

The logo for 'Connect Learning Gazette' is set against a dark green background. 'connect' is in a small, white, lowercase sans-serif font. 'learning' is in a larger, white, lowercase sans-serif font with a stylized 'y' that has a dot above it. Below this, the word 'gazette' is written in a very large, bold, yellow, lowercase sans-serif font.

connect learning gazette

Issue Eleven | September 2009

The only person who is educated is the one who has learned how to learn and change.
Carl Rogers

Welcome to the Eleventh edition of *Connect Learning Gazette* – learning and development resource dedicated to Union Learning Reps.

As always we value your feedback. If you do have any feedback and/or you come across any interesting information that you would like to pass on, please email kacie.ashford@connectuk.org.

What's New?

BT to sign Skills Charter with Connect

BT has agreed to sign a Skills Charter with Connect. The Skills Charter outlines the commitment both partners take on in raising awareness of learning opportunities, developing members' skills and supporting Union Learning Reps (ULRs) in BT.

Publicity connected magazine and BT Today as well as visibility for ULRs will follow in a form of a signing event in due course.

This is excellent news and opens up an opportunity for ULRs to approach members with a positive message and an offer of ULRs being available for learning reviews, help and advice.

It also means that Connect and ULRs can step up and take a more profound role in feeding back to BT issues on areas such as finding concrete examples, for instance, of training delivery shortfalls and where contractors are claimed to have skills not available in existing BT workforce.

ULRs will be invited to join forces with Connect Industrial Relationship Committees (IRCs) to examine where we can find case studies and facts to build and support a negotiating agenda. A conference call will be arranged this autumn for each BT Line of Business IRC and ULRs to ensure this important topic gets the attention it deserves.

For more information, contact Kirsi (kirsi.kekki@connectuk.org or phone 020 8971 6052).

Festival of learning

We ran an article in the last issue of the Connect Learning Gazette regarding Informal adult learning and how it will be a major focus of attention in October when the national Festival of Learning gets underway. Below is an update.

October marks your chance to join the Learning Revolution Festival when hundreds of events taking place across England will highlight the variety of learning that everyone can get involved in. Whether it is car maintenance, singing in a choir, yoga, going on a ramble or learning from a website, the Festival aims to showcase the opportunities for enjoyment and community development and highlight the real benefits that informal learning brings.



To find your nearest Learning Revolution Festival event or find out how you can encourage others to get involved, go to our new website www.direct.gov.uk/learningrevolution which will be live in late September.

If you're an organiser or provider of learning activity we'd love you to join in by posting details of your event on our website. And you can visit <http://thelearningrevolution.ning.com/> where you can get tips and advice on putting on an event and publicising it as well as being able to join discussions with other organisations that share your passion for informal learning.

To find out more about other Learning Revolution developments, go to: www.dius.gov.uk/informaladultlearning.

From DIUS to BIS

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS, or DBIS) now has a dedicated web-page on the transition next April from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to the post-19 Skills Funding Agency (SFA). There are various materials: a possible structure diagram, bulletins, and so on. It covers the wider 'Machinery of Government' reforms, too – including 16-18 matters and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA – more properly under DCSF, or Department for Children, Schools and Families). This is a pretty good 'one-stop-shop' for an overview of these upcoming changes.

Go to: http://www.dius.gov.uk/further_education/fe_reform/raising_expectations

Future skills supply in Europe: medium-level forecast up to 2020

The findings of the pilot study are that between 2007 and 2020 there will be substantial increases in the supply of both high and medium level qualifications across Europe, with rates of increase generally higher for women than men. There is also expected to be a fall in the proportion of people with low-level qualifications. There is speculation about the effects of the current economic crisis on the trends that form the basis of these projections. Cedefop notes that the immediate impact appears to be that educational participation and qualification acquisition are increasing as individuals delay entry into the depressed labour market. The longer term forecast is for financial constraints to discourage investment in human capital.

The report has heavy-duty 160 pages and can be found here:

http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/Information_resources/Bookshop/546/4086_en.pdf

Universities are “picking up the bill”

Universities are complaining that they are having to pick up the bill for delays in students' loans and grants. Student Finance England has apologised for a backlog of applications and says it is trying to get at least interim payments out to people.

As terms start, universities are allowing provisional enrolments and seeking only partial rents, but they say they should not have to cover for what they see as the incompetence of others.

For more go to <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/8263088.stm>

Money to Learn

Adult Learning Grant

It's never too late to learn new skills, and with the Adult Learning Grant (ALG), you could get up to £30 per week while you're studying - letting you focus on getting where you want to be in life.

To get ALG, you need to meet the following requirements:

- Be 19 or over, and studying in England.
- The course you take must lead to your first full Level 2 or first full Level 3 qualification.
- You must also be studying full time - at least 12 hours a week and attending college regularly.
- You must be doing a course at a learning provider funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Check with your college if you're not sure.

with **ALG**
you could get up to
£30 a week



And finally, to get ALG, you'll need to have earned less than the income threshold during the previous financial year.

This threshold is currently:

- Under £19,513 if you are single
- A combined income under £30,810 if you are living with a partner.

The income threshold is based on your gross income – income before tax or other deductions.

For more information go to:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/FinancialHelpForAdultLearners/Adultlearninggrant/DG_068343

Beyond Learning

Jobs for the Future

Jobs of the Future outlines where, as a result of expected growth and emerging global trends, new jobs could be created in the UK economy of the future. It identifies how the UK's labour market is set to change, the potential employment opportunities that key sectors of our economy could generate and Government action to equip our workforce to win their fair share of these jobs, including the National Skills Strategy and the Higher Education Framework.

Please go to: http://www.hmg.gov.uk/media/41730/jobs_of_the_future.pdf

WorldSkills 2009 - Britain really has got talent

Its official: Britain really has got talent thanks to an exceptionally skilled team of 26 young people who spent four days this September competing at the skills equivalent of the Olympics - the WorldSkills Competition in Calgary, Canada.

At the closing ceremony attended by all 900 competitors from the 46 nations that took part, as well as a further 6,000 team supporters and judges, it was announced that the UK had won three gold and six bronze medals. In addition the UK was also awarded 14 Medallions for Excellence given to competitors who achieve at least 500 points, deemed the world class standard. This included Hugo

Landau, 19, a student at Barnfield College, who received a Medallion for Excellence for IT PC & Network Support, and Richard Edwards, 19, a student at Milton Keynes College, who received a Medallion of Excellence in Web Design.

Skills Minister Kevin Brennan, said: "I would like to congratulate each member of Team UK for the hard work and talent they displayed in Calgary. These inspiring young people have demonstrated to the rest of world just how able and highly skilled the UK is.

"It's more important than ever that we continue to support and invest in the skills of our workforce, helping individuals get into and stay on at work as well as helping businesses stay competitive and prepare for the upturn."

The UK's WorldSkills team is managed by UK Skills working in partnership with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Assembly Government and key partners from education, government and industry.

To find out more about the UK's World Skills team, go to: <http://www.worldskillsteamuk.org/>

