

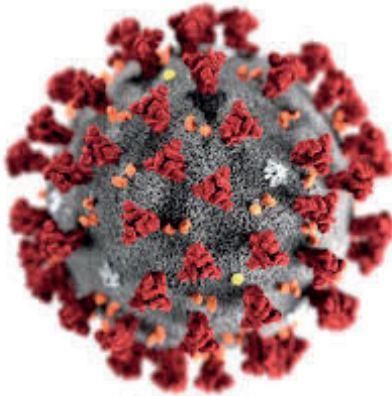
The Association of  
**Distance  
Learning  
Colleges**



# News 2020

SEPTEMBER UPDATE  
Coronavirus Special

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# The Association of Distance Learning Colleges

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## CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

**I**N YEARS to come, when asked by our grandchildren to pick a momentous year of our lifetime, 2020 will surely rank very high on all lists. What we recall as highlights will very much depend on circumstances and how we weathered the storm. One thing that the majority of people discovered was time – what they did with that time varied immensely but it did bring to my mind the words of W H Davies, the Welsh poet who wrote in 1911:

*What is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.*

*No time to stand beneath the boughs  
And stare as long as sheep or cows.*

*No time to see, when woods we pass,  
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.*

*No time to see, in broad daylight,  
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.*

*No time to turn at Beauty's glance,  
And watch her feet, how they can dance.*

*No time to wait till her mouth can  
Enrich that smile her eyes began.*

*A poor life this if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.*



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## WORKING FROM HOME - THE NEW NORMAL

WELL, I've been working from home all along! I have run this Association from my home office for more years than I'm going to admit to, and count myself very privileged to have been able to do so. But I never thought that it was in the least bit fashionable as a way of life.

Suddenly, in March this year, I found myself right on trend. Stay Home, Save Lives, was the message. Everybody was to work from home, and we saw a great deal of discussion as to what this meant, how people could achieve it, the implications for mental and physical health as well as the impact on businesses.

Our particular industry is of course very well placed to deal with this, since distance is the name of the game. Most of our Members' course writers and

tutors work remotely anyway, and some of the smaller Colleges are family-run and home based, so they could just carry on as usual. The bigger providers, those with offices and staff used to working as a team, had to face up to the challenge. In some cases they have been able to keep the office open with a few staff members socially distancing – no friendly gossip at the water coolers or lunches at nearby coffee shops – while others work from home. But we also know of at least one case where one solitary soul was left trying to run an entire large college from his kitchen table, with a single phone line scooping in all the calls that would normally go through the office switchboard.

Working from home does have its advantages – no commuting, so no season ticket or expensive fares, no



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alarm clock at dawn, you don't need to wear the suit – in fact you can be in pyjamas all day, unless you've got a Zoom call. I actually saw some fashion advice on one of these 'women in business' websites about how to dress smartly *from the waist up*. What the nether regions were wearing was obviously not important.

It's great to be able to fit your work commitments around other activities. I've been working out to YouTube videos in my living room every morning, as a substitute for going to the gym. But there is a downside, of course, especially if you're not used to it. It's a lonely existence, and you miss out on human contact and the ready exchange of ideas.

Another hazard, that didn't affect me but has been a real problem for many suddenly finding themselves to be home

workers, is that it may *not* be a solitary existence at all; maybe your children are ever-present, providing amusement and distraction, demanding attention, even requiring home schooling, depending on their age.

And even if this doesn't apply, there must be many a couple attempting to hold down two jobs in the same working space, vying for the use of the computer, the printer, the telephone, the broadband. As for people in house- or flat-shares, young urban office workers suddenly banged up in cramped conditions with comparative strangers - it hardly bears thinking about.

Our Chairman's idyllic vision of us all happily standing and staring at the beautiful countryside is a very lovely thought, but I fear is just that, for many – an idyllic dream. The urban reality is very different.

## STUDYING FROM HOME - LOCKDOWN STORIES

***STORIES I found in a general strawl around the internet – not specifically our learners, but I'm sure the experiences are universal.***

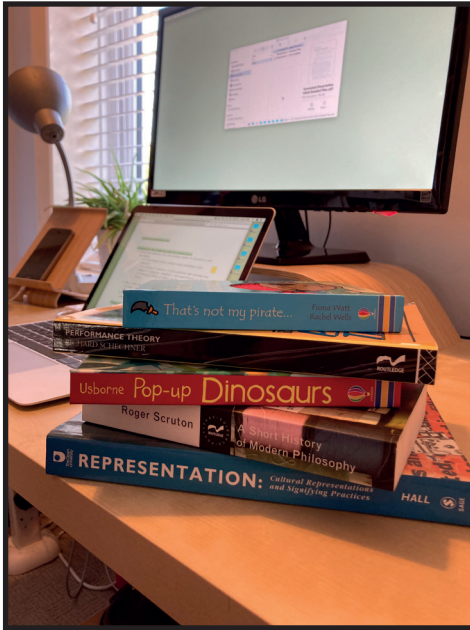
Learning online require discipline and focus and a huge amount of tenacity. You need to be ruthless in setting your own targets and you also need to build in time away from the computer to reflect, a key component in learning.

*Well, we had one student attend last night's online class whilst still travelling home, masked up and on a bus -*

*there's nothing stopping a dedicated student!*

*"My MA students turned their conference, long planned and sadly cancelled, into digital presentations. It's not the same as sitting and talking, drinking coffee while sharing in-jokes and biscuits, but our students are proving themselves good humoured and adaptable. Surely not terrible skills in the world to come."*

*"I'm finding it ok; but it is certainly a rollercoaster of emotions. My biggest challenge is staying motivated and*



*concentrating - I'm a very social person and I'm usually chatting away all day, so I need to blow off steam by having lunch breaks with my housemates or getting on Zoom calls. I find if I've had a chat with someone then it's easier to concentrate so my mind is focused on what I need to do - as I've got all of the chatting out of my system."*

*"I'm quite enjoying this now! I'm definitely more appreciative of being able to slow down (outside of work), hang out with my family and do things for myself that I wouldn't usually take time to do. Having said that, it's still quite difficult to create time, rather than lose several hours on Instagram. I guess for me, I need to make notes/reminders to force myself*

