



# Lead Times

June 2017

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Keeping you up to date with the latest developments  
in learning & disability



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## News from Lead

### Lead Scotland welcomes two new members of staff



**Sarah Burton**



**Teresa Livingston**

After two recent successful rounds of recruitment we are absolutely delighted to introduce our two newest members of staff.

Sarah Burton joins the Lead Scotland team as our new Regional Development Manager for the North area, covering our Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Moray and Highland projects. Sarah is a microbiologist by training and has enjoyed a diverse career in management over 30 years in the public and private sectors, self-employment and the third sector. Sarah currently volunteers in several Board roles in education, health and wellbeing organisations. She has two children, Abi (26) and Josh (22) and spends her spare time mountain biking, seeking out modern art and walking in the hills. On taking up her new role with Lead Scotland, Sarah said,

**"I was thrilled to be offered this position and when I met the team over**

**the first few weeks in my role, I knew I'd joined a fantastic organisation!".**

Joining Sarah in the north region is Teresa Livingstone, who has taken up the post of Learning Coordinator for a new project in the Highlands. Teresa is actually returning to Lead after previously holding this post from 2006-2014 before she moved on to Spirit Advocacy as a Volunteer Development Worker. Teresa had this to say about the new project,

**"Hello my name is Teresa and I am the Learning Co-ordinator for the Highlands. My project is funded to help people, currently not working, to improve the skills they need for employment.**

**Would you like to develop your skills and confidence?**

**Are you 16 years old or above?**

**Are you currently not working?**

**Are you disabled, living with a long term health condition, or a carer?**

**Then please get in touch with me either by phone on 07768917502 or email [tlivingstone@lead.org.uk](mailto:tlivingstone@lead.org.uk) to find out the options available and to get started."**

## Lead creates new post to drive forward fundraising and engagement activities



**Gail Phillips**

Lead Scotland have created a brand new Engagement and Development Officer

post in order to ramp up our fundraising efforts and actively engage more people in the work we do. Like any charity facing the current economic climate, we recognise the importance of diversifying our income streams, but we also see this role as a fantastic opportunity to tell more people about what impact our support is having on learners, their families and their communities across Scotland. After a successful round of recruitment we are pleased to announce the appointment of Gail Phillips to the role. Gail joins us from our Perth & Kinross project, where she previously worked as a Learning Coordinator. Gail said,

**“This is an exciting time for Lead Scotland with plenty of opportunities for those who would like to support us. Please check out our website for more details on how you can get involved or donate, alternatively you can email, me at [fundraising@lead.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@lead.org.uk) or call me on 07768917498. Thank you”.**

[Click here to find out more about supporting and fundraising opportunities with Lead](#)

## Two more Lead learners obtain Adult Achievement Awards



**Volunteer David and Learning Coordinator Donna, both from our North Lanarkshire project, standing with Depute First Minister John Swinney**

## **at the Adult Achievement Awards conference**

We'd like to give a huge well done to Philip Meighan and David Leather from our North Lanarkshire project, who have both recently obtained their Adult Achievement Awards at SCQF Level 6. David is our current Dr Ethel Gray Volunteer of the Year and Philip has been volunteering with our North Lanarkshire project since 2013. Philip spoke about his experience of doing the award,

**"This was an enjoyable course as it allowed me to write about my work, education and voluntary work experiences.**

**I liked the layout of the course as it advises you to go through the worksheets before attempting each learning outcome. As I progressed through the course I became interested in Honey and Mumford's theory on learning styles. This helped me identify my own learning techniques which allowed me to put practice into theory.**

**The Adult Achievement Award I completed was level 6. This entails 60 hours of learning over a 6 month period with at least 1500 words. It is a flexible learning online course which allows you to work at your own pace. My own learning technique suited me for this course.**

**After completing the Adult Achievement Award I am now progressing onto my HNC Working With Communities at College. I would recommend this course to anyone interested in learning and more so about their own life experiences."**

Lead has been involved in delivering the Adult Achievement Awards since their inception in 2015. The qualification was developed following the success of the Youth Achievement Awards in recognition of the need for an adult equivalent. The award allows adult learners to gain accreditation for context-free learning, which means experience, strengths and skills can be developed and recognised at home, in the community, doing volunteering as well as at work or at college. The awards are available at Levels 3, 5 and 6 on the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and our staff team of Learning Coordinators are accredited tutors and assessors for the award.

