

16<sup>th</sup> March 2016

## **Boost funding to post-16 education to secure future generation of entrepreneurs**

*ABE responds to Budget 2016*

A £1.5 billion boost to the education budget in today's Budget from chancellor George Osborne, along with a pledge to improve financial and social support for those in further education, has been welcomed by global non-profit organisation the Association of Business Executives (ABE). However, funding for further education (FE) still falls short and risks impacting the UK's ability to create entrepreneurs, start-ups and jobs, both in local areas, and nationally.

Gareth Robinson, CEO of ABE, suggests that following five years of further education budget cuts and the threat of college closures nationwide, now is the time to use the additional money to invest in business-focused vocational courses and increase support for the next generation of employers and employees.

He said: "Post-16 education is the cornerstone for people who either eventually want to find a job, or be part of our economic growth and create them instead. There is a serious lack of momentum in support from government to create entrepreneurs, instead young people are taught to look for jobs instead of how to create them. The focus on academia puts pressure on unemployment figures, leaving people with few of the skills required to start and grow a successful business, or run one. By increasing the support for vocational learning we also begin to address the chronic white collar skills shortages so well documented in industry."

Further education institutions, including sixth form colleges, are currently undergoing area provision reviews, [due to be completed in March 2017](#), preceding a proposed re-structuring of the sector. Funding for the sector has been volatile with the government only pledging to [protect it from further cuts](#) in November 2015.

Robinson continued: "The additional education budget is indeed encouraging, but it is by-and-large not enough to support the changes that really need to happen in the further education sector."

**- ENDS -**

**About The Association of Business Executives (ABE)**

ABE is a not-for-profit awarding body accredited by Ofqual. Established in 1973, it has an international footprint with key markets in the UK, Africa, the Caribbean, SE Asia and China. ABE develops business and management Diploma qualifications at QCF Levels 4-7. Its qualifications provide progression routes to Bachelors degree and Masters programmes worldwide.

[www.abeuk.com](http://www.abeuk.com)

**Editorial contacts**

Joanna Newsome / Sean Hand

Tel: 020 7388 9988

Email: [newsome@spreckley.co.uk](mailto:newsome@spreckley.co.uk) / [hand@spreckley.co.uk](mailto:hand@spreckley.co.uk)