*to make space for those things.*

*All in all, it is a great time to take stock and realise what's important, for sure!"*

*I was getting on well and was quite proud of my progress, doing my home learning course on Financial Management. I would generally put in up to two hours a day, between lunchtime and the school run.*

*Then along came the pandemic. Suddenly I have right beside me at all times a demanding nine-year-old boy with mild ADHD, and four-year-old twin girls who just want me to come and play. I love my kids, of course I do, and I love spending time with them. But what happened to time for me, and for my studies?*

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## THE ZOOM BOOM (from *The Guardian*)

**A**T THE end of December, Zoom had 10 million daily users; by March it was 200 million.

Since the pandemic hit, Zoom, FaceTime, Houseparty, Microsoft Teams and all manner of other video-calling apps have become so engrained in our lives. As one of the only safe ways to communicate, it's hard to imagine living without them. None of these have taken off quite like Zoom. At the end of December, the app reported a maximum of 10 million daily users. By March, 200 million people were on it each day to work, socialise, view lessons and lectures, sing in choirs, attend church, birthday parties and weddings, meet new babies, say final words to dying

family members and observe Ramadan and Easter. So embedded are these apps in all parts of life now that when Zoom went down last weekend, it made headlines around the world and even halted the Downing Street press conference.

For many of us, Zoom, and apps like it, are a necessary frustration – the technical glitches, the pixellated faces, the exhaustingly long meetings with colleagues with their bookcases in the background – are the price we pay for preventing the spread of a pandemic. But for others, many of them elderly or disabled, the Zoom boom has helped them become more sociable than before.



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## NEWS FROM MEMBER COLLEGES

**I**N THE *run-up to our 29 September meeting, I asked all our Member Colleges for some news and views from the front line.*

*Only a few responded. That's OK, I quite understand - you are all busy and stressed in so many ways. I have supplemented your direct replies with some items of news gleaned from members' websites.*

*I asked specifically —*

- Have you relocated your team entirely to working at home? If so, how has this been for you?*
- In general terms, how has business been? I know some of you have been busier than ever, while probably others have seen a falling-off. Which way has it gone for you?*
- Are students keen to carry on, to pick up courses they abandoned years ago? Several people have mentioned this. Or has mass unemployment meant a lack of disposable income for learning?*
- Does the proliferation of online offers of 'courses' for a few pounds have an effect on those of us trying to market genuine learning?*

### **NCT/OAK CAD**

Personally we are ok but are finding the isolation a bit difficult to cope with. OakCAD NCT is still trying to stay in business but it is becoming increasingly difficult.

Obviously our delivered training work has come to a complete stop, as companies are mainly working

from home, and our distance learning provision has dried up as most of our individual clients are funded by their company.

It has been reported in the press that two of our multi-national clients have up to 90% of staff working from home.

To counter this problem, we have updated our web sites to offer a more flexible training approach with additional zoom type tutorials but I don't think major organisations are considering engineering training at the moment.

We are finding almost impossible to make contact with clients and any 2020 pre-virus enquiries

To be a little more positive a previous client has taken up some Calibration DL training and existing students are still submitting work, but much less frequently.

Overall it is very slow for our type of training but we are trying to stay positive.

\* \* \*

During lockdown NCT has proposed three learners for our Certificate of Merit, and their two companies for the corporate version of the award. See page X

### **Oxbridge**

August was brutal. Nowhere near the figures we wanted.

We were busy during lockdown, but dropped over during the exam fiasco

We're getting a lot of people wanting to get finished quickly. Furloughed people are studying a lot right now.



Online 'courses' offers - this drives me mad, we have to explain to students that most of these courses are worthless.

### **School of Health**

There are two of us in the office, two working from home. All other teachers, tutors and supervisors worked from home anyway. It has been OK for us, some things need extra care, but mostly it is OK.

We have been busier on the home study courses but struggled with events and the attendance course.

Some students have had more time so are studying more, others have had less time and are struggling, others have financial woes.

We have made changes to our Online Learning System and have embraced Zoom more fully as a learning tool.

Cheap online 'courses'? Yes, sometimes, students that do not do their research carefully get sucked in.

### **Digital Sea**

Taking the opportunity to rejig the Travel Trade and Cruise Ship courses website – this hardly being a very popular field of study right now.

Write Storybooks has expanded into a larger operation, with courses in creative writing, some art courses and the like, as well as the original writing for children course.

The iPhotography provider has also expanded, with specialised advanced photography courses as well as the introductory one.

### **London Art College**

LAC has been very busy over lockdown, but things are starting to

slow again now. It was quite reassuring to see that people are prepared to pay for quality courses despite the surge in free and cheap courses even in challenging times. We have had quite a lot of 'lost' students rematerialise, fortunately not from the too distant past! However we suspect that the coming economic downturn will prove a challenge as disposable income drops.

We are lucky in that all our tutors and staff work from home anyway, so there was no problem for the college caused by lockdown in that regard, although some of the tutors have found it a struggle to find a quiet place to do their feedback with the family also home.

We have just had our website relocated and updated so we are still



*Lynn Stuart-James  
'Chinese Fish'*

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working through the teething problems but overall that process has gone fairly smoothly.

*We have provided a piece of student artwork to brighten up the gloomy picture!*

## **Animal Care College**

### **All Career Pathways**

Fast-track your future in animal care, with our expertly curated career pathways.

Whether you're looking to start a new career in animal care, or to add to your existing professional skillset, our career pathways offer you the best routes into professional animal care.

### **ATC**

We are continuing to operate as close to normal as possible within all Government guidelines – with the great majority of our staff continuing to work from home.

As always, we are absolutely committed to our students' studies – we are continuing to welcome new and past students onto our courses, and are accepting assignments daily by post and email (**info@accountingtrainingcollege.org.uk**). Our tutors are working hard to mark these and return them as soon as possible.

As we all get used to the 'new normal', you can be confident when enrolling or continuing your studies with us that we are striving to provide our usual high level of service.

