

HOT TOPICS

- Scottish Government plans & priorities
- Widening access & growing gender gap
- Higher education & research in the UK
- Qualifications & assessment
- University-business engagement
- Finance – capability, competence, education & FinTech
- Numeracy



Produced by

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PEOPLE

LOUISE SMITH

Head of Design, Royal Bank of Scotland, is Chair of the new **FinTech Strategy Group** created by **Scottish Financial Enterprise (SFE)** (*see page 5*).

PROF VICKI HANSON

Chair of Inclusive Technologies, University of Dundee, is new President, **Association for Computing Machinery**.

JEREMY SILVER

Former Chief Executive, Sibelius Software, is new Chief Executive Officer, **Digital Catapult** technology and innovation centre, taking over from **Neil Crockett**.

LUCY-ROSE WALKER

co-founder of **Entrepreneurial Spark**, will be new Chief Executive Officer from 30 June; **JIM DUFFY** will become Head of #GoDo.

EMPLOYMENT

■ Unemployment in Scotland was 169,000 from January to March 2016, up by 8,000 over the quarter at 6.2% (5.1% for UK). Male unemployment was 7.3% (5.2%), 4.9% for females (5.0%). Employment was 2.578m, down by 53,000 at 73.1% (74.2%).

Useful [Labour Market Infographic from Skills Development Scotland \(SDS\)](#) with more detail in the [SPICe Labour Market Update](#).

■ **University of the West of Scotland** and **Oxfam** published a series of reports as part of its '[Decent Work in Scotland](#)' research project:

- [The employers' view](#) on what employers think about the concept and their role.
- [What Scotland's future workforce think...](#) on the perceptions of 82 secondary school pupils.
- [Exploring 'Decent Work' with people with criminal convictions](#), on the obstacles faced.

A final report is due in late summer 2016.

■ **Fife Voluntary Action** published [Working for Fife: A Survey of Third Sector Employability Pathway Services in 2015](#), data from 29 organisations delivering 43 employability projects. It proposes 14 recommendations to improve employment outcomes.

■ [Regional Employment Patterns in Scotland – Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2015](#) from Scotland's Chief Statistician include:

- 232,700 were underemployed (9.1% of all employed) up 16,100 over the year, mainly due to full-time male workers.
- 48.4% of 16–64 year-olds had SVQ level 4+ (up from 47.1%) highest on record.
- 34.6% of workers aged 25–64 were graduates (up from 33.2%), highest on record.
- 83.5% employment rate for those with SVQ level 4+, almost double the 47.4% for those with below SVQ level 2 qualifications.

***Scottish Trends** published [Analysis of Inequality in the Scottish Labour Market](#) based on the above.*

■ **UK Commission for Employment & Skills (UKCES)** published [data workbooks for Scotland](#) containing labour market projections to 2024 from its [Working Futures](#) programme.

Informed Scotland 40 featured the main report findings.

■ [Police Officer Quarterly Strength Statistics 31 March 2016](#) showed there were 17,317 full-time equivalent police officers (up 0.1% since 2015).

DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE (DYW)

■ The unemployment rate for 16 to 24 year-olds in Scotland from January to March 2016 was 15.8%, up from 13.8% a year ago (13.2% for UK, down from 15.4%). Male unemployment rate was 17.7% (14.5% UK) compared to 13.9% for females (11.9%).

In Informed 1 in May 2012, youth unemployment was 23.1% and employment 51.9%.

■ **Office for National Statistics** published *Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)*. From January to March 2016:

- 865k 16–24 year-olds in the UK were NEET (down 69k from 2015), comprising 12.0% of the age group (down 0.8 ppts).
- 44% of NEETs were classified as unemployed (down from 46%); the rest as economically inactive (unavailable/not looking for work).

■ According to the *Regional Employment Patterns in Scotland (see page 3)*, in 2015:

- Youth employment rate was 56.2%, up from 53.2% in 2014.
- Youth unemployment rate was 14.3%, down from 17.1%.
- 23,000 16–19 year-olds were NEET, up 3,000.

SKILLS, TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS

■ **Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Partnership** is establishing a working group 'to inform a revised version' of its *My Skills, My Future* materials and workshops. Revised materials will be launched in January 2017.

■ **Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)** published *Employer Guide to Assessment*, providing overviews on aspects including different settings for assessment, underlying principles and examples of assessment methods.

