

Collegelife

Find out what's going on at Weston College



WESTON
COLLEGE



We are outstanding

Ofsted rates Weston College as one of the UK's best! **Page 4**



Fantastic facilities

College continues to invest **Page 10**



Inspirational winners

Learners-turned-lecturers win top UK awards **Page 18**



The *Max* factor



Talented apprentice finds the recipe for success **Page 8**

WIN
an iPad mini
See page 31

Plus lots more inside...

Hello

from Weston College

There has never been a better time to choose Weston College for your education and training needs, because we've had an outstanding time recently – literally.

A team of Ofsted inspectors spent a whole week with us – at very short notice – and scrutinised what we do, and how we do it, thoroughly.

The result was that they awarded us their top grade – outstanding – which means we are officially one of the top-performing colleges in the country.

That means that if you choose Weston, you can be assured you are going to get the very highest standards across everything that we do.

We showed Ofsted that we offer consistently excellent exam results, year after year, proven, positive, post-course progression, into a job or higher education, superb support for students, fantastic facilities, and teaching staff with an extensive wealth of industry experience and contacts.

We also offer an increasingly wide range of courses; A Levels, apprenticeships, vocational courses, traineeships, degrees, courses for the unemployed, and work-related courses.

We are still – proudly – the only education provider in North Somerset that enables its students to progress from entry level to a degree.

Following a successful bid to Government, we are now officially a Further AND Higher Education establishment, which means that we are not going to be resting on any laurels.

We are going to be expanding our provision significantly in the coming years, enabling us to offer even more choice. We are continuing to invest in ensuring all our learners enjoy modern, state-of-the-art, facilities to help them thrive.

Why settle for anything less than an outstanding College to help create your brighter future?

I look forward to welcoming you to our fantastic facilities which are complemented by brilliant staff.



Dr Paul Phillips,
Principal and Chief Executive OBE

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We offer a wide range of courses for everyone.

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Open evenings

Wednesday 8th October, 2014

Tuesday 11th November, 2014

Tuesday 13th January, 2015

To book your place on an open evening go to:
www.weston.ac.uk/openevenings

WIN
an iPad mini

Don't miss out on the chance to win an iPad mini in our free prize draw competition. See page 31.



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Free prize draw



Weston College is officially one of the highest-performing colleges in the country, after earning an 'outstanding' rating from Ofsted.

At very short notice, a whole team of Ofsted inspectors spent a week scrutinising every aspect of College life, observing lessons and talking to managers, staff, and students.

The result was Weston College being given Ofsted's top grade – making it the first general Further Education College in the West of England to achieve the highest rating in all four key inspection areas under stringent new guidelines.

Those key areas were:

- Overall effectiveness
- Outcomes for learners
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- Effectiveness of leadership and management.

The outstanding grade relates to every area of the College's education programme.

Many individual curriculum areas were praised, but Ofsted particularly noted the Outstanding provision in Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy, Sport, Public Services, Independent Living and Leisure, and Foundation English.

Weston College Academy of Football



Ofsted said...

The overwhelming majority of learners make good or outstanding progress.

The College provides very strong support to learners to help them to move into higher education or employment when they leave.

Learners benefit greatly from the culture of respect, hard work and enjoyment that permeates the College.

Outstanding leadership and management have improved teaching, learning and assessment, and raised standards very effectively across the College.

The vast majority of apprenticeship programmes have very high success rates.

Learners enjoy their time at College, and almost all of them progress to employment or further study.

Learners benefit substantially from excellent teaching, learning and assessment, coupled with very strong pastoral and academic support, both in and out of the classroom.

All learners receive exceptionally strong support, including specialist support where needed.

Learners' experiences are enhanced significantly through an excellent enrichment programme that includes visits, talks by outside speakers, meetings with employers and work experience.

Learners receive excellent information, advice and guidance, and hence they make well-informed course choices.

Teachers have good industrial experience and demonstrate best commercial practice in their teaching.

The College has extensive links with local businesses, which provide many learners with opportunities to develop skills such as enterprise, teamwork, innovation and creativity in real business situations.

Teachers successfully raise the aspirations and ambitions of learners across all areas of the College.

Partnerships with employers are particularly strong and used very effectively to develop apprenticeships and jobs.

Through genuine encouragement for innovation, keeping learners at the heart of their work and involving employers in changes to the curriculum, they have achieved a culture of enterprise and innovation, where the views of the community and employers are used to create a curriculum that matches their needs.



An inspirational leader *Dr Paul Phillips OBE*

Principal and Chief Executive Dr Paul Phillips OBE is widely acknowledged as the guiding light on Weston College's journey towards earning the coveted Ofsted 'outstanding' rating.

Chair of Governors Jude Ferguson said: "The College has undergone a dynamic transformation under the leadership of Dr Paul," going from a struggling £9 million establishment to the thriving one it is today, with an annual turnover of £45 million-plus.

He arrived in January 2001 and rapidly refocused the College on students and the curriculum, and encouraging staff to aspire to be outstanding. It's all a far cry from his boyhood wish to be a steam train driver.

Born and raised in South Wales, he earned a Cardiff University Degree in Maths, Statistics and Economics, and a Masters in Economics and Law of Education, plus a PhD in Cost Benefit Analysis, followed by a job at the MoD working on computer-aided command systems.

While there, the one-time disco promoter was asked to "help out" teaching maths at a local technical college, and while he was sure that his future lay in the world of industry, not education, he got hooked, and soon secured the post of maths lecturer at Coleg Gwent's campus in Newport.

Away from college, the father-of-two enjoys walking, watching professional wrestling and rugby, and canal restoration.

As if running Weston College didn't keep him busy enough, Dr Paul is very active in the local community as well as representing the Further Education sector regionally and nationally.

He's a National Board Member of the Association of Colleges (AoC), as well as sitting on the South West Board of the AoC and being a member of its National Joint Forum of Pay.

Dr Paul is Chairman of the South West LEP Skills Board, Chairman of the Skills and Economy Group of North Somerset Council, a member of the North Somerset Partnership, FE representative for South Gloucestershire Education Review Board, Chair of Western Principals' Group and Chair of the WEELS Multi Academy Trust.

In 2009 he was awarded honorary Doctorate of Letters for his services to FE and HE by Bath Spa University and received an OBE in the 2011 New Year's Honours list for services to Further Education and the voluntary sector.

Achieving Ofsted 'outstanding' coincided with his election to the AoC Board. He said: "*I was told by one of the inspectors that if what we do here could be bottled up and sold, every college in the UK would get an outstanding rating.*"

"All organisations survive or fail based on commitment, entrepreneurship and calculated risk. My staff personify these attributes and my students realise and exceed their ambitions. The success of Weston College is due to everyone involved: partners, Governors, Funding Agency, staff and students and even Michael Gove and Michael Wilshaw – they have all influenced us to succeed and achieve."

Outstanding results

We're in the **Top 10%** of Further Education Colleges in England for our success rates across all courses.

97%

A Level pass rate

98%

Vocational course pass rate

99%

degree pass rate

90+%

of apprentices are offered full-time jobs at the end of their programme

22%

of degree students graduated with first-class honours, compared to the national average of 16%

Weston College secures Higher Education status

Weston College is now officially a Further Education AND Higher Education establishment, which paves the way for its degree-level provision to be expanded significantly.



“Ten years ago we had 20 graduates; now there are nearly 350 and next year 768 are on degree courses.

“It’s been a massive growth and we want to make Weston-super-Mare a University town.”

Principal and Chief Executive
Dr Paul Phillips OBE.

The move towards offering more degrees at Weston College ties in with North Somerset Council’s strategy for the regeneration of Weston-super-Mare, and will lead to an eventual aim of having a ‘University Centre’ in the town.

Weston College’s growing reputation for university-level provision was enhanced by graduates celebrating an outstanding 99% overall pass rate.

It was a record year as more than 300 people graduated with Foundation and Honours degrees.

Find out more about degrees on pages 22/23, or go to www.weston.ac.uk



Best in the West – say students!

Weston College was named best in the West for the third year running in a student poll funded by the Skills Funding Agency.

Thousands of students took part in the Framework for Excellence Survey, which looks at “learner satisfaction.”

Assistant Principal Dave Trounce said: “To come out on top for the third year in a row is excellent news.

“The results show just how highly our students think of our College, which is extremely pleasing.”

Annual report



Principal and Chief Executive Dr Paul Phillips OBE reported growth across the curriculum, at the release of Weston College’s Annual Report.

He said the progress had been achieved in challenging conditions and “demonstrates the College’s commitment to the community.

“Everything we do is designed to create impact for our learners and to contribute to the entrepreneurial focus of our organisation. A Weston College learner can expect to achieve beyond expectation and make a major contribution to working life, business and industry.”

Trailblazing event celebrates apprenticeship success

A double-first was achieved when Weston College hosted a pioneering graduation-style ceremony for apprentices.

The College was one of just six organisations – and the only college – throughout the UK selected to stage the ‘Trailblazer’ celebration.

The double first was because this was also the first graduation-type event ever to take place on a British seaside pier.

Like their degree-course counterparts, apprentices got gowned up for the event.

Speakers included “Jedi” Jim Eastwood, 2011 finalist on the popular BBC TV show ‘The Apprentice’.

An upsurge of interest in apprenticeships at Weston College was celebrated to mark National Apprenticeship Week.

The College also launched a campaign designed to generate pledges of 100 new apprenticeship places in 100 days.

Employers were encouraged to come forward after College staff worked to raise awareness of the many business benefits of taking on an apprentice, and the target was shattered with some 30 days to spare.