We will continue to keep in touch with students and communicate any updates

as the situation progresses.

## **BSY Group**

### **An update on Practical Training**

As restrictions continue to ease, we are aware students on our practitioner courses that have a practical training element, such as Practical Training days here at our school in Devon, are keen to know when we will be able to start running these sessions.

We are working on ways to reintroduce our Practical Training days that will ensure the safety of both staff and students. We will provide further details as soon as these are available.

Students who are waiting to complete practical training may wish to arrange a one-to-one professional assessment with a practising, insured practitioner – but must only do so where this training can be carried out safely and within Government guidelines.

If arranging their own professional assessment, we'd ask students to provide us with a copy of their assessor's relevant qualification(s) and a copy of the assessor's current insurance cover.

We also strongly recommend an assessor carrying out a professional assessment have at least 2 years' experience.

## **Distance Learning Centre**

At Distance Learning Centre we are committed to the health and wellbeing of our colleagues and students as we face up to the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consequently, all of our staff are now working remotely from home and it is business-as-usual as far as enrolments

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and tutor-support are concerned. Courses accessed via our online portal will be available as usual and we will, of course, be keeping abreast of the latest government recommendations with regard to the delivery of physical materials.

Any student who is completing a Teaching Assistant or Child Care Course which requires a suitable placement in a work-place environment can contact us to arrange an extension to their support which will cover the duration of School and Nursery closures.

Some courses which had previously been available as a choice of either Online or Paper-Based will now only be available as Online, while the courses which would usually give Online access as well as supplying a hard copy of the course notes will for now only supply the Online version with the hard copy materials being dispatched later when the government relaxes the current lockdown.

Rest assured, we at Distance Learning Centre will follow all government recommendations and guidelines to the letter to protect our staff, students and their families from this insidious virus.

## **A Levels**

***I asked those of our Members who provide A Levels how their students had fared in this summer's fiasco.***

## **Distance Learning Centre**

We are an agent for the Oxford Open Learning Courses so they handle this but as a registered exam centre, I know

they were able to offer calculated grades to students providing they had a correct sample of assignments from the course.

## **Jamie Bridgewater of Open College (one of our potential new Members)**

With regards to your question about the examination period this year, I was actually working for a different organisation during that period. I have to say it was one of the most challenging things I have done since I started working in education. I'm happy to discuss it further with you at some point as it was an incredibly long and stressful period for distance learning providers, examination centres and of course the students.

## **Oxbridge**

This year, A-level students found themselves in unprecedented times. A global pandemic meant that hundreds of teaching hours in the classroom were lost and exams were cancelled. As a result, students achieved their A-levels based on their teacher's predicted grades.

Understandably, many students are now hesitant to dive straight into university. Between concerns about a future lockdown and worries that classes will all be online, the uni-experience will obviously be different from what was expected. Young people go to university for the life experience gained through socialising with new peers, contributing in lectures, and living an independent life in a new environment. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that thousands of students have chosen to defer their university place for a year.

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## NEW SIGNATORY MEMBERS

*We are delighted to have a new Signatory Member – and we hope that very shortly we will be able to welcome the UK College to full membership.*

*More enquiries are being received about possible Membership. This is very encouraging, and proves that our change of name earlier this year, from ABCC to The Association of Distance Learning Colleges, was a very good move. The new name makes clear what the organisation is and what it does.*

### **The UK College of Personal Development**

The UK College of Personal Development has been developing and delivering award winning personal and professional training for over 20 years.

When you consider investing in your personal and or professional development you will have many questions about the quality of the training and support services you will receive.

We believe that our twenty years of award-winning delivery has given us the experience and the skills to ensure all students enjoy their studies and achieve their personal and professional outcomes.

### **Why we are special**

Here are just 6 reasons why so many people choose to study with the UK College of Personal Development:

#### **Specialist CPD College**

Our knowledge of developing and delivering both personal and professional



### **UK COLLEGE OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

courses and qualifications means you will be studying with a provider that understands the profession and how you can gain the right qualifications to succeed.

#### **Gain respected qualifications**

Our courses lead to qualifications from a range of professional and national accrediting bodies including the ILM, the Association For Coaching and the Association For NLP.

#### **Flexible study**

Our courses are completed through distance learning so you will be able to complete your training at a time and pace that suits you, from the comfort of your own home.

### **Start as soon as you enroll**

You can start training when you enroll – so you can benefit from the impact of your qualifications sooner.

### **Support from experienced tutors**

Our experienced tutors help you gain the skills you need to successfully complete the course. They are available to help and support you by phone, email or Skype/Zoom.

The tutors are highly experienced and will give you advice about your training and assessments; and answer any questions you may have about your course.

### **High Quality training materials**

Our online training material is delivered via our bespoke online learning platform, you can access your course via a smart phone, tablet or PC.

### **A Selection of our courses:**

- ILM Level 2 Certificate in Team Leading
- ILM Level 3 Award in Leadership & Management
- Level 5 Diploma in Coaching & Mentoring
- Level 7 Diploma for Executive and Senior Coaches & Mentors
- Foundation Diploma in Life Coaching
- NLP Practitioner
- And Various Personal Development Courses
- We are accredited and recognised with the following professional organisations:
  - ILM – City & Guilds Group
  - The Association for Coaching
  - The International Association for NLP
  - The General Hypnotherapy Standards Council
  - UK Register of Learner Providers Number: 10042455



Leadership and Management Qualifications  
Coaching and Mentoring Qualifications



## NEWS FROM ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

### PRISONERS' EDUCATION TRUST

The 'This Small Change' project is asking museums to offer postcards to prisoners, to help alleviate the extreme conditions they face during lockdown.

Artist Guy Atkins, who has been working with PET on the project, explains how it came about.

"At most, postcards are the small change left over from art and poetry. But this small change sometimes suggests the idea of gold." Paul Éluard, 1933 – Three of 100 handwritten cards distributed as part of the pilot at Pentonville.

In March, at the onset of the pandemic, a housemate working in a mental health unit was finding it tough going.

