

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



JUNE 2026

NEWSLETTER



Dani Smith Wins Compliance Professional of the Year

Dani Smith of Kaplan Professional Education has demonstrated exceptional leadership, expertise, and commitment to advancing compliance standards. Through a proactive approach to regulatory change, a passion for fostering a strong culture of integrity, and a dedication to developing both colleagues and the wider profession, Dani has made a significant impact within the organisation and the compliance community.

This recognition celebrates an individual whose professionalism, innovation, and unwavering commitment to excellence continue to raise the bar for the compliance profession.





Heart of Yorkshire
Education Group

Lindsey Ball Wins the Quality College & University Improvement Champion of the Year

The Heart of Yorkshire Education Group enjoyed a fantastic evening at the North Yorkshire Apprenticeship Awards 2026 in Harrogate, celebrating the achievements of its Apprenticeship Team and learners, who received well-deserved recognition across several categories.

The Group was proud to be named Highly Commended in the Training Provider of the Year category, reflecting the continued dedication and impact of its Apprenticeship Team in delivering high-quality training and support to both learners and employers.

Individual apprentices were also recognised for their outstanding achievements. Owen Parsons, an Engineering Apprentice at G S-HYDRO, received a Highly Commended award, highlighting his commitment and success in his role.

Meanwhile, Aiste Sarvaite, a Professional Services Apprentice, was presented with a Special Recognition Award for her exceptional performance and contribution.

The Group was also nominated for a number of accolades at the West Yorkshire Apprenticeship Awards in Bradford, including the Training Provider of the Year.

Chris Baker, Director of Apprenticeships at the Heart of Yorkshire Education Group, said:

“These achievements highlight the positive impact apprenticeships continue to have across Yorkshire, supporting individuals to develop valuable skills and build successful careers within the region. Being Highly Commended in the Training Provider of the Year category is a fantastic way to mark the end of what has been a truly successful year for apprenticeships across the Group. We are incredibly proud to see our apprentices recognised through these awards and of the strong outcomes we continue to deliver, alongside the positive difference they are making within their industries and communities.”





Ofsted praises ITE provision at Luminate Education Group under new inspection framework

Luminate Education Group has received a positive Ofsted report for its Initial Teacher Education (ITE) provision under the new inspection framework, meeting the Strong standard for Inclusion and Expected standard across all other evaluation areas.

Member of the group, University Centre Leeds, is the training provider for the ITE courses that are on offer. Trainees are either following an apprenticeship, the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education or the Certificate in Education. It is one of the largest further education (FE) ITE providers in the region, servicing several colleges and external training providers, with over 100 trainees.

The Ofsted report noted: "Trainees grow in confidence as a result of their training. They develop an assured and commanding presence in their classrooms. They balance this skilfully with the nurturing approach required for effective learning."

The highly inclusive culture, where trainees are often encouraged to talk about their support needs and the adjustments they need to help them succeed in their studies and in their teaching, was highlighted.

Becky Fores, Dean of Higher Education at University Centre Leeds, said: "At Luminate Education Group we pride ourselves on having an inclusive culture. Our teacher education provision is so ambitious, and it was wonderful to see the report reflect that. The inspection really helped to demonstrate that our provision within teacher education supports our trainees and the preparedness to go into the classroom through achieving high standards and being able to adapt their training through the development of the feedback that they receive."

[The published report for Luminate Education Group's Initial Teacher Education \(ITE\) provision is available on Ofsted's website.](#)

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YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

York St John University won big at the NY Apprenticeships Awards!

York St John, our employers/partners and apprentices were shortlisted in 7 categories and won:

- **Professional Services Apprentice of the Year** recognises an apprentice working in a professional services role who has demonstrated exceptional commitment, development and impact within their organisation. Donna Jones from Network Rail - Project Management Degree Apprentice was our winner in this category.
- **Degree Apprentice of the Year** celebrates an individual undertaking a degree apprenticeship who has shown outstanding achievement, personal growth and a significant contribution to their employer through the application of their learning. Louise Green from Aqua Consultants - Project Management Degree Apprentice received this award.
- **Apprentice Ambassador of the Year** recognises an individual who has gone above and beyond in championing apprenticeships, promoting their value and inspiring others to consider the apprenticeship route. Tom Burton, our Head of Apprenticeships won this award.



FRESH FUTURES

BRIAN JACKSON COLLEGE

Brian Jackson College Launch Pathway 4: Connect

Maintaining engagement. Preventing NEET.

"We meet young people where they are and ensure they are never left behind."

Who is this for?

The Connect Pathway supports young people who are unable to attend on-site provision, are at risk of disengagement or becoming NEET, or face barriers such as SEMH needs, anxiety or EBSA.