National praise for offender learning work

Weston College’s approach to offender learning was called “spot on” by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons Nick Hardwick at a national City & Guilds Offender Learning event.

He went on to say that other providers of offender learning need to follow Weston’s example with their work.

One example of Weston’s work has been the opening of a new Young Offenders secure College at Portland Prison in Dorset.

Dr Paul Phillips OBE, Weston College’s Principal and Chief Executive, said: *“This is an ambitious project in partnership with the prison and Skills Funding Agency for Teaching and Learning. Our focus is courses and qualifications that lead to*

jobs with a wide range of education and training.”

Portland is a male prison with a capacity of over 500, the majority of whom are young offenders. Courses include Maths, English, Carpentry, Sports and Active Leisure, Creative Arts, Art and Design, and Home Cooking.

Portland Prison Governor Russ Trent said: *“This outstanding facility will help us achieve our ambition to deliver job-focused training in a safe but educational environment.”*

Weston College delivers its unique brand of education in prisons across the South West after successfully winning the Government’s £10 million Offender Learning Contract in 2012.



Gold Award puts College in top 2%

Weston College has retained the highest level of a coveted national award for displaying outstanding commitment to staff development.

The Investors in People (IiP) Gold Award is given to less than 2% of UK businesses, which have to meet stringent criteria including learning and development, leadership skills and recognition and reward of staff.

Dr Paul Phillips OBE, Principal and Chief Executive, said: *“To retain this very prestigious award is a great honour and is reflective of the time, effort and energy we put into staff development.*

“We very much hope we can champion our Investors in People status and share our good practice and ideas with many other organisations.”



Dr Paul Phillips with (left) Caroline Long (Head of HR) and Andrea Greer (Executive Director of Human Resources and Marketing).

‘Innovative’ marketing team scoops national awards

Weston College’s Marketing and Communications Team had cause to sing their own praises after winning two national awards and being shortlisted for two more.

The team took top spot in the Communication category of the Best Business Awards, and scooped the top Marketing Team prize in the Global Business Excellence Awards.

The team was also shortlisted for the prestigious Times Educational Supplement and Chartered Institute of Marketing Awards.

The Max Factor!



He's rubbed shoulders with a celebrity chef; now the world is Max Bennett's oyster.

Talented teenager Max Bennett capped off a whirlwind 12 months by finishing runner up in the national Adult Learners' Week Awards.

At a glittering ceremony in London, the 19-year-old finished a close second. He said: *"It was a great night full of inspirational stories, and I was very pleased to be there as regional winner."*

This latest success followed the Silver Medal he won in the national finals of the prestigious WorldSkills event, after putting his culinary skills to the test against top competition.

He was also named Weston College Apprentice of the Year at the College's 2013 Celebration of Success event.

Max works at the Marco Pierre White Restaurant at the DoubleTree at Hilton Cadbury House venue in Congresbury, North Somerset. The former Clevedon School student completed a Hospitality Services Apprenticeship, and is now studying a Level Three Supervisory and Leadership Apprenticeship.

Learning journey

He said: *"The learning journey I have been on has been a huge surprise; I am aware of how much I have learned and how it has benefited me, but also the learning process has been fun. This hands-on method of learning has been great for me. Working my way up and around the restaurant in a steady way, gaining qualifications and positive recognition as I go is going to help me achieve my goal."*

His hospitality skills and highly professional manner with the Cadbury House customers made him an ideal candidate for the WorldSkills event, the largest unique, biannual, competition in the world involving thousands of students, aged between 18 and 24, in nearly 50 different skill areas.

Winning the regional final in London earned him his place at the WorldSkills UK final in Birmingham, where he earned his silver medal after facing two competitors from Michelin-starred restaurants and another five from specialist catering colleges.

He said: *"We had to flambé, carve salmon, cook steak Diane, and make cocktails, among other things."*



Max mixing mocktails with local MP John Penrose during Adult Learners Week.

"I was amazed and delighted to take the silver medal; they almost had to call my name twice when the silver medallist was announced!"

Brian Howe, Weston College's Work Based Learning (WBL) Development Coordinator, said: *"Max is a great guy and a real credit to his employers. His outstanding success at WorldSkills just proves what you can achieve if you put your mind to it."*

"I was amazed and delighted to take the silver medal."

"Max competed against the best for three days in Birmingham. He showed great determination and was an ambassador not only for us at Weston College, but also DoubleTree at Hilton."

Dr Paul Phillips OBE, Weston College Principal and Chief Executive, said: *"Max is a credit to the College and to his employer, and we're all very proud of his on-going achievements."*

Max, who would ultimately like to manage or own his own restaurant, has thoroughly enjoyed his time at the Marco Pierre White Restaurant, where he is highly valued by colleagues and managers, and received Marco's autograph in person as a sign of his approval.

Support

Max is grateful for the support he has had from Weston College in taking those first steps in his promising career.

He said: *"I chose to study at Weston College after being very impressed with the facilities and tutors on open days."*

Max is also keen to encourage other people to benefit in the same way he has, by becoming a Weston College Apprentice.

He took part in a Skills Show at Weston's Winter Gardens which was visited by around 3,000 people, including many local schoolchildren. Alongside fellow DoubleTree apprentice Tim Walsh, Max mixed non-alcoholic cocktails for the visitors.

He said: *"It was great to be at the Skills Show. We got a lot of interest in what we were doing, and hopefully this will lead to some new employees in the future."*

Interested in a catering career?
Go to www.weston.ac.uk to find out more.



Max with Michelin-star celebrity chef, Marco Pierre White.



“The support and guidance I’ve received from tutors has been great and given me the confidence to pursue my chosen career.”

State-of-the-art *resources*

Around £30 million has been invested in recent years to create state-of-the-art resources to ensure that Weston College offers the best possible learning environment for students.

Projects like the £11 million renovation of the South West Skills Campus (SWSC) demonstrate the College's commitment to providing modern, fantastic, facilities.

Much of the investment has been prompted by a continuing growth in the number of students choosing to come to Weston College, and the College wanting to ensure it can not only meet this growing demand, but provide the best possible learning environment.

Innovation Centre open for business

The Lord Baker Innovation Centre, which is dedicated to vocational education and skills training, was officially opened for business by the former Home Secretary it is named after.

The purpose-built facility will train the next generation of young people to become skilled in the workplace, and assist unemployed people or those with other challenges to get back into work.

Lord Baker assisted and supported Weston College in the development of the Innovation Centre since visiting the College over two years ago.

At the official opening ceremony, Lord Baker said: *"In this country we have always been bad at skills training, but now technology is changing things very quickly.*

"Innovation is the way this country will prosper once again, and it is the successful colleges like Weston who will train people in the skills needed to innovate."

New bespoke premises for Business Centre

Weston College's Business Enterprise Centre (BEC) has a new home, with plush classrooms, office space, training facilities and hi-tech bespoke space for the College's business partners.

The ground floor has a new reception area, bistro-style canteen, 'LibraryPlus' facility, student support and IT facilities. That work was carried out at a cost of £3.3 million, a third of which has been provided by the Skills Funding Agency.



Lord Baker Innovation Centre (above and below).



“This extensive work will benefit both learners and staff, underlining the fact that, as a College, we are prepared to make significant investment for the future.”

Weston College Assistant Principal Linda Burlison.

Eco-house opens

A community sustainability centre has been built at the South West Skills Campus to demonstrate practical examples of green technology in action to students on related courses.

The £300,000 sustainable detached eco-house will provide students with a practical understanding about how environmental and renewable technology can transform the construction and retro-fit industry.

Weston College Building Services and Environmental Technology Manager Chris Simpson said: *"Weston College will cut its carbon footprint and be the driving force behind the provision of environmental technology training in the South West of England."*



University Campus extended

Weston College's University Campus has been extended to add six state-of-the-art classrooms to the already impressive facilities.

The campus features an additional two creative arts room, two dedicated to English and maths, one for care and early years, and a further room for degree-level students,

A new photographic studio and an extended staff room have also been created at the Loxton Road campus.

Interested in a course? *Want to find out more?*



Geared up for *auto excellence*

Weston College motor vehicle students now train in a new state-of-the-art facility following a £1 million refurbishment of a former Renault garage.

The Automotive Technology Centre, part of the South West Skills Campus, includes two large workshops, two computer suites with vehicle diagnostics – and two hi-tech classrooms.

Its opening was marked in spectacular style with a stunning display from the Bloodhound land speed record team.

Applications for motor vehicle courses at the College have doubled and success rates soared.

Dr Paul Phillips OBE, Weston College Principal and Chief Executive, said: *"This new motor vehicle maintenance centre was built in response to demand for quality courses. Our success rates for motor vehicle training are top of the league table in the South West and this is down to our dedicated staff and this modern, well-equipped, centre."*

"Despite the economic challenge we continue to invest heavily in buildings to meet the needs of 21st century students, offering them the best resources in the South West."

Medical room is just what the doctor ordered

A £20,000 simulated medical treatment room has opened at Weston College to give students practical experience of hospital patient care.



The facility includes two hospital beds, state-of-the-art simulation mannequins, a patient hoist, light boxes to show X-ray photographs, stethoscopes and pulsometers.

Health and Social Care Co-ordinator Sarah-Jane Lewis said: *"There is only so much you can teach in the classroom about patient care and handling, and the treatment room is a perfect way of demonstrating different techniques and equipping students with the skills they need."*

Modern new facilities for those who need extra support

A £1 million project will enable Weston College to deliver a better service than ever to people with learning, behavioural and physical disabilities and difficulties.

The scheme has two key elements; the first is the development of a bespoke workshop facility for students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD) at the Knightstone Campus.