The consequences of the lockdown for his patients were becoming severe: among other restrictions, patients were no longer allowed out of the facility, even on accompanied trips. The only accessible external space was a small

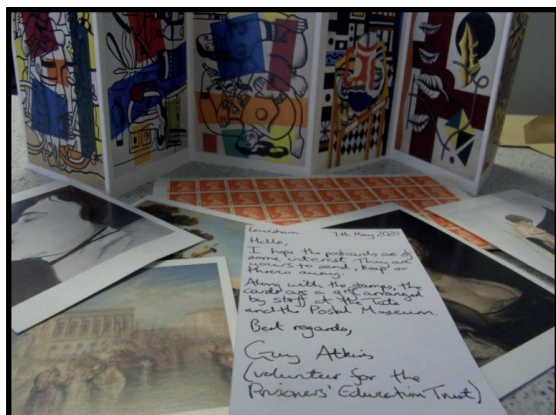
enclosed garden.

As well as keeping everyone safe, staff were under pressure to think of more activities that could be undertaken indoors.

Rooting round the house, we put together a pack of art gallery postcards and a few stamps. The next day, my housemate offered them as a gift to patients. While not all appreciated them, a couple really did: they wrote a series of cards to their families who could no longer visit.

Encouraged by the response, I contacted Francesca Cooney, PET's Head of Policy, to see if something similar would be of interest to people in prisons.

Francesca thought, given the conditions in prisons during the lockdown, it would be worth giving it a try. She explained prisoners were in their cells nearly all day; libraries and gyms had been closed; and all visits cancelled. Alarming, there were also



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reports of more incidents of self harm.

Together, we devised a scheme to see if museums – themselves closed to the public during lockdown – could send stocks of gift shop postcards to prison education teams. The hope was that the postcards would be of interest to prisoners in their cells.

Thanks to the efforts of many people across a number of institutions, the pilot scheme – between HMP Pentonville, Tate and the Postal Museum – has been a success.

Despite the challenges of remote working, we were able to distribute 100 ‘packs’ of cards to prisoners. Each pack included a handwritten card explaining the project, a selection of cards from the Tate, and some first class stamps donated by the Postal Museum.

We were also very grateful to Jose Aguiar, a prisons education consultant, who worked with men in HMP Pentonville to put the packs together and to distribute them to other prisoners.

The different elements of the pack had to be sent into the prison separately and collated by Jose and his team. We also needed special permission from the governors of HM Pentonville to include stamps in the packs.

Jose said the men were really impressed with the cards, commenting that it is rare for prisoners to see anything as beautiful and of such quality as the Tate cards.

Here are some of their comments:

*The postcard created a window to my family.*

*I never felt so proud to write to my son. A proper postcard.*

*A postcard has its own message.*

The ‘packs’ of postcards were assembled by men in HMP Pentonville

In this way, the project has been a reminder that even the simplest of objects can change in value according to their context. In the longer term, we hope to build continuing relationships between the museums and the men at Pentonville.

We are delighted that other cultural institutions have signed up to send material to prisons, and hope more museums and galleries will join in the near future.

## **ICB**

### **When the going gets tough, the tough get a bookkeeper**

There is growing evidence that despite the setbacks of COVID and lockdown, an increasing number of businesses are turning to bookkeepers to help them with their accounts so that they can get on with running their business.

Figures just released for the year to the end of August show that ICB members in practice have signed up no fewer than 7,681 new clients. If this growth continues for the rest of the year, 2020 is on target to beat last year’s record figure of 10,905 new clients. This growth is across the board and not sector-specific. It also appears to be countrywide, which is very encouraging.

Businesses turn to bookkeepers to take the burden of accounts of their shoulders. In these challenging times,

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forward-thinking business owners and managers recognise that spending hours doing the books is a waste of their valuable time when they should be out winning new business before their competitors beat them to it.

Making Tax Digital and affordable, easy to use cloud software has seen many owners leaving behind their paper-based accounting systems and switching to software. But increasing numbers are getting bored or frustrated with doing it themselves, particularly with furlough deadlines and increased record-keeping brought about by COVID.

Of course, it is not all good news and unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, 1,374 clients have been lost, many of which were for COVID-related reasons. Whilst some closures were undoubtedly brought about by loss of business, many were because business owners decided to bring forward their retirement but, talking to ICB members, it is hoped that many of these have not gone for good and will come back at some stage when business returns.

## **AAT**

### **Covid-19 recession leads to spike in workers seeking a career change**

- One in five employees are currently considering a new career as economic impact of coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic bites.
- Finance, healthcare and education seen as “most secure” sectors.
- Research issued ahead of latest ONS unemployment statistics.

The ONS (Office for National Statistics) figures today are likely to reveal a sharp rise in unemployment, new research has shown that 19% of workers believe their job is at risk due to the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic; while 22% have thought about a change of career this year.

The research, conducted by AAT, surveyed over 1,000 current workers across the UK to ascertain their views on how the events of 2020 have made them consider their career. It also found:

- the health and pharmaceutical sector is seen as the most secure by current workers (29%), followed by education (24%) and accountancy, banking and finance (19%)
- 32% said that job security will be a greater priority for them, once the pandemic comes to an end
- 23% believe that they will leave their current job within the next year.
- In addition, a second survey conducted by AAT of 500 UK adults who are currently looking for a new job found:
  - 51% said that the Covid-19 pandemic was the reason that they are looking for a new job
  - 58% say they are considering moving into a more secure sector than their previous role
  - 85% say they would be willing to retrain in order to make a career change.

With sectors including travel, hospitality and the arts hit especially hard by the pandemic, retraining opportunities, largely provided by vocational qualifications including apprenticeships, are rising in popularity.



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**Case study:** “I had a feeling I was going to be made redundant – and now I’ve found a new role in accountancy”

Having been furloughed from his recruitment consultant role due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Dan Purnell, 28 from Fareham, Hampshire, felt that he needed to act quickly to improve his skillset.