Our approach

Guided by our value of Approachable, we know that connection comes before attendance. Our experienced Pastoral Support Workers deliver flexible, personalised support in homes, community settings and other safe spaces, combining wellbeing, SEND intervention and academic learning to keep learners engaged.

The impact

By reducing barriers, building trusted relationships and providing tailored support, Connect helps young people rebuild confidence, remain connected to education and, where appropriate, transition back into mainstream learning.

Why Local Authorities choose Connect

Connect offers flexible, responsive provision that prevents disengagement, supports inclusion and aligns with SEND Reform. It helps keep vulnerable learners safe, engaged and progressing while reducing the risk of becoming NEET.

Key message: Pathway 4 - Connect provides Targeted and Targeted Plus support, ensuring the most vulnerable learners stay connected to education and continue making progress.

WHY LOCAL AUTHORITIES CHOOSE CONNECT

Prevents breakdown and disengagement	Offers flexible, LA responsive provision
Keeps young people visible, safe and supported	Clear alignment with SEND Reform (Targeted/Targeted Plus)
Maintains education pathways during crisis periods	Supports local inclusion and NEET reduction rates

Aligns with early intervention and inclusion priorities

Pathway 4 (Connect) delivers Targeted and Targeted Plus support for the hardest to reach learners ensuring engagement is sustained, escalation is reduced and no young person is lost from education.

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FRESH FUTURES
BRIAN JACKSON COLLEGE

**PATHWAY 4:
THE CONNECT PATHWAY
MAINTAINING ENGAGEMENT
PREVENTING NEET**

FRESH FUTURES
BRIAN JACKSON COLLEGE
RECEPTION



Youth Work – A Changing Place and Space: Conversation for Apprentices, Employers & the Public

This 90-minute Microsoft Teams session from B-Skill brings together apprentices in youth work, employers, and members of the public to explore how youth workers understand young people's needs, respond to shifting policy and funding priorities, and develop new physical and digital spaces that make a real difference.

Date & time: Monday 06 July 2026, 10:00-11:30 BST
Who it's for: Apprentices, employers, and the public
Speaker: Jon Niblo, CEO, NEY (<https://neyouth.org.uk>)

Jon Niblo is Chief Executive of NEY (Northeast Youth), where he leads strategic development, partnership building, and programme delivery across youth services in the region. He champions practical, values-driven practice and collaboration between statutory services, funders and community organisations.

What to expect:

- Introduction
- Youth Work – A Changing Place and Space: Conversation for Apprentices, Employers & the Public
- Q&A with actionable next steps
- Closing

Why attend:

Learn practical ways to engage young people, support for apprentices, and create new spaces for impact – plus networking with peers and employers.

How to join:

Register here: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/15b494fd-88ba-44f2-91ab-0526065211ac@2b57b636-d06e-4da0-a4f1-64c8d88bf3e3>

Questions or accessibility requests? Email business@b-skill.com



Youth Work – A Changing Place and Space

Conversation for Apprentices, Employers & the Public.

Monday, July 6th, 2026 — 10:00 to 11:30 (BST)

[Register Now](#)



Bradford college gives award in memory of Heather Greenwood

Motive8 College has created a new annual award in memory of former Wyke Middle School pupil Heather Greenwood, who tragically died aged 11 after suffering a brain haemorrhage in 1995.

Named the Daffodil Award—a tribute to Heather, who died on the first day of spring—the award recognises a student who embodies the same kindness, resilience and positive values she was remembered for.

Heather's sister, Dawn Greenwood, said the family were honoured by the tribute, adding: "It will always keep her memory alive."

The inaugural award was presented to Kelsey Wolfenden, who was recognised for consistently demonstrating Motive8 College's core values of respect, honesty, love, equality and dedication throughout the year.





Train'dUp hosted a Women in Engineering Event

For those who were unable to join, here are some of the key highlights and takeaways from the session:

- We heard inspiring career journeys from women working across engineering, manufacturing, rail and apprenticeship sectors, demonstrating that there is no single route into engineering careers.
- Speakers highlighted the importance of confidence, resilience and being willing to take opportunities, even when you may not meet every requirement on paper.
- Discussions focused on the challenges women can still face in engineering, including gender stereotypes, underrepresentation and imposter syndrome, while also recognising the significant progress that has been made across the industry.
- Apprenticeships were strongly promoted as a valuable pathway into engineering and technical careers, offering hands-on learning, professional development and excellent long-term career prospects.
- Employers were encouraged to focus on potential as well as experience, create inclusive working environments and provide visible role models to attract and retain more women in engineering.
- The panel shared their excitement about the future of engineering, particularly around innovation, sustainability, green energy, AI and solving some of society's biggest challenges.

One of the strongest messages from the event was simple: have confidence in your abilities, say yes to opportunities, and don't be afraid to put yourself forward.

