

CECOS INSIGHT SPRING

NEWSLETTER 2022



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Principal's Message

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the team at CECOS College to wish all our students and wonderful partners a prosperous and successful 2022!

This is a great time to look forward but also to reflect upon the last 12 months. There is no doubt that 2021 was another challenging year as we managed learning during the height of the COVID pandemic. Both staff and students alike adapted to the rigours of on-line learning for most of the year.

As part of our higher education provision we saw our first cohort of Staffordshire University 'Top-Up' students graduate in January 2021 in the Kings Hall Stoke-on-Trent. I have to say it was one of the most wonderful occasions of the year seeing our students, all of whom are mature non-traditional learners, who do not have English as a first language, graduate with an Honours Degree. Indeed seven students achieved a 1st Class, 59 Upper Second Class, 28 Lower Second Class degree, with no 3rd Class degrees awarded. This is quite an amazing achievement and congratulations to all!

The wonderful Further Education section of CECOS have worked tirelessly and secured projects in North Tyneside and West Yorkshire. Provision includes delivering training in Employability Skills and Health & Safety in a homeless Centre in Newcastle. During my recent visit I was delighted to present the certificates to candidates marking their amazing achievement. In addition, in Leeds the FE team are working with three Asian women's centres delivering functional skills and raising confidence and aspiration in the learners. The plan is that a number will progress on to higher level courses to enhance employability skills and success. In September we opened a new Campus in Digbeth Birmingham offering both the BA (Hons) Business Management & Sustainability along with the Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training which is proving successful.

We are delighted to now be back to predominantly face-to-face teaching on our campuses and wish all students success!



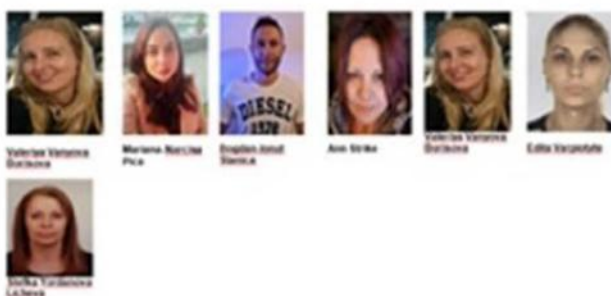
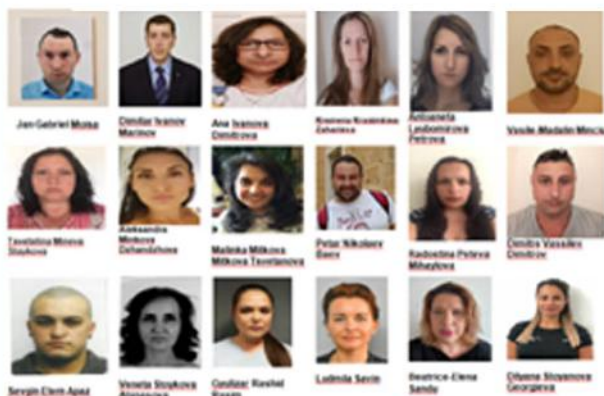
Prof. Mark Mabey
Principal

HE Update

BTECH Higher National Certificate and Diploma in Business

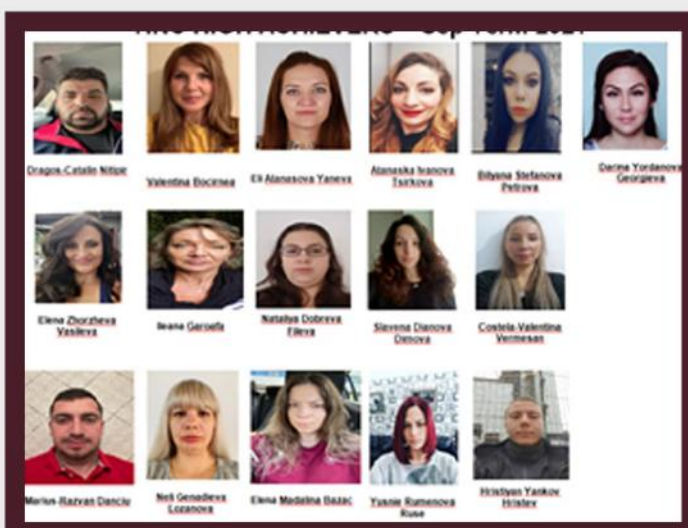
CECOS College London's HE department has been working hard to acknowledge and take forward their student engagement theme for the year 2022. This has brought forward many aspects for reflection and learning. The College has been at the forefront in responding, supporting and adapting to the challenging scenarios of the pandemic by ensuring students' efforts, contribution and commitment are recognized on all platforms.