The modern premises will provide dedicated facilities for motor vehicle courses, painting and decorating, carpentry, bicycle maintenance and other vocational subjects.

The second phase is the creation of a dedicated learning area for people with profound and multiple learning difficulties, with classrooms, a dining area and sensory room, with access to all the mainstream facilities on site.

The new facilities enhance the College's partnership working with the local authority and special schools, and will help build stronger relationships with parents and carers.



The new teaching kitchen facilities for students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD).

Fantastic new facilities created at all College campuses

Weston College's continuing commitment to investing in fantastic facilities is bringing benefits to students across all curriculum areas on all campuses.

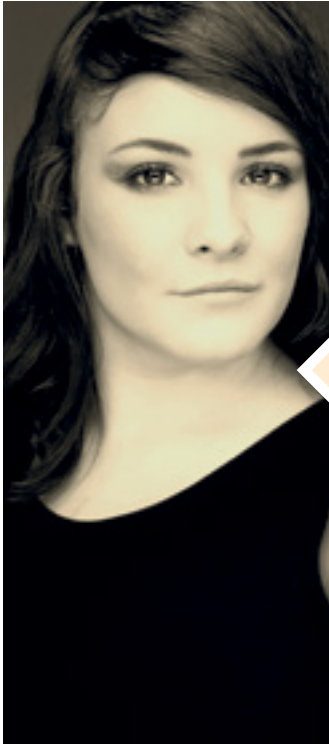
Degree students now have their own dedicated HE Centre at the Knightstone Campus.

This architecturally-designed area features the use of natural materials including oak doors and matching walkways. The facility features a lecture theatre, an open study area, welfare and support rooms, and new science labs.

The teaching kitchen for students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD) – which includes wheelchair-friendly facilities – has been refurbished on the third floor of the building, and the second floor Grove training restaurant has seen the creation of improved kitchen facilities and changing areas.

Training facilities at Weston College's Construction and Engineering Centre of Excellence have also received an upgrade.

Areas have been installed for painting, decorating and multi-trades, while students on the popular plumbing course have the opportunity to train in purpose-built bays.



Claire steps into the spotlight

Musical Theatre student Claire Lisette was picked from more than 100 applicants to play the part of Janet Weiss in a production of the Rocky Horror Show at Bristol's Hippodrome.

Claire, who completed both a Foundation Degree and BA Honours Degree in Musical Theatre, underwent a gruelling audition process before landing the part.

She performed in a special extended finale alongside the full professional cast.

Claire, from Cwmbarn, South Wales, said: *"I can't praise my Weston College tutors highly enough; they were extremely professional and helped me get this far with my career."*

Prison soap business booming

Women prisoners preparing for life after they are released are cleaning up with their luxury soap business.

Eastwood Soaps opened for business in May 2013 and employs eight women as part of a social enterprise project at the female-only HMP Eastwood Park Prison in Gloucestershire.

The enterprise was launched jointly by Weston College and the Prison Service, and has expanded from luxury soap to also producing lip balm, liquid hand soaps, and melt and pour soaps.

Single mum Lisa, 27, was released from prison in September 2013 and is hoping to become the first paid employee of Eastwood Soap, as it goes from strength to strength.

Her volunteer role with the project took her to the Houses of Parliament at the request of Baroness Jan Royale.



Girl power!

Four female construction students scooped two gold medals, one silver and one bronze in the annual SkillBuild competition, after competing against the best construction students – male and female – from colleges throughout the region. SkillBuild is the largest multi-trade competition in the country for construction trainees and apprentices. Shaun Canniford, Curriculum Lead for Construction, said: *"There should be no barriers to women going into the construction industry, they're as good as the men, and at SkillBuild they have proved this."*

SkillBuild winners (Left to Right): Zoe Gollege, Paul Seagrove, Suzie Reed, Gina Brunt, Emma Sharkey and Dougie Brown.



Double win at business awards

Weston College enjoyed a double win at the first ever North Somerset Business Leader Awards ceremony.

The College won the Employer of the Year and Training Initiative categories, as well as being a finalist in the Business in Community Award. The honours recognise Weston College's status as a major employer in the North Somerset area, and one which recognises the importance of training and ongoing staff development.

Principal and Chief Executive Dr Paul Phillips OBE said: *"The awards are testament to my brilliant and entrepreneurial College staff who always put the learner first."*



New website allows online course applications

A new website was launched by Weston College, providing future students with the ability to apply for full-time courses on line for the first time.

The new site marked the end of an extensive period of research, consultation and development. It has been designed to be very easy to navigate, and much more accessible.



Deaf student learns English and gains Apprenticeship

A Lithuanian student who lost her hearing after being struck by flu has perfected her English and been taken on as an Apprentice, thanks to specialist support from Weston College.

Health and Social Care Level 2 student Deimante Bareistye so impressed staff at a Weston care home that they asked her to join their team.

She was just 13-years-old when flu rendered her completely deaf in her left ear, and with only about 30% hearing in her right ear.

But thanks to the specialist support team at Weston College, she is now on her way to a brighter future.

Cracking job for Keith!

A Weston College Graphic Design degree student secured employment with Aardman Animations, makers of the Wallace and Gromit films.

After Keith Kilpin contacted the Bristol-based firm, he was offered two weeks' work experience, which was extended for a couple of months.

His work included the official Hobbit app for the hit film Desolation of Smaug, for which he got an official credit.

He is hoping to stay on with Aardman once he graduates.

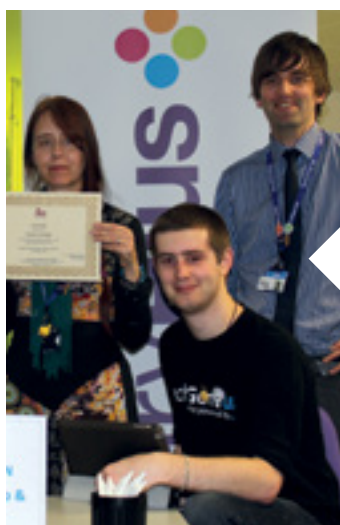


Public Services students are best in the west

A team of Weston College Public Services students won the coveted Naval Careers Service Challenge Cup after a gruelling two days of competition.

The 15-strong team completed an assault course, tug-of-war competition, deck hockey on a naval ship, six-mile navigation exercise, a cross country challenge and mock grenade throwing.

They were up against eight other colleges but came out on top to be crowned the best in the South West.



Award for tech geniuses

The College's 21st Century LibraryPlus service beat off tough UK competition to scoop a Best National Practice Award for its unique level of technical support.

The Council for Learning Services in College (ColRiC) judges chose Weston College's free 'TechGenius' service for its service interaction.

TechGenius involves Foundation Degree Computing students gaining work experience by helping others with computer, tablet, laptop, PC and phone glitches.



Schools Minister praises College

Schools Minister David Laws praised Weston College's 'high quality' provision for students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD) during a visit.

The Liberal Democrat MP for Yeovil visited the Knightstone Campus and Weston Bay, the bespoke facility – the first of its kind in the country – for learners on the autistic spectrum.

Mr Laws said: "I've been really impressed by the fantastic range of provision at Weston College.

"It's pleasing to see so many initiatives being pioneered here, particularly those in regard to Special Educational Needs. It's obviously having a big impact, and the support for such students is excellent."

Third Westminster speech for autistic student

Graduate Steven Philp delivered a third speech at Westminster to highlight the needs of students on the autism spectrum.

He spoke at the Autism Alliance Conference in front of more than 150 people, including Minister for Care and Comfort Norman Lamb.

He said: *"I was delighted to talk at Westminster again. This time it was about the transitions people on the autism spectrum have to make between school, college and university."*

"When I was 16, I was completely shy and reserved, did not have many friends and the thought of moving to College scared me."

"Being at the College gave me confidence and social skills. Weston College is like my second home."



Michelin-star menu highlights recipe for success

Champagne, venison and pigeon pate, crab and mackerel cakes, and tiny Yorkshire puddings with beef and cranberry canapés were served when the Chefs' Forum visited Weston College.

The canapés were created under expert direction, and preceded cookery demonstrations by Michelin-star restaurateurs as more than 80 chefs and industry representatives attended.

The Forum is a collective of industry professionals keen to share their skills with young people in education.

Michelin-star chef James Wilkins said: *"It's been really good working with the next generation of talented student chefs."*

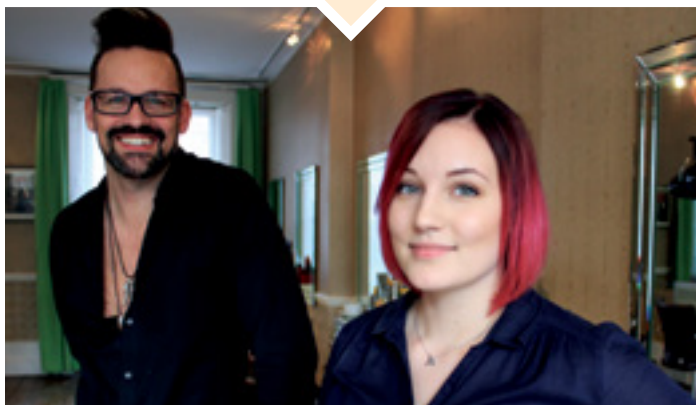
Hairdresser's success leads to international study link

A Finnish student proved such a hit at a local hairdressers during her work experience that a study link between the two countries is being set up.

Emma Uimonen spent five weeks in Weston College's Hair and Beauty Therapy department, during which she enjoyed some work experience at the SMART:EST 73 salon in the town centre.