Congratulations again to Philip and David!

[Click here to learn more about the Adult Achievement Awards](#)

**[Nominations now open!](#)**



We are pleased to announce that nominations are now open for this year's round of voting for our Dr Ethel Gray Volunteer of the Year Award and our James Hill Learner of the Year Award. These awards are an opportunity to celebrate the fantastic contributions and progression of our highly valued volunteers and our inspiring motivated learners. Voting is open to everyone and the winners will be announced at our AGM later in the year (usually October).

[Click here to read more about the James Hill Learner of the Year Award and to make a nomination](#)

[Click here to read more about the Dr Ethel Gray Volunteer of the Year Award and to make a nomination](#)

## [Volunteer impact survey](#)

We are also keen to hear about what impact volunteering has made to our volunteers as well as collect feedback and ideas for improvement.

If you are volunteering with Lead and would like to provide some feedback then we would love to hear from you.

[Please click here to access our short volunteer impact survey](#)

## [A look back over the last year at Lead](#)

Wow, what a year 2016-17 was for us! We engaged and supported 291 learners

to work towards 279 courses, delivered a conference attended by over 100 delegates, took 192 helpline calls and submitted 6 policy responses. This year we are keen to grow our capacity to engage with even more learners.

[Click here to read more highlights from Lead's work over the last year.](#)

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## Other news

### [The impact of Universal Credit on disabled students and Disability Rights UK call for evidence](#)

As the new Universal Credit benefits system continues to be rolled out across Scotland and the rest of the UK, our [Disabled Student's helpline](#) is continuing to receive reports from potential learners and partners about the negative impact the new system could have on studying. Universal Credit (UC) replaces existing means tested benefits including income-related Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and income based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) as well as Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credits and Child Tax Credits.

Under the current system, students claiming ESA may also be eligible to claim Housing Benefit to get help with their rent, however under the new UC rules, a student must satisfy the 'limited capability for work' test and also be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in order to get the housing costs element of UC. In addition, full time students are not eligible to take the test, which means they are prevented from proving they have limited capability for work, and therefore cannot receive any housing costs. This means that disabled people who want to start studying, may face being hundreds of pounds worse off every month if they lose eligibility for help with their rent or for ESA, which could effectively prevent them from taking up learning opportunities. This seems counter productive to the policy agenda of halving the disability employment gap in the UK, as learning can be a gateway to better employment options.

Lead Scotland have recently been involved in the [Scottish Government's Student Support Review](#) which was launched in October 2016 to assess whether the current student finance support system is meeting the needs of all further and higher education students. We sat on the Students & Benefits sub-group and these and multiple other issues were consistently raised. An emerging findings interim report is due to be published after the General Election.

Disability Rights UK (DRUK) are keen to hear from disabled people who have experience of claiming benefits while studying in order to know what difference this made to them and their situation. They will use this evidence to inform their advice to all the major political parties.