*“I had a feeling that I was going to be made redundant – which was confirmed in July,” Dan explains. “My role was specialising in recruitment for engineering and aviation, two sectors which have been hit especially hard by Covid-19.”*

*Dan put his furlough time to good use, starting the foundation level of AAT’s accounting qualifications back in June, in the hope of finding a role in the finance sector.*

*And he has made quick progress.*

*“I thought it would be beneficial to use the furlough period to study for a new qualification. I’ve gone on to pass the first two units already and have secured a new job at a small accountancy practice which I’m due to start later this month,” Dan says.*

*“While studying during lockdown was a struggle, the flexibility of being able to study AAT at home while looking after a young family was a huge benefit to me.” And Dan’s new employer, **Inn to Profit Limited**, has been supportive of his studies before he has even taken up his role as an assistant accountant, helping him fund his next qualification.*

Regardless of age, employment history or background, AAT welcomes

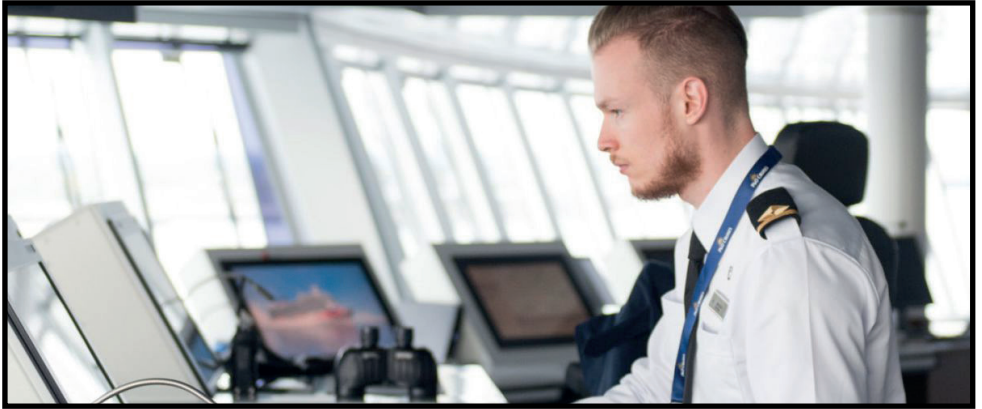
anyone thinking about starting a career in accountancy or bookkeeping. Over half of the people who get in touch about AAT’s accounting qualifications have never previously worked in the finance profession.

## **MARINE SOCIETY**

On 1 June, the Marine Society ran a webinar on the challenges of online training. MSSC Chief Executive Officer, Martin Coles, introduced the event and spoke about how, in a post-covid 19 world, organisations have had to adapt and refocus their training. He commented on how organisations now face the challenge of rapidly moving from face-to-face training to online training. Creating an infrastructure without prior planning and spending money on education technology might work in the short-term, but needs to change in the long term.

Our first guest speaker, Steven Gosling, Quality Assurance Manager for Videotel, spoke about why it is important to encourage seafarers to keep learning. He gave advice on why and how crew managers should encourage seafarers to keep learning during long passages at sea. He also spoke on how you adapt courses that normally require a face-to-face element.

Our second guest speaker, Nick Chubb, founder of Thetius, a technical research consultancy, addressed three challenges of online learning: the environment, accountability and allowances. He suggested that the physical environment, where you are learning, should be set up to make



learning easier. Without being accountable to someone or to an organisation, you may find it more difficult to complete online or distance learning. Accountability and mentoring make a difference in success rates. He also stated that you need to give learners extra support and time to complete courses.

Members of the Marine Society spoke about our Learn@Sea platform, about IFAN (@sea project funders) and about learning via the Marine Society.

If you would like to see the Webinar in full or the short clips from our CEO and guest speakers please go to <https://www.marine-society.org/webinar>.

## **NEBOSH**

*Assessing you safely – introducing open book exams for the NEBOSH General Certificate*

NEBOSH, like organisations around the world, is adapting to the challenges and opportunities presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We want people to feel safe when organising or attending a NEBOSH assessment. We have therefore brought forward and expanded plans to offer remote and online assessments for our range of qualifications and courses.

The first phase of this project is to introduce open book exams for both the NEBOSH National and International General Certificates – units NG1, IG1, NGC1 and IGC1. This will replace in-person closed book exams and enable learners to sit their NEBOSH assessment in their own home or another safe and suitable location.

We're currently adapting our internal processes and infrastructure to deliver the open book exams and anticipate that the first assessments will take place during July. People wishing to register for an assessment will be able to do so through their Learning Partner once these details have been finalised – this will be communicated via your Learning Partner as well as through NEBOSH's website and social media channels.

We are also looking at alternatives for those people ready to sit a GC2

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exam. Again, we will communicate the details of this as soon as we can.

David Morgan, NEBOSH Interim Chief Executive, says: *“The health of our learners is paramount. We want them to feel safe when they carry out their NEBOSH assessments and the best way to do this is transform the way we do things.*

*“We have worked closely with our regulator, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, to maintain the rigour and recognition people have come to expect from NEBOSH over its 40-year history. COVID-19 has certainly presented us with some challenges but the changes we’re making will enable people to gain the qualification they have worked hard for, safely.”*

A phased roll-out will see other NEBOSH qualifications follow; in-person assessments are likely to be replaced by alternatives that will continue to provide the rigour and recognition people expect from a NEBOSH qualification whilst being safer for the learner during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

As an interim measure, where it is safe to do so and permitted by local government regulations and guidance, some Learning Partners may continue to offer invigilated in-person exams for other qualifications later in the year. This will be assessed on an individual basis and arranged via your Learning Partner.

## **ROYAL FORESTRY SOCIETY**

As a result of the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak and current Public Health advice, we have had to cancel the vast

majority of our events programme in 2020. A few events are now able to go ahead, although these are subject to local and national restrictions and may change subject to any updated advice. as we do not wish to put our members, volunteers and supporters at any risk during this very difficult period.

RFS one day training courses have largely been postponed to 2021 (dates TBC) and ticket holders refunded. We are hopeful that we may be able to run the **Woodland Archaeology** course on 02 October. We have delivered a small number of courses online and hope to be able to announce more soon. Updates on online courses can be found on our website.