■ **St Andrews Management Centre** is the first in Scotland to become an accredited training centre of the **Institute of Export**, for its *Certificate in International Trade*.

■ **Edge Foundation** published *The Digital Revolution* calling for 'radical action to prepare young people for the next industrial revolution'. *Its focus is on the situation in England, but the context is relevant to Scotland.*

■ **SDS** launched a new *Transition Training Fund* website for people who have been made redundant or at risk of redundancy from Scotland's oil and gas sector to access information about training and skills grants. The £12m Fund was announced earlier this year.

■ **Clyde Training Solutions** has begun to build a £3.5m *safety training centre* in Clydebank, due to be completed in autumn 2016. It will offer mandatory and safety courses for the oil & gas and marine industries, with facilities including a training pool, Helicopter Underwater Escape Training module and fire training ground.

■ An eight-week *Animation Base Camp* for animation graduates is being run this summer by **Once Were Farmers** and **Animation Centrifuge**, with **Creative Scotland** and **Sony Pictures**. It is designed to develop skills and support students into employment.

Business

BUSINESS CONFIDENCE & THE ECONOMY

■ The latest **Bank of Scotland Purchasing Managers' Index** recorded no change in private sector output, signalling stabilisation in the economy. Workforce numbers declined at the fastest pace since November 2010.

■ **Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce** published its 24th *Oil and Gas Survey* carried out by the **Fraser of Allander Institute**. 75% of contractors were less confident in their prospects on the UK Continental Shelf than a year ago. Operators reported a 15% reduction in headcount over the past year and expect a further 17% reduction in the coming year.

BUSINESS CREATION, LEADERSHIP, DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

■ **SFE** has set up a new **FinTech [financial technology] Strategy Group**, involving over 30 industry figures plus representatives from government and higher education. Its aims for the next five years include 'mapping out employment and skills forecasts'. Its focus will include big data, cybercrime and globalisation.

■ **Co-operative Development Scotland** is to invest £200k over the next three years in developing two new collaboration services:

- Collaborate to Export
- Best Practice in Collaboration, to help established collaborations with growth potential improve operational effectiveness.

■ According to a **Regus UK poll** of 3,000 senior UK business people, the following are the most desirable qualities of a successful business leader:

- 96% said good communication skills
- 91% commitment to the job
- 89% the ability to motivate staff
- 89% confidence
- 77% innovative thinking
- 76% financial competence
- 65% technical knowledge
- 45% ruthlessness.

Wonder how these compare with other sectors?

■ **Strathclyde and Aston University Business Schools** published *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor UK 2015*, including findings for Scotland:

- Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) rate was 6.7%, up from 5.4% in 2014 (7.1% in UK).
- The female to male TEA ratio was 77%, highest in the UK.
- 34.6% of the non-entrepreneurially active reported good local start-up opportunities in the next 6 months (down from 38.1%).
- 59.3% (up from 54.7%) think starting a business is a good career development.

■ **Scotland CAN DO Forum** is to run three pilot projects on how to scale up digital businesses in Edinburgh; innovation and manufacturing excellence in Glasgow; and digital care systems in the health services of Highlands & Islands.

Business

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

■ **National Centre for Universities and Business (NCUB)** published *State of the Relationship 2016*, the third annual report of UK-wide university and business collaboration.

- There are more, though smaller, **Innovate UK** grants with Scottish academic partners.
- The number of patents by Scottish universities fluctuate but are currently falling.
- A report is included by **Scottish Funding Council (SFC)** on the Can Do SCALE initiative, plus case studies from **STV** with **University of Edinburgh Business School**, and **ABVenture Zone** and **QantIC** at **Aberdeen** and **Glasgow Universities** respectively.

■ **Growing Value Scotland (GVS) Task Force**, set up by **NCUB**, launched its final report, *The Step Change: business-university collaboration powering Scottish innovation*, welcomed by the Scottish Government. Nine recommendations include:

- Establish a new innovation funding system to leverage the research success of Scotland's universities into jobs and profit.
- Scottish Government must drive up the innovative capacity of businesses and increase demand for university services.
- Increase visibility and simplify explanation of research and services provided by universities.
- Policy, funding and practice must be tailored to the innovation styles of different sectors.
- Business schools, enterprise agencies and **Innovate UK** need to provide guidance on growth to small businesses.
- Universities need to develop business-literate and enterprising graduates and postgraduates.
- Better connection, support & skills promotion for creative industries, design, IT & finance.