Sandra Bull, Hairdressing co-ordinator at Weston, said: *"I'd wanted to do an exchange for a while because the opportunity is rare within hairdressing courses and I think it's important for our students to broaden their horizons."*

It's now hoped that a permanent exchange link will be set up between Weston College and Sampo College in Finland, where Emma studies.



From Weston to Westminster

A Level politics, history and media students gained a valuable insight into the world of politics thanks to local MP Dr Liam Fox.

He visited the College to speak to senior managers but also took time out to speak to a group of students, proposing a project for them about what drives turn-out at elections.

As a result, five students plus lecturer Mardi McLay went to London as guests of the Conservative MP, to visit the Houses of Parliament.

Student James Holtby said: *"It was a really interesting experience learning about the political system of the UK and the real life of an MP."*



Travel students go the extra mile

Travel and Tourism students have gone the extra mile by launching an in-house Travel Agency, offering deals to students, staff and members of the public.

The College has formed a partnership with local firm Thomas William Travel, whose Managing Director Simon Dinham is working closely with the students, providing them with vital 'real life' work experience.

He said: *"This is a fully operational, independent travel agency and there are no destinations that we cannot cover in terms of booking."*

Online learning becomes a virtual reality

Virtual learning took a bold leap forward with the introduction of online lessons from several Weston College departments.

A trial of Functional Skills lessons, focusing on an English Language module, has taken place and 10 other curriculum areas have expressed an interest.

Lead Learning Technologist Amy Palmer said: *"Education is moving increasingly towards online learning and it's vital the College follows this trend."*



Lord Baker opens new facility named after him

Former Home Secretary Lord Baker of Dorking visited Weston to officially open the Lord Baker Innovation Centre, a facility dedicated to vocational education and skills training.

The centre will help train the next generation of young people to become skilled in the workplace and assist unemployed people, or those with other challenges, to get back into work.

Lord Baker had visited the College two years previously, and has kept in contact. He said: *"Weston is one of the best FE colleges in the country."*

"Innovation is the way this country will prosper once again, and it is the successful colleges like Weston who will train people in the skills needed to innovate."



Charity single honours promising music student

College staff, students and well-known musicians including Beth Rowley and Ryan Inglis joined forces to record a charity single in memory of Charlie Derrick, a music student who died in a car crash a decade ago.

His mother Jules set up the Charlie Derrick Music Foundation (CDMF) to raise funds to support young musicians from North Somerset and promote local talent.

The single, Hope, was endorsed by Glastonbury Festival founder Michael Eavis, CDMF Patron.

Charlie's electric guitar, which has not been played since his death, was re-strung and used to record a solo on the track.



Trailblazer Weston College was one of just six organisations nationwide – and the only college – chosen to host a pioneering Trailblazer apprenticeship graduation ceremony, which was the first ceremony of its kind ever to take place on a UK seaside pier.

Soaraway success The 2014 annual Weston Fashion Show – themed around flight – was hailed a soaraway success – with Weston College students playing key roles. UAL Foundation Diploma students, Performing Arts students, Film and Photography students and Hair and Beauty learners were all involved in the event on the Grand Pier.



Life in the fast lane Weston College has created a new £500,000 facility and teamed up with an ace Formula Ford driver to train a new generation of racing car technicians. Roger Orgee's single-seater car, which races at the Castle Combe circuit in Wiltshire, is branded in Weston College colours to celebrate the innovative Motorsport Diploma courses which will see four promising students take on the role of No. 2 mechanic at the world-famous Castle Combe race track.



Celebrations! Weston College loves to celebrate success, whether its students enjoying the annual graduation ceremony to honouring students, staff and partners at the annual Celebration of Success and Business Excellence Awards ceremonies.



Bradley achieves a sporting goal Talented teenager Bradley Ash became the first Weston College footballer to be selected to play for the England College's football team.



Students open High Street shop The Shop Upstairs will stock vintage, retro and high street fashion, home starter packs for first time buyers, renters or students and will showcase products from local designers and artists.

Students are responsible for recruiting and training volunteers, keeping the shelves stocked and managing the budget, marketing and promotions.

Weston Hospicecare and Weston College have partnered on the project and the shop is on the first floor of the Hospice's premises in High Street.



Prince's Trust Award for former student A former Weston College student who struggled to live independently has won a top award from the Prince's Trust.

Carly Williams won the Trust's Samsung Young Achiever of The Year award, and was presented with it by Prince Charles at a glittering ceremony in London's Leicester Square.

Despite struggling with depression and low self-esteem, Carly came to Weston College and completed an Access to Higher Education course. She is now studying social work at Sheffield Hallam University.



Winning *ways*

Two teachers who started as students at Weston College have won major UK awards after being described as 'outstanding, innovative and inspirational'.





Tanya Gardener and Joe Abdulgani, both won Silver honours in the Further Education (FE) category of the 2014 Pearson Teaching Awards.

They were selected from among 20,000 nominees nationwide – which means Weston College had two of the five category finalists.

Tanya, a Care and Early Years lecturer, and Joe, a lecturer in Computing, will go on to the UK final at London's Guildhall in October 2014, where 10 Silver Award winners, one from each category, will receive Gold Awards.

The Pearson Teaching Awards are an annual celebration of exceptional teachers and teaching. Founded in 1999 by Lord Puttnam, they recognise the life-changing impact of an inspirational teacher on the lives of their students.

Tanya's tale

Award organisers said Tanya's work "is characterised by the highest ambitions for her learners, and her belief in them transfers to the students themselves, helping to build their confidence and self-belief.

"Her students love her classes and the rapport she has with learners is exceptional, maintained through a perfect balance of fun, enthusiasm for teaching, discipline, support, and a genuine interest in the young people in her classes.

"She is always introducing new and innovative ways to help her students learn. Her passion for teaching is simply limitless."

"To receive recognition like this for something I love doing is just amazing."

Tanya started at Weston College at the age of 16, completed courses in Early Years, and has been teaching at the College for five years.

She said: "I was overwhelmed to hear that I had won this award.

"To receive recognition like this for something I love doing is just amazing. It tells me that I am getting things right, and really helping our learners with their studies and development.

"I used to enjoy my lessons here when I was a student, and when I became a teacher I was determined to do everything I could to make my lessons fun; if you are enjoying yourself and having a good time, you are far more likely to take more in and learn more.

"It is hard work, and can be very challenging, but then something like this happens and I know that it's definitely well worthwhile, and that I'm hopefully motivating and inspiring others."

Joe's journey

Joe's life at Weston College started when he studied the BTEC National Diploma in IT Practitioners course between 2004 and 2006, followed by the Foundation Degree in Computing, until 2008.

He started teaching at Weston College through an agency in 2008, and became a permanent member of staff in 2011, while continuing to study for a BSc (Hons) in Applied Computing.

"The fact that they have felt moved to nominate me gives me a tremendous sense of job satisfaction."

He said: "I'm honoured to be a Silver Award winner. Everyone wants to be considered good at their job, and to win an award is very satisfying.

"What's even more touching is the fact the award has come about mostly because of nominations from the students I am teaching; as a lecturer, the best you can hope for is that your students are learning and gaining something positive from your lessons.

"The fact that they have felt moved to nominate me gives me a tremendous sense of job satisfaction."

The award organisers said: "Joe is a highly gifted inspirational Computing lecturer who develops outstanding opportunities for learning. His enthusiasm and passion for his subject, together with his innovative teaching and learning strategies, ensures that learners are always highly engaged in his sessions.

"Joe has brought fresh new ideas into his classroom and constantly finds new ways to deliver his subjects in ways that fascinate and enthuse learners.

"He inspires his learners to reach their full potential inside and outside of the classroom. Students love his lessons. His nomination from one grateful student simply read: 'He is EPIC'."

Part of the family

Dr Paul Phillips OBE, Principal and Chief Executive of Weston College, said: "Both Joe and Tanya are exemplary teachers who demonstrate the highest levels of excellence in all that they do. It is a great honour for them and Weston College to be recognised in this way. We strive to maintain the highest standards among our teaching staff so that our students benefit from some of the best quality education in the South West.

"It's even more gratifying to know that they are both former Weston College students, who have remained part of our family and have become such valued members of staff."



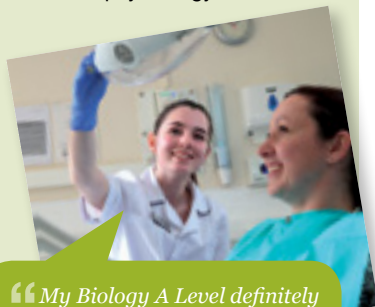
“I opted for Weston because of its excellent results, great atmosphere and the variety of A Levels to choose from.”

Javed Ahmed

A Levels: Biology, Applied Science, Psychology, History

Javed had heard great things about the College from his brother, who had studied previously at Weston College. He said the quality of teaching is high, and the guidance he's received from tutors has given him a clearer idea of how he would like his career to progress.

What next? Javed would like to take a biology or psychology-related degree at Queen Mary, University of London, and eventually pursue a career in clinical psychology.



“My Biology A Level definitely helped me when trying to understand how to maintain high standards of infection control in surgery in order to protect patients and staff.”

Jasmine Couch

A Levels: Biology, Chemistry, Psychology. AS levels: English Literature and Language, Applied Science.

Jasmine said her lecturers always came up with new and exciting methods of teaching, such as interactive learning techniques, quizzes and discussions on how the science would apply to everyday life.

What next? Jasmine is now working as a dental nurse, where she is enjoying putting her scientific knowledge into practice.



Student numbers soar at successful sixth form

Weston College Sixth Form Centre continues to go from strength to strength as more and more students choose our outstanding College for their A Level studies.

Weston College Sixth Form Centre



Outstanding results

Another year of excellent exam results saw 97% of A Level learners passing and 78% achieving A*-C grades.