At the beginning of August we began a phased return to RFS HQ on a rota basis, following strict social distancing measures. We will do our utmost to ensure that the office will be staffed between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

## **HIGHGROUND VIRTUAL RURAL WEEKS PROGRAMME.**

### **Summary. August, 2020.**

Due to CV-19, the planned spring Rural Weeks programme at Bicton College was cancelled and the participants (approximately 40 service leavers and veterans) who had been booked on Rural Weeks from March to July were contacted by Anna to let them know.

Following discussion with Chris Shepherd the Course Co-Ordinator at Bicton, Pete Boorn our Course Manager and Tim Lever who joins us as Rural



Employment Manager in January 2021, and prompted by the response from the potential Rural Week attendees, we decided to 'go virtual' and Chris contacted some of our Rural Weeks presenters to ask if they would be willing to join the experiment.

Thanks to the generosity of Matt and Kirsty from <https://www.hi-line.co.uk/> Steve Ensell from <https://www.bali.org.uk/home/> Steve Davis from <https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/> Ian Bowler from <http://bowleroakfield.co.uk/> and the inspirational Jamie Ranson who shared his experience of transition from the Army to self employment in the hedgelaying and arboriculture world via a Rural Week at Bicton College, we successfully delivered 3 Virtual Rural Weeks (VRW) in June, July and August.

The 29 service leavers and veterans who attended the VRW were spread across all 3 services with 6 officers, 19 veterans and 6 still serving.

They had found out about VRW via a variety of different means; some were already booked on a Rural Week

and wanted something to keep their planning on track, we had referrals from Project Nova, RBLI Lifeworks and the Royal Marines Charity, and Anna did a webinar for the Officers' Association in early June which signposted several individuals to a VRW.

The 3 days were never intended to be a replacement for the immediacy and intensity of 5 days and nights at Bicton. Indeed, when Anna did the follow-up calls after each VRW there was at least one individual who said they definitely wanted to join us for a Rural Week but, as an introduction to the land-based sector and the pressing need to recruit people with the skills and experience which former serving personnel bring to the workplace, the feedback from participants has been unreservedly positive.

We are very happy to be back at Bicton this September to start our autumn Rural Weeks programme and offer our grateful thanks to everyone who has supported our Virtual Rural Weeks during this unique summer.

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## CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

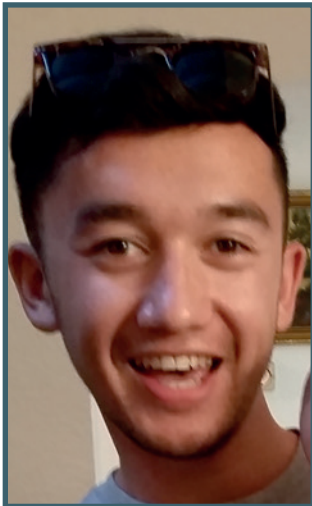
### Some of our students' stories

#### **Phillip Lacy** **Instrumentation and Control**

When Phillip first undertook the course, he was working as an Electrical and Instrument Technician in hazardous areas in the oil and gas sector. The standard of his work, consisting of in-course assignments, virtual practical work and multiple-choice end test was excellent and he managed his time very well, balancing it with his time off-shore on the rigs.

#### **Trevor Leach Technical Director & Course Tutor** **National College of Technology**

*Instrumentation and control really interested me, as I'm an industrial*



*Phillip Lacey*

*Electrician by trade installing and inspecting instruments. I wanted more technical knowledge on different instruments, for my own benefit at work and as I also find them interesting in how they work and act in a chain of reaction.*

*I was talking to an ex-colleague about learning Instrumentation & Control and he mentioned doing a course through NCT.*

*I have now swapped industries and gone into renewable energy as a Commissioning technician on Siemens Wind turbine Generators, which has various instrumentation installed around the machine.*

*The course was a bit daunting at first, coming from a electrical background but I eventually got the results to put me in a good position for the future.*

**Phillip Lacy**

#### **Desroy Jones – Shift Plant Operator** **– Veolia Staffordshire ERF** **Certificate in Engineering** **Maintenance**

This is the second time that this full six subject tailored training courses has been taken up using distance learning, as it is a very demanding programme to be fitted in around full-time employment.

Des and the other staff undertaking the training have all worked very hard and efficiently, at their own pace, in making the progress that has taken place and it is to their credit that they



*Desroy Jones*

have persevered with it and achieved so much.

The support they have received from Veolia and the managers and other staff has been excellent and I would recommend that the company should also receive a Certificate of Merit for providing and supporting this long-term opportunity so well.

**Trevor Leach - NCT Technical Director and Course Tutor**

*I undertook the course to give me more in-depth knowledge/understanding of the many components within the energy recovery facilities, from pumps and motors to instrument and control and I think this will help me improve in my job role.*

*Having been out of schooling for*

*over 20 year and with family life and my work requirements doing it in my own time helped.*

*I found the course well laid out and fairly easy to understand.*

*Starting with basic engineering and maths units helped as the course went into more in depth units. I maybe could have done with more individual help on some units, but I pester work colleagues for assistance and overall I enjoyed doing the course.*

**Desroy Jones**

**Ian Barrett  
Calibration**

Ian was one of the very best students that has undertaken the Calibration course and the quality of the work submitted was of the highest order and his overall attitude very professional.

**Trevor Leach NCT Course Tutor & Director:**

Turbine Tools Ltd provides high level supply and product support for our Gas Turbine Engine clients within the aerospace, marine and power-generation sectors. We supply the very specialized tooling and equipment used to maintain and overhaul gas turbines, where tool accuracy, dependability and safety is paramount.

As a company Inspector Ian has a dual role and, depending on his monthly duty roster, is either supervising the service/repair workshop, reporting directly to the Engineering Services Manager, or as the 'Duty Calibration Inspector' where Ian is responsible for



the calibration and testing of complex torque multiplier equipment, reporting directly to the Laboratory Services Manager.

The Calibration Level 3 course recently completed by Ian enabled him to be promoted to the dual Inspector position, whilst providing the business with an important ISO 17025 compliance aspect for our laboratory accreditation.