Previous reports were published in October 2015 and March 2016 (see Informed 35 and 39).

■ **Federation of Small Businesses** published *Enterprising Allies*, a discussion paper on small business-university engagement. It highlights the potential for more and newer forms of engagement to increase business productivity, innovation and growth. Eight recommendations include:

- Promoting the merits of engagement to small businesses.
- Increasing research data from the small business perspective.
- Universities refining and clarifying their small business offer.
- Business schools marketing themselves as expert providers of business support rather than academic institutions.

■ A new **National Centre for Energy Systems Integration** is to be created, backed by £20m from **Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council** and **Siemens**. Based at **Newcastle University** it will involve specialists from **Heriot-Watt**, **Edinburgh**, **Sussex** and **Durham**.

■ **Interface** launched *Specialist Facilities*, a new website to promote the equipment and services offered by Scottish universities and research institutes to support commercial R&D. Facilities include testing, training and consultancy.

■ **NCUB** created *konfer*, an online resource to provide 'easy access to university knowledge and intellectual property', to support university-business collaboration and knowledge exchange. It will be tested over the summer and fully launched in October.

The above two resources, or 'platforms' as their creators refer to them, have similar aims and appear to offer complementary services.

Schools

PEOPLE

ELLEN DOHERTY

Senior Education Officer, **General Teaching Council for Scotland**, will become Director of Education & Professional Learning when [Tom Hamilton](#) retires in July 2016.

BARBARA COUPAR

Coordinator of Religious Education, Motherwell Diocese, is the new Director, **Scottish Catholic Education Service**, taking over from [Michael McGrath](#).

JOANNA MURPHY

Glasgow Parent Council Forum representative, is the new Chair, **National Parent Forum of Scotland**, taking over from [Iain Ellis](#).

QUALIFICATIONS & ASSESSMENT

■ Scottish Government [Working Group on Assessment & National Qualifications](#) published its [first report](#). It sets out actions to be taken by **Education Scotland** and **SQA** in conjunction with local authorities and schools to reduce teacher workload, including:

- SQA to review quality assurance including verification by October 2016; random sampling of unit verification is suspended in 2016–17.
- Education Scotland and SQA to expand support for teachers, including via webinars and Glow.

See detailed items below and opposite.

■ **Education Scotland** published a [letter](#) to secondary schools recognising the 'increase in pressure and workload' and its 'adverse impact' on teachers and learners. Also:

- [Updated guidance on progression from Broad General Education \[BGE\] to the Senior Phase](#), including on progression pathways, assessment and numbers of courses: 'anything between six and eight qualification courses from S4'.

■ **Reform Scotland** published [National 4s and 5s: Unintended Consequences](#), suggesting there is 'inequality of opportunity' due to a 'large' variation in the number of Nationals pupils can sit.

■ **SQA** published New Qualifications Updates for [teachers](#) and [employers/parents](#) including items covered elsewhere in connection with reducing workload. A series of [School Coordinator Conferences](#) is taking place in June.

■ **SQA** published an [Executive Summary](#) of its initial evaluations of the new National Qualifications. Research focused on [internal Unit assessment](#) and [fieldwork visits](#) to schools; findings from staff and candidates include:

- The requirement to pass every Assessment Standard is seen as too challenging, taking more time due to re-assessment, and imbalancing the course.
- In many cases insufficient time was being given for delivery of National Courses.
- Personalisation and choice was less extensive than expected.
- Pupils did not feel Broad General Education was preparing them well for Senior Phase.

A three-year action plan is now in place. A report outlines the [Next Steps for teachers & lecturers](#) and [individual subject reports](#) provide more detail.

■ **SQA National Qualifications exams** took place from 4 May to 3 June.

- Over 133k candidates (132k in 2015) sat 500k+ exams from National 5 to Advanced Higher, in 470 (473) schools and colleges.
- Students sat new Advanced Highers for the first time.
- 142,512 (145,750) candidates took SQA qualifications, including internally assessed Nationals 1–4 and Skills for Work courses.

A [statement](#) was issued on the last minute replacement of a Higher English paper. Results will be issued on 9 August.

Schools

NUMERACY & FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

■ The Scottish Government published *Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN) 2015 (Numeracy)* covering the assessment of 10,500 pupils at P4, P7 and S2.

