



Construction Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)

NEWSLETTER

News from Acton & West London College
Centre of Vocational Excellence



Our **RESPONSE** to Employer Engagement

The College's new employer engagement division was launched on Monday 11th February at our annual general meeting by Chair of the Corporation Iain Mackinnon.

RESPONSE Industry Skills and Training will provide businesses across London with on-site assessments, bespoke qualifications and innovative training solutions for employers. In a new move for us, and in answer to the Government's new educational funding landscape, we will seek to attract income through proactively approaching business and offering them a quality product, in a responsive and market-led way.

Established by the College in an effort to gain a share of the training market – of which the FE sector currently only holds a 13% share, the Division's commercial sales force will work alongside teaching staff to ensure that our offer is tailored to suit the needs of employers, particularly in qualifications up to Level 2 standard.

Currently heading up the division is Mike James, under the job title Acting Director of Employer Responsiveness. He will lead a specially trained sales force and onsite NVQ assessors to establish a range of bespoke training packages.

To find out more about RESPONSE visit:

www.response.wlc.ac.uk



Outstanding Students

Jordan Cox - Was selected to represent the college in the SkillBuild competition in 2007, and has received a 'highly commended' award from the City & Guild Gold Medal of Excellence Awards for his outstanding ICA and NVQ level 2 Site Carpentry portfolio evidence. Jordan is now doing his advanced apprenticeship and is on track to complete it successfully in June 2008.

Neil McCartney - Regional SkillBuild winner in 2006 and 2007. In 2007 Neil went on to compete for the National SkillBuild title and was awarded 3rd place. He was then selected for the World Skills Competition 2007. This year he is aiming for 1st place at the Regional and National SkillBuild competition again. Neil is a highly motivated and excellent mentor to other SkillBuild candidates in the college.



Word from the Director

During the three months since our last employer forum, the College's Construction Division has been working hard to ensure that our learners attain the highest standards through their learning programmes. Looking ahead to the rest of the year there are key challenges and opportunities to be faced.

It is clear that work-related learning is at the top of the government's agenda and key to ensuring local businesses maintain their competitiveness. It is also an increasingly important part of our curriculum offer, particularly in seeking to support our students to link what they learn in College to their future working lives. I fully recognise the importance of work-related learning in enriching the curriculum, improving student motivation, raising standards and increasing success rates.

A very relevant example of this in action relates in our plans to introduce the new 14-19 Diploma in Construction and Built Environment from September 2008. Working in partnership with local schools and employers, we are developing these new courses at all three levels post-16 and at level 2 pre-16. The involvement of employers is a crucial element in the measure of success of the diplomas including Young Apprentice (YA) programmes given that their success is dependent on students gaining relevant work experience and support.

To that end, I am very keen to explore the potential for closer working relationships between construction employers and our college staff in designing new courses, exchanging practice and opening up opportunities for direct input by construction employees into the vocational components of the new courses.

We are committed to ensuring that we maintain our vocational excellence status through regular reviews and self assessment, through which the views of employers are of paramount importance. Your feedback on your experiences of our work is highly valued.

I therefore extend a warm welcome to you, to this, the second employer forum for the academic year at Acton College, and invite your contributions and ideas towards our mutual commitment of delivering high quality work-related learning.

Amrik Marwaha
College Director



Young Apprenticeship: New Diploma in Construction – Higher Level (Level 2)



This course provides an introduction to working in the construction industry and is of interest to anyone considering a career in building. Whether you want to work in trades such as carpentry or bricklaying, or whether you would like to move on to professions such as architecture or surveying, this course will help you understand more about what it is like to work in construction.

Students will gain basic practical skills in four different building trades; carpentry and joinery, bricklaying, plumbing and electrical installation. Students will also learn about some of the wider issues in the industry such as the environmental impact of building, accident prevention and science in construction. As well as workshop and classroom activities at the college you will gain first hand experience of the industry with work placements.

The course content includes; Introduction to the Construction Industry, Health and Safety in Construction, Maths and Science in Construction, Exploring Carpentry and Joinery, Exploring Brickwork and Exploring Building Services (Electrical & Plumbing).

Successful completion of this course will lead to a level 2 qualification which would be ideal for progression to; an apprenticeship, a construction specific course, or advanced level diploma in construction.