In this regard, students who have shown exceptional progress in their attendance and academic performance were highlighted and made their way to the College newsletter and announcements. These students were provided opportunity to share with other students how they maintained their performance throughout so consistently and brilliantly.



HND HIGH ACHIEVERS Sep Term 2021

Moreover, in January 2022, students were provided an opportunity to meet our partner college – New College Swindon. It was a moment to cherish as students were quite expressive not only about how challenging it is for them to adapt to the uncertain and transitional points of education during the ongoing pandemic, but also reflecting on their learning experiences. Some students shared how online classes enable them to accommodate their job and personal life commitments, whereas others commented on the opportunities to socialise, make friends and have fun while studying on campus.



However, the story that captured the attention of our colleagues from the partner College was about a student's learning transformation. She shared how studying at CECOS College London has made her aware of her work rights and her right to demand equal pay at work. She mentioned that there were instances where she worked hard without being paid appropriately and was financially exploited. However, studying at CECOS College London has changed her way of thinking about herself and now she finds herself more confident at work, at the College and in her personal life.

Students whose first language is not English also shared how they have improved their communication skills through participating in the class discussions and activities. They said they have improved their self esteem and now feel more comfortable in their social circles.



CECOS College London believes that students who study at the College are prepared for their life challenges and future demands. In this regard, a lot of emphasis is placed on contemporary employability skills. During their studies, students are engaged in projects where they are equipped with leadership, digital and communication skills. The academic faculty places great emphasis on developing students' business and management skills. Thanks to the active and supportive teaching and learning provided by the teaching team, students' achievement on the HNC and HND is truly transformational. The courses allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to their individual fields of interest and to lead by example.

Our students' transformational learning and success is something we are very proud of at CECOS College, and serves to inspire us to continue to ensure our students receive a high quality learning experience.

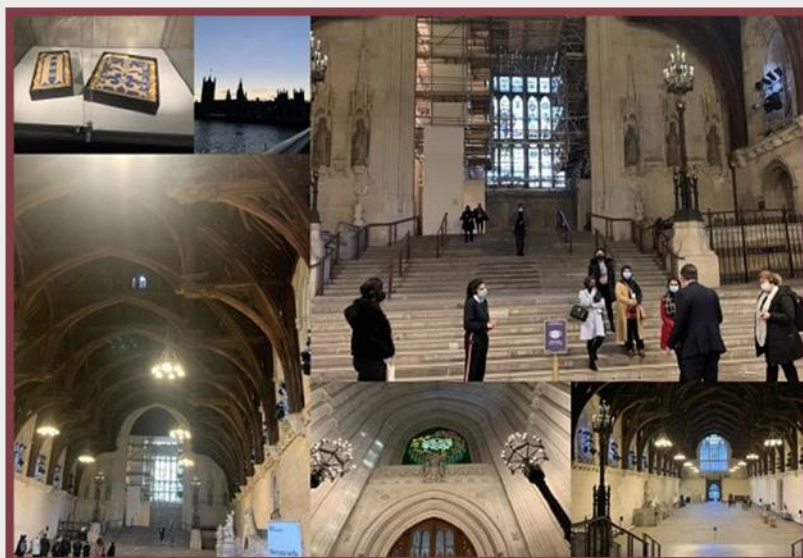
Update from Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training

On behalf of the CECOS College London and Level the 5 Diploma in Education and Training Staff, we would like to thank all the students who have chosen to study with us. We are very fortunate to share that many of our HNC/HND Business students had chosen to pursue the DET with us and have decided to continue to study with us in the new academic year of 2021-2022.