- 66% of P4 (down from ~69% in 2013 & 76% in 2011), 66% of P7 (unchanged & down from 72%) and 40% of S2 pupils (down from 42%) were working well or very well at the relevant curriculum level.
- The percentage of pupils not yet working in their respective levels increases from less than 1% in P4 and 3% in P7 to 36% in S2.
- At all stages pupils from the least deprived areas performed better than those from the most deprived areas; largest difference was at S2: 28 pts higher (unchanged).
- Boys performed 5 pts better than girls in S2 (same group performed better than girls in P7 in 2013); there were no statistically significant differences at P4 and P7.
- Over 95% of primary and ~100% of secondary maths teachers were very or fairly confident in teaching of maths & numeracy.
- Use of ICT increased from 2013; pupils report high levels of confidence in using equipment.

New Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills, John Swinney, said the SSLN statistics 'reinforce the need to improve attainment and to close the gap between ... young people from different backgrounds'. He set out his priorities for education over the next five years – see details on page 17.

■ UK All Party Parliamentary Group on Financial Education for Young People published *Financial Education in Schools: Two Years On – Job Done?* It says financial education provision is stronger in Scotland, Wales & N Ireland than in England, highlighting Curriculum for Excellence, financial capability and the role of **Education Scotland**. Four priority areas identified are:

- Strengthening primary and secondary school provision.
- Improving teacher confidence and skills.
- Encouraging coordination across the sector led by a reformed money guidance body.
- Measuring long term impact of interventions.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT

■ **Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL)** published *Developing Teacher Leadership*, a report of the 'outcomes and implications' from its recent teacher leadership engagement work.

- The outcomes are captured under eight themes: enthusiasm, focus, opportunities, recognition, sharing, mentoring, equity and everyone.
- SCEL will be using the themes to inform future work and is encouraging 'everyone involved in Scottish education' to do likewise.

SCEL is seeking feedback and wider engagement via scelengage.com or #tellscel on Twitter.

■ **Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh**, is to run a new free computational thinking professional development course for 12 primary teachers in Edinburgh, starting in September 2016. It has been developed by computer science and primary teaching specialists with support from industry, including teacher cover costs sponsored by **CGI**. 12 additional places are open for software developers, computer science students and student teachers as volunteers to partner a teacher.

An interesting and innovative model.

Schools

DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE (DYW)

- **Education Scotland** published:
 - Report and resources from a Young Persons' Conversation Day on the Senior Phase held in Elgin in February. They can be used for planning, professional development and for employability education with learners.
 - Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool, a single page self-evaluation resource to aid planning and professional development.
 - The first in a series of DYW Interesting Practice examples including **Clyde Gateway's engagement with schools**, and **Millburn Area School Group's development of career management skills**.
- From June **SDS** Careers Advisers will offer an extended service to schools including:
 - Group sessions for pupils moving from P7 to S1, and for S2–S3 pupils to support them at subject choice time.
 - One-to-one interviews with pupils at subject choice time, and with parents and/or teachers at the same time or separately.
 - Working with schools to agree one-to-one career management skills development support for S3 pupils who need it most.
- **GCHQ**, UK's intelligence agency, is running a series of CyberFirst initiatives to encourage young people into cybersecurity careers, including:
 - Four-day CyberFirst Futures course for 16–17 year-olds delivered by **Smallpeice Trust**, at **Glasgow Caledonian University** in July.
 - CyberFirst day for 100 14–15 year-old girls at **Edinburgh Napier University** in June, aiming to bridge the gender gap.

SCHOOLS, NURSERIES, COUNCILS & PARENTS

- According to a **Times Educational Supplement Scotland (TESS)** survey of secondary school libraries:
 - 11 out of 32 local authorities have a qualified full-time librarian in every school.
 - 19 have part-time librarians or a mix of librarians and library assistants.
 - **E Ayrshire** has no qualified librarians; **Argyll & Bute** will have unstaffed libraries from August 2016.
- **Children in Scotland** and **Families Need Fathers Scotland** published Helping Children Learn: Involving non resident parents in their child's education, a guide for schools and nurseries. It encourages 'better parental inclusion in support of their children's education' to help academic attainment & constructive relationships.
- **E Lothian Council** is using films featuring the views of pupils in the recruitment of senior positions in its schools. The latest are for headteacher posts for **Pencaitland** and **Prestonpans Primary Schools**.
- **City of Edinburgh Council** is to extend its 1 in 5 Raising Awareness of Child Poverty in Edinburgh training to all schools following a successful pilot.
- **S Lanarkshire Council** published a detailed Digital Education Strategy 2016.
- **Upstart**, a campaign 'to introduce a kindergarten stage' in Scotland for 3–7 year-olds, was launched. It is calling for a change in structure with more opportunities for learning through play, including outdoors.

