

NEW PAY ARRANGEMENTS

The College is in the process of implementing the first stage of its new pay arrangements. Discussions are currently being held with all five of the College's recognised trade unions and detailed information will be published in the very near future. The Director of Resources will be attending the forthcoming staff meetings to be held throughout February to explain the details of the new arrangements and to respond to questions from staff.

The first stage will involve moving staff from the existing six pay spines in operation to one single pay spine with effect from 1 February 2006. All staff moving onto the new spine will benefit financially depending on their current spine point.

Discussions will be ongoing over the next few weeks with all five trade unions to agree detailed arrangements for further pay progression. Detailed arrangements will be published in the very near future.

Pensions a Day

6th April 2006 will be the date of significant changes to the rules that are applied to tax and pension schemes.

With effect from that date, everyone will be entitled to put up to 100% of their salary into pension policies each year, although this figure will be capped at £215,000 in any tax year. There will also be a pension fund lifetime limit of £1.5m.

The current regulations limit contributions to 15% of pensionable pay. The money does not have to be found from an individual's earnings, for example, money received from an inheritance could be put into the fund. As pension contributions attract tax relief, if a person paid the whole of their salary into a pension scheme then

there would be no tax due to be paid. Please note that the contributions that you can make to the Teachers Pension Scheme and to the Local Government Pension Scheme, and the benefits that you can receive from those schemes are restricted by the individual scheme regulations. However, the changes to the tax rules will allow people to invest in alternative pension provision.

The new tax rules may allow you to receive up to 25% of your accumulated pension pot as a tax free cash benefit known as a "commutation", although this will affect the amount of pension available at retirement. The minimum age requirement for this will be 55.



Principal Points

Avid Diary readers will realise that the weeks in late December and January have been quite interesting times. We have opened discussions with the Lancashire Learning & Skills Council about our funding for 2006/2007. All the issues about which we knew from 'Priorities for Success' are influencing the public funding available to us for next year and, as expected, will curtail significantly funding for many of our adult programmes. Consequently the Fees and Charges Group has had an unusually busy time as it works on proposals to be put to the Corporation Board in April.

The Business Planning meetings took place for all the academies and we will hear from the support services in the middle of February. We have identified key dates as milestones in the process of setting the budget for 2006/2007 and you will hear something about them and the new pay structure in the staff meetings arranged for later this month.

I have been fortunate enough to meet members of parliament and ministers in recent days. It is good to see the recognition of the work of all of you in raising the profile of the College to make this possible.

By the time of the next edition we shall have much more information about the funding position for 2006/2007 and will bring it to you then.

Straw

School Leaver Open Day & Advice Evenings

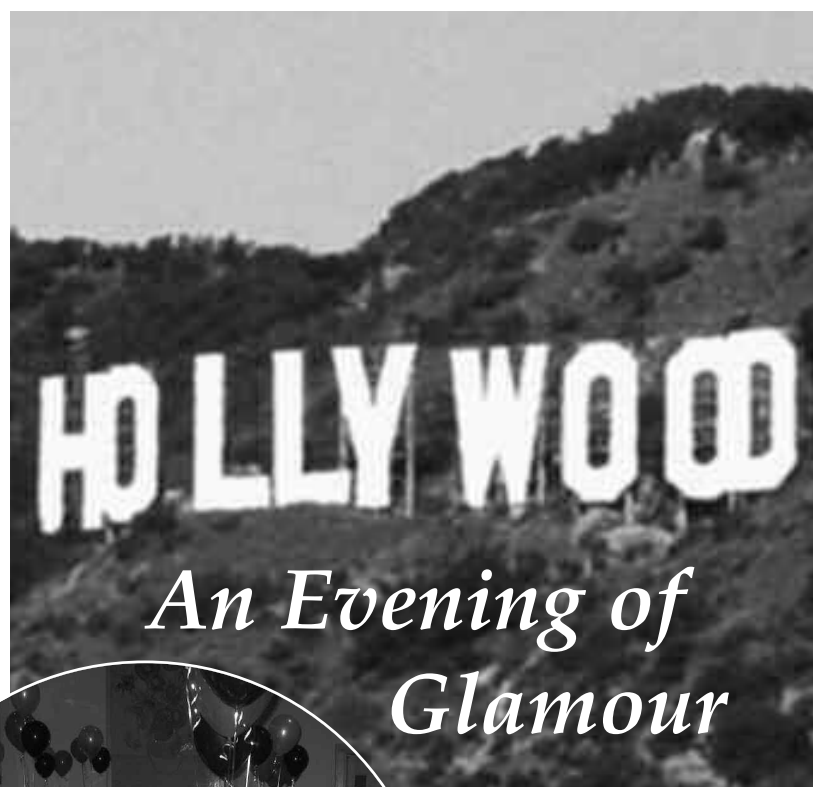
On behalf of all the 14-19 Recruitment Team can I thank the following staff for their help and support prior, during and after the Open Day, and Advice Evenings:

- Academy Staff
- Recruitment Team staff
- Estates (Site Supervisors and Cleaners)
- Catering Team
- Scholarship Students
- Student Ambassadors
- Marketing
- Additional Support
- Student Support
- Enrichment
- Job Shop
- Libraries and Learning Centres

The evaluation from the Academies will influence the format and timings of the event 2006/7.

The feedback from potential students has been very positive so thank you all in making the events such a success!

Louise Birchall
Recruitment Co-ordinator 14-19



The Celebrity guests were greeted by Canapés and Champagne on arrival, followed by a sumptuous Oscar winning chicken dish, then finished off with some of the finest desserts this side of Beverly Hills.

After the evening's delicacies there was the Awards Ceremony, prizes were given for the best dressed and most original Hollywood Themed costume. All proceeds raised on the evening were donated to the student's nominated charity 'The National Epilepsy Society' After the VIP party ended guests partied the night away at a host of other Celebrity establishments. It is fair to say a truly enjoyable evening was had by all. Why travel to the USA in search of glamour and the stars when it's right here on your doorstep?

John Barlow
Hospitality Lecturer

Vincent's Restaurant was transformed for an evening of glamour on Tuesday 10th January when the BA (HONS) Event Management students staged the first of their Charity Themed Events.

Stars (alike) such as Marilyn Monroe, Clyde from Bonnie and Clyde and a magician schmoozed with guests in their best bib and tucker for what was one of the 'glitziest' events Preston College has ever seen. The themed evening supported by the Academy of Retail Hospitality Travel and Tourism was a roaring success with the evening being sold out soon after tickets went on sale.

FROM PRESTON TO PENNSYLVANIA

As my friends and colleagues are already aware, I am currently on a 3 year secondment, two days per week, working as the Preston College Research Co-ordinator on the Literacies for Learning in Further Education (LlLFE) Project. This Project is an international, Government funded project, directed by the Literacy Research Centre at Lancaster University. The research focuses on the literacy practices of further education students, both in college and in their everyday lives. We have spent a lot of time carrying out a range of research activities with staff and our students including observations and interviews.

Last year, on behalf of the Project, I gave presentations at both

Lancaster and Stirling Universities. During February Study Week, I will be delivering a third presentation. This time, I have to travel a little further than just up the M6 – to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA! I am attending an Education Research Forum on 24-25 February 2006 at the University of Pennsylvania, USA and my presentation will take place at this Forum. I will be talking about the extremely 'text rich' college environment and discussing the experiences of our students in relation to the demands of this type of environment. The audience will be worldwide – I do hope they can understand my Blackburnian accent!

Angela Brzeski

Managers Message Board

Well done to Janet Rogers, Brian Wohlters and team for the College becoming an Approved Provider for the Automotive Academy.

Congratulations to Leysa, Students and staff for the two fantastic speciality evenings in Vincents last month, New York, New York, and Hollywood Nights.