[Click here to read more from DRUK and to provide evidence about the impact of claiming benefits while studying](#)

## [Scottish Government announce new measures to create more employment opportunities for disabled people](#)

Following on from the Scottish Government's publication of their [Fairer Scotland for Disabled People Plan](#) in December 2016, they have announced a set of measures they will implement to improve employment opportunities for disabled people in the public sector and public service in Scotland. Disability employment figures have continued to remain static for over a decade in Scotland, with twice as many non-disabled people in work in comparison to disabled people. These measures aim to create tangible opportunities and solutions to reduce the gap and drive forward the [Fairer Scotland](#) agenda. The measures will include:

- A **new internship programme** for disabled people in the Scottish Government from September as part of the 120 place programme in public and third sector and in politics
- In the first event of its kind to be hosted in Scotland, a **major congress will take place in December on disability**, employment and the workplace accompanied by a newly announced week-long programme of events which will explore employability issues in depth;
- A new **campaign to launch in June to raise awareness among small and medium-sized enterprises** (SMEs) of the benefits of hiring and retaining more disabled people;
- A review, which will report back in the autumn, in to **whether the Access to Elected Office Fund could be extended** to support disabled people who wish to undertake public service other than standing for elected office.

[Click here to read the full press release from the Scottish Government about tackling the disability employment gap](#)

## Parliamentary report says Scottish universities must go further to support disabled people

In our December newsletter we reported on our written and oral submission to the Equalities & Human Rights Committee's (EHRC) inquiry into disabled people's experience of Scottish universities. We provided oral evidence to the committee at the Scottish Parliament on the issues and barriers people contacting our disabled student's helpline faced, which was resonated by the rest of the panel. You can [read the full article and access a link to the video in our December newsletter here.](#)

In January the committee published a report on their findings and released a statement urging Scottish universities to do more when supporting disabled students, after they received a body of evidence in response to the inquiry. The committee said universities were running the risk of not upholding their duties under the Equality Act and must go further to ensure equalities were embedded in their policies and culture.

One of the key recommendations emerging from the report was to make equality awareness training mandatory after they heard multiple accounts of disabled students and BSL users being denied appropriate reasonable adjustments by academic staff. The committee also recommended extending contextualised admissions to disabled students in the same way they are currently used for applicants from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. Contextual admissions give weight to background information about applicants in order to widen access to higher education to students who may face greater social and economic barriers. Factors like postcode area, how well a school traditionally performs and whether the applicant has experience of being in care or attending a widening access programme are all taken into consideration alongside academic achievements, and an adjusted offer made where appropriate.

Lead Scotland made a case for this approach to be extended to disabled students when we provided evidence to the committee in light of the testimonies we receive to our helpline. We believe the barriers a disabled student has faced when progressing through tertiary education and attaining qualifications should be taken into consideration alongside their academic achievements when deciding whether a university place should be offered. However at the moment this is not standard practice and disabled applicants do not receive any extra weighting or special consideration during the admissions process.

The committee also commented that while the remit of the [Commission on Widening Access](#) did not extend beyond looking at the barriers facing students

from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, they acknowledged the importance of the new commissioner's role, Professor Peter Scott, in carrying out further work to understand the barriers facing other disadvantaged groups when accessing higher education.

[To read the EHRiC's press release and final report on Disabilities and Universities click here](#)

[To read a progress report from the Scottish Government on implementing recommendations from the Commission on Widening Access click here](#)

## Children with additional support needs being let down by some schools, say Education & Skills Committee

A recent inquiry into the provision children with additional support needs (ASN) receive at school, has found inconsistent approaches and a lack of support staff are contributing to lower attainment levels and a negative experience. The committee received an overwhelming amount of evidence from parents, teachers and other staff supporting children with ASN about the widespread and systemic issues being experienced at some schools across Scotland. While the number of children classed as having ASN has more than doubled in Scotland since 2010, evidence submitted during the inquiry suggested repeated cut backs to support staff had been made, impacting on the overall outcomes and attainment levels of children with ASN.