[Women in Engineering Event - Train'd Up-20260623_090040UTC-Meeting Recording.mp4](#)



AiVII

AI, Visualisation, Insights, Impact

Strong Start to Summer for AiVII

June has been a particularly positive month for the AiVII team as we have welcomed a number of new clients and supported them through the early stages of their onboarding journey.

One of the most rewarding aspects of this process is seeing the reaction of teams as they begin to explore how they can use data more effectively to support quality improvement, learner progress, safeguarding, compliance and inspection readiness.

Across our onboarding sessions, we have received some fantastic feedback from colleagues working across the skills and apprenticeship sector. Comments such as:

"This is going to be the biggest game changer for my team."

"This is really powerful."

"I can't wait to use it."

"I'm very excited to be sitting here hearing all this."

"You're blowing our minds."

"You've just answered all our prayers."

Whilst these comments are encouraging, what excites us most is what sits behind them. They reflect the challenges many providers face in bringing together information from multiple sources and the desire for greater visibility, efficiency and confidence in decision-making.

As organisations continue to navigate increasing expectations around learner progress, achievement, safeguarding and quality assurance, having access to timely and meaningful data has never been more important.

We are trialling some exciting new features which are soon to be released such as our audit centre and curriculum builder.





Ascentis Launch New Functional Skills Assessment Options

New Level 1 and Level 2 Paper-Based Assessments Coming Soon

Ascentis is pleased to announce the launch of paper-based versions of its [Functional Skills](#) English and Mathematics Level 1 and Level 2 assessments, providing centres with even greater flexibility in how assessments are delivered.

These new assessments will complement our existing online offer, allowing providers to choose the assessment format that best suits the needs of their learners while maintaining the same high standards of quality, rigour and reliability.

Whether you prefer digital or paper-based delivery, Ascentis is committed to providing accessible assessment solutions that support learner success.

To find out more about Ascentis Functional Skills qualifications and assessment options, please contact your Ascentis Account Manager or visit the Ascentis website [here](#).





KLEEK
APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprentice of the Year finalist

Amira Mehr, a Level 3 Advanced Hairdressing apprentice at Saks Wetherby, has been shortlisted for Apprentice of the Year at the [VTCT Skills Excellence Awards 2026](#).

Training with Kleek Apprenticeships, Amira's Apprentice of the Year nomination is recognition of the resilience, hard work and determination she has shown throughout her hairdressing apprenticeships, whilst continuing to thrive despite significant personal challenges. Celebrating the news, her salon, Saks Hair Wetherby, shared its pride in her achievement, commenting: "A MASSIVE well done to our Amira for being nominated!"

The award ceremony was due to take place on 25 July, but due to the extreme hot weather has been postponed until Autumn. So, we've a little longer to wait for the results! Kleek is also a finalist in the Large Training Provider of the Year category! Good luck Amira and Kleek!





LXP Skills Welcomes New Managing Director and Joins YLP Network

LXP Skills has recently joined the Yorkshire Learning Providers (YLP) network, marking an important step in strengthening its presence across the region.

The organisation has also appointed Rebecca Craven as Managing Director, bringing over a decade of experience in apprenticeships, learning and development, and workforce improvement. She has a strong track record in supporting educators, developing high-quality learning experiences, and championing professional development across the sector.

LXP Skills delivers teaching, training, assessor and IQA qualifications, supporting both experienced practitioners and those looking to move into education from industry. The organisation is committed to opening up clear and accessible pathways into teaching and assessing, helping to strengthen the pipeline of skilled professionals across the sector.

Rebecca is based in Yorkshire and is keen for LXP Skills to play an active role within the YLP community. Working closely alongside colleagues across the wider group, including LXP Talent, (a specialist recruitment service) the team is well placed to understand workforce challenges across the sector.

The team is particularly interested in engaging with other members to better understand shared challenges, including the recruitment and retention of skilled staff and the ongoing development of practitioners.

By joining the network, LXP Skills hopes to contribute to collaborative conversations and share insights that support high-quality education and training across the region.



Realise

Training centre helps 1,000 people unlock their potential in Bradford

Realise has helped more than 1,000 adults improve their skills and employment prospects through its free Skills Hub in Holme Wood, Bradford.

Launched in 2023, the hub offers adults aged 19 and over the opportunity to gain nationally recognised qualifications from Entry Level to Level 3. Free courses include English and maths, digital skills, customer service and security training, with many providing guaranteed interviews with employers.

Holme Wood is one of the UK's most deprived communities, making the hub a vital resource for improving employability and supporting social mobility. Director of Adult Skills, Dan Goodall, said reaching the 1,000-learner milestone demonstrates the positive impact the training is having on local residents and the wider economy by helping more people into long-term employment.

