



FORUM

Gordon Associates cordially invite you to AO-Forum 2024

Date... Wednesday 1 May 2024

Venue... Woburn House Conference Centre, 20 Tavistock Square London WC1H 9HQ

... Nearest tube: Euston or Kings Cross – see www.woburnhouse.co.uk for further details

Cost... £170 + VAT (£204). **Early Bird Price:** £135 + VAT (£162) for bookings received before end of March 2024

AGENDA

09.00 – 09.45 **Registration, Tea & Coffee**

09.45 **Welcome** – By Ben Smith, AO-Forum Chairman

09.45 – 10.30 **An Update From IfATE: review cycles, engaging employers, insights – and much more**
Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE)

IfATE will provide an update for awarding organisations who work with EPAs or in technical education – and this should be of interest to all who work with vocational qualifications.

- Unpacking IfATE's review cycles in order to support AOs planning process
- Engagement of employers effectively throughout their work, including sharing some best practice observed from AOs
- Utilising IfATE publications and insights, with input from AOs on how you might want to or be able to work with the regulator to strengthen those insights
- Some information about IfATE's SkillsCompass tool; currently in development, this is an AI tool to detect changing labour market requirements that may involve or stimulate AO market entry in certain areas

10.30 – 11.15 **Help! There's An Election Coming And I Want To Know What *Might* Happen So I Can Make Plans At My Awarding Body!**

Steve Besley, Education Eye, Leading Education Policy Expert

What will happen in the education sector over the coming years? If the Labour Party wins the next general election how will the landscape change? Will they change vocational qualifications or apprenticeships? As one of the leading education policy experts in the UK, there is nobody better than Steve Besley to lead us through the murky waters of what might happen when the next government is formed. Steve will ...

- Outline the current education policy context
- See how the major political parties are lining up their policies to tackle current key issues
- Look at how education might shape up post-election and the educational challenges which may lie ahead to 2030

11.15 – 11.40 **Tea & Coffee**

11.40 – 12.30 **Unlocking International Opportunities: Bridging Borders through Qualifications**

Jenny Patrickson, Managing Director, ActiveIQ

The reputation of the UK education system serves as a powerful gateway for awarding organisations seeking to market their qualifications internationally. In an interconnected world, the demand for skilled professionals is not confined by borders and this session will explore some key strategies and considerations for providing qualifications and learning content to an international market. It will include a look at the challenges and opportunities in working with a global audience, taking into account cultural nuances, regulatory variations and the diverse expectations of providers and learners.

The session will include insights into aligning qualifications with international standards, obtaining accreditation from reputable bodies and establishing partnerships with institutions worldwide to successfully navigate the complexities of the global qualifications landscape. Online platforms for course delivery and assessment, accessibility of content, language and cultural considerations will be discussed as will the potential pitfalls of international endeavours.

12.30 – 13.30 **Lunch**

- 13.30 – 14.00 **Qualifications Wales – Open For Business!** *presented by Qualifications Wales*
 Qualifications Wales, an independent statutory body, regulates qualifications that are developed and delivered by the awarding bodies that we recognise and that are offered to learners in Wales. Our purpose is met when qualifications taken in Wales are trusted and valued by learners, employers and education providers and are recognised throughout the UK and internationally. This presentation will be of interest to awarding bodies who are considering offering qualifications to learners in Wales, and those who are currently doing so, and will cover:
- Recognition of awarding bodies by QW
 - Key differences between QW regulatory requirements and those of other UK regulators
 - Guidance, support and monitoring of awarding bodies
 - Designated and Approved qualifications in Wales
 - Availability of qualifications through the medium of Welsh
 - Qualifications in Wales (QiW) database
- 14.00 – 14.30 **Question Time with the Regulators**
Regulators confirmed so far: CCEA, Qualifications Wales, IfATE
 This is a Q&A session with the regulators and provides you with an opportunity to ask questions related to your business or raise issues relevant to your sector. The session will be chaired by a leading industry figure, who will employ Paxman-like tenacity to solicit solid answers to your questions. Either raise a question on the day or submit your question in advance.
- 14.30 – 15.15 **Manifesto for AOs in a changing world**
John McNamara, former CEO of FAB & current Chairman of Innovate Awarding
 Having heard from the regulators and the potential policy directions in the previous sessions, John McNamara will reflect on the current and future challenges for Awarding Organisations – and suggest possible ways forward for our AO businesses over the coming years. John will consider the following:
- Brief review of past government skills policies
 - Impact of skills policy change and reform on UK productivity since 2010
 - Outline some of the main ‘pinch-points’ for any government coming into power in 2024
 - What should the AO ‘wish-list’ look like?
 - How should we campaign effectively to make maximum impact?
 - What will success look like for AOs?
- 15.30 **Closing – By Ben Smith, AO-Forum Chairman**

To book a place:

Simply email margaret@gordonassociates.co.uk stating the delegate(s) name(s) and we will send you an invoice or call Margaret Chamberlain on 01242 529820. Or to pay by credit card please go to www.awardingorganisation.com and click Buy Tickets. Please note that the agenda is subject to change due to the availability of speakers.

Speaker Profiles

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| <p>John McNamara John McNamara is the Chair of Innovate Awarding Ltd. Formerly he was founding Chair of the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) and led the organisation from 2001 to 2009. He has gained considerable strategic leadership experience in the Skills Sector and the financial services industry. He was also the Director of the Hospitality awarding Body (HAB), Chief Executive of BIIAB, and Innovate Awarding. He has recently been acting as the interim CEO of FAB & handed over to the new permanent CEO this year.</p> | <p>Steve Besley, Education Eye Steve currently runs Education Eye, a policy briefing service that provides a weekly summary of what's going on in UK education and goes out on the EdCentral site. Before that he spent 20 years as Head of Education Policy at Pearson and prior to that he worked in BTEC, FE and schools. Steve is a member of the Leadership Institute, a previous Reader of the Queen's Anniversary Prizes for FE and HE and a Fellow of a London College. Find out more or sign up to the weekly policy newsletter, at https://edcentral.uk</p> |
| <p>Jenny Patrickson, Managing Director, Active IQ Jenny has over 30 years of experience within the awarding and active leisure sectors, leading the development of specialist health and fitness sector awarding organisations to drive growth and excellence in service provision. Whilst developing an in-depth understanding of regulatory frameworks and their requirements, Jenny has been responsible for strategic planning, business development, business process improvement and international development. Having also worked within the training provider environment, Jenny has a clear understanding of the need for flexible and responsive awarding organisation provision, in line with Active IQ's values. On an international level, Jenny was involved in the development and implementation of occupational standards, accreditation systems and quality assurance processes for the European Health and Fitness Association (now Europe Active), the Register of Professionals (REPs) Ireland and for the International Confederation of Registers of Exercise Professionals (ICREPs).</p> | <p>Elaine Carlile, Strategic Engagement Manager, Qualifications Wales Elaine recently joined Qualifications Wales as strategic engagement manager for the higher and further education as well as the work-based learning sectors, following 15 years working at WJEC. At WJEC Elaine initially progressed from her role as Subject Officer to Assistant Director before being appointed as the Director of Qualifications, Assessment, and Responsible Officer, overseeing qualification design, assessment development and the delivery of each examination series. Originally from Ireland, Elaine is an award-winning teacher having worked in schools teaching music and performing arts and taking strategic responsibility for assessment and reporting. Since commencing her role at Qualifications Wales, Elaine has enjoyed meeting and collaborating with professionals across the UK who share a passion for post-16 education and training.</p> |