



Department  
for Education

Jenese Joseph  
Chair of the Corporation  
Amersham & Wycombe College  
Stanley Hill  
Amersham  
Buckinghamshire  
HP7 9HN



Department  
for Business  
Innovation & Skills

**Nick Boles MP**  
Minister of State for Skills

1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000  
E [enquiries@bis.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@bis.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/bis](http://www.gov.uk/bis)

16 October 2015

I am writing to inform you of the Government's view of the position of Amersham and Wycombe College following the Further Education (FE) Commissioner's recent review, and the steps that will need to be taken to secure improvement.

As you know, the Skills Funding Agency issued the college with a notice of concern for financial health in March 2013 and it has also been consecutively graded as 'Satisfactory' or 'Requires Improvement' by Ofsted at its last three inspections. In light of the lack of progress made in addressing these issues, I asked the FE Commissioner, Dr David Collins, to carry out an assessment of the college and this was conducted between 21 and 27 September 2015.

The FE Commissioner's key finding is that while the college has a recovery plan covering both financial and quality issues, this is not sufficiently robust and the targets set are not sufficiently focused to bring about improvement in a timely manner. In addition, relationships between the interim executive team and the governing body are not strong. The FE Commissioner has thus recommended that the college should not be left to manage its own future and should be placed in administered college status. The implications of this are set out in the document "The Strengthened Intervention Process" <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-commissioner-intervention-process>.

I note the board recognises that the long term prospects of the college would best be served by some form of structural change that is likely to be derived from a merger or other form of relationship with another FE provider and has begun to explore alternative options for the future. The FE Commissioner recommends that the board should continue to explore these options, taking into account the objectives of the area review process that I announced on 20 July this year. I hope that an area review covering the college can begin shortly.

The FE Commissioner also makes a number of detailed recommendations for action that the college should take over the coming months, including strengthening the targets of the financial recovery plan, ensuring the quality improvement plan has clear milestones that are not deemed successful before their impact can be measured, and engaging external expert support to assist the ongoing implementation of the recovery plan to ensure costs are minimised and the quality of provision for learners is quickly improved.

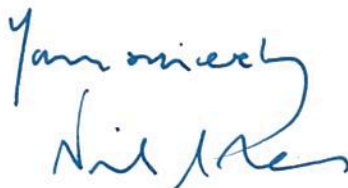
I have carefully considered the FE Commissioner's assessment, and accept all the recommendations he makes. I am therefore placing Amersham and Wycombe College into administered college status with immediate effect.

While there has been recent significant change at both board and executive team level, I have asked the FE Commissioner to review the position at his first monitoring visit in and, if necessary, to recommend further strengthening.

Amersham and Wycombe College faces a challenging future. I shall be looking to you, the other members of the board and the college's executive team to provide the appropriate leadership in these difficult times.

A summary of the Commissioner's assessment report and recommendations are provided with this letter. This summary and my letter to you will be published on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) two weeks following the date on which this letter was sent.

If you have any questions about the FE Commissioner's assessment or this letter please contact Paul Lucken in the Skills Funding Agency ([Paul.lucken@sfa.bis.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.lucken@sfa.bis.gov.uk)) in the first instance.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Yours sincerely Nick Boles". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**NICK BOLES MP**