



Department
for Education



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

Minister for Skills and
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To: Chairs of FE and Sixth Form Colleges

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Dear Chair

I have promised to write to you on a regular basis to update you on recent policy developments. Since I last wrote in November, we have continued to put in place rapid and significant reforms to improve the rigour and responsiveness of the FE and skills system and earlier this month National Apprenticeships Week saw us announcing more details on our progress with transforming the apprenticeships and qualifications systems.

A particular priority is reform to improve the teaching of Maths and English. Maths and English are essential foundations for any career. From September 2014, institutions which do not offer Maths and/or English courses to students aged 16 to 19 who have not yet achieved a GCSE grade C or above in those subjects by age 16 will lose funding. To help the sector develop its workforce capacity in these subjects, I announced a programme of bursaries to attract high quality graduates to FE to train as specialist teachers of Maths, English and students with special educational needs (SEN), together with grants to enhance the skills of existing staff to teach GCSEs in Maths and English. It is imperative that all colleges have in place the right workforce to deliver this important provision. We will shortly be publishing an FE Workforce Strategy which sets out our priorities and includes details of the funding and incentive schemes available and I would urge you and your governors to consider the arrangements in place in your own college.

At the same time of course the implications of the 2013 spending review have become clear. I understand that budgets are tight, but I am glad that we have been able to mitigate the impact of the 18 year olds funding reduction in the academic year 2014/15 by capping any losses in relation to this at 2%. This will protect those institutions which would have otherwise lost more than 2% of their total EFA programme funding due to the 18-year-olds funding reduction.

I know that responding to these challenges is not easy, but I am confident that putting rigour and responsiveness at the heart of everything we do is the best way to respond to the fiscal and global pressures we, and our learners, face. In that way, colleges can deliver high quality education that meets the needs of employers, and provide excellent, stretching training to learners. Colleges are social enterprises, in the widest sense of that term: enterprising in their engagement with business; responding directly to the needs of their customers, winning business directly from employers and individuals, whilst driven also by a strong social purpose which ensures that those at most disadvantage in local

communities are helped to reach their potential. As funding switches over time to follow the learner through loans or the employer through Apprenticeships, this will be increasingly important. As governors your role in delivering that local vision is critical.

Given these pressures, I believe the sector deserves credit for consistently improving performance, as measured by Ofsted. The most recent Ofsted Annual Report shows that 58% of colleges inspected in 2012/13 were graded as good or outstanding, compared to 52% in 2011/12 and 49% in 2010/11. The number of colleges graded as satisfactory / requires improvement has decreased year-on-year for the past three years from 49% to 38%. Where performance is not good enough we now have a clear process to grip problems in the shape of David Collins, the FE Commissioner, who has made an excellent start. David has written an [open letter](#) to Governors about the lessons learnt from his first six visits. I would urge you to take a look as it emphasises the central role of governors and the importance of good support for them. I recognise that David's letter is focused on lessons from colleges where improvement is needed and that of course, many of you already demonstrate excellence. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have applied to become National Leaders of Governance.

I was delighted that so many of you were able to attend the Ministerial recognition event that I hosted at Lancaster House on 24 February. This was an excellent opportunity to reflect on the vital importance of the role you play as governors and consider examples of where governors' challenge has led to real improvement in colleges as well as the importance of the role businesses and employers can play in governance. Securing more business people onto boards brings mutual benefits to colleges and local employers. Their skills can be particularly valuable at times of change – understanding the bottom line, setting strategic direction and holding the executive team to account for delivering high quality services. As you consider the composition of your boards it may help to remind you of [guidance](#) published last summer on what expenses governors are eligible for and in what circumstances it might be possible for governors to receive payment. It is also timely to reflect on the skills and aptitudes required to drive an organisation that can not only survive but thrive in changing and competitive circumstances.

As requested by many of you, we have put together a brief for governors on the latest policy developments and this is attached. I would be grateful if you could ensure it is shared with all your governors. It is important that you as governors continue to have access to information that allows you to undertake your role most effectively, and I hope that these termly letters and attached briefing play an important role in that. In addition, this Spring, Ofsted will be publishing a data 'dashboard' for each governing body showing performance against various key metrics. I am sure these dashboards will be a helpful addition to supporting college governors to fulfil their role effectively.

We would be delighted to receive feedback from you about any of the issues covered in this letter and the attached briefing. If you would like to do that please contact Bobbie McClelland (bobbie.mcclelland@bis.gsi.gov.uk).

