

**AoC Update  
25 February 2013**

**FE International Network**

**Marguerite Hogg  
AoC International Projects Manager**

# AoC Update



- Fee and business income from international students to the sector is around £100 million and expected to rise
- 160 Highly Trusted Sponsors
- 50,000 overseas students
- Not just commercial – student experience, enriching the curriculum
- Colleges developing international partnerships and overseas delivery
- Trying to be international in the ‘right way’ not just looking at international students as commodities

# The bigger picture

- UKBA PBS Tier 4 legislation, Highly Trusted Sponsors
- UK VET International Strategy  
Sector now supported by 'Education UK' BIS/UKTI funded initiative
- Looking for funding opportunities
  - UKIERI
  - UKCPIE
  - EU 'Erasmus for All'
  - British Council 'Skills for Employability'

# Education UK Team



- Announced 21 Jan 2013
- Based at and funded by BIS/UKTI (10 strong team)
- Specifically targeting fast-growing markets (India, Middle East)

Will specifically focus on:

- Researching, identifying and helping to develop trading opportunities for UK exports
- Supporting UK providers to respond effectively to targeted international opportunities, by fostering the development of UK consortia for specific opportunities and helping them to prepare and promote bids
- Ensuring large-scale complex commercial opportunities, which the UK is not currently well-equipped to respond to, are effectively pursued so UK organisations win the business.

# Funding Update

## UKIERI



### UKIERI

- 2013/14 Call announced last week

### UKIERI Strands

- Strand 1 - Further Education Leadership (announced today)
- Strand 2 – Innovation Partnerships (Thematic Partnerships)
- Strand 3 – Skills Development (SS Collaboration, Institutional Capacity Building)
- Strand 4 – Enhancing Mobility (Study India Programme)

# Market update

- China – UKCPIE programme is starting with the Principals' shadowing scheme
- India – UKIERI – Looking for larger scale projects
- AoC India Office launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2013 – 32 Colleges participating
- Brazil – negotiations with British Council and CAPES to extend Science without Borders to Colleges
- Indonesia and Saudi Arabia – BIS partnership programmes being established
- Developments in Latin America

# AoC India



Barking & Dagenham College

Barnet & Southgate College

Belfast Metropolitan College

Blackburn College

Birmingham Metropolitan College

Bournemouth & Poole College

Bournville College

Bradford College

Burton & South Derbyshire College

City & Islington College

City of Westminster College

Edinburgh College

Exeter College

Grimsby Institute

Guildford College

Harrow College

Havering College

Henley College Coventry

Highbury College Portsmouth

Isle of Wight College

New College Durham

North East Surrey College of Technology

Oaklands College

Solihull College

South Thames College

Stockton Riverside College

Sunderland College

Westminster Kingsway College

Vision West Nottinghamshire College

Walsall College

Warrington Collegiate

Ystrad Mynach College



# aocindia

Association of Colleges UK

# Welcome to this *FE Week* supplement

*Nick Linford, editor of FE Week*

On first hearing that 30 FE colleges were to have a permanent presence in India I was intrigued. I asked myself, is there not enough of a challenge educating learners and supporting employers during tough economic conditions in the UK? Why use precious resources chasing contracts in unfamiliar countries, where many have tried and failed before?

And was Sir Michael Wilshaw, the chief inspector for Ofsted, right to ask in his first speech to FE colleges, if international work is a distraction from the urgent need to raise the standards of teaching and learning for our own learners?

My next question was whether it was worth the time and financial cost of flying to India with *FE Week* colleague Shane Mann to find out. That was easy to answer — yes.

AoC [Association of Colleges] India is an important development in FE. It is a story we couldn't possibly do justice to from our office in London.

For this reason, we have produced a supplement, in partnership with NOCN, on the development. It starts by introducing

you to the colleges taking part (31 at the time of going to print), each one investing £20k for a two-year membership to AoC in India.

We then introduce you to Sannam S4, the consultants with the contract from AoC in India to be the eyes, ears and representatives on the ground.

Next up comes interviews with the chair of the group, Asha Khemka, and project director John Mountford.