The Skills Hub was established with funding from the Mayor of West Yorkshire and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and is based at The Holme Centre in Holme Wood.





**ASKHAM BRYAN
COLLEGE**

Askham Bryan College and University Centre are proud to announce eleven finalists at the North Yorkshire Apprenticeship Awards 2026

Askham Bryan College and University Centre are proud to announce that they have eleven finalists, along with their own apprenticeship team, shortlisted at the North Yorkshire Apprenticeship Awards 2026. The awards, set to be held at Harrogate on Thursday 11 June 2026, celebrate innovation and excellence across the sectors.

Amongst those nominated also include college staff members Sofia Page, Lecturer in Animal Management, Owen Brignall, Advanced Teaching and Learning Coach as well as Jacob Ward, General Farm Worker.

Ritchie Bywater, Head of Apprenticeships Askham Bryan College said: "As an apprenticeship department, we are incredibly proud to see such a strong representation among this year's North Yorkshire finalists. This achievement reflects the dedication and talent of our apprentices and the commitment of the employers who support them. The passion and hard work of our entire apprenticeship team is evident in every nominee, and we're honoured that this has been recognised with our own nomination for Provider of the Year."

Finalists span across four key categories including:

Intermediate Apprentice

- Andrew Morrow-Coates, The Oaks Golf Club
- Elicia Sanchez-Clark, Elwick Stud
- Jacob Ward, Velcourt / Askham Bryan College
- Jake Fisher, WJ Richardson
- Nick Smith, Leeds Golf Club
- Tom Deighton, Oakdale Golf Club
- Tom McBain, Askham Bryan College and Amey-Sheffield Council

Higher Apprentice

- Sofia Page, Askham Bryan College

Mentor of the Year

- Owen Brignall, Askham Bryan College

Small and Medium Employer of the Year

- Follifoot Riding Centre – Equine Employer

Training Provider/Programme

- Askham Bryan College – Apprenticeship Department



Aspiration Awards 2026 – celebrating Yorkshire's winners

The Aspiration Awards, national education awards created by education charity and leading vocational and technical awarding organisation NCFE, celebrate the outstanding achievements of learners, educators and education organisations across the UK.

Among this year's winners, Yorkshire has much to celebrate. **Jacob Naylor from Leeds City College has been named Apprentice of the Year**, recognised for his exceptional commitment, professionalism and personal growth as a Level 2 healthcare support worker apprentice.

Beginning his journey at just 16, Jacob quickly became a valued member of the team at York Hospital. He has consistently demonstrated compassion, maturity and a strong sense of responsibility in patient care. Always going above and beyond, Jacob actively seeks out learning opportunities and offers support to colleagues in busy clinical environments.

While managing dyslexia, he has shown remarkable determination to develop his skills and confidence, underlining his resilience and drive to succeed. With a clear passion for healthcare and strong ambitions for the future, Jacob's dedication and positive impact make him a truly deserving winner.

Also recognised is **Gulshan Bi from Bradford College, who has been awarded Support Staff of the Year**. As a careers adviser, Gulshan has demonstrated outstanding dedication, compassion and impact through her personalised approach to student support.

She empowers learners to build confidence, overcome barriers and make informed decisions about their futures. Supporting hundreds of students, Gulshan delivers high-quality careers guidance, assists with UCAS applications and creates opportunities that broaden aspirations. Her inclusive, student-centred approach ensures that every learner feels heard, valued and supported.

These remarkable achievements showcase the talent, resilience and ambition driving success across Yorkshire's education community.

[Discover Jacob and Gulshan's stories on NCFE's website](#)





night to remember – celebrating award-winning success at the North Yorkshire Apprenticeship Awards 2026

Our Learning & Development team was proud to attend the North Yorkshire Apprenticeship Awards on 11 June – an inspiring evening celebrating apprenticeship achievement across the region. We're delighted to share:

NYC Winners

- Mentor of the Year: Amy Morton
- Health & Public Service Apprentice: Wendy Whiston
- Large Employer: NYC Apprenticeship Programme
- Training Provider/Programme: Qualification Delivery Team (for the second year running)

Special Recognition

- Technology & Digital Apprentice: Joseph Massey

NY Highways Achievements

- Construction Apprentice of the Year: Joe Robson
- Highly Commended (Higher Apprentice): Luka Jobson

These awards highlight the dedication, hard work and impact of our apprentices, mentors, and colleagues across the service. They reflect our continued commitment to high-quality apprenticeship delivery, supporting workforce development and ensuring no learner is left behind.

It was also fantastic to celebrate alongside partners across North Yorkshire and recognise the collective impact of apprenticeships across the region. We're excited to build on this success and continue supporting apprentices, mentors, and services in the future.





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