

Press release: Julie Lennard appointed interim Chief Executive of DVLA

Julie has been DVLA's Director of Strategy, Policy and Communications since August 2014. Prior to this, Julie worked at The National Archives where she was responsible for developing strategic policy relationships with senior stakeholders and overseeing Parliamentary and legislative issues.

Julie has also worked for Which? the largest consumer organisation in Europe, in a range of roles including as a journalist and representing the campaigning organisation to government departments, agencies and other stakeholders at a national and international level.

Department for Transport Permanent Secretary Bernadette Kelly, said:

Julie is an experienced and highly regarded leader in government and private sector with a proven track record in delivering results. I am sure Julie's experience and knowledge of DVLA and its customers will be invaluable as DVLA continues its drive towards becoming a hub for digital motoring.

DVLA's interim Chief Executive Julie Lennard said:

I'm really looking forward to leading the team here in Swansea at a time when the agency is taking great steps in innovative digital services for motorists.

Notes to editors

Julie will take up her post as interim Chief Executive of the DVLA on the 19 March.

The external competition for the permanent role of Chief Executive of DVLA will be launched shortly.

The DVLA is an executive agency of the Department for Transport. It is responsible for maintaining over 48 million driver records and almost 40 million vehicle records. It collects around £6 billion a year in Vehicle Excise Duty. The agency employs over 5,000 people and is based in Swansea.

Speech: Opening Address of the Oxford AQA Thought Leadership Seminar at Taylors University

Lord Willets, Vice Chancellor, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I take huge pride in being here and talking about British education, because education is above all else an industry of hope and opportunity – it is also, when done well, an industry of amazing energy and creativity;

Over the last four years working on education in Malaysia I have seen this up close. This is a country at the heart of one of the most dynamic regions in the world, a place of constant renewal and change, with a population that is young, talented, and hungry for betterment and growth;

Seeing this up close has reinforced my belief that great change is coming to the education sector across the world. That it will be spurred by a greater drive for choice and tailoring, reflecting more individual approaches to employment and working lives that will span multiple career paths;

That it will have to be more responsive to industry needs, able to teach the latest approaches through the latest methods, rather than through classrooms of students arranged in rows that would be instantly recognisable to a teacher from the 1800s;

That it will become more flexible and adaptable to teach a new generation of job makers, not job takers. People who will be far more focused on the value for money of what is taught, and will want skills they can transfer between jobs not regurgitate by rote;

And it will need to be global, and modular. Allowing students to study at their pace and in their way, but also ensuring the honours they earn will be recognised and respected they work in the world;

In Malaysia I can already see a lot of these attributes, in an education sector which is increasingly competitive because of the demanding nature of its customers. It will, I believe, be the crucible for change in 21st Century educational practises. There is much here for the UK to learn from.

All of which is by way of saying how delighted I am to be part of Oxford International AQA examinations at this Thought Leadership event

About a year ago, we hosted the Oxford International AQA examinations launch in the British High Commissioner's Residence. And most recently, we have launched another Oxford initiative in the country that was the Said Oxford Business School Executive Education for SME leaders.

British High Commission is very pleased to support this work as part of our wider Education is GREAT Campaign, which looks to not only support suppliers

of British education, but through that to enhance our partnership with Malaysia, its educators, and its people;

Education is a sector that has been at the heart of our bilateral relationship for two centuries, since the first English international school opened in Penang in 1816. Today, there are over 100 international schools teaching the British curriculum in Malaysia, 5 university branch campuses, and over 125 institutions that offer UK degrees.

But it is more than that. It is about sharing and blending our culture of learning. Just as thousands of Malaysian students have studied in the UK, so too are increasing numbers of UK students drawn to Malaysia – with tropical weather and easy access to sandy beaches even in winter, on top of outstanding learning opportunities, it is no surprise they are drawn here!

This pull for UK students, and of our Universities, explains why Malaysia is fast becoming the Education hub for the region. In response to the Malaysia Education Blueprint and the 11th Malaysia Plan, the UK offers its expertise and capabilities to strive the ambition for Malaysia to become a developed nation by 2020.

We must agree that the only way to do this is through quality education for the nation, as education provides endless opportunities.

To prepare students for university education and the workforce with 4.0 Industry revolution we need to equip them with a range of qualities and skills that are considered vital to success.