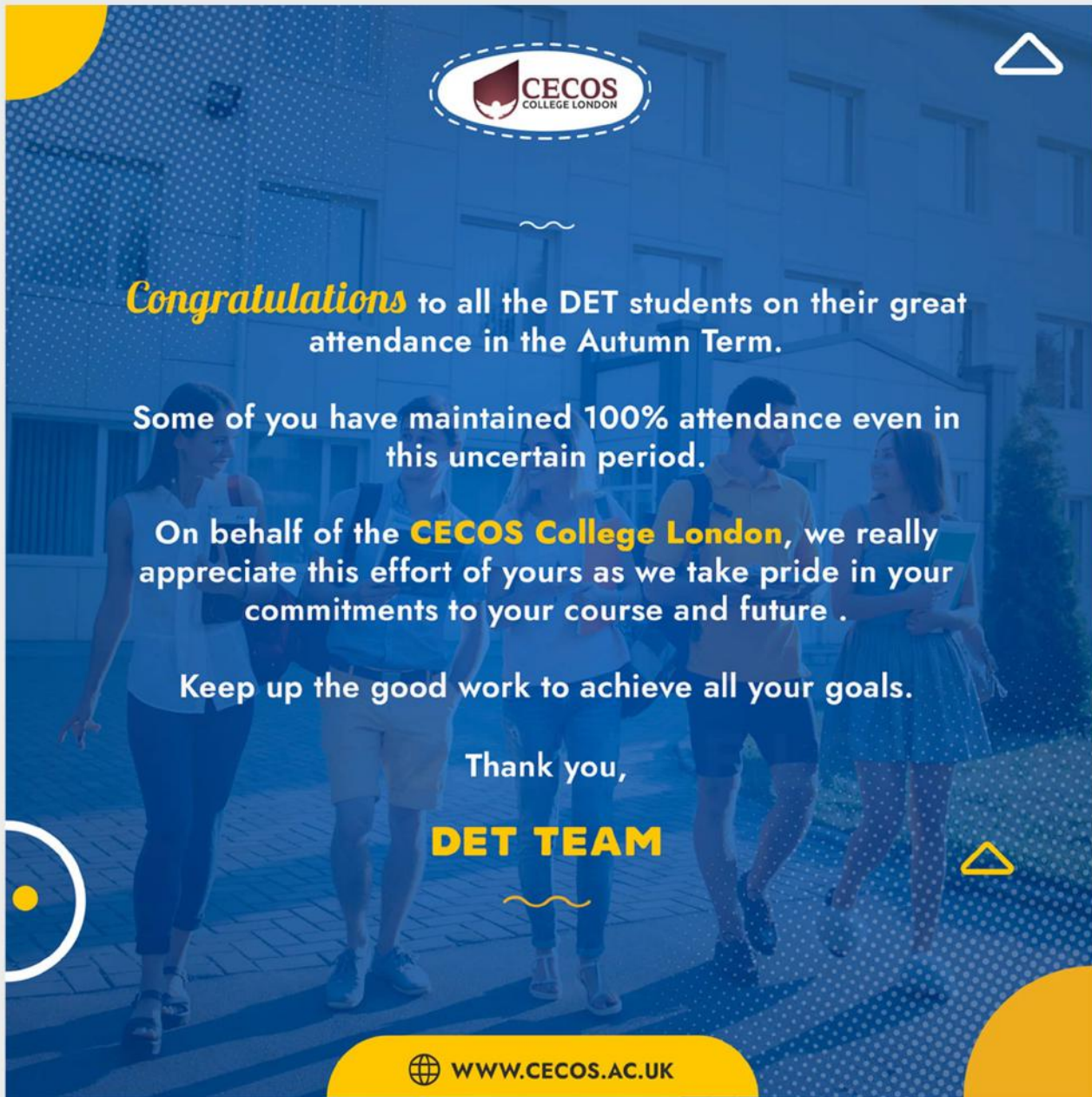
The teaching and administration team of the programme specifically take pride in helping and supporting students' attendance, motivation, and academic perseverance. The staff have adopted many strategies to help students introducing a mentor-mentee programme for new staff, introducing formative feedback through electronic media, organising meetings with student representatives, involving the representatives to have their voices heard in some core programme meetings, adapting the timetable to give more flexibility to the students and accommodating their learning needs for the course.

