18 Jul 2011)

Skills Minister John Hayes has pledged to provide more effective, targeted help for people who face barriers to learning the English language skills communities need, following the publication of an [equality impact assessment of the provision for English for Speakers of Other Languages \(ESOL\) training \(July '11\)](#). **The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)** will work in partnership with the **Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)** on developing new forms of support for those who need informal, community-based learning of English.

NIACE has published its [latest update](#) (13 Sept '11) on the Government's policy changes to funding for ESOL in England. Although [NIACE has welcomed the flexibility given to ESOL providers to support learners](#), it still has concerns that the overall funding may have a negative impact on two groups: women and low paid workers.

Meanwhile **The Guardian** reports that "[U-turn on ESOL funding causes enrolment mayhem for colleges](#)" (12 Sep 2011).

[The Lifelong Learning Account goes live!](#) (www.nextstep.direct.gov.uk)

Lifelong Learning Accounts are free and available through the **Next Step website**; offering adults greater flexibility, control and choice for their skills and learning development.

A Lifelong Learning Account will give individuals access to a range of information and tools to match their personal circumstances and needs – the results of which can be saved in a private, secure and easily accessible space.

Create your own Lifelong Learning Account [now](#).

[Lifelong Learning Account promotional leaflet](#) (SfA, 13 Sept '11)

This leaflet provides a description of the benefits of a Lifelong Learning Account - for use by Prime Contractors, providers, Skills Funding Agency staff and anyone else involved in the delivery or promotion of the Lifelong Learning Account programme.

[Adult Learning Grant becomes part of Discretionary Learner Support](#) (www.direct.gov.uk)

The **Adult Learning Grant (ALG)** has become part of **Discretionary Learner Support**. This support helps students in financial need with their learning costs. Individuals can now no longer apply for an ALG, instead they will need to apply for Discretionary Learner Support. Applicants must be 19 years old or over.

[The ALG scheme is changing](#) (YPLA)

From August 2011, decisions about the use of adult learner support funding will be fully devolved to Further Education colleges and training providers - instead of via the YPLA.

[Organisations Secure Funding for Adult and Community Learning](#) (SfA, 7 Sept '11)

59 organisations from across England have secured funding from the **Skills Funding Agency** to offer informal adult and community learning opportunities to help make the Big Society a reality as part of the new **Adult and Community Learning Fund**.

The Adult and Community Learning Fund, which will be managed by **NIACE**, has awarded a total of **£2.25 million** to a variety of organisations who will begin work at the start of September.

[Click here](#) to view the **list of successful organisations**, including several from the South West (pg. 13)

[Progression beyond school is variable for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities](#) (Ofsted, 23 Aug '11)

Too few young people with learning difficulties and disabilities progress from school to complete programmes that will help them live independently, undertake further study, or gain employment, says recent [report](#) published by **Ofsted**.

[NIACE survey finds disabled learners at risk](#) (NIACE, 8 July '11)

Learning providers are confused about provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and many people are at risk of missing out on learning, according to a survey from **NIACE** of over 100 practitioners.

['Have a go' at new skills this Autumn](#)

As part of the **World Skills London 2011** initiative, the ['Have a Go'](#) campaign will allow people to gain hands-on experience in a new activity at any time **between now and February 2012** and hopefully be inspired to find out more about learning.

[Click here](#) to find out about 'Have a Go' opportunities in the South West.

European Lifelong Learning Programme:

The European Commission has published the **2012 Call for Proposals** for participation in the **Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP)**.

Click on the following links for:

- [Leonardo application information](#) (deadlines begin from February 2012)
- [Grundtvig application information](#) (deadlines begin from January 2012)
- [Transversal Study Visits application information](#) (deadlines from September 2011)

[edUKation newsletter \(Autumn 2011\)](#)

Business Secretary, Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP shares his vision for lifelong learning in the latest edition of **edUKation** - the quarterly newsletter for the Leonardo, Grundtvig and Transversal programmes.

EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

[Shaping a strategic framework for improvement and development](#) (LSIS, 13 Sept '11)

Rob Wye, Chief Executive of LSIS, sets out how LSIS plans to help the Sector to manage the multifaceted nature of the transformational change currently facing the Sector by launching a Strategic Framework **"New Freedoms: New Focus"** with an accompanying a set of [Strategic Intentions 2011-2014](#).