Oxford AQA qualifications are a perfect example of that, a means through which Malaysian students can not only take advantage of the latest state-of-the-art in learning, but also know that they are investing in a legacy of teaching that will grow in value in the future;

At the same time, it is also a means for Oxford AQA to take all the learning from the Malaysian experience and apply it to their approaches for UK students – ensuring we are not left behind in Asia's educational revolution;

I wish you all every success in the course of this seminar, and look forward to continuing my interactions with you on behalf of the British Government.

Press release: Major flood exercise from the source of the Trent to the Humber

A major exercise is taking place this week that will test the response to a

large flooding incident along the whole of the River Trent, the third longest river in the country.

The scenario will test how the Environment Agency, emergency services, councils, government departments, utility companies, the Met office and the military exchange information, provide aid and test local and regional emergency plans.

The exercise is based on a long period of wet weather that has saturated the region, followed by an intense storm which causes significant flooding.

Local Resilience Forums from Staffordshire to Humberside will be involved alongside Strategic and Tactical co-ordination groups, with the Environment Agency injecting scenarios along the way to keep everyone focused and ensure it challenges those involved.

Paul Lockhart, East Midlands Flood Risk Manager at the Environment Agency said:

We don't get second chances during a major flooding incident so it is essential that we test our response through exercises like this one, to make sure every organisation can work together to do everything possible for communities when we are faced with the real thing.

We appreciate that major flooding events don't take place regularly and therefore many people often don't think about the potential consequences. It is great for the public to know that so many organisations will be looking out for them if the worst happened, but whilst we can reduce the risk of flooding, major weather events do occur which test flood defences.

Flooding is dangerous and can happen very quickly. The effects can be devastating. There are a number of things you can do to prepare for flooding to keep yourself and your family safe. Find out if your home is at risk, sign up for flood warnings and be ready to take action. Visit www.gov.uk/flood or call Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Learning from the exercise will be used to shape how organisations respond to a major flooding incident on the River Trent in the future.

[Press release: Inspirational young Sri](#)

Lankans presented international award by HRH The Earl of Wessex

Inspirational young Sri Lankans being presented with The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award by The Earl of Wessex

The Awards were presented at the Gold Award Ceremony held at Temple Trees, Colombo on 4 February 2018, by HRH The Earl of Wessex; Chair of the Award's international organisation, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation.

Tissa Samarasinghe, National Director of the Award in Sri Lanka says:

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award has significantly contributed towards developing and empowering young people in Sri Lanka; helping them to challenge themselves, experience life and find their purpose, passion and place in the world. The Gold Award challenges participants over 18 months and more, in five areas – physical activity, skill development, service to community and by taking them outside of their comfort zone, through an adventurous journey and residential project.

HRH The Earl of Wessex says:

It has been a great honour to meet such inspiring young people, hear about their Award journeys and celebrate their achievements. Achieving your Gold Award is not an easy task – it requires commitment, tests your resilience and challenges you to step outside your comfort zone. But it also opens up many opportunities for young people and enables them to be their own agents of change, both for themselves and their communities.

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a global, non-formal education framework which challenges young people to discover their potential and celebrate their achievements. It operates in more than 130 countries and territories around the world, helping to inspire over 1.3 million young people every year.

News story: Derailment due to a landslip at Loch Eilt



Aerial image of the landslip and derailed train

At 06:47 hrs on Monday 22 January 2018, a passenger train travelling between Mallaig and Glasgow Queen Street struck a landslip. The leading vehicle derailed and tilted to the left. There were no injuries among the five passengers and two crew on board. Passengers were evacuated to the nearest road access by a specialist rail vehicle and then transported by taxi.

The landslip was on a remote section of track between Lochailort and Glenfinnan where the line runs across sloping ground above the shore of Loch Eilt. The accident happened in darkness following a period when significant snow melt occurred at the same time as moderately heavy rainfall. The landslip originated above the railway boundary. A proportion of the several hundred tonnes of material that slipped was deposited on the railway. This destroyed a section of a fence installed recently to protect the railway from individual loose boulders rolling down the adjacent slope.

Our investigation will seek to identify the sequence of events which led to the accident and will consider:

- the arrangements for protecting the railway from landslip debris at this location
- Network Rail's procedures for managing the combined effect of rain and melting snow
- any underlying management factors

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

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