In addition, Ian is an active member within our Engineering – Management Action Group and plays a vital role within our Quality Review Board.

Clearly, Ian is engaged in many vital roles across the business but in every aspect of his work he displays the highest level of courtesy, professionalism and respect for his fellow colleagues. A gentleman in the extreme, and a marvelous role model to those following in his footsteps’.

I’m really delighted that he has been recognised in this way and I’m really grateful for your support in this regard and as a business we are thrilled and extremely proud of his achievement.

**Steve Skinner Director of Turbine Tools**

*I found the Calibration Level 3 Course to be stimulating and challenging. The comprehensive course notes had a good balance of detailed factual information and practical examples to work through. The pace of the course is entirely a personal choice, which I liked. The manner in which the six modules were submitted, by staggering them, for assessment helped build my confidence during the course. I received encouraging written feedback from my tutor on the marked assignments.*

**Ian Barrett**

**Craig Roberts  
Certificate in Engineering  
Maintenance**

Craig works as a shift plant operator for the Veolia Staffordshire Energy Recovery Facility. The site takes residual waste and turns it into useful energy in the form of electricity.

**Veolia** introduced this training in 2017 and further staff joined the programme in 2018. The programme consists of six distance learning courses, specifically

chosen to up-skill and support the staff in undertaking their work.

Each course has a minimum study time of 80 hours, set at Level 3, and is fully supported by Veolia Staffordshire ERF.

The subjects in the programme are:

- Mathematics for Engineers.
- Mechanical Principles.
- Instrumentation and Control.
- Electrical and Electronics Principles.
- HVAC
- Hydraulic and Pneumatic Principles.

Craig joined the programme with the second group and is the first person to complete the training.

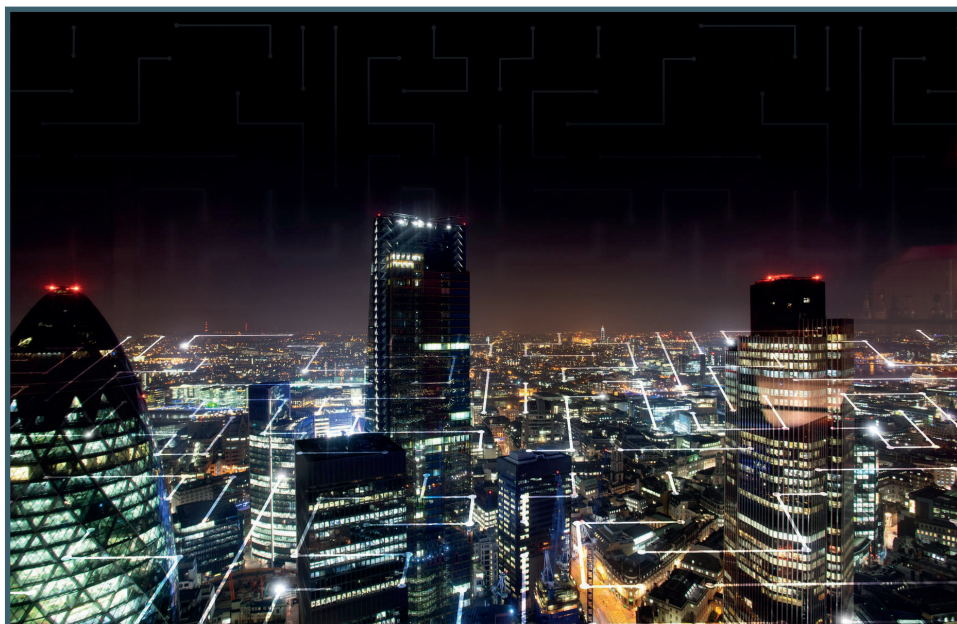
The standard of his work, consisting

of in course assessments, virtual practical work and multiple-choice end tests was excellent and he managed his time extremely efficiently, I would recommend him for a Certificate of Merit.

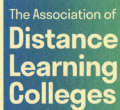
**Trevor Leach - NCT Technical Director and Course Tutor**

*The course was a bit daunting at first, coming from a background with limited engineering experience, but with the support of my colleagues, shift team leader, manager and NCT, I eventually got the results to put me in a good position for further progression in the future.*

**Craig Roberts – Shift Plant Operator – Veolia Staffordshire ERF**







## Certificate of Merit

awarded to

### Veolia

for outstanding provision in Distance Learning

Veolia introduced this training in 2017 and further staff joined the programme in 2018. The programme consists of six distance learning courses, specifically chosen to up-skill and support the staff in undertaking their work. This is the first time that this tailored training course has been taken up using distance learning, as it is a very demanding programme to be fitted in around full-time employment. Students say the support they have received from Veolia and the managers and other staff has been excellent.

Max Faulkner, Chairman

  
www.homestudy.org.uk



### Veolia Staffordshire Energy Recovery Facility

This is the first time that this full six subject tailored training courses has been taken up using distance learning, as it is a very demanding programme to be fitted in around full-time employment.

Craig and the other staff undertaking the training have all worked very hard and efficiently, at their own pace, in making the progress that has taken

place and it is to their credit that they have persevered with it and achieved so much.

The support they have received from Veolia and the managers and other staff has been excellent and I would recommend that the company should also receive a Certificate of Merit for providing and supporting this long-term opportunity so well.

**Trevor Leach - NCT**

### The Certificate of Merit is our way of recognising the achievements of some of our Member Colleges' most remarkable students.

The Certificate is very simple and has no monetary value, but it gives great pleasure to those who receive it - one student said that he mounted his on his study wall and looked at it whenever he felt his enthusiasm for learning slacken.

The nominations also gives us a fascinating insight into the lives of our students and their motives for learning.

We would like to urge all our Members to look out for remarkable stories among their learners, and nominate them for the Certificate.

It's ironic that NCT, which is almost entirely concerned with workplace training, is the only Member to have nominated students during this pandemic.