The team received messages of appreciation from recent graduates. One of the current students narrates *"I am doing Diploma in Education and Training (DET) level 5 but before doing this I already completed my HNC, HND and BA Top Up in Business Management with CECOS college. Basically, I am a business student and now doing DET was the biggest decision of my life. I was scared and confused that I don't know if I can do it but now this is my second term of DET and I can say this was one of the best decisions of my life and I am really happy. The first term was hard because as a business student DET is completely new for me but my teachers and DET team helped and supported me and continue to make my DET journey comfortably. I have the opportunity to learn about inclusion, lesson planning, assessment, as well as learning theories and also doing 100 hours voluntary teaching helps me to understand different ways of planning and delivering lectures and ways of making your lecture interesting and meet your student needs. After completing the course, anyone will be able to develop skills that would enhance their teaching and learning skills and also they will be able to teach in the lifelong learning sector. (Alia Khan, DET Sept 21 A, Term 2 student).*

As part of CECOS College London, the programme team continues to provide and promote opportunities for personal, professional and academic growth for students from all backgrounds through the enhanced teaching and learning. As the world is moving towards the implementation of 5G, DET programme provide IT workshops at all levels to help our students understand the need for digital literacy. To support the overall development and understanding of our students, the programme team arranged an educational trip to Houses of Parliament in October 2021. The trip was thoroughly enjoyed by the students with the majority of them confirming that they now know more about the culture and laws of the country after visiting the Houses of Parliament.



We as a College always celebrate students' success. Last term we celebrated the students who had maintained 100% attendance. A glimpse of such the Social Media post is as shown below.



As we continue our journey with our beloved students, the DET team truly believes that the students of CECOS College London will be torch bearers in their fields of expertise.



FE Update

Winter/Spring 2022



Tyne Housing Employability Programme

CECOS Principal, Mark Mabey, was delighted to attend a graduation ceremony for our Tyne Housing learners in Newcastle upon Tyne on the 7th February. This provision works with disadvantaged learners to enhance knowledge and skills within employability, engagement, progression, budgeting and nutrition. Mark passed out certificates in Employability L1 and Nutrition L2 to the successful learners before hearing more about their personal experiences.



Growing in Bradford

As our FE provision continues to grow in the West Yorkshire sub-region we have developed an excellent relationship with two vital community groups. Firstly, the Millan Centre where we offer Functional Skills, Mental Health Awareness and Autism Awareness which complements the vital services already offered. The Millan Centre was established in 1988 as an educational, social and health support venue for women and girls within this area of Bradford.

We had the privilege of meeting the chairperson of the committee, Elizabeth Hellmich, on the 9th February. She very kindly gave Mark a tour of the building and spoke in great detail about the needs of women and girls within the Manningham and Heaton areas of the City.

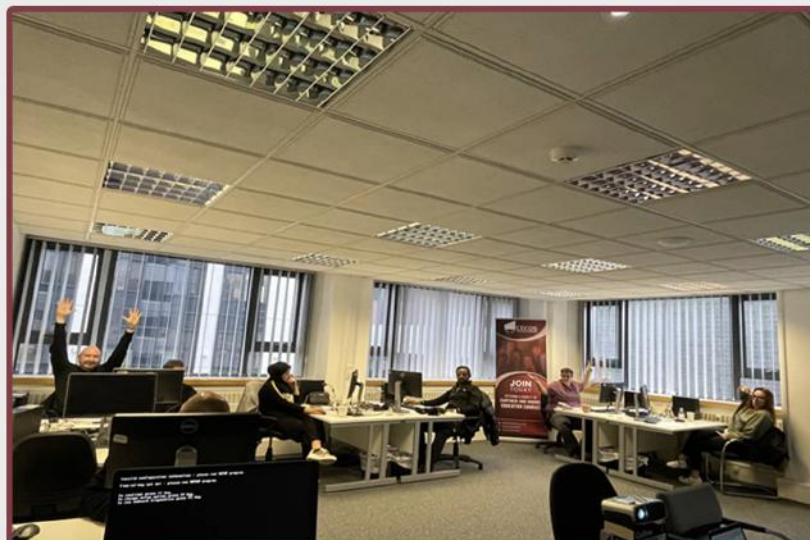


Secondly, The Karmand Centre where we currently deliver functional skills and are hoping to add Essential Digital IT to our offer. This is a long established community organisation that offers a wide range of support and guidance to local residents. On the 9th February Mark was able to meet our functional skills learners before enjoying a delicious lunch that was very kindly provided by the centre team.