I would like to thank you again for your continuing hard work to lead your colleges.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'For the Matt', written in a cursive style.

MATTHEW HANCOCK MP

BIS/DFE BRIEF ON PROGRESS WITH IMPLEMENTING RIGOUR AND RESPONSIVENESS – A brief for FE Governors

This annex contains briefing for college governors on the following topics:

- **Apprenticeships**
- **Skills Funding Statement**
- **24+ Loans**
- **EFA funding for 18 year olds**
- **14-19 vocational qualification reform**
- **Vocational qualification reform plan**
- **Traineeships**
- **Careers / inspiration**
- **16-19 accountability**
- **19+ accountability**
- **New colleges and the place of elite institutions in the landscape**
- **FE Workforce Strategy (including update on support for teaching of Maths, English and Students with Special Educational Needs)**
- **Chartered Status**
- **Perkins Review of Engineering in FE and sixth-form colleges**
- **Free meals for disadvantaged students in FE**
- **Care leavers strategy**
- **Implementation of new legislation to strengthen support for students with SEN in further education**
- **Honours**

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships already benefit employers, apprentices and the economy. We need to ensure that world-class Apprenticeships support our employers and our economy to grow for years to come. We want it to become the norm for young people to go into an Apprenticeship or go to University or do both in the case of some Higher Apprenticeships.

The Government is reforming Apprenticeships to make them more rigorous and responsive to the needs of employers. The reforms are set out in full in [*The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Implementation Plan published on 28 October 2013.*](#)

Apprenticeship reforms will improve the quality of Apprenticeships, simplify the system and put employers in the driving seat enabling them to lead on the design of Apprenticeships. Long complex frameworks are being replaced by short, simple standards describing the skills and knowledge that an individual needs to be fully competent in an occupation. We are also increasing quality through higher expectations of English and maths, more end point assessment to ensure the apprentice is fully competent, and raise aspiration for Apprentices by introducing grading.

Trailblazers, made up of large and small employers and professional bodies, are leading the way. The first of these are in the sectors of Aerospace, Automotive, Digital Industries, Electrotechnical, Energy and Utilities, Financial Services, Food and Drink Manufacturing and Life Sciences and Industrial Sciences. Employers in these sectors have been collaborating to design new Apprenticeships standards and assessment approaches for occupations within their sector to make them world-class. The first of these standards are available to view via the National Apprenticeships Service website www.apprenticeships.org.uk/standards . We expect the first new Apprenticeships will

begin to be delivered in 2014/15. Our aim is that from 2017/18 all new Apprenticeship starts will be on the new standards.

We recently announced a further phase of Trailblazer projects in 29 more industries including STEM, Professions, Service and others. Leading employers in each of these sectors will design the new high quality standards for their occupations. This Trailblazer activity will help to create a sustainable employer model for future Apprenticeship development.

Apprenticeships, particularly Higher Apprenticeships, offer more opportunities than ever to help individuals progress to the top of a profession. Apprenticeships deliver and offer the ideal opportunity for ambitious young people and adults to learn while earning a wage – and for employers to recruit the brightest and best.

The Budget announced an additional £10m in 2014-15 and in 2015-16 for new support for employer investment in Apprenticeships up to postgraduate level. The Autumn Statement announced Government funding of £40m to deliver an additional 20,000 Higher Apprenticeship starts in England over the academic years 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Skills Funding Statement

The Skills Funding Statement 2013-2016 was published on 10 February 2014 and sets out the funding priorities and available budget for the further education (FE) and skills sector for the 2014 - 2015 financial year. The Secretary of State wrote to the sector as the publication was announced to re-iterate the funding priorities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-funding-statement-2013-to-2016>

24+ Loans

The Skills Funding Statement announced that Apprenticeships will be removed from 24+ Advanced Learning Loans. Regulations were laid before Parliament on 13 February to bring this change into force from 7 March. It is clear that Loans are not the preferred funding route for employers or prospective Apprentices, so it makes sense to remove Apprentices from Loans now in readiness for the reformed Apprenticeships.

Outside Apprenticeships, the introduction of Loans has been very successful for those studying at Level 3 and 4. Latest data available showed that over 60,000 potential learners had applied for Loans. This is why the whole of the Loans budget is now available for non-Apprenticeship training. The Skills Funding Agency will be issuing revised guidance for 2013/14 and we will be working with the sector to continue to grow the programme to the full capacity of the budget this year, and which doubles in 2014/15.