[To read the press release from the Education & Skills Committee and access the full report, click here](#)

## **Important case for disability discrimination and reasonable adjustments**

This month's Scotland Equality Law bulletin from the Equality and Human Rights Commission has published details of an important case related to disability discrimination. The Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) has upheld a ruling by the Employment Tribunal, which found an employer had unlawfully discriminated against a job applicant with Asperger's Syndrome. Ms Brookes, a law graduate, asked the Government Law Service (GLS), the employer, to make changes to a multiple choice Situational Judgement Test in order to remove the barriers this

posed to her as a disabled applicant with Asperger's Syndrome. Ms Brookes requested to answer the questions in short narratives rather than as multiple choice answers, however GLS refused her request. Ms Brookes took the employer to tribunal and they were found to have unlawfully discriminated against her on the grounds of indirect disability discrimination, failure to make reasonable adjustments and discrimination arising as a result of disability. The employer appealed the judgement but it was upheld by the EAT.

While this case is employment related, there are clear parallels here with education settings. Our [disabled students' helpline](#) receives multiple calls about students with Asperger's Syndrome and autism spectrum disorders (ASD's) experiencing similar issues with arranging reasonable adjustments within their institutions, especially in relation to assessment arrangements. We hope this case sets an important precedent and encourages more disabled people to have the confidence to request reasonable adjustments when applying for jobs, at work, when sitting exams and completing assessments, and for more employers and education providers to understand their legal duties in providing them.

[You can read the post by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and access the full judgement on the case here.](#)

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## Events, training & information

### [Disabled Student's Information Sessions & New Guide on Post-School Learning Opportunities](#)



**New intern Chris Purnell with our CEO Emma Whitelock**

We were delighted to recently welcome Chris Purnell to the Lead Scotland Head Office team as part of the SCVO/Inclusion Scotland Disabled Graduate Internship Scheme. Chris has just completed a diploma in counselling and comes with a wealth of social justice experience developed from volunteering at a number of different charities across Edinburgh. Chris' role will involve reviewing and updating all of our current [free downloadable information guides](#), as well as delivering information sessions to groups across Scotland. The sessions will be a chance to raise awareness of our disabled students' helpline and information service, however we are also keen to deliver some key messages about accessing learning, including information about the options, support, funding and rights that are available to disabled people interested in accessing a learning opportunity in Scotland.

If you work with/support disabled people or are part of a group of disabled people and are interested in having a free information session then please email [info@lead.org.uk](mailto:info@lead.org.uk) or call 0131 228 9441 to register your interest and we will be in touch.

Chris has been very busy and almost completed the first update of our **Post-School Learning Choices in Scotland** guide. This comprehensive guide covers the whole range of learning options available in Scotland after school including training, adult learning in the community, online/distance learning, employability programmes as well college and university. The guide covers the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework (SCQF), explaining the qualifications level system we have in Scotland to help you get an idea of what your learning level might be. The guide also provides information on support, funding and benefits for students, however we have more comprehensive guides covering these topics, with the updated versions coming soon!

[Click here to access all of our current guides and check back there soon for the newly updated Post-School Learning Choices in Scotland guide](#)

## **Free Employability Training worth £1599**

The British Gas Energy Trust are providing fully funded training worth £1599 to people in receipt of certain benefits. The online/distance training is being provided by e-careers and covers a number of different work related topics including:

- Microsoft Office Courses
- Project Management
- Customer services

- Digital and Social Media Marketing
- Sales
- Teaching
- Accounting
- Event Management
- Business Start-Up

[Click here to read more information about the free employability training and to make an enquiry](#)

## Consultation on Research Priorities for Learning Difficulties

 The Salvesen Mindroom Centre

### Research priorities for learning difficulties

Project delivered by



In partnership with



[www.SalvesenMindroom.org](http://www.SalvesenMindroom.org)



**Research Priorities for Learning Difficulties in Children and Young People** is a project to find out what research is most important to people living with learning difficulties and those working alongside them. Across Scotland, they're asking people who have learning difficulties, their families and the professionals working alongside them, to complete a short survey telling them what they would want researchers to find out about learning difficulties. By bringing all the responses together, the project will identify the top 10 research priorities for learning difficulties amongst children and young people. The results will help inform future research work into learning difficulties and the work of The Salvesen Mindroom Centre.