The number of all Weston College A Level students holding offers from the Russell Group of top universities doubled from last year.

Among the many success stories were Ed Hillman, 18, of Weston, who achieved four A-stars, in Chemistry, Physics, Maths and Further Maths. He is now studying Maths and Physics at Bristol University.

He said: *“I’ve done better than expected and I’m so pleased. Weston College has been an excellent place to study, and I’ve had a lot of help and support all the way through my time here.”*

Will Sugg, 18, from Uphill, Weston, also exceeded his expectations, earning two A-stars and two As in Chemistry, Physics, Maths and Further Maths.

He said: *“Getting these results has been the highlight of my time at Weston College. I’ve enjoyed it here very much. I feel I benefited from the small class sizes, which meant I received excellent one-to-one teaching.”*

Brad Wheatley, 18, of West Wick, Weston, did better than he was predicted and under new rules has been able to take up a place at Bristol University studying Dentistry.

Brad achieved an A in Maths and Bs in Chemistry, Physics and Biology. He said: *“Dentistry is something I’m very interested in and I’m hoping to qualify and then join the Royal Navy as a ship’s dentist. I think that will be an amazing career to have.”*

“I’ve had a fantastic time at Weston and I’d really recommend it as a place to study.”

Applications to the Sixth Form Centre continue to grow, with an impressive 17% increase this year.

Dave Trounce, Assistant Principal, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, said: *“The provision we offer our students is excellent.”*

“The recent Ofsted inspection highlighted not only the outstanding standard of teaching and learning but also the seamless support that we provide to our learners.”

“It is these two ingredients, along with bespoke, industry-standard, facilities that are enabling our learners to succeed and progress.”

“Learners are recognising this, with more choosing to study with us each year, a trend I hope will continue as we are seen by more and more people as the first choice for vocational and academic qualifications.”

Interested in a course? Want to find out more?

Vocational students continue to excel

Weston College reinforced its outstanding status with another year of excellent vocational course pass rates in 2013.

The overall pass rate was over 98% (Level 1: 98%, Level 2: 99% and Level 3: 98%) as students gained valuable work-based skills and qualifications that will allow them to progress towards their career goals.

Weston College offers over 100 vocational qualifications in a wide range of subjects.

These work-related qualifications include Diplomas, NVQs and VRQs, and are designed to allow students to learn in a way that suits them.

They provide the skills that employers are looking for and the ability to progress to degree-level qualifications if this is what the learner prefers.

The College's Construction and Engineering Centre of Excellence (CECE) has enjoyed huge success with its training in a wide range of construction occupations.

There is a 100% success rate for Level 2 qualifications, with around 70% of CECE students finding work in industry.

There are also more plumbing courses in the pipeline, after the College celebrated the end of its first year teaching plumbing by seeing a 300% increase in demand for places.



“The staff are extremely helpful and friendly, and there is always a great atmosphere.”

Ella Ashton

BTEC Extended Diploma, Horse Management, Level 3

Ella had previously completed a Horse Care BTEC Diploma Level 2 at the College, and says she immensely enjoys the practical elements of her course that take place at Badgworth Arena, near Weston.

What next? Ella hopes to do a Foundation Degree in Equine Management at Weston College before going on to study a top-up degree, and wants to eventually become a riding instructor.



“The quality of teaching at the College is great; tutors treat you as an adult and are always on hand to guide you.”

Aaron Newman

Carpentry, Level 2

Aaron has learned alternative ways of completing tasks which he says will increase his competency as a carpenter in the long term. This course has also enabled him to pass his Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) test, which allows him to go out and work on-site.

What next? Aaron plans to progress onto the Level 3 course in Site Carpentry, with the ultimate ambition of becoming self-employed and managing his own business.

Construction students lay firm foundations for their future

Nine Weston College students so impressed local developer MLDUK while on work experience that they were kept on.

Some of them may even go on to earn full-time positions with the Weston-based company when they complete their course.

College Construction Curriculum Lead, Shaun

Canniford, said: “MLDUK were doing maintenance work at the College, and offered students some work experience.

“We try to embed work experience as part of their training, and this was a fantastic opportunity for them.”

MLDUK spokesman James Lloyd-Jones said: “We were delighted to support the College and we were very impressed by the calibre of both the students and expertise offered to them by staff.”





Amelia (left) and Laura at Dyson HQ in Malmesbury.

Graphics graduates designing for Dyson

Two graduates from the BA (Hons) Graphic Design course have taken up graduate designer roles with Dyson.

Amelia Hurrell and Laura Hughes both graduated with First Class Honours in 2013 and had been working as freelance designers as well as taking up intern positions – Amelia at Sky Creative, having won the New Designers Sky Award 2013, and Laura at Proctor and Stevenson, a prestigious web design company.

Thanks to the strong reputation of the College's degree provision in Graphic Design, Victoria Norcross, Programme Co-ordinator for FdA and BA (Hons) Graphic Design, was contacted by Ben Tappenden, Creative Head of Graphics and Packaging at Dyson and asked to recommend some graduates for the role of Junior Designer. Amelia and Laura were both successful in their interviews.

Ben said: "The candidates from Weston College were strong in interview and had encouraging portfolios. Laura and Amelia are competent and exciting graduate designers with a good sense of fun, enthusiasm, confidence, professionalism and ambition in abundance."

We're degrees higher than the rest!

Weston College proved why it should be first choice for students who want to succeed with their degrees, by securing a 99% overall pass rate.

A record 300-plus people graduated, with every Honours student passing their course, and 22% gaining a first-class degree – 6% above the national average.

The impressive results are also being translated into 'real world' success, with 99% of Honours graduates gaining employment within six months of completing their course.

Finding jobs

In addition, 65% found jobs in areas related to their degree course, which is 20% above the national average.

Anthony Murray, Director of Higher Education, said: "Once again Weston College has proved to be the place to study if you want to succeed at Higher Education.

"Nearly a quarter of our graduating Honours students achieved a first class degree, a statistic that significantly out-strips the sector.

"Building on our students' success, we continue to be bold, developing new programmes and improving the employability of our graduates."

Weston College's university-level provision has been awarded the highest judgement possible by the Quality Assurance Agency, the body responsible for academic quality and standards in UK Higher Education.

Top College

It was ranked as the top-performing college in the South West and in the top five nationwide.

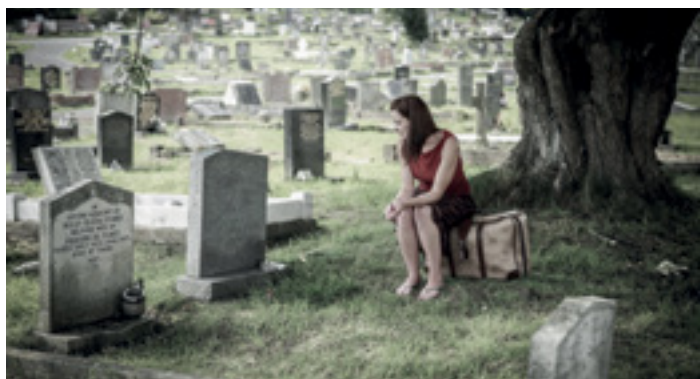
Principal and Chief Executive Dr Paul Phillips OBE said: "More and more students choose to study with us and reap the rewards, achieving outstanding results and improving their job prospects."

Weston's new official status as a Further Education AND Higher Education establishment, means its degree-level provision can be expanded significantly and go from strength to strength.

Want to study for a degree?
Go to www.weston.ac.uk/he



Interested in a course? Want to find out more?



Anna's award-winning image exhibited in New York

A Photography in Practice Foundation Degree student at Weston College has won a prestigious international competition.

Anna Piotrowska was selected to be part of the Young Photographers' Alliance (YPA) mentoring programme. The New York-based YPA offers an international mentoring initiative which pairs talented college students and recent graduates with leading photographers from around the world.

Anna, 31 won the award for Best Single Image, for her photograph based on the theme of 'Escape'. Anna used childhood memories and a suitcase of photographs as inspiration for her work. Her winning image is a self-portrait in a graveyard.

She said: "I was asked for three photographs and a short essay on the theme of escape and so I had the idea of doing something about memories from my past and finding my place in the world."

Anna's work was picked from more than 70 students being mentored and exhibited in the annual YPA competition in New York. She won a voucher worth \$250 that will pay for a re-touching service for her pictures.

Inspirational visit to Google HQ



Weston College Computing Degree students enjoyed a glimpse into the future when they visited Google's hi-tech headquarters in London.

The five BSc Applied Computing students visited the IT giant's multi-coloured offices, where they listened to a talk about the company and its work, followed by a tour of the building.

The group saw how Google's working environment differed from conventional office spaces in that it had very few formal areas and lots of communal rooms, themed spaces, secluded 'pods', kitchen and dining areas and even games rooms.

"They don't really believe in having your own desk," student Thomas Osborne said, "and you're encouraged to work more creatively. It was a lot more futuristic than we imagined, and it must be a great place to work. They're planning a new HQ by King's Cross which will have a swimming pool, cycle track and football pitch. I think we all came away feeling we'd like to work there!"

Daniel Fay, 20, was also on the trip. He said: "It seemed to be a very encouraging working environment, one that you could really explore your creativity in. Visiting Google was a great experience and we'd love to do it again."



Students experience Gambian public services

Weston College Foundation Degree students spent a week in The Gambia learning about international public services, education and the origins of modern slavery.

The trip was designed to give the students an insight into a different political regime. It consisted of 30 first year students from the Sport and Public Services Foundation Degrees accompanied by four members of teaching staff from the College.