Apprentices who have already taken out a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan will not have to pay it back and the Student Loans Company will contact them to make them aware of the changes.

EFA funding for 18 year olds

We are reducing the funding for 18 year olds in full time education in the academic year 2014/15 by 17.5%. We are doing that within the context of a huge budget deficit, which means we are having to make some very difficult decisions to make savings from the spending round settlement announced in 2013.

We have applied this reduction with consideration of the differing needs of 18-year-old students. We are maintaining provision for disadvantaged students by not applying this reduction to the element of the formula that provides additional funding, based on the number of students who have not achieved a grade C in GCSE English or mathematics.

We have also excluded all students with statements of special education needs, learning disability assessments or education, health and care plans from this reduction.

Our analysis of the impact of this decision shows that the average loss in funding per student across all 16-19 providers, as a result of the change in funding to 18-year-olds, will be 2%, with no disproportionate impact on disadvantaged students. We are aware, however, that the challenges facing some colleges as a result of this funding change might be considerable. We will mitigate the impact of the 18-year-olds funding reduction in the academic year 2014/15. We will cap any losses in relation to this at 2%. This will protect those institutions which would have otherwise lost more than 2% of their total EFA programme funding due to the 18-year-olds funding reduction. This protection for the academic year 2014/15 will give schools and colleges more time to adapt to the change, including for those students who are already on courses. The need to tackle the budget deficit remains, however, so the full funding reduction for 18-year-olds will still be necessary in 2015/16.

14-19 vocational qualification reform

In December 2013 we confirmed which [vocational qualifications](#) will count in the 2016 performance tables. This affects courses available for teaching from September 2014. We published:

- The third annual list of approved Key Stage 4 non-GCSE and iGCSE qualifications. 180 qualifications have been approved covering a wide range of sectors, including suites of new construction and engineering qualifications developed with industry.
- The first lists of level 3 vocational qualifications for 16 to 19 year olds, categorised as Tech Levels or Applied General qualifications.

142 qualifications have been approved as Tech Levels with a further 85 qualifications pending approval subject to confirmation of industry support.

Tech Levels lead students to recognised occupations and are publicly supported by representative employers and or professional or trade bodies (and may also be supported by HEI).

87 qualifications have been approved as Applied General with a further 4 qualifications pending approval subject to confirmation of HEI support. Applied General qualifications provide broader study of a vocational area and (alone or combined with other qualifications) fulfill entry requirements to a range of HE courses and are publicly supported by HEI.

In spring we will confirm which pending qualifications have been approved. We expect to publish a list of new Early Years Educator qualifications by the summer. These are qualifications that meet the criteria set out by NCTL following the Nutbrown review and also the interim requirement for high quality qualifications that will count in the 2016 performance tables

Tech Levels will count towards the [TechBacc](#) performance table measure, a new measure of excellence in technical provision for schools and colleges. The TechBacc will be introduced for courses beginning in September 2014, for reporting in the 16-19 performance tables.

Establishing this measure for excellence in technical provision will end the perception that vocational education in the UK is a poor second to academic study. By recognising excellence, it will incentivise high-value provision and encourage the most able students to study demanding technical programmes.

Students who achieve the three component qualifications (a Tech Level, alongside a level 3 maths qualification and extended project qualifications) included in the TechBacc will be equipped to apply for technician roles and higher apprenticeships in a wide range of industry sectors. Alternatively, they could enter professional training or university. After the Easter break, we will issue technical guidance concerning requirements of, key stage 4, level 2 substantial vocational qualifications, Tech Levels and Applied General qualifications counting in the 2017 performance tables, for teaching from September 2015. Lists of approved qualifications that will count in the 2017 performance tables will be issued in the autumn.

We have now published the outcome of the consultation on 16-19 accountability which closed last November. This sets out how these new categories of vocational qualifications will be reported in college performance tables and used to set minimum standards.

Reform Plan for Vocational Qualifications

[Getting the job done:the Government's Reform Plan for Vocational Qualifications](#) was published on 5 March. The plan sets out the steps we have taken to reform vocational qualifications in full-time education, and initiatives for further reform. BIS has worked with DfE, Ofqual, the Skills Funding Agency and the UK Commission for Employment and Skills to produce the plan.

By November 2014 we will have removed more than 6,500 qualifications not valued by employers from Government funding – either because they have no or very low usage or because they don't deliver the quality we are seeking – allowing nearly £200m of funding to be redirected towards more effective qualifications which deliver for learners and employers.