Schools

RESOURCES & PROJECTS

■ **University of Glasgow School of Critical Studies** launched [MetaphorIC](#) (Metaphor in the Curriculum), a free online resource and app for secondary schools. The project was funded by the **Arts & Humanities Research Council** and includes teaching materials, examples and quizzes for learners.

■ **UNICEF** published *[In search of safety: Children and the refugee crisis in Europe](#)*, an education pack for primary and secondary teachers with learning activities to help pupils 'make sense of the refugee crisis'.

■ **e-Learning Foundation** has relaunched as the **Learning Foundation**. It aims to inspire learning by 'supporting schools in introducing technology effectively and sustainably' across the UK.

Further & Higher Education

PEOPLE

WILLIE SHANNON

NAFC Marine Centre Director, was appointed Interim Joint Principal of the **tertiary sector in Shetland**, by **Shetland College UHI & NAFC Marine Centre** Boards.

AIDEEN O' MALLEY

Vice-Chair, **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI**, is now Chair, taking over from **Lord Minginish**.

NICK KUENSSBERG

international businessman, will be Chair, **Royal Conservatoire of Scotland** from December 2016, taking over from **Lord Vallance**.

APPLICANTS, STUDENTS & LEAVERS

■ UCAS published 2015 Conservatoires End Of Cycle Report.

- 2,355 students were placed on courses (up 16.5% compared to 2014) from 8,545 applicants (up 7%).
- Undergraduate applicants increased by 9% and postgraduates by 3%.
- Music courses have the highest number of applicants and acceptances (unchanged).
- Undergraduate drama and dance courses are particularly competitive.
- ~60% more women applied than men, but similar numbers of men & women were placed (both unchanged).
- The most advantaged 20% of young people in the UK are ~six times more likely to enter courses (unchanged).

Conservatoires UK covers the eight UK institutions including **Royal Conservatoire of Scotland**, the only one that offers drama, dance & music.

■ UCAS published statistics on applicants for undergraduate places at 16 May:

- 646,900 applications had been received for UK institutions (similar to 2015).
- 48,190 applicants were from Scotland (up 1%).
- Applicant numbers were up 1% from N Ireland and 6% EU countries; down 1% from England and 2% non-EU; no change from Wales.

■ **Applican** is to run its first course in Scotland offering guidance for prospective applicants to UK medical schools. Founded by students, it involves current medical students helping prospective peers to 'navigate the application minefield'.

■ **Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)** launched a Consultation on principles and future requirements for the UK's public interest data about graduates on what should replace the 'Destinations of Leavers from HE' survey.

The consultation is open until 14 July 2016.

OUTCOME AGREEMENTS

■ SFC published final 2016–17 Outcome Agreements for colleges and universities.

- Most colleges are to receive a 1% increase in teaching grants; capital & maintenance grant is to be £15.6m, down from £20m in 2015–16.
- University agreements include support for an additional 680 places for widening access and 1,118 places for articulation from colleges.

- University Innovation Fund replaces the Knowledge Exchange and Knowledge Transfer Grants from 2016–17.
- £5m is set aside for universities for 'institutional change and improvement' in recognition 'that the funding settlement outlined ... may be challenging for some'.

Further & Higher Education

WIDENING ACCESS & GROWING GENDER GAP

■ **Sutton Trust** published *Access in Scotland* on widening access to higher education, carried out by **University of Edinburgh** researchers. According to the report, 90% of growth in disadvantaged students to higher education over the past 10 years has been 'through sub-degree courses in colleges'. Scots are more likely than English students to enter higher education, but less likely to go straight to university, with many often having to repeat at least one year. It makes five recommendations:

- Scottish Government should ensure additional places are available to meet rising demand.
- Expand bridging programmes, alongside effective career & subject advice in schools.
- An independent Commissioner for Fair Access should be appointed to oversee progress (*this was already in train – see page 17*).
- **SFC** & Dept for Business Innovation & Skills to provide Higher Education Initial Participation Rate by social class & institution type.
- Avoid duplication of widening participation initiatives, and run rigorous evaluation alongside implementation.