Further education Minister Matthew Hancock was also visiting India seeking opportunities, learning about India's plans to train half a billion people by 2022 and, as a Parliamentary cricket team member, quite reasonably taking a spectator seat for the one-day international between England and India in Changanacherry.

We were granted an exclusive interview with the minister en route the official launch party for AoC in India, held at the UK High Commissioner's residence in New Delhi.

As reported in a recent edition of *FE Week*, AoC in India is by no means the first nor the only FE college venture into the



From left: Shane Mann and Nick Linford.

Photo by Marguerite Hogg, AoC

Asian education market, and on page 14 and 15 we look at such projects.

What struck me was that by clubbing together the colleges have chosen a relatively low risk form of investment.

The use of an Indian market entry specialist firm makes a lot of sense. Sannam S4 is well-placed from New Delhi to quickly spot a good opportunity from an unrealistic or poor one. They have also already made impressive headway in arranging meetings with the relevant Indian agencies.

The challenge now will be not just to convert ambition into returns on investment, but also dealing with the

tricky operational and strategic issues, presumably familiar to all new partnerships made up of competing businesses.

I also attended the official opening of New College Nottingham's International Lifestyles Academy, to which its East Midlands parent college is contributing curriculum design and quality assurance.

Finally, as for my most unexpected experience in India?

That was being invited to stay for dinner after the AoC in India launch and being told by the ambassador's wife that the apples in the crumble were a gift from the King of Butan.

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*FE Week* is a newspaper dedicated to reporting on news, analysis, jobs and fun in the further education sector.

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The AoC in India delegation with staff from Sannam S4, at the firm's office on the third floor of Devika Tower, New Delhi

Photo by Nick Linford

# Colleges set off on an Indian venture

**Shane Mann**  
@shanermann

**T**hirty-one colleges (at time of print) from across the UK have come together with the aim of entering the vocational education marketplace in India over the coming years.

The AoC has established a limited company, AoC India Ltd, with the aim of helping deliver the "UK's world-class vocational training alongside further education training providers in India in an effort to meet the country's growing demand for skills." Trading as AoC in India, it will act as a representative body for its members.

AoC in India has employed the services of a market entry specialist, Sannam S4 Consulting Pvt Ltd, in New Delhi, (see page 4) who will build the initial team that will be based in India.

It is envisaged that this "Indian base" will act as a hub for sharing best practice and forge strong ties between UK and Indian training providers and employers.

AoC in India is the largest collective attempt by UK colleges to contribute to India's enormous and ambitious skills strategy.

AoC in India will be governed by company directors including Andy Wilson, principal of Westminster Kingsway College,

and Asha Khemka, principal of West Nottinghamshire College and chair of AoC in India.

The company is a partnership of UK colleges secured for the next two years by a two-year financial commitment of £20,000 from each member college.

**AoC in India represents a strong partnership of UK further education colleges that will work together**

It is hoped that it will help both UK educational establishments and businesses explore opportunities, set up, and expand their business in India.

It will be overseen on a day-to-day basis by a strategic management group which will report to board of directors.

During AoC in India's visit to New Delhi, Sannam S4 organised networking events for the fifty-strong delegation with the National Skill Development Corporation

(NSDC), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and vocational education and training providers from India.

Minister for Skills, Matthew Hancock MP, officially launched AoC in India (see page 12) on January 22 at the British High Commissioner's Residencies in front of a delegation of Indian and UK skills providers, industrial partners, government ministers and civil servants.

The opportunities in India are vast, with around 500 million young people requiring vocational training over the coming decade.

AoC's international director, John Mountford, said: "This marks a great opportunity, not only for our member colleges in the UK, but also for a huge variety of education and training providers in India. AoC in India will be a way of sharing educational best practice that has been developed in colleges in the UK over many decades.

"AoC in India represents a strong partnership of UK further education colleges that will work together to effectively engage with leading Indian training, education and industry partners

"It will develop programmes which, due to the scale of the skills drive in India, may involve training local people to train others and 'cascade' skills down to the wider population."