The plan builds on Professor Alison Wolf's review of vocational education at 14-19 and the Richard review of Apprenticeships, applying the same principles to adult vocational qualifications. It also picks up on the recommendations of the review of adult vocational qualifications led by Nigel Whitehead. To have a coherent and seamless education and skills system we need to ensure that all the elements are aligned and work well with each other, and this alignment is highlighted throughout the plan. The plan both announces specific further work which is being undertaken and raises issues which need further consideration.

At the same time, Ofqual will review the way qualifications are regulated, to make sure that the system consistently produces high quality qualifications, rather than ones which need to be removed from funding because they don't meet real needs.

Traineeships

Traineeships are an important part of the Government's drive to tackle youth unemployment. With work preparation, English and maths and work experience at their core, Traineeships give young people aged 16-23 the skills and experience they need to be able to compete for Apprenticeships or other jobs.

Introduced in August 2013, the programme is now being delivered across the country and we have already seen some excellent examples. As a new programme we expect Traineeships to grow and develop over time, helping more and more young people unlock their potential. To support this we will be extending the funding to include 24 year olds from 2014/15, and DWP has removed the 16-hour training rule that has applied to Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants participating in Traineeships, giving providers and employers, greater flexibility to design programmes that meet individuals' needs.

To ensure Traineeships are a high quality programme from the outset, their delivery is limited to those providers who have achieved an Ofsted inspection grade of 'good' or 'outstanding'. To support the development and dissemination of good practice across the sector, the Education and Training Foundation has launched its Traineeships Staff Support Programme. Further details can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/nzlm5m>

We urge providers to engage with employers, encouraging them to offer quality work experience opportunities and to help in designing excellent Traineeship programmes. Traineeship opportunities can be promoted on the National Apprenticeship Service website: <http://tinyurl.com/os2pgqj>

Careers / Inspiration

In September, an Inspiration Vision was launched, calling for employers, schools and colleges to follow the example of the best in working together to inspire young people about the world of work, (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-inspiration-vision-statement>). We need to provide young people with more inspiration and more real-life contact with the world of work to support them when they are making important decisions with long-term impacts for their futures. Many organisations are already doing important work in this area and there has been a high level of success and positive impact being achieved by those we have spoken to. In order to find out more, share successes and inspire more people to get involved in delivering this vision **we would like you to send us examples of good practice**. These might be examples from your own organisation or other organisations, web links, case studies, or a couple of lines in an email that we can follow up. Please send your responses to inspirationvision@bis.gsi.gov.uk.

16-19 Accountability

We have now published the Government response to the 16-19 Accountability Consultation. Our new, fairer accountability reforms place a new focus on the progress students make and minimise perverse incentives so that schools and colleges support all students equally. There will be a sharper focus on English and mathematics, recognising the importance of these skills for progression to further and higher education and employment. These reforms will also provide better information on school and college performance for parents and students. These reforms will give as many students as possible the knowledge and skills to flourish in the later phases of education and life and drive higher standards across 16-19 education and training

Post 19 Accountability including outcome based Success Measures and Ofsted's dashboard

We set out in the Skills Funding Statement our intention, as with 16-19 provision, to build a stronger focus on learner outcomes, as well as achievement of qualification when measuring the success of adult provision. Therefore, we are developing a new set of outcome focused measures of performance for publicly funded post-19 FE and skills. These measures will utilise matched administrative data which is already collected across government - from BIS, DfE, HMRC and DWP. The measures will focus on three areas: progression within learning; destinations (into further learning and employment); and earnings. We intend to publish the first set of experimental data on these measures in July 2014, showing results for 2010/11 learners. We then intend to publish data for 2011/12 learners in November 2014. In the first instance these measures would be made available for information but, alongside the July publication, we will consult on how the measures will be used in future.

Whilst measuring outcomes is an important way of holding colleges and providers accountable for the public money that they spend, we recognise that colleges are

essentially social enterprises and that they should look outwards to their communities and feel accountable to them. Last year's AoC report on governance recommended that it would be helpful for the Department to produce an Accountability Framework for colleges and our aim will be to publish this alongside the consultation on outcome measures in the summer.