Universities Scotland commented that comparison with England was 'not always meaningful or helpful' due to system differences.

■ **Higher Education Policy Institute** published *Boys to Men: The underachievement of young men in higher education – and how to start tackling it*:

- Men are in a minority among undergraduates, postgraduates, full-time & part-time students.
- Young disadvantaged white men are the least likely to enter higher education.
- More men than women drop-out and are less likely to achieve a degree at 2:1 or above.
- Seven recommendations include a 'Take Our Sons To University Day', and male role models in all activities aiming to widen participation.

*A fascinating report of a complex & challenging picture. In her foreword, **UCAS** Chief Executive Mary Curnock Cook warns, 'On current trends, the gap between rich and poor will be eclipsed by the gap between males and females within a decade'.*

LEARNING, TEACHING & ASSESSMENT

■ **Higher Education Academy (HEA)** is piloting a new Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) in 2016. CATE aims to 'capture the creative and innovative practice that positively impacts on the student experience'.

CATE is funded by organisations in the rest of the UK, however it calls for 'anyone in Scotland who is interested in engaging with' it to make contact.

■ **College Development Network (CDN)** has created an Inclusive Practitioner programme, awarding Open Badges to recognise participation in relevant professional development activities.

■ **HEA** published *Student engagement and experience in UK universities*, analysis of data from Postgraduate Research and Taught Experience, and UK Engagement Surveys. There is 'substantial lack of agreement' among students in each university. It suggests it would be better to aim to make improvements in a more targeted manner, e.g. by gender, age, disability and origin.

■ **Open University's FutureLearn** is to offer 12 new programmes that enable learners to earn degree credits via massive open online courses (MOOCs).

Further & Higher Education

■ **Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)** launched a Quality Code Enhancement Project to capture and explore innovative examples of how universities and colleges are enhancing the quality of their provision, supported by the Quality Code.

Case studies are sought by 15 June.

■ **QAA** published Quality in Action highlighting its work over the past year, including in Scotland.

■ **SFC** published Review of Extended Learning Support [ELS] – Final Report examining how colleges have used the funding system. 17 recommendations include:

- Renaming ELS as the Access & Inclusion Fund.
- Outcome Agreements to require colleges to develop an access & inclusion strategy.
- Improving data sharing between colleges and other organisations, e.g. schools.
- Developing a national approach for deaf students.

PARTNERSHIPS & AGREEMENTS

■ **University of St Andrews** School of Computer Science launched a four-year Engineering Doctorate (EngD) in Computer Science in partnership with **The Data Lab**, the first in Scotland. It is an 'advanced research apprenticeship' for graduates and those working in the sector and will involve industry sponsors, support and placements.

■ **Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS UHI)** and **Open University in Scotland** launched My Seaweed Looks Weird with Opening Educational Practices in Scotland, a new free online course on seaweed cultivation. It is for industry employees and students with a scientific background.

Award for the most unusual course title...?

■ **Robert Gordon University (RGU)** with **Common Data Access Ltd** is to offer a new online Graduate Certificate in Petroleum Data Management for the energy industry from September 2016.

■ **University of Aberdeen** anatomists and **University of Abertay** computer game designers have created interactive 3D models of human organs and body parts to help train doctors and medical science students. **Roland Sutton Academic Trust** has funded the development.

■ **Edinburgh Napier University** announced a partnership with **F5 Networks** and **Hutchinson Networks**, cybersecurity and IT network services companies respectively. Students will be able to develop industry skills via access to company technology and training licences.

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS & COLLABORATION

■ **RGU Aberdeen Business School** is working in partnership with **Seminole State College of Florida**, involving RGU staff delivering an MSc in International Business in the USA.

■ **Aberdeen, St Andrews, Swansea, Liverpool & Southampton Universities** are to collaborate on aquaculture research in a consortium with institutes and universities in India and Bangladesh.

■ **University of the Highlands & Islands (UHI)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding with **Augsburg University of Applied Science**, Germany, to develop academic collaboration. Inverness and Augsburg have been twinned for 60 years.

Further & Higher Education

COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

■ **UHI** received £4m from **Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE)** towards the development of a school of health, social care and wellbeing. It will include life science and health service management & administration. It is also proposed that pre-registration nurse education moves from **University of Stirling** to the new UHI school from 2017–18.