The students had the chance to meet The Gambia's public services, including the Police, Fire Service and Army, and learn about the different resources and processes they work with.

The trip was self-funded by the students, with additional funds provided by the College to go towards providing stationary and books for Ayr Luton School. This was the fifth year that students from various courses at Weston College have visited this school.

“

This trip has really helped consolidate the mind-set of the students towards the courses they are studying and, ultimately, their careers in public services.

”

Mark Harvey, Programme Co-ordinator for the FdA in Uniformed and Public Services

Corrine scoops national performing award

A Weston College Musical Theatre Foundation Degree graduate has won the prestigious Stephen Sondeim Student Performer of the Year 2014 award in London's West End.

Corrine Priest, 21, graduated from the College's Foundation Degree (FdA) in Musical Theatre last year and progressed to the exclusive one-year Musical Theatre Diploma at the London School of Musical Theatre (LSMT).

She passed through the heats of the competition at the Royal Academy of Music and, out of more than 70 auditions, was announced as one of the 12 finalists.

Her outstanding performance of "Don't Laugh" from the musical Hotspot wowed the judges and won her the award, which was presented on-stage at the Garrick Theatre by renowned performer, and Patron of the Stephen Sondeim Society, Julia McKenzie.

Corrine studied at the College's Wessex Academy of Performing Arts (WAPA), gaining a triple distinction in her BTEC National Diploma in Performing Arts (Musical Theatre) and a First Class Foundation Degree. She said: "I cannot thank the more than dedicated and talented staff at WAPA, who supported me throughout my degree, enough."

"My time at WAPA gave me the confidence to pursue my dream. I learnt a lot there and would recommend any aspiring actor to attend."



Corrine receives her award from actress, singer and theatre director Julia McKenzie, who was a judge.

Photo by David Ovenden

Businesses reap rewards from investments

The Confederation of British Industries (CBI) suggests that business confidence in the growth of the economy is at its highest since 2003, and that most sectors are beginning to grow, especially retail and the service sectors. This growth is being driven by both the use of consumer credit and by business investment.

Prudent investment is key to any business. The Association of Accountancy Technicians (AAT) found that the average apprentice gave businesses a net benefit of £2,088 in 2012/13. This is the financial gain that an organisation could expect to realise on average, after wage and training costs have been deducted. This means that while someone is undertaking an apprenticeship (and not yet fully qualified), many employers will see economic benefits. Ofsted recently noted: *"Hairdressing apprentices demonstrate exceptional technical skills that often far exceed the requirements of the qualification."* This is why apprenticeships are seen by 83% of employers as a key route to filling their skills gaps.

In many cases, the cost of training is fully or partly covered by Government. Many businesses can claim subsidies, like the AGE grant, if they hire apprentices, further offsetting costs such as wages and course fees.



Contact The Business Enterprise Centre on 01934 411 594 or email business.enterprise_centre@weston.ac.uk to see how we can help you to grow your business.



Weston College – we mean Business

Helping businesses with their staffing needs!

After several very difficult years, many small and medium-sized firms are now planning to recruit again.

With limited resources, small business recruitment can be very time-consuming.

Weston College makes it possible for businesses of all sizes to compete on a level playing field for the best available talent. Employees are at the heart of any successful business and if you want your company to fulfil its potential, you need the right people.

How can we help your business?

We offer a number of solutions to your business recruitment challenges. And we do not charge a fee for any of our recruitment services.

Sector-based work academies (SBWAs)

SBWAs can help you recruit more effectively especially if you have multiple vacancies. They provide short training around the needs of your sector followed by a brief period of work experience and a guaranteed job interview.

They offer a very flexible approach. We will work with you and JobCentre Plus to design the sector-specific training to meet the needs of your business and the local labour market. The training is fully funded through the Government and delivered by our expert staff. This will enable participants to obtain recognised units or qualifications plus, if you wish, some of your induction training. We may also be able to work with you to join other employers in your sector as a consortium.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships enable you to develop your own employees and potential managers. They are work-based training programmes providing skills, knowledge and experience, plus nationally-recognised qualifications. In over 90% of cases, employers offer their Weston College apprentice

a permanent position at the end of their course. Our apprentices have won numerous awards including the South West and UK Apprentice of the Year in 2013.

We have created a highly effective process that works well for the hundreds of companies that already use this service every year.

Our professional and industry-experienced team work with you on your requirements and manage the applications and shortlisting for you.

We will support you and your business throughout the process and are always on hand to answer your questions.

Most industries today have a relevant apprenticeship qualification – it's not all plumbers or hairdressers. And it's not all about school leavers either; there's no upper age limit on apprenticeships so your existing staff could benefit, too. You could even be eligible for a Government grant.

Traineeships

Traineeships offer employers the chance to take a closer look at a young person for a few weeks before making the decision of whether to offer them a job.

Trainees are usually aged between 16 and 24. The programme can last up to 24 weeks.



AGE Grant

To be eligible for a £1,500 grant, your business must:

- Not have had an Apprentice in the last 12 months
- Employ less than 1,000 staff
- Employ an Apprentice aged between 16 and 24

Free Sustainability course

There are already many reasons why employers should choose our outstanding College for training and development opportunities. From September 2014, there is yet another one to add to the list.

Anyone taking one of our work-based Adult Apprenticeship programmes has the chance to gain a useful extra qualification free of charge.

The Award in Sustainability Skills is a nationally-recognised qualification where your adult apprentice will develop project management skills designing and implementing a sustainability project that could save money for your business.



For more information contact our Business Enterprise Centre on 01934 411 594 or email bec@weston.ac.uk

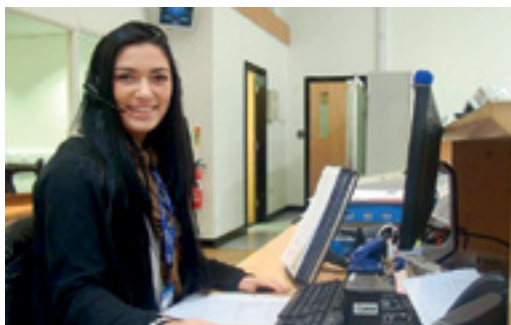
Want to know more? Contact the Business Enterprise Centre.

More and more businesses benefit from Apprenticeships

Weston College marked National Apprenticeship Week 2014 by launching an ambitious campaign to generate pledges of 100 new apprenticeships in 100 working days.

And by making businesses more aware of the many benefits of taking on an apprentice, many came forward, with the campaign reaching its target with more than 30 days to spare.

Now we are keen to spread the pledge, and ensure that many more businesses can reap the rewards of being part of the Apprenticeship success story.



To ensure your business doesn't miss out, and for more about the many benefits of taking on an apprentice, call **01934 411 594** or email **apprenticeships@weston.ac.uk**

“The 1,120 new apprenticeships created last year will have boosted our local economy by around £2.3 million. Each firm that hires an apprentice should have helped their bottom line by about £2,000 after wage and training costs are deducted.

The apprentices get valuable training and on-the-job experience, which makes their chances of finding a skilled, full-time, job miles better. Everybody wins.”

John Penrose MP

Helping you into work

Weston College offers a wide range of support, training and courses to help get you into work and on your way towards a brighter future.

If you are seeking work, looking to change career, returning to work after a break or if you are facing redundancy, we have a course to help you.

Options include:

ASPIRE – a two-week course to give you the skills, motivation and confidence to improve your chances of finding work.

Over 50% of ASPIRE candidates enter work within six months of the course, and companies increasingly use ASPIRE as a source of applicants rather than use traditional recruitment agencies or Job Centre advertisements.

Ngage – this programme develops team-building skills by getting learners working on live projects, set by local employers, to show how enterprising they can be.

CV workshops – a two-day course to create a CV which could be your passport to job interviews and new opportunities.

All courses include the provision of free, personalised, information, advice and guidance (IAG).

For more information, email **aspire@weston.ac.uk** or call **01934 411 735**.

Online courses

Taking courses online is a popular way for working people to have the chance to gain qualifications at their own pace without the need for travel and files of paper.

People who take online courses are usually looking for career advancement, career changes, or just need to update expired certificates such as food safety (food hygiene) or health and safety.

There is a range of online courses on offer, all accredited by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH).

Lucy's story...

Lucy enrolled on the ASPIRE course to find a way into employment, after deciding that A Levels were not the right route for her.

The former Priory School student said: *“I felt ASPIRE offered practical skills and knowledge that would help me get my foot in the door in looking for a full-time career.*

“The course inspired me to recognise and realise my potential and enabled me to progress on to an Apprenticeship at the College.

“The teaching was informal, yet delivered professionally, which created a friendly working environment.”

After completing ASPIRE, Lucy progressed to a fast-track Intermediate Apprenticeship in Customer Service and now works as the Events and Marketing Co-ordinator at the Winter Gardens in Weston-super-Mare.



For more information, including how to enrol, contact the Business Enterprise Centre on **01934 411 594** or email **business.enterprisecentre@weston.ac.uk**



Harry's Traineeship Tale

Harry joined the Traineeship programme in September 2013, as he needed a little motivation and help to progress. He grabbed the opportunity to work with the College's Traineeship and Apprenticeship teams with both hands.

They gave Harry advice and guidance on applying for jobs and upgrading his CV. Harry worked hard to make these corrections.

Harry was subsequently offered an Intermediate Apprenticeship in Customer Service with a well-established local carpet company.

How a Traineeship can work for you

Traineeships are designed for young people, aged between 16 and 24, who want to work, but who need a little extra help to get onto an Apprenticeship or into a job.

Traineeships give young people the opportunity to develop the skills and workplace experience that employers value in new recruits.