Off the mark in Leeds

Late in 2021 we commenced a partnership relationship with Reed to offer education course to participants on their JETS provision. This is a DWP programme delivered by Reed in West Yorkshire and works with claimants who have been unemployed for six months plus. As we move into a post pandemic era this provision is vital in supporting the long term unemployed to upskill and move closer to the Labour market. We commenced a functional skills cohort from our Leeds centre before Christmas and an Essential Digital Skills group came on board in February.



Partnership News

In the month of January New College Swindon came for a visit. A big thank you to Lynne Plested Vice Principal Curriculum, Nicola Pedley HE Manager and Gillian Stopka HN Lead for Business of New College Swindon for visiting us and meeting with our students.



January also marked another stakeholder visit as the lovely Step Ahead came to see our London delivery where they met learners and staff members. Thank you to Tim and Sean from Step Ahead for attending our London campus and providing us with the opportunity to showcase the great work undertaken by our students.



The New Year also marked a visit from Staffordshire University and this time they went to our new Birmingham campus. We are delighted to confirm that this new campus was approved for delivery and enables our students to study the BA Hons in Business Management and Sustainability with our University partner. We had further good news from our University partner, as we were approved for our 4-year programme in Business Management and Sustainability. This provides our students with the opportunity to start their degree programme at the foundation level.



Staff in the Spotlight *Sadia Asad*

What is your job role in CECOS College and what is a typical day for you?

I am working in the capacity of Academic Administrator at Cecos College, London. My work is all about coordination and I have faith in myself. A typical day for me at Cecos is my morning journey, which begins with a lovely commute under the stars and beholding an exquisite sunrise on my way here.

What is the one thing you cannot resist?

I struggle keeping my eyes away from stationary. Whenever I visit a shop that sells it I end up buying something, and I make sure I do that quite often.

What is your greatest fear?

My greatest fear is dying while laughing. Ha, Ha, Ha!

Where is your favourite place to be?

My favourite place is the island nation of Southern Asia Maldives. It is an archipelago located in the Indian Ocean.

Where is the best place you've travelled to and why?

The best place I visited is Haram, the Kaabah. It's a place of immense tranquillity, harmony and it makes you feel at liberty from all uncertainties.

What would you do (for a career) if you weren't doing this?

I would have been a great cardiologist but as it is, believe life has got all those twists and turns.

Any favourite line from a movie?

There are many inspirational quotes that have changed my thoughts and life; one of them is from The A-Team movie (2010). It states "I love it when a plan comes together".

If you could choose anyone, who would you pick as your mentor?

I absolutely adore the aura, calmness, warmth and empowerment in Amal Clooney, and I think I would like to choose her as my mentor.

If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?

If I could learn to do anything, I would pick up sky-diving and Salsa.

What are 3 words you'd use to describe CECOS College?

Inspirational, irreplaceable and a growing experience.

If you won the lottery, what is the first thing you would do?

If I won a lottery the first thing I would do is purchase an island and get a Wi-Fi life there.

What music is on your iPhone/Android phone?

I have all types of melodies but primarily pop and folk & Sufi music.

What chore do you absolutely hate doing?

I just dislike cleaning toilets.

If you could meet anyone, living or dead, who would you meet?

I would really like to meet Einstein as I am really curious about his brain activity.



Student in the Spotlight *Nataliya Fileva*

1. Tell us about the greatest obstacle you've overcome.

One of the biggest obstacles that I have managed to overcome is years of depression.

2. What has been the happiest and proudest moment of your life?

Generally, my kids are my pride and joy and what makes me happy.

One of my proudest moments was when my son had his work published in a book for young writers.

3. How do you define success?

For me, success means being at peace with myself, being happy, loving and loved, and most importantly, having no fears.

4. What is your secret to your College success?

Paying attention, managing time by starting assignments early, and studying.