[Policy Tracker - September 2011](#) (The Pearson Centre for Policy & Learning)

A new education year - but it's the continuing concerns about the economy, heightened by a number of recent reports, that provide the main talking points this month.

[“The Hughes Report” - Access to Education](#) (25 July '11)

Simon Hughes, the Government's Advocate on Access Education, has now submitted his [independent report](#) to the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. The report makes over thirty recommendations to increase participation in higher education and are directed towards schools, colleges, universities, government and regulators.

Responses to the Report from within the Sector:

- [Association of Employment & Learning Providers \(AELP\) - formerly ALP](#) (15 Aug '11)
- [NIACE](#) (22 July '11)
- [Department for Business, Innovation & Skills \(BIS\)](#) (21 July '11)

[Commons Education Select Committee Inquiry into the participation of 16-19 year olds in education and training - report published](#)

The Committee has now completed this Inquiry and published a [report](#) (19 July '11) on its findings. [Educational Maintenance Allowance changeover poorly executed by Government, say MPs](#) (www.parliament.uk, 19 July '11)

[Commons Education Select Committee Inquiry into Services for Young People - report published](#)

The Committee has now completed this Inquiry and published a [report](#) (23 June '11) on its findings.

[UK education rates amongst the worst in the developed world, report shows](#)

(SLIM, 19 Sept '11)

A **report** released by the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** "[Education at a Glance 2011](#)" reveals that the UK has one of the worst records for educational participation among leading economies.

[One step forward, two steps back? Skills policy in England under the Coalition Government](#) (SKOPE, 1 July '11)

This **SKOPE Research Paper** written by **Jonathan Payne and Ewart Keep**, examines some of the challenges confronting skills policy in England under the new Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition Government, and considers the prospects for a more integrative and holistic approach to tackling the 'skills problem'.

[Skills projects will boost growth across the economy](#) (BIS, 18 July '11)

Business Secretary Vince Cable has announced Government backing for employer led projects to deliver the skills for growth in sectors ranging from healthcare to nuclear manufacturing.

Following the first round of applications to the £50m Growth and Innovation Fund (GIF), innovative proposals to deliver world class training in seven leading industries have been selected for further development.

[UK and Chinese Governments sign bilateral agreement on vocational education](#)

(BIS, 11 July '11)

A groundbreaking agreement outlining how the UK and China will work together to boost vocational learning in both countries has been announced by **Skills Minister John Hayes**.

[Ofsted inspections - official statistics released](#) (Ofsted, 9 Sept '11)

Ofsted has released updated statistics about the outcomes of inspections in learning and skills providers, early years and childcare registered providers, social care providers and children's centres.

Click here for [official statistics: Learning and skills inspections and outcomes](#)

[Podcast: Success factors for work-based learning](#) (JISC, 16 Sept '11)

Work-based learning has different definitions depending upon which area of education you work within. **JISC's Rebecca O'Brien** chats with **Stan Unwin, an advisor on work-based learning at JISC Advance RSC East Midlands**, about what it means for vocational learning and apprenticeships while at work. (Duration 8:41 mins)

[Employment and skills agenda means a new name for ALP](#) (AELP, 21 June '11)

The Association of Learning Providers (ALP) has been renamed and will now be known as the **Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP)**.

[Qualifications for teaching and supporting learning in the FE sector in England](#)

(Excellence Gateway)

This section on the **Excellence Gateway** provides the latest information on the changes to teaching qualifications, following LLUK's recent review, including details on the [new qualification guidance documents for PTTLs, CTTLS and DTLLS](#).

- [Download the qualification guidance for PTTLs re-issued September 2011 v1](#)
- [Funding update for PTTLs and new PTTLs qualification](#) (City & Guilds, 22 June '11)

UPDATE: ["Developing & Supporting Effective Teaching Practice in the Lifelong Learning Sector - Guidance for Providers"](#) (LSW, 6 July '11)

Following the closure of LLUK, you can now download this useful ["plain English" guide](#) directly from the **Learning South West website**.

Apprenticeships:

[Government cuts apprenticeship red tape](#) (BIS, 6 Sept '11)

Boost for employers as the **Government** outlines new measures on cutting the red tape that can deter employers from taking on apprentices. **Skills Minister John Hayes** has announced a package of new measures to make it easier for employers to take on large numbers of apprentices.