OSAT Overview

OSAT is run through Work Based Learning and Contracts Unit (European Social Fund). It currently runs painting and decorating, wall and floor tiling, plastering, dry lining, steel fixing and carpentry and joinery at NVQ level 2 craft level.



Current projects include;

- We are running a 'training the trainers' project through ESF which is taking supervisors and craft operatives and training to become qualified assessors. The project is aimed at not only bridging the academic vocational divide but supplying the potential for the workforce for assessing for the future.
- The assessment team is assessing at Heathrow Terminal 5 where it is qualifying supervisors to A1, level 3 and 4 site management as well as carpenters, dry liners and painters.
- The BDL group Ltd started with us over 5 years ago when we were qualifying level 2 operatives. Through our employer engagement we now assess level 3 and 4 managers in their company. The culture within the company has progressed to such a stage that they have had two of their supervisors who assess with the college for their company staff. This presents an ideal situation for us as the culture of a company is changed from seeking external solutions to us providing them with the tools and the partnership to solve their short and long term training goals.
- Our dry lining craft level is by far the strongest of the provisions we provide. We have sites at White City, Terminal 5, BP3 Canary Wharf, and Drayton Park.



Employer Forum

The Employer Forum will be held on 26th March, between 5.00pm to 6.30pm at Acton & West London College.

The purpose of the Construction Employer Forum is to;

- **Improve formal links between AWLC and construction employers**
- **Receive and act upon employer feedback**
- **Contribute to the strategic long term planning of construction curriculum**
- **Provide an information exchange for workforce development**
- **Explore opportunities for future partnerships**
- **Provide businesses with an opportunity to contribute to the local community**
- **Networking opportunities for employers**

The Forum is an excellent networking opportunity to meet with other employers, and also learn about Acton and West London College and the services on offer. A buffet dinner will be served on the evening's conclusion.

We hope you can join us on this valuable and informative evening.





London Regional SkillBuild Final

Acton & West London College is delighted that it will host the London Regional SkillBuild Final on Wednesday 7th May 2008. This is the first time the College will host such a high profile craft event.

The College was approached to host SkillBuild as a result of consistent success in regional competitions, and regular involvement in national competitions.

Employer Information now available on RESPONSE Website

We are pleased to announce that all CoVE newsletters and employer forum presentations are now available online.

Go to the RESPONSE website (www.response.wlc.ac.uk), click on 'Construction' and then 'Client Information' to download the newsletter and presentations.

Employer profile

Mears

Mears is one of the UK's leading social housing repairs and maintenance providers and has a strong presence in West London.

Mears takes an active role in contributing to sustainable improvement and supporting the communities in which it works through practical initiatives such as; youth projects, local apprenticeship training, refurbishments and local mentoring schemes.

Mears believes that local companies should contribute to supporting local communities and does this by volunteering the skills of its workforce to help provide long-term sustainable benefits to local people

One initiative the Mears is heavily involved in is the Ealing Diploma and Enterprise Centre (EDEC) which aims to give young people aged 14-19 years broader options alongside other qualifications like GCSEs and A-Levels. Students who attend are given the opportunity to learn skills that they would not learn in mainstream education.

Contact Details

Director of Enterprise & Employer Responsiveness

Mike James

T: 020 8231 6345

E: mike.james@wlc.ac.uk

College Director

Amrik Marwaha

T: 0208 231 6346

E: amrik.marwaha@wlc.ac.uk

Building Crafts & Services – Division Manager

Jim Gallagher

T: 020 8231 6510

E: jim.gallagher@wlc.ac.uk

Building Crafts & Services – Division Manager

Theseus Joseph

T: 020 8231 6510

E: jim.gallagher@wlc.ac.uk

Head of Work Procurement Operations

Pam Rathbone

T: 020 8231 6524

E: pam.rathbone@wlc.ac.uk

Workforce Development Manager

Jodi Franklin

T: 020 8231 6312

E: jodi.franklin@wlc.ac.uk

Employer Links Coordinator

Sean Poche

T: 020 8231 6323

E: sean.poche@wlc.ac.uk

Dates for your Diary

Employer Forum: 26th March 2008

SkillBuild Regional Final: 7th May 2008