5. Which book would you like to recommend?

I love reading, so it is hard to pick only one, but some of my favourites are: "Selling the Invisible" by Harry Beckwith, "The Psychology of Money" by Morgan Housel and "It's Not How Good You Are, It's How Good You Want To Be" by Paul Arden

6. What is your favourite quote?

"Small minds discuss people; average minds discuss events; great minds discuss ideas." by Eleanor Roosevelt.

7. What will people be surprised to know about you?

That I speak four languages, I've studied programming, and I've played professional basketball.

8. What are your hobbies?

Reading, music, and movies.

9. What inspired you to pursue your degree in business?

Wanting to run my own business one day.

10. What do you aim to achieve in life?

I am still deciding on that.

11. What is a cause you are passionate about?

Anything that genuinely helps people. Two of my favourite organisations are Angels for Bulgaria and Kiva.

12. What is your favourite spot on campus and why?

I don't have one, as I've only been to campus a handful of times.

13. What has been your greatest challenge as part of your studies?

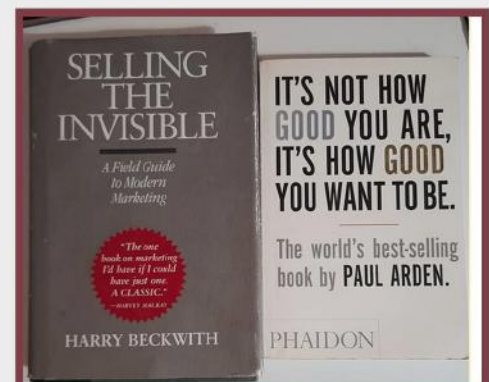
One of the hardest things is time management and balancing my studies with my personal life.

14. What have you learned from other students?

How to have a good time and a great laugh, as well as how to help each other not only with studies but with personal issues too. My group is truly amazing.

15. What advice do you have for incoming students?

Work smart, not hard!



AT CECOS COLLEGE WE ARE ALWAYS READY TO LISTEN TO OUR STUDENTS AND TO RESPOND TO THEIR REQUESTS AND COMMENTS IN ORDER TO MAKE THE COLLEGE A BETTER PLACE TO STUDY AND TO SUCCEED.



YOU SAID:

I would love to do a course, but I work. Can I fit a course in around my work commitments?

I have been recently made redundant, how can you help?

I want to be able to learn from home, but I have childcare problems, how can you help me?

WE DID:

At CECOS College we are flexible and offer courses across the week including on Saturdays and Sundays.

We have advisors who can help you access further funding to support access to shorter courses and qualifications.

We have developed online resources and delivery using zoom and offer sessions at different times of the day and evening.



Let us know what you would like to say whether you are in Birmingham, London, Luton, Leeds, Newcastle or any other location by contacting newsletter@cecos.ac.uk

Student Voice

Feedback from end of module forms have also let us know that students would like:

Students would like:

1. More interactive lessons including class activities, animated videos and documentaries as well as use of online quizzes and surveys.
2. To work in break-out groups with other students who have the same first language as themselves.
3. All students to converse in English so that no one feels excluded.
4. More enhanced communication between lecturers who teach the same groups so that lectures complement each other.
5. More explanation of assignment briefs and how learning outcomes can be met.

CECOS College will:

- a. Undertake teaching observations to encourage lecturers to include more activities as part of their teaching as well as videos and quizzes to check students have understood the content of the session.
- b. Encourage students to communicate in English to ensure no students feel excluded.
- c. Ask staff to actively remind students that they should only speak in English whilst in class.
- d. Ensure lecturers take part in programme meetings to monitor student progress and to review teaching each term. Module leaders will be encouraged to hold meetings with all lecturers teaching the same module at least twice per term.
- e. Ask Programme Managers to ensure additional explanation of assignment briefs and evidence requirements to be provided for each module.



And in other Campus News...



It's a 'Wednesday Well Done' to Shannon who ensured that 28 learners turned up to the first class of the new functional skills cohort.

Her perseverance and raw energy ensured learners had a great start to their learner journey.

There was a small reward from CECOS College for Shannon. Enjoy!



It was team Birmingham's turn to go out and have a good time as they celebrated the recent admissions with a night out.



As we bid farewell to Louise from our Newcastle campus, her learners gave her a goodbye birthday surprise.



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