The Pearson Centre for Policy & Learning takes a more detailed look at how this announcement will benefit employers in their [Pocket Watch – Simplifying apprenticeship processes for employers](#). (13 Sept '11)

Apprenticeships cont.

[FE Loans Consultation: Your feedback needed](#) (NAS, 26 Sept '11)

The **Government's** new consultation "[New Challenges, New Chances](#)", includes plans to introduce FE Loans from 2013. As this will **affect some categories of Apprenticeships**, the **National Apprenticeship Service** is asking as many Apprentices, Apprenticeship Providers and Employers as possible to **respond to the [online survey](#) by 21 October 2011**.

[Euro Apprenticeship - Apprenticeship in Europe](#)

Are you interested in gaining more information in the field of European Mobility of Apprentices? If so, register your details [here](#).

[European Commission presents plans for new education benchmarks on employability and mobility to be achieved by 2020](#) (3 Aug '11)

[Britain's 'Skillionaires' revealed](#) (Edge Foundation, 9 Aug '11)

The [City & Guilds Vocational Rich List](#) ranks wealth among those who have built their fortunes following an Apprenticeship or other practical qualification.

[Councils should adopt a more collaborative approach to commissioning services for young people](#) (Ofsted, 9 Aug '11)

A **report** published by **Ofsted** has found that local authorities are not always considering the voluntary and community sector, charities, or other arms of the public sector, when commissioning services for young people.

[Free learning opportunities for the Voluntary Sector from The Open University](#)

(SWF, 3 Aug '11)

Are you looking for free, flexible resources to train and develop yourself or people in your organisation? Do you want to improve leadership and management of your organisation, to ensure its success? [CharityWise](#), part of OpenLearn, uses bite-size **Open University** materials to develop or refresh your skills how and when you wish.

[Funding Central Website - Smart Guide to grants, contracts and loans](#)

(SWF, 28 Sept '11)

Are you applying for any of the 1,199 grants, 217 contracts or 38 loans currently available for organisations in the South West? Register your details at www.fundingcentral.org.uk (managed by **NCVO**, and funded by the **Office for Civil Society**) to get immediate access to the free comprehensive funding search as well as a weekly update packed with all of the new relevant opportunities.

The Big Society:

[Who's Listening to the Big Society? - New Report published](#) (SWF, 8 Aug '11)

The **South West Forum (the regional voice of the voluntary and community sector)** has published a **new report** raising concerns that while the Government might talk of "taking power away from the politicians and giving it to people" the reality is rather different. The report contains results of a survey of the 15 county/unitary areas across the South West about how voluntary organisations have dialogue with local public authorities, and how marginalised groups are involved, and includes case studies of creative and successful ways to help voluntary organisations have a voice.

The Big Society cont.

[Consultation on proposed new Big Lottery Fund policy directions](#) (Cabinet Office, 22 Aug '11)

The **Government** has opened a **12-week consultation** on proposed new policy directions for the **Big Lottery Fund**. The consultation invites views from a wide range of stakeholders which include the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and other government departments. **The Deadline for responses is Midnight on Friday 18 November 2011.**

[National Citizen Service 2012 providers announced](#) (Cabinet Office, 19 Sept '11)

Nineteen service providers have been selected to run National Citizen Service (NCS) pilots in 2012. On making the announcement, **Nick Hurd, Minister for Civil Society** said that up to 30,000 16-year-olds would have the chance to benefit from the scheme next year, a three-fold increase on the number of places in 2011. The list includes **two providers from the South West - Petroc, and NCS South West Consortium led by Young Devon.**

[Government encouragement 'deters people from volunteering'](#) (SWF, 13 Sept '11)

Governments' attempts to encourage volunteering can deter people from getting involved in their communities, according to a new [research report](#) compiled by the **National Council for Voluntary Organisations**, the **Institute for Volunteering Research** and the Think Tank **Involve.**

LSIS National Safeguarding Conferences: "Making the Connections - the provider's journey" (10 & 21 February 2012)

In May 2011 Ofsted published their report "*Best Practice in Safeguarding*" outlining effective safeguarding practice in 15 providers. These LSIS Safeguarding Conferences (in London and Manchester) will focus on provider's safeguarding journeys, and will provide delegates with the opportunity to hear about what their colleagues are doing in the field.