## The 31 members of AoC in India

Barking & Dagenham College  
Barnet and Southgate College  
Belfast Metropolitan College  
Blackburn College  
Birmingham Metropolitan College  
Bournville College  
Bradford College  
Bournemouth and Poole College  
Burton and South Derbyshire College  
City and Islington College  
City of Westminster College  
Edinburgh College  
Exeter College  
Grimsby Institute  
Guildford College of FE and HE  
Harrow College  
Havering College of FE and HE  
Henley College Coventry  
Highbury College  
Isle of Wight College  
NESCOT (NE Surrey College of Tech)  
New College Durham  
Oaklands College  
Solihull College  
South Thames College  
Stockton Riverside College  
Westminster Kingsway College  
West Nottinghamshire College  
Walsall College  
Warrington Collegiate  
Ystrad Mynach College





Taking questions from the AoC in India delegation. From left: Sunaina Mann, principal of North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOT), Andy Wilson, principal of Westminster Kingsway College, Sudeshna Chatterjee, director of South Asia development at Bourneville College, Sue Rimmer, principal of South Thames College, Clive Hill, executive director of Birmingham Metropolitan College, Shane Mann, reporting for *FE Week* and John Mountford, international director for the AoC. Photo by Nick Linford

# Q&A with the chair of AoC in India

## How did the AoC in India launch event in New Delhi go?

"It was a tremendous success. The most important parts for me were that it allowed AoC in India and its member colleges to show off the world class education that we provide in England. Furthermore, it reaffirmed our challenge and agenda — to deliver and make a real difference."

## What are going to be the challenges?

"The biggest challenge for the Indian government is not the population who can afford to pay and get educated, it is the vast majority who still live in the rural parts of India and cannot afford education."

"The Indian government need to invest resources, it needs to invest capital and it needs to give these young people somewhere to go where they can have decent training. If you go to the institutions here in India some are like a shell, in tiny surroundings and without resources."

"At the same time there are other institutions where people charge \$10,000 a year and there are amazing facilities. Our greatest challenge is the sheer diversity of this country."

## What does the UK FE sector have to offer India?

"We have a lot to offer India. I feel we should start by working with UK companies that have operations in India such as JCB and Rolls Royce. We need to capture their interests and investment and work with them in providing a workforce with a qualification that says you are properly trained and qualified in this particular trade."

"We bring with us to India our intellectual property — qualifications. Although vocational qualifications only work when people can see well-paid jobs at the end of it, that's why it is important for us to work with the employers."

## In a couple of years' time what do you see the ideal membership of AoC in India being?

"I think we have to limit the numbers, because when you have too many, you can't get anything through. I have really worked hard as chair to ensure things are happening in the right way. Consulting with our 31 colleges, getting their approval and agreement is challenging enough and if we have a bigger cohort, yes it's good, but we need to see what our destination and outcomes are in two



Asha Khemka, principal of West Nottinghamshire College and chair of AoC in India, interviewed by Shane Mann at the British High Commissioners Residence in New Delhi. Photo by Nick Linford

years' time ARE, evaluate them and start to think about where we go next."

## What do you think the biggest reward will be for the colleges AoC in India, regardless of the revenue?

"Revenue I don't even consider — this is not for money-making. This is about

discharging your corporate national responsibilities, raising the profile of what we do in Britain and sharing with our partners in India. Where they do not have that track record, nor have the expertise. That is the great satisfaction and this is why I'm doing it, nothing more and nothing less."



# Getting a feel for a foreign market

At the end of a very busy few days in India, *FE Week* caught up with AoC International director John Mountford, who has overseen the development of AoC in India. We asked him about the launch of AoC in India and what we can expect to see over the coming years.

## How has the visit to India gone?

"It has been excellent. We came with two key objectives — one was to get the office off to a good start, and through the launch and the meetings I think we have achieved this. Second, we wanted to give all those involved the chance to get a feel for what India is all about."

"You're not always going to get that on a first trip, but I hope people who have come will go back with a better feel for what the opportunities are and what the challenges are than when they arrived. I think we have achieved these two objectives."