■ **UHI** is to offer a new BA (Hons) Contemporary Film Making in the Highlands & Islands from September at **Orkney, Shetland** and **North Highland Colleges UHI**. The course will be taught by industry experts and students will be encouraged to collaborate with local writers, musicians and actors.

■ **Glasgow School of Art** is to run courses at the Creative Campus at Blairs Steading, Forres, supported by **HIE**. From 2016 it will offer courses including three Masters of Design Innovation programmes.

The Institute of Design Innovation has been based at the Campus since 2010.

■ **RGU's** MSc Accounting & Finance degree has been accredited by the **Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)**. The MSc is a conversion course for graduates who wish to develop a career in accounting.

■ **Edinburgh Napier University** launched a new online part-time BA (Hons) Business & Enterprise in Sport for elite athletes or support staff working in an elite sport environment.

Community & Adult Learning

PEOPLE

FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

■ **Money Advice Service** aims to contribute up to £7m in 2016/17 via a 'What Works' financial capability fund to evaluate programmes and pilots across the UK. As part of the Financial Capability Strategy for the UK, the Service launched:

- IMPACT Principles, designed to highlight and encourage good evidence and evaluation practice.
- Financial Capability Evaluation Toolkit, a set of resources to help organisations evaluate the impact of their programmes on people's financial capability.

The funding will be tailored to circumstances in each UK nation.

■ **Lloyds Banking Group** is working with **UK Youth** to develop a 'refreshed version' of its Money for Life personal money management programme for young people. It aims to help improve knowledge, confidence and skills in managing money. £3m funding over the next three years will support UK Youth and **The Mix**, a digital support service for under 25s, to develop a financial education programme.

The new programme will launch in September 2016.

DIGITAL INCLUSION & TRAINING

■ **Citizens Advice Bureau Scotland (CAS)** published Bridging the Digital Divide: Measuring the progress of digital inclusion amongst Scottish CAB clients. Digital inclusion has slightly increased among clients overall since 2013. Findings include:

- 33% were not proficient in using a computer.
- 33% never or hardly ever used the internet.
- 68% had had no training. Those least proficient were least likely to want free training or support opportunities. Those already proficient were most interested.
- 72% access the internet at home, 29% at family or friends, 15% at a library (down from 45%), 14% at work.
- Majority felt unable to apply for benefits or jobs online by themselves. Barriers include skills & confidence, practical access, health issues and online application processes.

It raises the dilemma – how best to target training initiatives when those who need it don't want it...

Community & Adult Learning

VOLUNTEERING

■ **Business in the Community** published [findings](#) of a YouGov poll of 2,000+ British adults about volunteering. Findings include:

- 18–24 year-olds volunteer more than any other age group (57%); 48% do so to gain new skills, 38% to further their career aims.
 - 56% of all other age groups volunteer to 'give back' and contribute to their community.
 - 10% of people volunteered in work time through their employer in the past three years.
-

YOUNG PEOPLE

■ **Big Lottery Fund Scotland** awarded £487k [Young Start](#) funding to 12 projects. They include **A & M Scotland**'s training and mentoring programme leading to work or further study, and **CEMVO**'s work placement and career support, both for young people in Glasgow.

■ **Sistema Scotland**, with **Optimistic Sound** and **Dundee City Council**, is to create a [Big Noise Centre](#) in Douglas, Dundee, its fourth orchestra programme in Scotland. It will work with P1–2 pupils in two primary schools and their communities, extending to after-school clubs and nurseries.

Government & Wider Society

PEOPLE

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Cabinet members with relevant posts, and Parliament spokespeople for other parties, have been appointed – *see details in the Annex, page 19.*

EILIDH WISEMAN

senior employment lawyer, is new President, **Law Society of Scotland.**

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT PLANS & PRIORITIES

■ The First Minister's 25 May [Priorities Speech](#) to Parliament placed education 'at the heart'. It contained numerous relevant announcements, including many of those covered here and elsewhere in this issue of *Informed Scotland*:

- A Delivery Plan to improve Scottish education will be published.
- International Council of Education Advisers will be created over the summer to advise on 'improvements to the education system' and 'lessons of best practice from other countries'.
- Scottish Government will host a major summit on school reform and raising attainment.
- Funding formula for schools will be reviewed. Extra £750m to be invested in school education; headteachers to be given more freedom & support to spend on learning.
- A Commissioner for Fair Access will be appointed to ensure the recommendations of the Widening Access Commission are implemented in full.
- All children born in Scotland will receive a 'baby box'.
- A Labour Market Strategy will be published.