To book your place click on the links below:

- [London - 10 February 2012](#)
- [Manchester - 21 February 2012](#)

E-LEARNING

[Digital literacy is key to unlocking the value of online resources says the HEA and JISC](#)

(JISC, 2 Sept '11)

A **new report** '[The value of reuse of open educational resources](#)' produced by the **HEA** and **JISC**, highlights the need to support learners and academic staff alike in the referencing and the reuse of online resources. Open educational resources (OER) are materials which educators make available online to learners and also to other educators, to share, re-use and remix. The report claims, that their use in teaching offers new and better ways to engage with learning anytime anywhere and raising the richness the course.

[Click here](#) to listen to the podcast with David White, author of the report.

(Duration 11:15 mins)

[JISC Legal responds to cloud computing developments](#) (JISC, 31 Aug '11)

Colleges and universities now have a toolkit to help them make confident, informed decisions about the legal issues surrounding cloud computing. **JISC Legal** has responded to a growing demand for guidance on cloud solutions by creating a comprehensive '[Cloud computing and the law](#)' toolkit. The aim of this resource is to guide educational professionals through the legal aspects of implementing cloud computing solutions in their institutions.

[LSIS rescues the hugely popular National Learning Network NLN materials](#)

(LSIS, 28 July '11)

The **National Learning Network (NLN)** materials, a huge range of well-respected online teaching and learning resources, have been transferred to **LSIS**. Originally funded by the Skills Funding Agency (SfA), the materials represent one of the most substantial and wide-ranging collections of e-learning materials in the UK

INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING (IfL)

[2011 IfL Advisory Council Elections – Make Your Vote Count](#)

Elections for the **19 vacant seats** on the **IfL Advisory Council** will **open on 19 October '11** (closing on 16 November '11). In order to vote in the elections, members are required to be a Fellow, full or Associate member of the Institute for Learning on or before 18 October '11.

[Click here](#) for more information about the Election timetable and the seats available.

[DfE Consultation on the proposed changes to allow qualified teachers from further education \(QTLS\) to become permanent teachers in English schools - now open!](#)

The Department for Education (DfE) are proposing to make some regulatory changes to allow trained FE teachers to become permanent members of staff in schools. **QTLS holders** will be able to be appointed as permanent members of staff and will have the same terms and conditions as QTS holders.

To take part in the consultation [click here](#). **The closing date for responses is Friday 16 December 2011.**

Subject to consultation and parliamentary process, revised regulations should come into effect from April 2012.

[IfL welcomes minister's proposal for an independent review of professionalism in the further education and skills sector](#) (IfL, 8 Sept '11)

IfL has welcomed the **Skills Minister John Hayes'** proposal for an independent review of professionalism in the further education and skills sector.

FE News also comments on the proposed review in their article "[Government issues independent review of professionalism in the FE and Skills sector](#)" (12 Sept '11)

[IfL Podcast - Three decades in the making: a history of IfL](#)

Being part of the professional body for teaching and training is a relatively recent development in the sector for many of IfL's members. However, the roots of the IfL go back three decades. Founder member, **Derek Betts**, joins **IfL's Chief Executive, Toni Fazaeli**, and **Deputy Chief Executive, Lee Davies**, in reflecting on the development of IfL.

[Two experienced teachers and educationalists become IfL patrons](#) (IfL, 28 June '11)

IfL is pleased to announce two new patrons, **Professor Ann Hodgson** and **Geoff Petty**, both teachers who have pledged their support for the professional body for teachers and trainers in FE and skills.

[InTuition – Issue 5 Summer 2011](#)

Download your copy of the latest issue of InTuition - the professional journal for IfL members.

FURTHER EDUCATION

[How FE colleges can overcome new challenges to provide high-quality and relevant education](#) (FE News, 4 Oct '11)

FE colleges are facing a new, long-term challenge: that is, to ensure that they will be able to directly compete in a widening marketplace. As both policy and popular mood shift towards a focus on promoting and providing apprenticeships, particularly for the 25+ learner, for some colleges this will represent a significant cultural shift and will require these institutions to take a good look at their current leadership, management and governance to ensure they can adapt to the challenges and respond effectively. Whilst tackling the immediate challenge of funding cuts, the opening up of the adult skills budget is also requiring colleges to enter unfamiliar territory previously the province of independent learning providers. [Read more](#)

[New Challenges, New Chances: Next Steps in Implementing the Further Education Reform Programme - FE Loans Consultation](#) (BIS, 16 Aug '11)

The **Government's** consultation "*New Challenges, New Chances*", also **contains two more detailed consultations** focussing on **FE loans** (for introduction from 2013) and **informal adult and community learning**.

