

# Partnership between Jesus College Oxford and Wales' brightest students unveiled at major education summit

The partnership between the University of Oxford College and the Welsh Government's Seren Network will see a selection of Wales' brightest students attend a bespoke summer school at Jesus College in August this year.

Students from each of the 11 Seren Network hubs across Wales will be given the opportunity to apply for the four-day summer school, where they will sample student life and attend lectures on demography, artificial intelligence, climate, trade, politics and literature.

Unveiled today by Welsh Government Minister for Lifelong Learning and the Welsh Language at the Seren Network's second annual Beyond the Curriculum conference in mid-Wales, the summer school is thought to be the first aimed at solely Welsh students.

Speaking at the event, Welsh Government Minister for Lifelong Learning and the Welsh Language, Alun Davies, said:

“Raising the aspirations and attainment levels of Welsh school pupils to help them reach their academic potential is an ongoing priority for Welsh Government, and the Seren Network is playing a pivotal role in this ambition.

“Since its inception in 2015, the Network has quickly grown to a recognised and valuable vehicle through which some 2000 of the brightest pupils in Wales are now channelling and honing their academic talents.

“Today's announcement adds another tangible benefit for students. By enabling Wales' most academically gifted pupils to sample life at one of the world's best academic institutions, we are demonstrating that educational excellence is well within their reach, and equipping them with hands-on support and guidance to make sure they reach the top.

Professor Sir Nigel Shadbolt, the Principal of Jesus College, Oxford, said:

“Jesus College is incredibly proud of its enduring connection to Wales, a connection that goes back to the College's foundation in 1571. This new initiative will help ensure that we continue to

welcome future generations of talented Welsh students here in Oxford.

“The Seren Network works in partnership with organisations including the Sutton Trust to identify all opportunities and support Seren students to make informed decisions about their futures. Morgan Cronin, from the Merthyr-RCT Seren hub, attended a Sutton Trust-organised summer school at Yale and now has an unconditional offer to study there.”

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## Construction worker seriously injured in wall collapse

A Manchester building contractor and a company owner have appeared in court after a worker was seriously injured on a refurbishment site.

The 53-year-old father of two from Salford was employed as a labourer at the site of a refurbishment project at Manchester One, Portland Street Manchester when the incident occurred on 29 August 2014.

The incident was investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and on 9 March 2017 Workspace Design and Build Ltd, the principal contractor for the project, and Paul Harrison former director of Access Flooring Specialist Ltd were prosecuted for serious safety failings.

Manchester Magistrates' Court heard how two operatives working for Access Flooring Specialist Ltd had started the demolition of a freestanding concrete block wall on the site using a demolition hammer.

One of the men had started to cut into the wall just above the half way point, when the second man took over and continued from the top using step ladders for access. As he did so, the top half of the wall collapsed knocking him from the ladder and landing on top of him.

The injured person suffered fractures to his neck and back and spent three months in hospital following the incident. He has been unable to return to work since.

The HSE investigation found there was no suitable risk assessment in place for the work that was being carried out and the workers had not been provided with suitable work instructions for carrying out this task safely.

In addition to this no checks had been made regarding the injured workers training or experience, he was not provided with a site induction or adequate PPE for the task and the work on site was not being supervised.

Workspace Design and Build Ltd of Manchester One, Portland Street, Manchester pleaded guilty to breach of Regulation 22(1)(a) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 and was fined £14,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2972.

Paul Harrison of Kirkfell Drive, Tyldsley, Manchester pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 37 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 relating to his companies' breach of Regulation 13 (2) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 and was fined £1300 and ordered to pay costs of £2851

Speaking after the hearing HSE Inspector Laura Moran said: "The risks associated with the demolition of the internal walls at Manchester One were not properly considered and, as a result, there was no safe system of work in place for the operatives to follow.

"Together with a lack of adequate supervision, these failings resulted in one man suffering serious and life changing injuries, which could have been prevented had the work been properly planned and managed."