The programme is made up of three elements;

- 1 Personal, social and employability development
- 2 Work experience
- 3 Functional skills like English and Maths.

If you would like to find out more, contact the Traineeship team on 01934 411 594.



How an apprenticeship was just the job for us



Apprentice Samantha Locke (left) with her employers, Ruth and Adrian Royce.

An apprentice and her employer explain how Weston College has helped them both.

The Apprentice's view

Samantha Locke, 23, had been unemployed for three months before starting an apprenticeship with Concept Wear, a company offering contract printing and embroidery services.

An apprenticeship was not something Samantha had considered before, because she didn't know enough about it. But she enrolled on the Weston College Ngage programme, one of a range of pre-employment courses.

While there, she was informed about the opportunity with Concept Wear, and jumped at the chance.

Samantha is working on a Product Manufacturing Apprenticeship.

"I get a lot of support from the College; my supervisor comes to see me once a month to help me with my coursework."

"I've got a job I really enjoy, I am working for a qualification, I am getting paid, and I am getting some real experience, which is what most employers are looking for these days. It's great!"

"It has been brilliant, I love it, and I hope to stay on here after my apprenticeship."

The employer's view

Ruth Royce runs Concept Wear, on Weston's Oldmixon Trading Estate, alongside her husband Adrian.

She said: *"We felt that, with the kind of person we needed, it would take a lot of training; it's not easy to find people qualified in printing and embroidery, especially using the machines."*

"We just felt that the College had the knowledge to back us up and support us going through the process to find someone perfect for us."

"They can help to train a brand new member of staff and give that staff member a qualification afterwards, and we end up with a fully-qualified team member we could take on full time. It's more than you could hope for."

"I can 100 per cent vouch for the College's reputation, they just go above and beyond."

"Samantha has slotted into our small team so quickly; she has so much common sense, attention to detail and is exceptionally hard-working."

"I can't rate the team at the College enough; they are always just a phone call away."

Want to know more? Contact the Business Enterprise Centre.

Do I need to stay in school *until I am 17?*

Education after the age 16 is not all about staying at school full-time. You can, of course, stay at school, but there are alternatives, like going to college, doing a Traineeship or an Apprenticeship.

Whatever you want to do, whatever career you think you would like to take up, Weston College will have a course to help get you there.

We offer a huge range of A Levels, a wide variety of vocational qualifications, including Diplomas, NVQs and VRQs, an increasing number of degrees, courses for the unemployed and work-related courses. Another increasingly popular choice is to

take up a Weston College apprenticeship. We work with hundreds of employers in more than 50 job sectors. Whatever your interest, whatever career you want to pursue, we will have a course for you.

A school will have a much more limited range of courses, although the surroundings will be familiar, whereas you can choose from hundreds of college courses in a vibrant new environment.

The appeal of apprenticeships – *all year round!*

Apprenticeships are becoming increasingly popular, appealing to a wide range of people from different educational backgrounds.

This growing group are those who may not wish to go to university yet but want to launch their career, they simply don't want to sit in a classroom anymore; others may be motivated by the opportunity to earn money and learn new skills at the same time – apprentices could earn a starting salary of up to £13,500.

Apprenticeships provide rounded individuals who not only know the theory of a job role but who are also, thanks to the NVQ style element of the programme's framework, able to prove that they can do it as well. Over 90% of Weston College's Apprentices were retained by their employer at the end of their course last year which is higher than the national average.

Even if you are one of the few who do not stay with their employer, your CV would have 12-18 months employment history and an employer reference in your chosen sector.

We help our 1,000+ employers recruit apprentices all year round. Opportunities change on a weekly basis as jobs are filled and new ones arrive. Typically there are 30-40 jobs, from a range of industries, at any

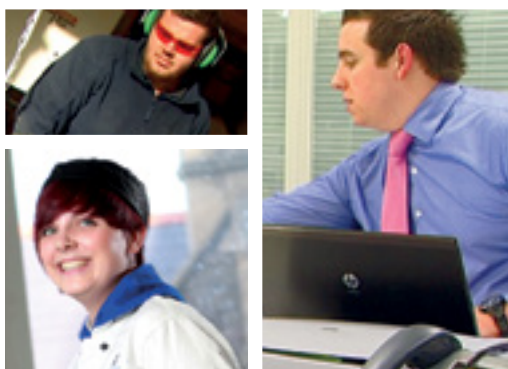
one time. You can also look for your own employer. If you are unsure what is right for you, contact the Apprenticeship Team for advice.

How do I apply? Visit apprenticeships@weston.ac.uk and when you see a vacancy you like, simply hit the 'apply now' button alongside it and fill in your details. We'll contact you and ask for your CV, which we can pass on to the employer. We also have a 'talent pool' to enable you to easily be considered for more than one role and for employers to 'dip into' when they need a new member of staff quickly.

What if I don't have a CV? We offer support based on our knowledge of what employers look for. Email our experienced team at apprenticeships@weston.ac.uk for help or to enrol on our CV workshop.

What happens next? After your CV has been submitted to an employer, you may be asked to attend an interview. We will support you through this, offering interview techniques and training.

Remember most employers are looking for a new, long-term, member of the team.



What Apprenticeships are available?

- Accountancy
- Barbering
- Building Maintenance Operations
- Business Administration
- Business Management
 - Team Leading
 - Management
- Brickwork
- Carpentry
- Childcare
- Customer Service
- Electrical Engineering
- Estate Agency – Sales
- Estate Agency – Lettings
- Fashion and Textiles
- Food and Drink Manufacturing
- Hairdressing
- Health And Social Care
- Hospitality And Catering
 - Chef
 - Food and Drink Service
 - Housekeeping
 - Reception
 - Services (multi-skill)
 - Supervision and Management
- IT Support Technician
- Motor Vehicle Maintenance (light)
- Manufacturing Operations
- Painting and Decorating
- Plastering
- Plumbing
- Retail Operations
- Sales
- Spa Therapy
- Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools

NEW!

Weston College is always developing new opportunities. From September 2014 we will also be offering:

- Medical Secretary
- Legal Secretary
- Laboratory Technician – Industry
- Laboratory Technician – Education

Something for *everyone*...

Our outstanding College has hundreds of adult and part-time courses to help you further your career, change career, get more enjoyment out of your hobbies or to inspire you to take up a new interest. Our programmes of study are very flexible, allowing you to learn around your other commitments. Here's a small snapshot of what's on offer.

Helping you into work

If you're unemployed, we offer a wide range of support, training and courses to help get you back into work. Courses include:

- ASPIRE – a two-week course designed to get you job-ready
- Ngage – an eight-week programme which develops team-building skills and improves job-searching skills and knowledge
- A CV workshop – a two-day course to create a CV which could open the door to job interviews and new opportunities.

Join the IT crowd

Whether you use computers at work, or like to surf the web and respond to emails in your spare time, IT skills play an increasingly important part of modern life. Whether you are a beginner, or a more experienced user, we have a range of courses. They include:

- Desktop Publishing (various levels)
- Adobe Creative Suite (various levels)
- Web Design using Dreamweaver (various levels)
- Developing Smart Phone Apps.

Get creative

Whether you want to take up painting as a hobby, decorate your home, or become a graphic designer, we can accommodate your artistic aspirations, allowing you to get creative in state-of-the-art facilities. Courses include:

- Watercolour for all abilities
- Fashion Design (various levels)
- Graphic Design (various levels)
- Silver Jewellery (various levels).

Environmental technologies

Weston College is the largest provider of sustainable and renewable technologies courses in the region. Courses include:

- Woody Biomass, BPEC
- Rainwater Harvesting and Grey Water Recycling, BPEC
- Installation of Solar Thermal Systems EAL, Award.

We mean business

We can help you get ahead of the game in a new job, develop the entrepreneurial skills needed to start your own business, or gain much sought-after administration qualifications. Courses include:

- Business, BTEC Diploma
- Various Administration courses
- Customer Service courses
- Retail courses
- Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) – various levels.

Nurturing your caring side

The number of people working in health and social care is expected to increase by 9% by 2020. If you think your future might lie in supporting people with mental health issues, nursing or working with children and young people, our courses can help you progress. Courses include:

- Mental Health Awareness, Award
- Health and Social Care, Diploma
- Children and Young People's Workforce (various levels).

An eye for beauty

Do you want to help people look good and feel good? A career in the health and beauty industry combines the satisfaction of immediate results with social interaction. Courses include:

- Beauty Therapy, Diploma
- Barbering (various levels)
- Hairdressing (various levels)
- Salon Management, Certificate
- Nail Technology (various levels).

Let's make music

Are you a performer at heart? An aspiring actor, someone who dreams about being a dancer, or do you aim to make a living by making music or movies? Courses include:

- Music Performance, Diploma
- Music Technology, Diploma
- Theatre Performance
- Making a Short Film (various levels).

Aiming for university?

Don't let a lack of qualifications quash your dreams of going to university or getting a job that requires a degree. Our Access to Higher Education courses can provide your passport to university. We have four courses: Education, Nursing, Health and Social Care (fast track option available), and Animal and Equine Management.

Gain trade skills

Quality plumbing, electrical installation, carpentry and brickwork skills are always in demand. At our state-of-the-art Construction and Engineering Centre of Excellence, we provide a superb environment to learn a trade or gain industry-recognised qualifications. Courses include:

- Bricklaying (various levels)
- Carpentry (various levels)
- Plastering (various levels)
- Plumbing (various levels).

Recipe for success

Perhaps your future lies with a top restaurant, managing a hotel, or organising a big event? We have courses that can set you on the road to becoming a professional chef, to working in the hospitality industry or can help you impress family and friends with your cake making skills. Courses include:

- Cake Decoration, Certificate
- Chef Master classes (various)
- Hospitality (various courses and levels).