Malcolm Clarke

A big thank you to Yvonne Short who has the uncanny knack of always knowing where I have put things and of anticipating what I am going to do next and thank goodness, has the patience of a saint.

Thank you

Jacki Hughes

Excellent News for all Students - the Youth Service is back on Campus.

After a gap of nearly two years LCC Youth Service are now back on campus to work with our students. The team leader is now Ronald Clarke (who many of you will know). They are bringing a mobile information centre on site every Monday afternoon staffed by Ronald and Glynis Atherton. Ronald will also do some work with the SU and some work on celebrating diversity and equality issues with the Pastoral Care Team. Can I ask that all academies encourage their students to make use of this service.

Mike Turner
Dean of Student Support

New York • New York



Students partied in big apple style at the New York themed night in Vincent's at Preston College.

The event began at 7.30pm on Thursday, January 19 guests received a free cocktail on arrival.

Travel and Tourism students were inspired throughout the evening by their future trip to New York in March 2006.

Past student Lee Parkinson performed a cabaret act, resident DJ from the Ritz JP supplied the evening's music and our very own performing arts students gave a taster performance of Fame.

Competitions aimed to raise money toward the future trip were organised throughout the night these included how many cream crackers can you eat, how many sweets are in the jar and guess the name of the teddy.

Catering students created a New York style buffet with hot dogs, sloppy Joe burgers, muffins, cookies and brownies.

Over 50 students attended.



Staff Spotlight



Sarah Woolford Director of Finance

How long have you worked for the college?

4 weeks!

What is a typical day like?

If there's going to be a typical day, I don't think it's happened yet. I've spent a lot of time since I started getting to know my staff and also meeting people from right across the college, which I've really enjoyed.

If you were Prime Minister for the day what would you change?

I would reverse the government policy of closing down Special Schools. I would also give everybody six months of paid annual leave every ten years to do whatever they like with the time. Oh and I'd massively increase investment in the building of cycle lanes.

How would you spend a lottery win?

I'll tell you after I've won the £125m Euromillions prize this Friday

How do you spend your free time?

Mostly doing stuff with the kids. I also try to go swimming every day. To relax, I like to curl up with a glass of wine, a good DVD and my knitting.

Who does the housework in your house?

We're an upside-down family so I go out to work and my husband

stays at home with the children and the housework. Except for the ironing - I can't seem to shake that off that particular duty.

If you were to get a snack from a newsagent, what would it be?

A Crunchie. No, make that two Crunchies.

Any good hangover cures?

Sleep it off.

You wouldn't know it but I'm very good at...

Untangling knots. My Dad worked as a parachute packer in the RAF for his National Service and showed me a few tips.

You may not know but I'm very bad at...

Parking.

A book that changed me...

The Bible

If I wasn't me I'd like to be...

An itinerant musician

What a result!

Two bits of excellent news from the Academy of Maths, Science and IT.

First of all 46 out of 170 students scored 100% in the external AQA modular Maths exam a result which has flabbergasted the Maths staff. Well done to David Roocroft, the PC for the area and all his team.

And then, Dental tutors, Julia Harvey and Emma Davies achieved a 100% pass rate in the NVQ 2 Dental exam and heard that Preston College was the number 2 college for Dental in the league table. Julia, Emma and Dawn Booth have worked hard with this course and have now secured the reinstatement of our full NVQ certification status. They say 'we are getting lots of enquiries now as people hear about the quality of our courses. Particularly popular is the new course we have started in a pub in Lancaster !!!'

Duty Principal Rota - February

w/c	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri - Sun
6/2/06	J Thompson	M Clarke	S Woodburn	G Snailham	S Woodburn
13/2/06	S Ingleson	J Hughes	S Woolford	T Hulme	G Snailham
20/2/06	J Thompson	M Clarke	S Woodburn	G Snailham	S Ingleson
27/2/06	S Ingleson	J Hughes	S Woolford	T Hulme	J Hughes