



From Rachael Campey, Chief Executive

Happy New Year everyone. We have started 2012 with a short survey asking members for their views on how FEdS can continue to meet their needs this year.

We have already had some great feedback, particularly regarding the topics you would like FEdS to spotlight. These include: an update on the review of the National Curriculum; employer ownership of skills; progress on the Work Programme; collaboration between state and private education; the focus on STEM; the impact of academies; HE/FE contribution to growth; the transition from school to employment; how to measure and maintain standards; and what we can learn from other countries.

Quite a menu! But what has emerged is the desire for FEdS to make more of its business-education network, giving members a practical insight into collaborative ventures and solutions. You also want to learn much more about what employers and other members are doing. Here you would like FEdS to widen the access to policy and business leaders who are tackling specific issues in a busy reform agenda.

It is clear, also, that our intelligence briefings are highly valued and that you distribute these widely within your organisations.

Our events programme starts in March and will kick off with an issue highlighted in the survey feedback: school to work transition. Details are on this page.

If you haven't had chance to complete the survey yet, I would be grateful for your feedback as soon as possible. It will help us to continue to be relevant and topical in 2012 – and beyond. A further copy is attached to the same email as this Newsletter.

Rachael's regular blogs can be found at: www.feds.co.uk.

Building a UK vocational skills legacy

A FEdS seminar with David Cragg, WorldSkills 5 December 2012

David Cragg was a self-confessed "reluctant volunteer" when he was asked to take on strategic oversight of WorldSkills London, with the remit to increase and extend the impact of the competition. He has since become a passionate advocate of the power of such competitions as a tool for inspiration.

Having exceeded expectations in terms of size and success – Team UK came a best-ever 5th out of 51 countries – the London competition will now be held annually, filling the crucial gap in public awareness and knowledge of vocational education and training.

The aim is to move away, however, from one-off events and embed them in the fabric of our skills provision. David is now busy putting in place an integrated programme of activities that combine 'have-a-go', careers advice and training showcases, with a cohesive programme of competitions at its heart.

The government's [plan for FE and skills system reform](#) published in December included a commitment to create a network of expert practitioners in specific vocational skills. If successful, we should see a real increase in the number of young people taking part in apprenticeships at levels 4 to 6, which will be seen as a genuine work-based route offering credibility, quality and value.

A FEdS paper on the seminar was circulated to members and is available in the members' area of the website.

Forthcoming FEdS events

We are busy planning an exciting series of events for the first half of 2012, including the following:

March

Transition, progression and collaboration: the route to employment.

A seminar with Professor Ann Hodgson, Co-Director of the Centre for Post-14 Research & Innovation at the Institute of Education.

She will feedback on the lessons being learnt from a North-East Lincolnshire project reviewing transition and progression at 14+ through an area-based partnership approach.

April

What can our school systems really learn from the East?

A seminar with Isabel Nisbet, Senior Education Adviser to Cambridge International Examinations, covering the Asia Pacific Region.

Isabel, former Chief Executive, Ofqual, is now based in Singapore and will bring first-hand, practical insight to this issue.

Coming up

In May a seminar with Paul Steer, Partnerships Director at the awarding body OCR.

In June we're planning a FEdS dinner to debate employer ownership of skills with a special guest.

Dates will be confirmed through direct circulation to members and on our website. All events are held in central London, unless otherwise specified.

If you are not a member of FEdS but would be interested in attending, please contact:
coral.rayfield@prospects.co.uk

Connect. Collaborate. Make a difference.

Taking Stock of 2012

As we approach the end of the second year of Coalition Government, there is no let-up in the pace of change.

Concerns about exam standards; a new focus on inspection and 'coasting' schools; rapidly rising numbers of academies; the introduction of higher tuition fees in HE; and a continuation of gloomy economic news and rising youth unemployment. These are just some of the issues the government will be dealing with over the coming year.

At the end of January, FEEdS members will receive our regular January Stocktake including a timeline of forthcoming key milestones.

Financial Education and the Curriculum

In December, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Financial Education for Young People published its [report](#) on its 8-month inquiry into financial education in primary and secondary schools in England.

FEEdS member **pfeg** had provided the secretariat for the APPG, collating the evidence, commissioning research and championing the campaign.

During a 3-hour parliamentary debate on financial education on 15th December, Nick Gibb, Minister for Schools, said: "I think we're all in agreement about the importance of good quality financial education. It is true that young people are growing up in a materialistic world that they are not prepared for."

He said that the government would consider the APPG report's proposals as part of the National Curriculum review. He did not discount financial education being made compulsory.

Networking with Confidence

On 30th November, FEEdS joined with 16 other organisations to host the second Scottish pan-professional networking event, bringing together over 150 delegates from financial, legal, banking, construction, accountancy and sports management organisations.

Fraser Murray of Rock the Boat Consulting entertained with an informative, interactive session on networking, followed by the opportunity for us all to put his advice and tips into practice. The evening was variously described as 'amazing', 'rewarding' and 'highly relevant'; plans are already underway for the next event.

News...news...news...news...news...news...news...news...

- **Simon Waugh**, Chief Executive of the National Apprenticeship Service, has completed his 3-year contract and will be leaving his post at the end of March.
- **Geoff Russell**, Chief Executive of the Skills Funding Agency, has announced that he will be retiring from his post at the end of July.
- Speaking at the BETT show for educational technology in London, Education Secretary Michael Gove has announced that a new **information and communications technology (ICT) curriculum** will be introduced in England in September 2012. A consultation has been launched on what will effectively be an 'open source' curriculum in computer science. IBM and Microsoft are already working on a pilot GCSE curriculum.
- In his New Year message, **Scottish Education Secretary Mike Russell** set out the key priorities for education in 2012: the reform of post-16 education; tackling youth unemployment; the early years and preventative spending; and the ongoing implementation of the new curriculum.

These stories and more will feature in the next FEEdS UK Briefing and Scotland Briefing, due early February.

Members' News

School Governors click [here](#) to read about an exciting teacher secondment opportunity being organised by HTI for a passionate maths/science leader, to be based with National Grid in Warwick.

For further information please email e.khiari@hti.org.uk

HTI's Transforming Lives – Leading for Learning event for Senior Leaders will be held on Thursday, 14 June at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London.

The event will explore areas around the curriculum such as creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

For further information please email e.khiari@hti.org.uk

Cambridge Assessment - the University's international exams group - is hosting an event called Learning comes first: shifting the focus from examining to the curriculum.

It will consider why there has been a rise in awareness of the importance of curriculum coherence; and the role exam boards and other organisations should have in shaping good curricula.

Participants will have an opportunity to explore the concept behind a curriculum or programme of learning; to discuss a qualification's educational purpose; and to debate what makes a good education.

Tuesday 31 January, central London

[Join the debate and register here](#)

Prospects is organising three National Career Guidance Shows in London, Leeds and Edinburgh in February and March 2012, in conjunction with the Institute of Career Guidance.

A Microsoft Partners in Learning Teacher Camp is being held later this month in East Kilbride, offering innovative teachers the chance to work together with experts to develop, create and evaluate learning resources using Microsoft software.