To respond to any, or all three, of these consultations [click here](#).

The deadline for all three is Friday 21 October 2011.

[Colleges in their Communities – Interim Report published](#) (NIACE, 14 July '11)

Colleges need greater freedom from over-elaborate funding restrictions and other limitations to achieve their full potential for the benefit of their wider communities. This is the key finding of the [Interim Report](#) from the [Independent Commission on Colleges in their Communities](#), supported by **NIACE**, the **157 Group** and the **Association of Colleges**.

[Colleges given more freedom to deliver skills for employment and growth](#)

(BIS, 9 Aug '11)

Skills Minister John Hayes has announced greater freedoms for colleges to deliver fully subsidised training to help people on benefits enter employment. Under new rules that come into force for the 2011/12 academic year, only benefit claimants on Jobseekers' Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group), who are required to seek work as a condition of receiving their benefits, will be eligible for free training; but to enable colleges to meet local demand for the skills that lead to employment and growth, FE providers will also be given some local discretion to provide fully subsidised courses for people on a wider range of benefits, providing the training is to help them enter employment.

[Inspiring the Future Project - sign up now!](#)

"Inspiring the Future" is a **free service** to be launched across England **from 10 October '11**, which will see 100,000 people from all sectors and professions going into state schools and colleges to talk about their jobs, careers and the education route they took, with the aim of encouraging young people achieve their full potential. The initiative is being co-ordinated by independent charity, the [Education and Employers Taskforce](#).

Register your college or school's interest now to be matched with a volunteer.

Or if you are an **Employer** you **can sign up your staff** to get involved [here](#).

If you are **self-employed** or want to register directly, not through your employer, [click here](#).

"Inspiring the Future" is supported by all the main teaching unions and employer and workforce representative bodies.

[The value of practitioner enquiry: LSIS 'Research Labs' report back](#) (LSIS, 12 Sept '11)

New [research case studies](#) published on the **Excellence Gateway** highlight how providers across the country are trying new approaches in their work (inc. podcasts, blogs, video technology, online peer marking, outdoor learning and student-led activities in the classroom) to enhance teaching and learning.

[The 16-19 Bursary Scheme:](#)

The **Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)** has notified schools and colleges of the allocations they will receive under the new £180m **16-19 Bursary Scheme** (which replaces the Education Maintenance Allowance – EMA).

The Scheme will help 16- to 19-year-olds continue in full-time education, where they might otherwise struggle for financial reasons. It is made up of two parts - a bursary of £1,200 a year to the most vulnerable young people and a discretionary fund for schools and colleges to distribute.

For more information, including a **guide for schools and colleges**, visit the **YPLA's 16-19 Bursary Fund pages**.

Q&A factsheets are also available to help:

- [Young People and Parents](#)
- [Providers](#)

and **The Association of Colleges (AoC)** has published a document giving [advice on the administration of the 16-19 Bursary Fund](#).

HIGHER EDUCATION

["Students at the Heart of the System" – Consulting on the future of Higher Education](#)

The Government published its [Higher Education White Paper, Students at the Heart of the System](#) in June 2011, outlining proposals for a radical reform of higher education in England.

As part of the on-going consultation process **BIS** are currently holding a [Technical Consultation on a new, fit-for-purpose regulatory framework for the HE sector](#), which **closes on 27 October 2011**.

To keep up-to-date with all the latest news and developments [visit the BIS website](#) dedicated to the consultation.

[The Alternative White Paper: "In Defence of Public Higher Education"](#)

(Guardian, 27 Sept '11)

Hundreds of academics have signed a document that warns of dire consequences should the **Government's White Paper** on [Higher Education](#) become law.

The document, "[In Defence of Public Higher Education](#)", endorsed by a wide range of prominent academics, including **Stefan Collini, of Cambridge University**, and **Howard Hotson, of Oxford**, offers an alternative to the Government's vision for the sector in the form of nine propositions about higher education's value to society. Drawing on recent research, it also argues that the changes proposed are based on ideology rather than financial necessity, and will make no lasting savings.