New Education Secretary John Swinney's speech can be read [here](#). The three priorities outlined are: transforming early learning & childcare; working to close the attainment gap for good; and widening opportunities to higher, further & vocational education.

COSLA raised [concerns](#) about possible changes to Councils' role in education.

■ Scottish Government is to carry out a review of the 'roles, responsibilities and relationships of enterprise, development and skills agencies'. Economy Secretary Keith Brown is to chair the review group covering **SDS, SFC, HIE & Scottish Enterprise.**

Keith Brown [stated](#) the Government's aim is 'to raise productivity and prosperity through ...investment in infrastructure, skills & innovation'.

Purdah began for the UK on 27 May until the EU referendum on 23 June 2016.

Government & Wider Society

HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UK – WHITE PAPER

■ UK Department for Business, Innovation & Skills published *Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility & Student Choice*, a white paper as part of the Higher Education & Research Bill, including the following with direct or indirect implications for Scotland:

- Institutions across the UK will be able to take part in year one of a new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Introduced over four years, the Scottish Government is yet to decide if institutions will take part in subsequent years.
- Making it easier to set up new universities with degree awarding powers and for colleges to apply to award their own degrees.
- Consultation on demand for easier switching between universities and courses and for accelerated degrees.
- Requiring all universities to publish details on application, offer & progression rates by socio-economic background, gender & ethnicity.
- Establishing UK Research & Innovation, a single funding body from the 7 Research Councils and Innovate UK (each retaining identities & budgets), plus HEFCE's research & knowledge exchange functions.

Although much of the paper is focused on England, there are UK-wide implications for all of the plans.

***Universities Scotland** published its position on TEF.*

*According to TESS, **City of Glasgow College** has already begun to seek degree awarding powers.*

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

- According to **Internet Matters'** survey of social media use among UK 11–16 year-olds:
- The average child posts 26 times a day on social media and attracts 100 followers to each profile, but 60% are not real friends.
 - Those in Glasgow post an average 47 times a day, highest in the UK.
 - 44% of those in Edinburgh use Skype, highest in UK.
 - 62% of 11 year-olds and 69% of 12 year-olds have a Facebook profile – minimum age is 13.

■ **National Literacy Trust** published *Children's and Young People's Reading in 2015*, its annual survey of 32,500 UK 8–18 year-olds, including from two schools in Scotland. Enjoyment and frequency of reading increased again.

Respondents spent more time reading online than reading a book. Girls continue to enjoy reading more and to read more frequently than boys.

■ According to the *Annual Halifax Pocket Money Survey*, in 2016 the average pocket money per week for children in Scotland is £7.06, down from £7.27 in 2015 (£6.55 UK average, up from £6.20).

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CABINET & PARLIAMENT SPOKESPEOPLE

Scottish Government Cabinet & Ministers with relevant responsibilities

- **Deputy First Minister & Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills**, John Swinney MSP
- Minister for Childcare & Early Years, Mark McDonald MSP
- Minister for Further Education, Higher Education & Science, Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP
- **Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Jobs & Fair Work**, Keith Brown MSP
- Minister for Employability & Training, Jamie Hepburn MSP
- Minister for Business, Innovation & Energy, Paul Wheelhouse MSP
- **Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security & Equalities**, Angela Constance MSP
- **Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism & External Affairs**, Fiona Hyslop MSP
- **Cabinet Secretary for Finance & the Constitution**, Derek Mackay MSP
- **Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy & Connectivity**, Fergus Ewing MSP

Scottish Parliament party spokespersons

- **Scottish Conservatives Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills**, Liz Smith MSP
- Further Education, Higher Education & Science, Ross Thomson MSP
- Childcare & Early Years, Jeremy Balfour MSP
- **Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs & Fair Work**, Dean Lockhart MSP
- Jobs, Employability & Training, Liam Kerr MSP
- Health Education, Lifestyle & Sport, Brian Whittle MSP

- **Scottish Labour for Education, Skills & Science**, Iain Gray MSP
- Shadow Education Minister, Daniel Johnson MSP
- Shadow Minister for Inequality (Health & Education), Monica Lennon MSP

- **Scottish Lib Dem for Education & Sport**, Tavish Scott MSP
- *Children & Young People*, Sheila Thomson

- **Scottish Greens for Education & Skills**, Ross Greer MSP
- Children & Young People, Alison Johnstone MSP