**You have the task of getting 31 colleges working together on this project. Do you think it will happen?**

"I do — I'm optimistic that they will. They have to if they are to access India successfully because of the scale and complexities. You have to take a joined-up approach."

"You've got to get the model right and that takes thought and time, but if it properly and carefully and work together getting something that you're all happy with then AoC in India will be a great success."

## Do you think you've been taken seriously by the Indian government?

"Definitely. There has been a real enthusiasm and interest in what we're doing and that's actually very heartening. Going back to your first question, I think that's one of the positives to what we have gotten out of this week — a very warm Indian welcome."

"At the end of the day they know they've got this huge human resource that they need to train and up-skill, and they also acknowledge they haven't got the internal capacity to do that."

"So they do need to work internationally, there is an interest in what the UK model is

and I think the fact the UK has come here to establish a base is very exciting for the Indian partner."

## There's some scepticism back home about the value of the project. What's the added value to organisations that are participating?

"We're operating in a global landscape now and you don't have to come to India to see that in 20 to 30 years' time, countries like India, China and Brazil will have become more dominant. Countries like the UK have to be positioned to work effectively with them."

"If not, they'll work with someone else and that also applies to our learners as well. So if our job as a sector is to prepare people to be effective in the work place, so that UK Industries are competitive and efficient, then there should be an international dimension to our work. Otherwise we're not properly preparing our learners."

"It has been a very positive week and a very exciting project and we're optimistic that it's going to push our sector forward."



John Mountford at the Sannam S4 briefing

# Employability in India

Graham Hasting-Evans, managing director of NOCN, is working in India with Auctifer, the Institute of Productivity (IoP) and is developing a long term relationship with the All India Management Association (AIMA), the proposed management/behavioural skill council of India.

How is it possible that in a country blessed with a demographic dividend and an abundance of labour there is still a shortage of employable and productive people?

Yet that seems to be the case in India. For although two-thirds of the country's 1.21 billion population is below the age of 35 and its colleges disgorge more than 750,000 science and engineering graduates every year, only 26 per cent of those graduates are fit for employment in India's US\$60 billion (Dh220.37bn) technology sector — according to the National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom), an industry lobby group in New Delhi.

And all this when India's employers are reporting skills shortages in a number of sectors including auto components, construction, engineering, food, IT, machine tools, outsourcing, plastics, services, textiles and tourism.

So, what is behind this apparent dichotomy?

Simply put, it is employability skills which of themselves help drive productivity

in the Indian education system experience by learning is negligible. Indians, it seems learn more by rote.

Many sectors face skills challenges. From the discussions NOCN has had with Indian employers and educational organisations, and the feedback at the recent AIMA Employability Forums in New Delhi, the most common areas of skills shortages are found in communication, customer care, English, project management and working in teams.

To overcome such challenges government, academia and employers will have to join forces to act as one.

Long term and short to medium term strategies will be needed.

In the long term the government would need to develop teaching and assessment methodologies which are more broadly based. These would need to include experience-by-learning and the development of employability skills. What's more it needs to be recognised that such a strategy could take at least a generation to show any benefits.

In the short to medium term India would need to consider putting in place programmes aimed at improving employability skills. These programmes would need to be available to both students in their final few years at school and university graduates and postgraduates, as well as the unemployed and people already



Seated from left: Mike Dillon, NOCN Intd, Graham Hasting-Evans, NOCN, John Heap, IoP and Dr Sunil Abrol, AIMA with colleagues during a recent visit to New Delhi

working. At present qualifications in India are 'technically' based, for example, providing a degree in engineering. There is only a limited emphasis on certifying that the would-be employee has the necessary skills needed for the job.

To put that in context, just two per cent of India's young people undergo vocational training, compare that to South Korea, you'll find that figure is a staggering 90 per cent.

But, if the Indian government and employers tackle the employability challenge now it could lead to a bright future.

One could envisage a student, unemployed person or employee taking a course, which would lead to a certified qualification stating they have reached a particular level of attainment (grade) in all or specific of the recognised employability skills. The course could be either stand-

alone or form part of a wider qualification.