[New online 2012-13 student finance resource now available!](#)

Student Finance England have replaced their previously printed practitioner pack with a [new online resource](#).

The new resource contains all the information needed to help students and parents make informed decisions about student finance, including a [myth-busting student finance film](#) (**Section 8: Resources**) which can be used at parents nights or information evenings.

[LSIS picks up the baton on supporting progression to Foundation degrees and work based higher level learning](#) (LSIS, 12 Sept '11)

Following the closure of **Foundation Degree Forward (fdf)** in July, **LSIS** is striving to ensure that key aspects of its work continue for the benefit of the sector. LSIS will provide some funding to keep vital resources on the website up-to-date, offer relevant training and produce a new CPD module on 'learning while earning' which will be available on the CLIAG section of the Excellence Gateway later in the year.

[Small firms in the South West report university partnership success](#)

(Universities SW, 14 June '11)

Research undertaken by **Universities UK** and the **Institute of Directors** has revealed that over three-quarters (78%) of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in the South West have worked with a university or higher education institution (HEI) in the past year, and reveals wide ranging engagement driving innovation and employment as well as boosting local economies.

[The impact of higher education for part-time students](#) (UKCES, 8 Sep '11)

Recent policy developments suggest that part-time study is central to the UK's skills and employability agenda because it provides flexible study aimed at those already in the labour market. Specifically, it has a role in providing educational opportunities throughout people's lives, in increasing social mobility, and in creating a more diverse Higher Education sector responsive to the needs of employers, the economy, and students.

This **UKCES report** compares how graduates from part- and full-time study fare in the labour market six months and three and a half years after graduation.

REGIONAL NEWS & NETWORKS

[BIS Local Offices now open](#)

BIS Local is the title given to the presence that the **Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)** will maintain across England to develop and maintain links between the department and those delivering its policies.

Its role will be to:

- Support the BIS ministerial team with briefings, updates, handling visits and generally acting as a conduit between BIS and local areas
- Lead and develop relationships with Local Enterprise Partnerships and local government so they fully understand BIS national policy priorities, can help coordinate economic development, and can build capacity and capability amongst key partners and stakeholders
- Provide intelligence to BIS
- Coordinate government responses to 'economic shocks' including where major companies fail
- To develop local understanding and buy-in to BIS policies by maintaining strong links with selected large businesses, key sectors and local business bodies
- Provide local intelligence to BIS so that the department understands the impact of policies
- Contribute to the development of new policies

BIS Local - South Central & West will cover the **South West** (and some parts of the South East), with offices in Bristol, Plymouth and Guildford. [Click here](#) for more information about the **BIS Local offices and the contact details of the SW Local Lead Contact**.

[Proposed Merger of Filton College and Stroud College](#) (SfA)

A **public consultation** took place between 15 June and 20 July on the proposed merger of Filton College and Stroud College. The **consultation report** is now available to view [here](#).

[New initiative hoping to halt rise in youth unemployment](#) (This is Bristol, 13 Sept '11)

A new campaign, to tackle youth unemployment and give young people better opportunities to get into the world of work has been launched in the **Bristol area** by the **Bristol Partnership**. The Partnership, along with the **Local Enterprise Partnership**, wants to address the issue of joblessness among young people, specifically 16-24 year-olds.

[First successful Project from first round of Regional Growth Fund to be awarded funding](#) (BIS, 21 July '11)

Business Secretary Vince Cable has announced the opening of the **Plymouth University and Western Morning News Growth Fund (PWGF)** which successfully secured funding from round one of the **Regional Growth Fund (GIF)**.

The Project will create jobs across the, **Heart of the South West and the Cornwall and Scilly Isles Local Enterprise Partnership Regions** by awarding grants to small businesses that have struggled to access finance through other means.

Around the Region:

[Dr Beri Hare 'bowled over' by OBE honour](#) (Stroud College, 11 June '11)

The award of an **OBE** in this year's **Birthday Honours List** has left **Stroud College Principal Dr Beri Hare** 'bowled over and absolutely delighted'.

[Filton College makes top ten FE colleges](#) (FE News, 14 Sept '11)

As a result of another year of strong results, **Filton College** now ranks in the top 10% of General Further Education Colleges in the Country in qualification success rates.

