

The logo for 'Connect Learning Gazette' is set against a dark green background. The word 'connect' is in a small, white, lowercase font above the word 'learning', which is in a larger, white, lowercase font. Below 'learning' is the word 'gazette' in a very large, bold, yellow, lowercase font.

connect learning gazette

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It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.
Aristotle

What's New?

Ofsted report on U-Net

Please find below the link to the recent Ofsted report on U-Net, the network of learning centres that deliver learndirect within unionlearn.

The report was particularly positive referring to the outstanding work of ULRs, good relationships with employers and a strong ethos to widening participation and promoting social inclusion. As well as the U-net team it is a credit to the unions, employers and provider partners.

[http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxedu_providers/full/\(urn\)/57714](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxedu_providers/full/(urn)/57714)

John Denham's "Jobs for the Future" Tour

John Denham visited four regions during March to highlight sectors that will help create and sustain the jobs for the future. During the visits he focused on the creative industries, healthcare and life sciences, clean technologies (particularly low carbon technologies) and high value manufacturing.

The Secretary of State described the tour as "ensuring the Government is doing all it can to make sure local workers get their share of the jobs of the future in the key industries, technologies and services that will drive the UK's future economic growth ... To do this, we need to use the levers of Government where they will have most effect – in the sectors and markets in which we are strong as a nation, where government action can be effective and where there is significant potential for economic growth and new employment." During the visits John Denham viewed new facilities in these sectors and met with employers to discuss developments in the sectors and what more the government could do to help education and business work together on innovation and knowledge transfer to promote jobs and economic growth.

Flexible Working Rights Go to Extra 4.5 Million

From April 6th more than 10 million people obtained the right to request flexible working and government support is helping businesses get ready for the change.

Six million parents and carers already had the right to request flexible working from their employers, with another 4.5 million have now gained the right with its extension to parents of children aged 16 and under.

All carers and parents of children aged up to six, or children with disabilities aged up to 18, already have the right to request flexible working.

Flexible working embraces a wide variety of working practices, including compressed hours, working from home, or any pattern of hours other than the standard one in an organisation.

Benefits of flexible working to business include increased productivity and recruitment savings.

The government is boosting the free guidance and tools available to help businesses deal with flexible working requests. Websites *Business Link* and *Direct.gov* give firms and individuals all the information they need to comply with the law, including online forms to deal with requests – helping save time and money.



Spotlight on...

School of Everything

School of Everything is a website that helps people who want to learn, meet up with people who want to teach.

The award-winning site is free to join and is available worldwide. Teachers register online and create a personal page giving information on their lessons, the qualifications offered and the format in which they teach - for example workshops or one-to-one sessions.

Potential pupils find a tutor who's right for them simply searching by subject, learning category and location. They can then send them a message, arrange to meet and begin learning their new subject. Some School of Everything teachers have left jobs in educational institutions because they've become fed up with the administrative burden. Others are 'pro-ams', people who have found a way to make a living from their hobbies and amateur passions. You can charge what you like for teaching, or share your skills for free - and unlike most schools, you can teach or learn whatever you want (as long as it's legal). <http://schoolofeverything.com/>



Latest e-skills Bulletin outlines the state of the IT and Telecoms labour market

e-skills UK has published the latest issue of the e-skills Bulletin, the definitive source of information about changes in the demand/supply of ICT labour and skills in the UK.

Key findings for Q3.08 include:

- a continued decline in the number of both permanent and contract ICT positions on offer
- advertised rates of pay for ICT staff fell slightly over the Q2-Q3.08 period while the actual earnings reported by ICT staff rose a little during Q3
- as the number of ICT vacancies declined, so too did the employment package on offer with advertised rates for permanent and contract staff both falling by around 1% on average compared with the previous quarter
- the number of ICT staff working in the UK rose once again during Q3.08 to 1,059,000 people – the highest level recorded since the final quarter of 2006
- fewer ICT staff seeking additional or new jobs
- the percentage of ICT staff that stated they had received job-related education/training during the past 13 weeks fell once again during Q3 to 24% but over three quarters (77%) said they had been offered training over the same period.

To download the Bulletin, and subscribe to future issues, go to www.e-skills.com/bulletin.

Women in IT Scorecard maps gender imbalance in IT workforce

New research published in March by BCS, e-skills UK and Intellect, shows that the gap between males and females remains a live issue for those working in the UK IT professional workforce. Currently, females account for just one in five IT professionals, with many rejecting IT qualifications at Secondary and Higher Education level.

The aim of the 'Women in IT Scorecard', therefore, was to identify drivers of this gender imbalance and to provide an evidence base for data and commentary, from females taking IT related qualifications, to being employed as part of the IT professional workforce.

Key findings of the scorecard include:

- Females represent 45% of the UK working population but just 19% of the IT professional workforce.
- There is a significant pay gap between male and female IT professionals - ranging from 14% for young professionals (aged 16-29) to 30% for women aged 40-49.
- The number of females in the UK's ICT industry is only two thirds that of Italy and Ireland.
- Although females taking IT related qualifications in Secondary Education are low in number, they consistently outperform their male counterparts. It can be presumed, therefore, that if females were more inclined to participate in IT careers then the pool of talent available to IT employers might improve noticeably.

Minister for Communications, Technology and Broadcasting, Stephen Carter, said: "We are delighted to offer our support to BCS, e-skills UK and Intellect in producing this scorecard. The recent interim Digital Britain report underlined the importance of the IT sector for business development and success in the 21st Century, but we will only fully benefit from becoming a digital nation when everyone has access to the right education, skills and media literacy programmes.

He added: "22 million UK employees use IT every day and we need a skilled and diverse IT workforce to support them. There's more to be done to strengthen the ways business, education and government work together to nurture the IT leaders that business needs, and we will be working with the Sector Skills Councils to develop some action points for the final Digital Britain report."

Karen Price, CEO of e-skills UK, said: "The gender imbalance in IT is a deep and persistent issue that cannot be put right by one organisation alone. We must work together; employers, government and education all have an important role to play.

"We know that the collaborative approach works. We have seen from our own programmes how committed partnerships can bear fruit. Two thirds of the girls on our employer-backed computer clubs programme, CC4G, report being more positive about a career in technology as a result; half of those registered on our new IT careers website, BigAmbition, are female; and around a third of students on our employer-designed IT and business degree course, ITMB, are female - compared to 15% for traditional computing degrees.

"To make the impact the UK needs we need to multiply and scale such activities."

Read the full report at www.e-skills.com/scorecard

Spread the Word

BBC raw: skills for everyday life

The new **BBC raw** campaign and website has been launched. The website has been redesigned to create a user friendly, video-rich resource offering practical advice, inspiring activities and real life experiences to empower adults to take the next steps towards tackling their skills needs.

It has launched with raw money (financial capability) and raw computers (basic ICT). Over time, the site will grow to cover a range of topics such as numeracy and employability skills as it continues to reach adults with basic skills needs. Look out for new reading and writing resources which will be available on the raw website later in the year. www.bbc.co.uk/raw

Any Other Business

Give skills the Hollywood treatment



For this year's **Learning at Work Day** (14 May) the Campaign for Learning in association with **Video Arts** is inviting you to take part in its 'Skills Shorts' film competition. To be in with a chance of winning a morning on a film set for the next Video Arts training film and a Flip Video, you will need to create a film inspired by workplace learning and skills, which uses hands as the main characters. Films must be no longer than 1 minute (including opening and closing credits). All eligible films will be featured on the [Learning at Work Day YouTube Channel](http://www.learningatworkday.com).

For information how to enter your own film visit the "Skills Shorts" page on www.learningatworkday.com