For more information about working safely at demolition sites visit:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/buildings.htm>

#### **Notes to Editors:**

1. The Health and Safety Executive is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. It aims to reduce work-related death, injury and ill health. It does so through research, information and advice, promoting training, new or revised regulations and codes of practice, and working with local authority partners by inspection, investigation and enforcement [hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
3. Further HSE news releases are available at [press.hse.gov.uk](http://www.press.hse.gov.uk)

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.

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**[It is deeply concerning that millions remain in low paid, insecure work – Debbie Abrahams](#)**

**Debbie Abrahams MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting**

on today's Labour Market Statistics, said:

"We welcome the overall increase in employment, but are deeply concerned that millions remain in low paid, insecure work.

"The Government has also failed to close the employment gap faced by women, disabled people and ethnic minority groups, who are all less likely to be in work.

"Working families face the increasing costs of basic essentials, stagnating wages and the Government slashing social security, leaving families £1,400 a year worse off up to 2020.

"Labour would reverse cuts to in-work support that could see working families lose £2,600 a year, ban the exploitative zero-hours contracts being used on hundreds of thousands of workers, and guarantee a real Living Wage."

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## **[BCC comments on labour market statistics for March 2017](#)**

Head of Economics, Suren Thiru, comments on the labour market statistics published today.

15th March 2017

**Commenting on the labour market statistics for March 2017, published today by the Office for National Statistics, Suren Thiru, Head of Economics at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said:**

"The UK's jobs market is going from strength to strength, with the number of people in work continuing to rise and unemployment also falling.

"UK labour market conditions may cool over the next few years as the expected slowdown in growth and the rising burden of upfront business costs stifle firms' hiring intentions. That said, we expect that the UK unemployment rate will reach a peak of 5.3% next year, still some way below the historical average.

"However, average pay growth continues to slow, and it appears increasingly likely that inflation will outstrip earnings growth in the coming months, which will put further pressure on consumer's spending power.

“With Article 50 set to be triggered shortly, it is vital that more is done to provide greater clarity and stability for firms, including certainty on the residence rights of their existing EU workers, and clarity on the regime for hiring from EU countries during the negotiation period. Further action is also needed to ease the burden of upfront costs and taxes of doing business in the UK, which limit companies’ ability to invest and grow.”

**Ends**

**Notes to editors:**

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) sits at the heart of a powerful network of 52 Accredited Chambers of Commerce across the UK, representing thousands of businesses of all sizes and within all sectors. Our Global Business Network connects exporters with nearly 40 markets around the world. For more information, visit: [www.britishchambers.org.uk](http://www.britishchambers.org.uk)

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## **[New teacher training changes to attract the best to the profession – Kirsty Williams](#)**

The Welsh Government has revealed changes for initial teacher education (ITE) that include strengthening how schools and universities work together and increasing the role of research.

The latest accreditation criteria are part of the Welsh Government’s national mission to reform education and include:

- An increased role for schools.
- A clearer role for universities.
- Structured opportunities to link school and university learning.
- A greater emphasis on research.

The changes come after the recently published new professional teaching and leadership standards.

Kirsty Williams said:

“I want teaching in Wales to be a first choice profession so that we can attract the very best. For this to happen, we must get our initial teacher education offer right.

“The new accreditation standards are part of our national mission to raise the standards and standing of the profession.

“The teaching profession can only make its proper contribution to raising standards of education in our schools if our initial teacher training offers our future teachers the skills, knowledge and appetite to lead the change required.

“This is about our schools and universities working together, using the best research available, so our teachers have the right skills to deliver our new curriculum for the benefit of all our pupils.”

The Education Secretary also announced that the Education Workforce Council (EWC), through the establishment of the Initial School Teacher Training Committee (the Board) will accredit individual ITE programmes.

She added:

“I am delighted to announce that the public appointment process for the Chair, and Deputy Chair, of the EWC ‘Board’ is now open. The establishment of the Board will enable more specific consideration of how ITE programmes will raise the quality of provision – attracting the right people with the right qualifications and an aptitude for teaching, to enter the profession.”

The Education Secretary wants international evidence and best practice to help guide Wales’ education reforms. From today the OECD will be holding an international workshop in Cardiff to help further develop ITE in Wales.