

2009 Autumn Edition



Alumni Association Newsletter



# College bids for Higher Education Centre status

Havering College has submitted a bid to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to establish a new Higher Education Centre in the Thames Gateway, under the Government's 'New University Challenge' proposals, which were published in 2008.

The bid, which is being supported by Havering Borough Council and Anglia Ruskin University, will, if successful, enable the College to consolidate its position as the largest Further Education College provider of Higher Education in the London Region.

## College contributes to national study on widening participation in higher education amongst young people

Havering College is a major contributor to a Government funded project aimed at widening participation in higher education amongst young people.

The project, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is researching into the attitudes and aspirations of young people towards higher education in six areas across England.

The six areas involved are – Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Leeds, Salford, rural Cambridgeshire, Hastings in East Sussex and Barking and Dagenham.

Working with colleagues from the University of East London and Barking College, Jo Finch, Curriculum Manager for Social Work, has been interviewing students who live in the borough of Barking and Dagenham.

The students from both Further (FE) and Higher Education (HE) programmes have been sharing their experiences of school, their current programmes of study and their hopes for the future.

The findings from the FE students included:

- most learners had negative or indifferent experiences of school;
- some students made good use of career guidance services and Connexions;
- students were also reliant on their own resources to find out about college courses;
- parental/carer support seems key in helping young people to achieve educationally; and
- most of the young people interviewed were considering vocational courses at mostly post-1992 universities.

The findings from the HE students included:

- HE learners being more positive about the borough and its facilities;

- experiences of school were generally more positive, although those educated in the borough had indifferent or negative experiences;
- learners chose to undertake HE courses to progress their careers, although some were required to undertake courses due to changes within their professions;
- studying for this group of learners was clearly linked to future career goals and aspirations;
- most learners were first generation HE students.

HEFCE will use the information from all six local studies to enable them to develop work with colleges and universities to promote studying at HE level for young people who have traditionally found it difficult to access or beyond their families' experience.

## Higher Education and links with industry and employers – how you can be involved in the work of the college

Many of you will have completed placements or work based learning as part of your Higher Education (HE) studies at Havering College. Would you like to give something back to the current generation of HE students by offering to support them by offering opportunities to gain valuable experience in the work place?

Havering College has over 35 years of experience of delivering Higher Education (HE) programmes. The current HE portfolio includes HNCs, Cert HEs, Foundation Degrees, Diplomas of Higher Education and Honours degree programmes across a wide range of subjects, e.g. Engineering, Creative Arts, Counselling, Education, Social Sciences, Social Work and Youth and Community Work. Providing training and education to local employers and for employers from across the sub-region has been a key feature of HE development.

## The nature of “Employer engagement” in Higher Education

Employer engagement, work-based learning and preparing students for “employability” and the development of graduate skills are significant aspects of all higher education programmes at the college.

All of the college’s Foundation and Honours degree programmes have elements of employer engagement within their curriculum.

The level of employer involvement varies according to the nature of the programme. Where courses are vocational and subject to the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies the work related component will be high. For courses without a specifically vocational element the employer engagement will be less, but there will be mechanisms for preparing students for the world of work.

Across the college, five models of activity are used to describe activities with employers and local industries, these are:

### Work Based Learning (WBL)

This applies to courses with a requirement that a component of the course is based in the workplace. Foundation Degree programmes have this mandate and employers will be involved in the planning and overseeing of the WBL activities. This may involve the work place as a venue for a ‘Major Project’ that is weighted and carries the award of credits. While employers may advise and inform the course team as to the abilities of students all assessment is undertaken by academic staff.

### Work Placement Experience

Students are placed with an employer for a period of time for the purposes of “experiencing” the working environment. This will not be a mandatory component of the course and will be for “enrichment” purposes only. In these situations students may find their own placement and there will be no academic weighting or credits awarded for the activities although it will feature as part of the students’ personal development planning. The college ensures in such cases that all insurance and health and safety aspects of the placement are appropriate.

### Work Placement to determine competence

This will apply where there is a statutory, professional or regulatory requirement that a student must be deemed competent in order to qualify as a designated “professional” e.g. Teacher, Social Work and Youth & Community programmes. The duration of such a placement is specified by the regulatory body e.g. 150 days or hours and the purpose is to provide the opportunity for a student undertaking a course of study to demonstrate that they have the knowledge, competence and skills related to the profession. Students on such placements are assessed in the workplace according to



the professional criteria and “Pass” or “Fail” accordingly. While there is no academic assessment associated with this activity, a student failing to demonstrate competence cannot qualify. Such placements are mandatory and are formally sought, approved and monitored by dedicated college staff.

### Work Placement for individual accreditation

Some professions e.g. counselling offer a student the opportunity to become “accredited” with a recognised body e.g. the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP). To demonstrate their competence they must personally accrue a specific number of hours (some of which must be supervised) actually practising. In such cases, the college programme usually builds in a number of hours specifically for such activities. It is often the case that the student seeks the placement themselves. The college provides assistance with this and determines the suitability of the placement in terms of vocational relevance and health and safety.

### Work related activity

It is recognised by the college that some disciplines e.g. creative and performing art programmes do not readily offer work placement opportunities. Students studying on these courses often undertake “live projects” which involve employers and outside agencies and these contribute to the overall learning experience.

If you are interested in offering placements or other forms of work based learning activity to students currently on HE programmes then please email the Alumni Team at – [hegrad@havering-college.ac.uk](mailto:hegrad@havering-college.ac.uk)

# Lectures and speaking

## Professorial Lectures

A programme of Professorial and Public lectures on a range of HE relevant subjects will be developed each academic year – look out for posters around the college advertising each event.

## Guest speaking and guest lecturing

Alternatively, you may have reached the stage of your career where you would like to give something back to your profession in a different way.

If you would like to share your experiences of your job, of developing your career in a dynamic and changing work place with students currently studying at college, why not contact the Alumni Team who will liaise with the teaching team concerned to enable this to take place. Their email address is – [hegrad@havering-college.ac.uk](mailto:hegrad@havering-college.ac.uk)

## Contact

To avoid pressure on teaching teams and individual members of programme teams, please make your offer of support for placements and guest speaking through the Alumni Team at – [hegrad@havering-college.ac.uk](mailto:hegrad@havering-college.ac.uk)

# Forthcoming Professorial Lecture Dates

21 OCTOBER 2009

Professor John Gabriel  
Title:- Public Sociology

10 FEBRUARY 2010

Dilys Williams  
Title:- Sustainable Fashion

19 MAY 2010

Guest Speaker  
to be confirmed



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