Other course areas...

- British Sign Language
- Motor Vehicle
- Sport and Public Services
- Photography
- Teaching and Teacher Training
- Tourism.

PLUS lots more.

Go to www.weston.ac.uk to find the course for you.



Want to know more?

These pages contain just a taster of the many adult and part-time courses available. Our Adult Course Guide contains full details of all the available courses, plus lots of other useful information, handy hints and top tips.

To get your free copy just call **01934 411 411**, or visit **www.weston.ac.uk** and download it, or order one to be posted to you.



The 24+ Loan

If money has been preventing you from pursuing your dream and enrolling on a Weston College course, then a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan could be just what you need.

That's what Ben Shilton did; while working full-time for his family firm, Ben has been chasing his ambition of becoming an accountant, fitting in his studies around his 'day job'.

Having completed a Level 3 course last year, the 25-year-old knew that the traditional funding would not cover a Level 4 course, which he was determined to take up.

"An option would have been to have worked hard for another year or two and try to save up to cover the fees, but that would have set me back a year or two."

"I have a mortgage and a two-year-old son, so there was no guarantee I could have come up with all the money."



Ben was then told about the 24+ Loan, and found the application process easy.

"This loan gave me the ability to continue my studies rather than take a break to save up."

Is the 24+ loan for you?

If you are aged 24 or over, and take a Level 3 or 4 Certificate or Diploma course, a 24+ Loan will cover all your up-front tuition fees.

You don't pay a penny back until you earn more than £21,000 a year, and even then the repayments are very manageable; for example, if you earn £22,000 per year, your loan repayment is £7 per month.

If you take out a loan to cover the Access to Higher Education course, and then go on to complete a university-level course, the 24+ Loan is written off completely.

For more information, call **01934 411 481**, email **24loan@weston.ac.uk** or visit **www.weston.ac.uk**



“We’ve made it”

Throughout this edition of **College Life**, we have been telling you that our outstanding College can help create a brighter future for you. But don’t take our word for it! Here are just four student success stories which speak for themselves, and may prompt you to choose Weston College so that you can write a success story of your own.



Rob: *I’ve made it as a carpentry business owner!*

“Studying at Weston College enabled me to apply theory to practice in a ‘working’ environment.

“The courses also inspired me to set myself goals and high standards, which have been crucial in the development and running of my carpentry and joinery business.”

Rob’s business, Woodies, produces a host of joinery-based products from a fully-equipped workshop in Weston. His role also involves managing staff, accounts and materials.

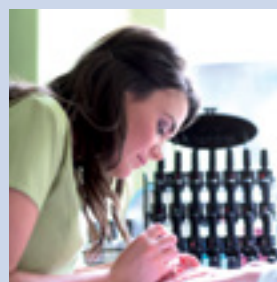
Former school: Priory

Level 1: Wood Occupations, NVQ // 2003-2004

Level 2: Wood Occupations, NVQ // 2004-2005

Level 3: Wood Occupations, NVQ // 2005-2006

Owner: Owner of ‘Woodies Carpentry and Joinery’ // 2008-present



Emma: *I’ve made it as a beauty spa business owner!*

“Studying Apprenticeships at Weston College has been an amazing journey and one I’m keen to share to inspire other young people.

“The experience has helped me cope with dyslexia and provided me with the skills required to start and run my own successful beauty business.”

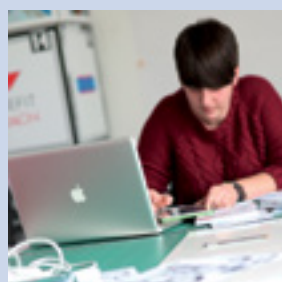
The Apprenticeship also helped Emma win first place in the beauty therapy section of the prestigious WorldSkills national final and claim the coveted UK National Apprentice of the Year title.

Former school: Churchill

Level 2: Beauty Therapy, Apprenticeship // 2010-2011

Level 3: Beauty Therapy Apprenticeship // 2011-2012

Owner: Owner of ‘Beauty By Emma’ // 2012-present



Amelia: *I’ve made it as a graphic designer!*

“The degree is perfectly suited to helping you break into the industry and provides you with the key skills required to achieve great results.”

As part of the Honours top-up, Amelia designed a mobile app for sufferers of ME, which won a national design award and earned her a prestigious internship at Sky Creative.

After graduating, Amelia secured a sought-after role at Dyson. Her job involves designing product packaging, instruction manuals and a range of information graphics.

Former school: Whitstone, Shepton Mallet

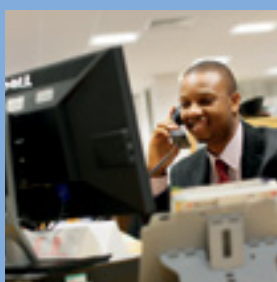
Level 3: A Levels (Graphic Design, Textiles, ICT) // 2007-2009

Level 4: Foundation Diploma in Art and Design // 2009-2010

Level 4-5: Graphic Design, FdA // 2010-2012

Level 6: Graphic Design, BA (Hons) (top-up: work-based) // 2012-2013

Graduate: Graphic designer at Dyson // 2014-present



Nyasha: *I’ve made it as an IT business owner and banking consultant*

“Weston College equipped me with the technical skills required to start my own technology company and the business acumen to manage and administer it. These skills are also crucial in my role as a consultant at RBS Group.

“My time at the College was a great stepping stone in my life. I will always remember how my tutors encouraged and challenged me to be the best I could be.”

Nyasha achieved First Class Honours in his degree and subsequently won the College’s Higher Education Student of the Year.

Former school: Out of area

Level 3: IT, National Diploma // 2005-2007

Level 4: Applied Computing, FdSc // 2007-2009

Level 6: Applied Computing, BSc // 2009-2011

Owner: Owner of ‘Chips Technology’ and consultant at RBS Group // 2011-present

Tell us what you think and you could win an iPad mini.

We would like to know what you think about this newsletter. Just fill in the short survey and return it to us at the FREEPOST address below for your chance to win an iPad mini. Good luck.



Did you find the information contained in this newsletter interesting and useful?

- ☐ Yes. Please tell us what you found most interesting and useful.
- ☐ No. Please tell us what information you would like to have seen in the newsletter.

Do you like the style and layout of the newsletter?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Any comments?

Are you likely to enrol on a course at Weston College this year?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

If 'yes' which course(s)

If you were choosing to study at Weston College, what would be your most influencing factor?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exam results | <input type="checkbox"/> Ofsted outstanding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reputation | <input type="checkbox"/> Location |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choice of courses | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities |

Other (please specify)

Would you be interested in receiving one of our Course Guides?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If 'yes' please indicate which Course Guide you would be interested in:

- ☐ Adult Course Guide
- ☐ Full-time Prospectus
- ☐ Undergraduate Prospectus

Would you be interested in receiving information about future open days/evenings?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Any comments?

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Contact number:

Email:

**NO STAMP
REQUIRED**

Post to: **Marketing, Weston College, Freepost (BS6 735), Knightstone Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 2AL.**

Data Protection Act 1998 – I give my consent to Weston College recording and processing the personal information on this form, for any purposed of the College associated with the provision of advice and guidance to potential students on the range of courses available to them, college facilities and other associated information. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the information will be used only for the above mentioned purposes. If you do not wish for any further information to be sent to you about Weston College please tick here. []

Competition rules – No purchase necessary. Normal college competition rules apply. No cash alternative. No correspondence will be entered into. The closing date for entries is 31.08.14. The first entry drawn out after the closing date will be awarded the prize.



WESTON
COLLEGE

99% degree pass rate

Your ticket to a brighter future

Weston College's degree programmes boast an outstanding 99% pass rate and 100% at Honours level. In addition, 22% graduate with First Class Honours, which is an impressive 6% above the national average.

This is one of many reasons why you could benefit from studying a degree at Weston College. Here are more:

- Great employment prospects – 99% of our graduates from 2013 were employed within six months of completing their degree.
- Career-focussed degrees – We work with businesses to blend academic study with work-based learning to make you more employable.
- Industry-experienced staff – Our passionate staff have all been employed within their relevant sectors and the majority remain active. This means you can be confident your teaching will be informed by the latest industry developments.
- Best in the South West – The Quality Assurance Agency (the body responsible for academic quality in UK Higher Education) recognised us as the top-performing college in the South West and among the top five nationally.

Degrees include:

- Animal Management FdSc
- Applied Computing FdSc/BSc (Hons)
- Business with Management FdA
- Business Management with Sustainability BA (Hons) (top-up)
- Care Management in the Community FdSc
- Computer Animation for Game and Film, FdA
- Contemporary Art and Professional Studies FdA/BA (Hons)
- Counselling FdSc/ BSc (Hons)
- Early Childhood Studies FdA
- Early Years FdA
- Early Years Education BA (Hons) (top-up: work-based)
- Education MA
- Equine Management FdSc
- Film and Media Arts Production FdA
- Graphic Design FdA/BA (Hons)
- Health and Social Care Practice FdSc
- Inclusive Practice FdA
- Music Production FdA
- Musical Theatre FdA/BA (Hons)
- Performing Arts FdA/BA (Hons)
- Photography in Practice FdA/BA (Hons)
- Popular Music FdA
- Public and Environmental Health FdSc/BSc (Hons)
- Sport Studies FdSc
- Tourism Management FdA
- Uniformed Services FdA/BA (Hons)

Want to find out more about studying a Degree?

Call 01934 411 409

Email he.unit@weston.ac.uk



01934 411 411



www.weston.ac.uk



enquiries@weston.ac.uk