New colleges and the place of elite colleges in the landscape

As part of realising our intention to bring new dynamism to the further education sector, we are supporting the establishment of new colleges that will provide high quality training and adopt innovative approaches to learning and drive up quality, customer focus and responsiveness. The announcement that the new elite institution for HS2 will be an incorporated college underlines our belief in the college sector, and the profile of this project will give a boost to the status and visibility of the sector. [The consultation](#) on the location of the main site for the new high speed rail college was launched on 7 March. The new elite colleges will build relationships with a network of affiliated facilities, including existing colleges, ensuring that the benefits are shared widely in the sector.

In addition, Prospects Learning Foundation, a large education and skills charity based in South Essex that has a national reputation for its work promoting and delivering technical vocational education, has recently completed a full public consultation on their proposal to become a unique new employer-focused, specialist technical FE Corporation. We are expecting their application for incorporation in due course.

FE Workforce Strategy (including update on support for teaching of Maths, English and Students with Special Educational Needs)

Improving the quality and professionalism of teachers and trainers is a key priority for FE, supported by the Education and Training Foundation.

In addition to the work to raise standards in the specialist teaching of Maths and English and of those with SEN which we set out below, Government recognises the other workforce priorities facing the sector:

- the importance of excellent leadership and governance to drive standards;
- the need for a closer line of sight to work through greater involvement by business in everything the sector does;
- the potential to make more effective use of technology in teaching and learning.

BIS will shortly be publishing a strategy paper, which sets out what Government is doing to support colleges and training providers in these priority areas. It is hoped that this will stimulate a debate across the sector on the best way for meeting the challenges and about how we should measure and demonstrate the impact of delivering this strategy for learners and employers.

As the OECD report on skills of UK showed, we need to make significant improvements in the level of Maths and English skills in the population of this country and to do that we need excellent specialist Maths and English teachers. With support from the Education and Training Foundation, we have put in place a range of programmes of support to help colleges and training providers develop their workforce capacity. These were initially announced on 1 August 2013, with further programmes announced on 5 February 2014. The programme of bursaries and grants aims to attract high quality graduates to FE to train as specialist teachers of Maths, English and students with special educational needs (SEN), and also ensure that existing teachers can improve their skills in these areas.

The complete package of support includes:

- Bursaries of up to £20,000 to attract new graduates with relevant degrees to teach Maths and English and to specialise in teaching students with special educational needs (SEN) in 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- Development of a Subject Knowledge Enhancement scheme to enable highly qualified graduates who have the skills and aptitude to teach but need to increase their depth of knowledge and Maths skills before they start teacher training.
- Golden Hello programme to encourage retention of new Maths teachers - bonus of £7,500 for graduates teaching maths in FE paid in the second year of teaching, rising to £10,000 if they train to support learners with SEN.
- Recruitment incentive scheme - a bonus payment of £20,000 to colleges and training providers who recruit a specialist graduate Maths teacher or £30,000 for those who will be sharing their teaching expertise with nearby institutions.
- Funding for FE Centres of Excellence in Teacher Training to deliver initial teacher training and identify innovative and best practice in teaching Maths and English to post-16 students, including those with SEN; and assess the level of SEN teaching skills and knowledge skills the sector.
- Subsidies for the costs of existing teachers participating in the Maths enhancement programme (from the Education and Training Foundation).
- Development of a new English enhancement programme to increase the skills of existing FE teachers to teach English to GCSE, for delivery from September 2014.
- Introduction of a 'premium' scheme to support Maths and English graduates within FE to achieve a Masters degree within two years of commencing teaching – pilots to be run in autumn 2014.

Further details of the announcements can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bursaries-of-up-to-20000-offered-to-teach-maths-english-or-special-educational-needs-sen>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/millions-unlocked-to-encourage-the-best-to-teach-maths-in-further-education>

Guidance on the bursary scheme can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-initial-teacher-training-bursary-guide-academic-year-2013-to-2014>

Mathematics Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) Programme Guide for 2013/14 available at:

<http://et-foundation.co.uk/vision/docs/external-documents/142-guide-to-ske-funding/file.html>

Chartered Status

Recognising excellence will be at the heart of the proposed chartered status scheme. Chartered status will recognise colleges most responsive to the needs of their learners and employers. The consultation we held on the proposed scheme came back with the clear message that it needed to be independent of Government. I asked Lord Lingfield to take forward the idea of a new quality scheme on an independent basis and he has set up the Institution for Further Education to do that. He and his team are working hard to launch the scheme as soon as possible, and hope to have the Institution's communications and website up and running shortly. They have now been joined by Ed Quilty, a senior civil servant seconded from BIS. He is keen to hear from those in the sector who are interested in the project, and if you want to get in touch with him in the interim, he can be reached on charteredstatusproject@gmail.com.