For this survey, learning difficulties means a problem of understanding or an emotional difficulty that affects a person's ability to learn, get along with others and follow convention. On a day-to-day basis, this may be many things – struggling with reading, writing or numeracy, not being able to concentrate for

long periods, losing track of time, forgetting what has just been learned or acting impulsively.

[Click here to access the short survey on research priorities for learning difficulties.](#) A child-friendly paper version is also available. Please contact [LD\\_Research@ed.ac.uk](mailto:LD_Research@ed.ac.uk) for copies.

## **Adult Numeracy Network Meeting**

**Tuesday 20th June, 11am-1pm, Robertson House, 152 Bath Street, Glasgow, G2 4TB**

The Network Meeting will include the usual practice sharing opportunity and this meeting will feature a workshop – Using Digital Technology to Teach Numeracy - which will include an introduction to the DigiMaths Guidance and Traffic Light Evaluation Method. During this workshop participants will have the opportunity to share their own experience of using digital technology in their teaching practice, the DigiMaths guidance document will be introduced along with the concept of the Traffic Light method to evaluate the impact the technology is having on the teaching and learning experience.

To register interest in the network please contact Jackie Howie at [jhowie@learninglinkscotland.org.uk](mailto:jhowie@learninglinkscotland.org.uk) or on 0141 353 5649

## **Adept Conference: Aiming higher for deaf students - What works? What could work?**

**Saturday 24th June, 10am-5pm, University of Edinburgh, School of Education**

This one-day conference held in the heart of Edinburgh will be full of current ideas in deaf education on the theme of raising achievement. Keynote speakers include Professor Greg Leigh, a notable international researcher into deaf children's achievements and curriculum access, and Dr. Audrey Cameron, leader of the Scottish Sensory Centre's own British Sign Language Glossary project of curriculum terms for science/maths topics.

Themes include:

- Raising achievement (academic and other outcomes of education)
- Access to curriculum and assessment for deaf learners
- Citizenship for deaf students - involvement in decision making
- Creativity and raising achievement with deaf learners

[To find out more about the conference and book a place click here](#)

## Channel 4 Apprenticeships Pop Up Event in Glasgow



Great FREE Channel 4 opportunity, please apply as the deadline is the 11<sup>th</sup> June!

No Experience or Educational Requirements needed to attend!

### **MORE INFORMATION:**

[Deadline for Applications: Sunday 11th June – 23:59](#)

### **WHAT IS IT?**

- A day with the Channel 4 & MyKindaFuture team, where you will get to learn more about the various roles at Channel 4 such as Marketing, HR, Sales, Commissioning and Finance
- Fantastic group based challenges to give you workplace skills and give you an insight of a typical role at Channel 4 may look like
- **An introduction if the Channel 4 Apprenticeship Programme across the business and get PRACTICAL TIPS on how to make YOUR application stand out**
- Applicable for those studying ALL subjects from Maths, Science, Business, IT, Law, Media & Marketing, Digital Media etc.

- A chance to unlock your skills and find out what job opportunities are best suited to you
- Chance to be recognised as a Rising Star and get the opportunity to be put in a talent pool and get invited to exclusive events
- Network with Channel 4 and likeminded people
- **IT'S FREE.**

#### **HOW TO APPLY:**

- [To apply and register for a place at the Channel 4 Apprenticeship pop up event click here](#)
- **Place guaranteed but MUST apply**

#### **WHO'S IT FOR?**

- 18+ (You can be 17, but will need to be 18 by September to be a part of Apprenticeship scheme)
- NO experience needed, but a passion for TV and a desire to develop your workplace skills

#### **WHEN IS THE EVENT?**

- 6<sup>th</sup> July

Contact [Miriam@mykindafuture.com](mailto:Miriam@mykindafuture.com) for more information.

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