The student could receive a printed certificate, just like any other certificate that they could then show to a further education establishment or a future employer.

However, it would require both the further education establishment and employer having confidence in the certificate and what it demonstrates about the person's capabilities and skills.

But if India is to thrive it is essential that industry and academia work together to address the employability challenge facing them. If they don't, students will be leaving school or university without the skills needed for the economy to grow and become more prosperous.

This in turn has consequences for unemployment for, paradoxically, it could remain high — even though there are skills shortages.

Graham Hasting-Evans, NOCN



# Welcome to India Mr Hancock

The AoC India launch formed FE Minister Matthew Hancock's first major international visit since he took up the post late last year.

It was a visit that also took in a number of other duties, including attending the opening of the New College Nottingham International Lifestyle Academy (NILA) in New Delhi.

There was time for a trip to the Mumbai stock exchange and a meeting with his counterpart in India, Subramanian Ramadorai, from the National Council on Skill Development, who advises the Indian prime minister.

He also used the trip to announce the UK government's plans to establish Education UK, a dedicated team at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to promote UK education abroad.

"The partnership between the UK and India is already a strong one, culturally and economically. But we have the opportunity, potential, and the intent to go even further," he said.

"India has to be innovative in providing training, because of the sheer scale of the challenge. Half a million young people in Britain need stronger English and maths, while the challenge in India is a thousand times bigger. So although the context is



From left: FE Minister Matthew Hancock is presented with a bouquet of red roses by Hemant K Batra, director for the Batra Group

Photo by Nick Linford

different, and it's important to remember that, the innovation here is enormous and we can learn from that."

He continued: "It is essential that we realise the potential of the largely untapped resource that is our education exports. There is a fast-growing demand for high-quality education, and

we are lucky to have a dynamic and entrepreneurial sector that is well placed to contribute.

"We are in a global race and other countries are presenting attractive and co-ordinated offers, so Education UK is a vital step in bringing together the UK sector to drive its international engagement,

particularly on high-value opportunities."

A BIS spokesperson added that the UK's education sector had the potential to make a "significant contribution" to growth — with education exports currently worth more than £14bn annually. By 2020 this could rise to £21.5bn, they said, and to £27bn by 2025.

## FE Minister up for India challenge

### What brings you to India?

"The Indian government's goal of training half a billion people by 2022 is an enormous opportunity for UK providers to support them. So in part this is a trade mission, but the second and equally important element is learning."

### Do you welcome the AoC in India initiative?

"Yes, they're also here as more than a trade initiative — we're all learning, because I see learning and trade as two sides of the same coin.

"There's already a small British presence in India, apart from the British Council, but there are very big opportunities for organisations like City & Guilds and Pearson."

### What would you say to those who are concerned international education is a distraction from educating British students?

"Learning from overseas is part of improving the service at home, which is absolutely top of the agenda. And so where collaboration overseas can play its part then it's a great help.

"Standards in FE are vital, and in focussing on that we've got to look across the whole world at how we can improve our systems."

### What is EducationUK?

"EducationUK will be ten staff, funded through UKTI to co-ordinate the government's support for education as an export industry, which currently sits

across different departments, and putting it under the roof of UKTI.

"Education is not just vital domestically but it is also a major export opportunity. Across the world people want British English qualifications, for example, and the need for internationally recognised qualifications, whether at university or technical or basic skills levels, is expanding.

"EducationUK will support initiatives like AoC India, it will support and is closely related to the work of the British council, which will continue to be important, but it will also support private providers breaking into new markets."

### Is the UKBA a help or hindrance for education providers?

"It's important Britain has a strong and controlled immigration system and UKBA helps.

"I've been clear there is no cap on students wanting to come to high quality institutions because it's also important we attract, in an organised way, the best people from around the world.

"However, for the very large numbers of people around the world who will want further education, in-country delivery is the only way that can happen on such a mass scale.

"So provision of FE has to focus much more on in-country delivery, meaning UK providers being in the country where people who want to study UK qualifications or do a UK course are living."



# AoC India





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**Coming soon:**  
**AoC International Conference May/June 2013 (tbc)**