Perkins Review of Engineering amongst FE and 6th Form colleges

The Perkins Review of Engineering Skills was launched in November 2013. The review is a call to action to government and the engineering community to focus its efforts on inspiring the engineers of the future and addressing the skills shortages within the industry. Professor Perkins made 22 recommendations – focusing on inspiration, academic foundations, vocational education and higher education.

Recommendations relevant to the FE sector include:

- (i) Engineering employers should encourage their staff to share their skills and knowledge, for example by participating in the Education and Teaching Foundation's Teach Too scheme.
- (ii) Government and the FE sector should encourage the application of learning technologies to extract maximum value from expert lecturers and the materials they produce, for example through Teach Too.

To realise these objectives, the engineering community (through the Education for Engineering Consortium) is leading a task and finish group to identify mechanisms to encourage deeper employer engagement with the FE sector to support teaching staff and address local needs. Carol Burke (MD, Unipart Manufacturing) is chairing this group which has representation from a number of employers and FE colleges including Wirral Metropolitan, Redcar College, Walsall College and the Samuel Whitbread College, as well as organisations such as the Education and Teaching Foundation (ETF) and Careers Academies.

If you would like to receive our monthly progress up-dates on implementation of the Perkins Review or wish to be involved with the group please get in touch with Stephanie Fernandes via Stephanie.fernandes@bis.gsi.gov.uk.

Free meals for disadvantaged students in FE

Last September the Government announced that, alongside the provision of free school meals to all infant pupils attending state-funded schools, free meals would also be provided to disadvantaged young students in FE and sixth form colleges from September 2014.

Colleges, and their representative bodies, have campaigned for some time for free meal provision to be extended to their students, and this commitment has therefore been welcomed by the sector.

An overall amount of funding has been made available in the Autumn Statement for both of these policies, and we will shortly be making further announcements about the funding that will be available for free meal provision in colleges. This will be in addition to the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Colleges will receive an allocation to pay for the free meals, and we will soon be in a position to explain the basis for the distribution of that funding, along with further details of how the free meal provision should operate in colleges.

Care Leavers Strategy

BIS has published two booklets aimed at care leavers and people who are homeless, and aimed too at those who support and advise them, about how the skills system and

DWP services can help them address skills needs and get into employment.¹ Colleges and providers might experience an upsurge in approaches from individuals, or from those who support and advise them, looking to take up your learning offer.

Implementation of new legislation to strengthen support for students with special educational needs (SEN) in further education

The Children and Families Act has now received Royal Assent. From September, this new legislation will introduce a 0-25 system of support for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) in schools and further education. FE colleges, sixth form colleges and approved independent specialist providers will have important new duties under this new system, including a duty to 'have regard' to a new 0-25 SEN Code of Practice. Young people who would currently receive a Learning Difficulty Assessment will in future have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. FE colleges, approved ISPs and sixth form colleges will be under a duty to admit a student if named in a young person's EHC plan. All post-16 provision will be included in a new local offer for SEN and disability services.

FE colleges should be working with their local authorities and with schools now to prepare for implementation from September. [This briefing](#), produced by the Council for Disabled Children in collaboration with AoC, NATSPEC and Preparing for Adulthood, provides additional information on the changes and sources of support for FE providers. We will also shortly be publishing a pack to support the FE sector in preparing for implementation of the reforms.

As set out in the workforce section above, to support FE providers to develop further their capacity to improve outcomes for students with SEN we are investing in bursaries for high-calibre graduates to undertake the specialist Diploma in Teaching Disabled Learners.

Honours

As we moved into the New Year two Chairs were recognised in the New Year's honours – Richard Wightman, Chair of Corporation, Bradford College received an OBE and David Norman, lately Chair of the Governing Executive at Ruskin College received an MBE.

There were many other honours for individuals across the FE sector, which are testimony to achievements across the sector. Honours are an effective way of recognising personal and collective achievement and to raising the profile of FE. For further information on how to nominate an individual, FE colleges can contact the BIS Honours team at alison.marsh@bis.gsi.gov.uk and Sixth Form Colleges can contact the Department for Education team at honours.team@education.gsi.gov.uk

¹ The documents are available at <http://homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/Skills%20Support%20BIS%20July%202013.pdf> and at http://leavingcare.org/news?page_ID=14&news_ID=617