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## Pocket Watch – Some of the key numbers from the AoC Conference

### Introduction

Politicians, Professors and Olympians came to address the FE sector at the annual Association of Colleges (AoC) Conference this week. Core themes this year included: careers guidance and how this could best be improved in schools; youth employment and employability, the subject a major new report by the think tank IPPR launched during the Conference; quality and accountability, the subject of a number of presentations and developments with the consultation on 16-19 accountability for instance closing during the week; and a new future vision for FE, presented with an accompanying report from the Opposition. Other issues included the strength or otherwise of good local labour market intelligence, developments in learning technology, the emerging global market and of course future funding sustainability.

As ever, there were also many policy announcements, summarised below by number.

### Conference announcements by number

- Four. The number of priorities set for the sector by the Minister, the same number as last year and indeed the same ones as last year captured in the acronym TASQ (Traineeships, Apprenticeships, Qualifications and Standards)
- Two. The number of main priorities for the sector identified by the Labour Party, summarised as: skilling up young people and ensuring provision of L3 apprenticeships
- Three. The number of criteria likely to be used in 'accrediting' Labour's proposed new Institutes of Technical Education and incorporating: the quality of English and maths provision; expertise in vocational teaching; strength of employer and labour market links
- Two. The level of English and maths that Labour is recommending all FE lecturers teaching young people should hold
- 14-19. The subject of Labour's next and final major report for the FE sector and the subject of another report published during the week, this time by the Skills Commission
- 500. The number of providers the Minister said were now offering traineeship places
- 50%. The 'other' half of young people who don't go straight to university and for whom the Government is keen to see apprenticeships as the alternative route
- 2014. Early in the year when the Government intends the new chartered status scheme for colleges will be launched
- 24/7. The amount of online availability the Minister hopes will happen following the commitment to fund improved broadband width in colleges. A FELTAG report on online technology will be published shortly
- £488m. The amount of (matched) capital investment announced by the Business Secretary for the FE estate over the next two years
- Three. The list of L3 qualifications, approved for performance table purposes, which will be announced shortly with work on L2 criteria and on the Whitehead principles following
- 75%. The number of colleges judged good or outstanding in recent Ofsted inspections compared with 69% last year
- Seven. The number of national priorities listed by Ofsted for the FE sector this year. They include: L2 outcomes in English and maths; quality of provision for 14-16 yr olds enrolled in colleges; the status, quality and impact of vocational training; the quality of T/L and assessment; leadership and local accountability; improvement work generally
- £56.80. The current JSA weekly rate for under 25 yr olds out of work and recommended in IPPR's report as the going rate for their proposed new youth allowance

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**College Conference by numbers. Nov 2013**