[Weston College students join town hall revamp project](#) (FE News, 8 Sept '11)

Weston College has teamed up with one of the UK's largest privately-owned construction company to revamp its local town hall. **Willmott Dixon**, will carry out the £9.7 million project with the help of Construction and Engineering students from the College.

[S&B Automotive Academy Success at IMS Global Learning Impact Awards 2011](#)

(JISC RSC SW, 11 Aug '11)

[The Jericho Project](#) funded by the **LSIS Flexibility and Innovation Fund** has enabled **S&B Automotive Academy from Bristol** to host virtual workplace visits at schools using innovative netcam technology, allowing potential apprentices to exchange real world information. The technology has been so successful that both **S&B** and **e-Learning Advisor, David Rowe, from JISC Regional Support Centre South West** have recently **won a bronze award at the International IMS Global Learning Awards**.

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs):

[The role of Local Enterprise Partnerships in tackling skills needs](#) (157 Group, June '11)

This **report** offers the main findings of a research project carried out by the **Local Government Group**, the **157 Group of Colleges** and the **British Chambers of Commerce** looking at the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in local skills, and the availability and use of labour market intelligence (LMI).

The South West now has full coverage of Local Enterprise Partnerships, as the remaining LEPs are confirmed:

- [Gloucestershire joins local enterprise partnership network](#) (BIS, 18 May '11)
[Green light for Gloucestershire LEP](#) (Glos Chamber of Commerce, 19 May '11)
- [Dorset joins local enterprise partnership network](#) (BIS, 7 July '11)
[Second time success for Dorset LEP](#) (Insider News, 8 July '11)
- [Swindon and Wiltshire joins local enterprise partnership network](#) (BIS, 21 July '11)
[Swindon and Wiltshire get LEP approval](#) (Insider News, 22 July '11)

[South West Observatory LEP webpages](#)

The **South West Observatory (SWO)** has produced these pages in response to requests for information about LEPs in the South West, and includes sections on "Your LEP Questions Answered", "What's new", and LEP updates, as well as **links to all six SW LEP websites**.

You can also find information about Local Governance & New Subnational Arrangements on the SWO [State of the South West 2011 website](#).

Life Change UK Events: 'Understanding & Managing Challenging Behaviour'- Promoting positive change for young people and adults, working more effectively with hard to reach groups

Dates: Wednesday 19 October '11 (Exeter) or Wednesday 2 November '11 (Plymouth)

For more information on these events and to book a place [click here](#).

LSW NEWS & EVENTS

[Learning South West joins Facebook!](#)

Learning South West now has its own Facebook page, click here to ["Like us"](#).

['Have a go' at new skills this Autumn](#)

As part of the **World Skills London 2011** initiative, the ['Have a Go'](#) campaign will allow people to gain hands-on experience in a new activity at any time **between now and February 2012** and hopefully be inspired to find out more about learning.

In this Region **Learning South West** is **one of the partners co-ordinating the campaign**. There will be opportunities to 'Have a Go' across the region at lots of different events and in all sorts of places.

If you have any events where you would like to give adults the chance to try something new please **contact Hayley Broom at hayley_broom@learning-southwest.org.uk or 01823 365435 for details of the support available.**

["somewhereto" do you have space for young people?](#)

The **Regional Youth Work Unit**, based at Learning South West, is helping to deliver a **national project called 'somewhereto '**, which is all about finding spaces for young people to debate, play sport, perform, play music, dance, display artwork, show films, write - in fact spaces for young people to do anything related to the arts, sports and culture.

We are looking for free or low cost spaces across the region that might be available for young people aged 16 – 25 years to use for dancing, performing, writing, meeting, playing sport - especially any new or unusual spaces that young people might not know about.

If you think you can you help and would like to register your interest [click here](#).

[New Centre for *informal* Learning \(CfiL\) Launched](#)

Learning South West is launching the **Centre for *informal* Learning (CfiL)** to provide accredited qualifications to meet the needs of our members and partners.

Our first accredited programme will be a **Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement, starting on 3 November '11 at Bishops Hull House, Taunton.**

This course is aimed specifically at those who are involved in training for youth workers and related areas, who need to gain a nationally approved assessor qualification.

[Click here](#) for more details on the course content, and to download an enrolment form or contact **John Gibson** at john_gibson@learning-southwest.org.uk / tel: (01823) 365650.

Learning South West Membership - Join Us Now!