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## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

### **AAT - The Association of Accounting Technicians**

www.aat.org.uk  
020 37352468

### **ABC AWARDS**

www.abcawards.co.uk  
0115 854 1620

### **HIGHGROUND**

07951 495 272  
<https://highground-uk.org>

### **ICB - The Insitute of Certified Bookkeepers**

www.bookeepers.org.uk  
020 7398 4440

### **THE MARINE SOCIETY**

www.marine-society.org  
020 7654 7050

### **NEBOSH**

www.nebosh.org.uk  
0116 263 4700

### **PETbc - The Pet Education, Training and Behaviour Council**

www.petbc.org.uk

### **The Prisoners' Education Trust**

www.prisonerseducation.org.uk  
0203 752 5680

### **RFS - The Royal Forestry Society**

www.rfs.org.uk  
01295 678588

### **RHS - The Royal Horticultural Society**

www.rhs.org.uk  
01483 226500

## LIFE AND HONORARY MEMBERS

**Al Vanden Akker**

**Ian Campbell**

**Peter Fisher**

**John Mercer**

**Christopher Middleton**

**Diana Nadin**

**Mike Rigby**

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## MEMBER COLLEGES

### **The Animal Care College**

[www.animalcarecollege.co.uk](http://www.animalcarecollege.co.uk)  
0800 041 8500

### **ATC (Accounting Training College)**

[www.accountingtrainingcollege.org.uk](http://www.accountingtrainingcollege.org.uk)  
0800 988 0065

### **The BSY Group**

[www.bsygroup.co.uk](http://www.bsygroup.co.uk)  
0800 731 9271

### **Careers in Travel (Digital Sea)**

(website currently under reconstruction)  
0845 643 8442

### **Distance Learning Centre**

[www.distance-learning-centre.co.uk](http://www.distance-learning-centre.co.uk)  
0845 129 7238

### **DLA Ltd**

[www.distancelearningassociation.co.uk](http://www.distancelearningassociation.co.uk)  
0114 2326279

### **Esoteric College**

[www.esotericcollege.com](http://www.esotericcollege.com)  
01672 511427

### **Fitness Courses College**

[www.fitnesscoursescollege.co.uk](http://www.fitnesscoursescollege.co.uk)  
0800 781 6188

### **Foot Health Practitioner College**

[www.fhpcollege.co.uk](http://www.fhpcollege.co.uk)  
01553 768661

### **HCC (Horticultural Correspondence College)**

[www.hccollege.org.uk](http://www.hccollege.org.uk)  
0800 083 9191

### **Health and Safety Training College**

[www.healthandsafetytrainingcollege.org.uk](http://www.healthandsafetytrainingcollege.org.uk)  
0800 977 4007

### **Ideal Schools**

[www.idealschools.co.uk](http://www.idealschools.co.uk)  
0141 248 5200

### **iPhotography Course**

[www.iPhotographyCourse.com](http://www.iPhotographyCourse.com)  
0845 643 8442

### **London Art College**

[www.londonartcollege.co.uk](http://www.londonartcollege.co.uk)  
0800 3280 465

### **NCT National College of Technology**

[www.nctonline.net](http://www.nctonline.net)  
08456 345 445

### **Oxbridge**

[www.oxbridgehomelearning.uk](http://www.oxbridgehomelearning.uk)  
0333 222 4010

### **Premier School of Building**

[www.premierschool.co.uk](http://www.premierschool.co.uk)  
01244 311609

### **Regent Academy**

[www.regentacademy.com](http://www.regentacademy.com)  
0800 378 281

### **The School of Health**

[www.schoolofhealth.com](http://www.schoolofhealth.com)  
01453 765956

### **Write Story Books for Children**

[www.WriteStoryBooksForChildren.com](http://www.WriteStoryBooksForChildren.com)  
0845 643 8442

## SIGNATORY MEMBERS

### **The UK College of Personal Development**

<https://ukcpd.net>  
01793 511 180

## The Association of Distance Learning Colleges Code of Ethics

Members of the Association pledge themselves to maintain the highest standard of integrity in all their dealings and, in particular, they undertake:

1. To ensure that any information they give about the choice of a career, the prospects in a particular career or a prospective student's studies shall be accurate to the best of their knowledge, and that any advice they give to prospective students and others shall be given in good faith and the best interests of the persons to whom the advice is tendered.
2. To take every reasonable care to enrol students only for courses that are suited to their individual needs and educational status, or for tuition for examinations for which the students are likely to be eligible.
3. To inform students in their prospectuses and/or enrolment application forms of the conditions on which they are enrolled and to include in advertisements only statements which accurately reflect such conditions.
4. To make fair regulations governing their relationship with students, and to treat equitably those who, through circumstances beyond their control, are unable to comply strictly with their regulations.
5. To provide efficient tutorial service, to maintain adequate and appropriately qualified tutorial and administrative staff and to issue to their students without undue delay adequate and reasonably up to date tutorial literature and instruction suitable to each student's needs.
6. To encourage their students to complete their courses of study and to do everything reasonably possible to enable the students to derive full benefit therefrom.
7. To issue only certificates or diplomas that fairly represent the instruction given and not to make any statement or to imply that any such certificates or diplomas are equivalent to a degree or to a certificate awarded by a recognised examining body.
8. To maintain the highest ethical standards in their publicity by making no statement in any advertisement, prospectus or publicity literature, or by correspondence or orally, that is knowingly untrue or wilfully misleading; and in particular by publishing no examination results or statistics or particulars of their tutorial service of staff that are knowingly inaccurate or misleading.
9. To encourage fair, dignified and honourable competition.
10. To ensure that all examinations and assessments related to accredited courses are administered and supervised to the standards as laid down by the appropriate external body.
11. To prepare and maintain a record of the working procedures of the business that can be readily available to a responsible person in the event of the sudden death or major illness of the principle manager of the business. According to the set up of the business alternative arrangements are acceptable. The Association is prepared to hold confidentially a copy of such a document.
12. To arrange for the Association to be notified immediately if such an incident occurs that might cause the business activities to be in jeopardy.
13. To ensure that their staffs are acquainted with this code, that they are given all facilities for complying with it, and are encouraged to honour it in the spirit as well as the letter.