Is your organisation interested in becoming a Learning South West Member? Why not visit our [Membership pages](#) to read about the numerous benefits on offer to our members, or contact the **Membership Team** on (01823) 347951, e-mail membership@learning-southwest.org.uk.

"Clarity and Confidence with Language" - A One-Day Event with David Crystal

Date: Monday 31 October 2011

Venue: The Cleve Spa Hotel & Conference Centre, Wellington, TA21 8SN

Learning South West are pleased to announce that **David Crystal**, one of the foremost writers and lecturers on the English language, with a worldwide reputation and over 100 books to his name, will be visiting the South West at the end of October.

Spend the day with David, hear lectures on three separate topics:

- The Structure of Language: elements of literacy
- Grammar Rules
- Internet Linguistics

and put your questions to him on any aspect of grammar during a Q&A Language Clinic.

[Click here](#) for further details and to book your place now!

The closing date for applications is Wednesday 19 October 2011.

"Making Headway in Turbulent Times"

The South West Region working together to respond to change

Date: Wednesday 23 November 2011

Venue: Rookery Manor, near Weston-super-Mare (BS24 0JB)

This **free** one-day conference will provide information and support on initiatives designed to help colleagues cope with the changes in our sector. There will be workshops to share learning from the **LSIS Regional Response Fund projects** including Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills in Apprenticeships, working with diverse groups of learners and an update from **South West Learning & Skills on Local Authority Alliances Across the South West**. There will be input from **Petroc** on the Work Programme, the **Association of Colleges** and **South West Forum**. **JISC** will present "*Open Your I's - a selection of free and open source ILT resources for providers*".

To request further details and to book your place, please e-mail [John Gibson](#).

The closing date for applications is Tuesday 15 November 2011.

Other Professional Development Opportunities this Autumn:

South West Regional Teacher Education Forum	Thursday 20 October '11
Regional Inclusion Forum	Tuesday 8 November '11
South West Regional Staff Development/HR Managers' Forum	Wednesday 9 November '11
European Learn+ Project Dissemination Events	Monday 28 November '11 & Thursday 1 December '11
Professional Formation - Applying for QTLS/ATLS	Monday 12 December '11

If you would like further information about any of these events please e-mail: events@learning-southwest.org.uk

Why not use Bishops Hull House for your next meeting or event?

If you want to enjoy a lovely garden whilst networking and team building, come along to Bishops Hull House, a beautiful Georgian property offering three conference rooms, all with natural daylight and views over our gardens and the surrounding countryside. We can accommodate for up to 50 people, offering large or small meetings, free Wi-Fi throughout the building and Skype meetings upon request.

[Visit our website](#) for further details and costs or contact Georgina Skirton on (01823) 365447 or Emma Fawcett on (01823) 365438.

➤ **Book your Christmas Meal at Bishops Hull House**

Why not have your Christmas meal with friends or colleagues at Bishops Hull House this year? Enjoy a delicious 2-course meal with all the trimmings for £25.00 per head. Click [here](#) to view the menu.

Dates available from November 2011 - January 2012 (inc. evenings and weekends)

Call Emma on 01823 365438 or emma.fawcett@learning-southwest.org.uk to book a date now! (bookings must be for 10 people or more)

➤ **Bishops Hull House Activities this Autumn**

Festive Craft Fayre

Date & Time: Saturday 12 November 2011 (10.00 am - 3.30 pm)

Free Entry - pop in any time

Find inventive ideas, unique gift suggestions and divine decorations in our festive market. Join us for this uniquely festive day offering more than a sprinkle of christmas spirit!

Wet Felt Workshop

Date & Time: Saturday 19 November 2011 (10.00 am - 4.00 pm)

Price: £35.00 (inc. materials and refreshments)

Learn how to make a felted bag from wool fleece. For complete beginners, ages 8 to 80.

Starting your Family History

Date & Time: Sunday 27 November 2011 (2.30 pm - 4.30 pm)

Price: £10.00 (inc. refreshments)

Come and listen to presentation given by Bob Steed, a local Genealogist with 35 years of experience, followed by an opportunity to ask questions. There will also be a chance during the afternoon to start researching your own ancestry using 'ancestry.com' and 'findmypast.co.uk'.

To request further details about any of these events please call Emma on 01823 365438 or emma.fawcett@learning-southwest.org.uk.