



Dear colleagues

I thought I would consider the new buzz word, **nudge**, which has been around for a couple of years, but just recently hit the headlines through the publication of today's Public Health white paper. The concept was developed by Richard Thaler the economist in his book: '*Nudge: improving decision making in health, wealth and happiness*'. It suggests that our behaviour can be influenced positively without resort to compulsion – otherwise known as libertarian paternalism. Nudgers are paternalistic, because they want to make life better for people, but they are libertarians too – they don't like compulsion. According to this view, we are less Mr. Spock than Homer Simpson and can do with a bit of help - what Thaler terms a 'nudge' - to save more, eat more healthily and do all the other things that we know we should.

It strikes me that we have some considerable expertise in the nudge approach; many of our learners need to be nudged towards more positive lifestyles or behaviour patterns and I guess we know only too well that compulsion is not a successful long term strategy. So I wonder if we can apply our skills here to some of the wider challenges we face. Consider the following:

Our research suggests, for instance, that ice cream shoppers in grocery stores look at the brand first, flavor second, and price last. Organizing supermarket aisles according to way consumers prefer to buy specific products makes customers both happier *and* less likely to base their purchase decisions on price—allowing retailers to sell higher-priced, higher-margin products. (This explains why aisles are rarely organized by price.) For thermostats, by contrast, people generally start with price, then function, and finally brand. The merchandise layout should therefore be quite different.

Clearly, what we are doing is about people rather than products, but we need to position ourselves to be, like ice cream, considered first on the basis of brand (**quality**), then flavour (**specialism and expertise**) and finally price (**value for money**). Not the perfect analogy, I know – especially on a day when thermostats are far more essential than ice cream - but I hope it makes a bit of sense.

I hope that wherever possible you have managed to enjoy the snow and that it has not made things too difficult for staff and learners where you are.

Best wishes

Alison

Inspections

I know a number of you have received the call already this term, and generally I get to hear about it. However, it is no longer possible to find inspection reports by date order on the Ofsted website, so it would be very helpful if you could let me know when they are scheduled. In the meantime, good luck to those of you with inspections looming!

Alison

Natspec annual conference 2011

I just wanted to make sure you have all got the dates for next year's major event in your diary – and no, I don't mean April 29th. The Natspec annual conference will be on Tuesday and Wednesday **May 17th and 18th** at the Aston Business School in Birmingham. I know we have used this venue a few times already, but the evaluations indicate that this is clearly the preferred venue, with London a second (but far more expensive) choice. We have negotiated with Aston to keep prices down, bearing in mind current financial constraints.

I am beginning to consider the programme and would welcome any offers from you to run a session on any aspect of the innovative, creative, high or low tech, learner centred, great outcomes work you are doing. We hope to have an opportunity for some shorter, showcase type sessions as well as more in-depth workshops.

I'd also like to know what you want to hear about; there are obvious candidates, such as the Green paper, but I'd be keen to hear from you with your ideas about the key issues.

Many thanks

Alison

ITT grants

A member college recently enquired about ITT grants, which are available from IfL, but for which it would appear ISC's are not eligible. I raised this with their CEO Toni Fazaeli, and I am very grateful for the speed with which she followed it up. It would appear to be correct that ISC's cannot get this grant unless they have some SFA funded provision, such as apprenticeships. IfL is continuing to pursue this on our behalf with BIS and I will keep you informed, but their initial response is below. Annette West deals with this aspect of their work; she is aware of the issues and will follow up individual enquiries, please send these to the dedicated address for the funding for Initial Teacher Training queries which is fitt@ifl.ac.uk where Annette will pick them up.

IfL response:

In terms of the agreement we have with BIS for administering the ITT grant, we work within a definition of eligible providers written by colleagues in the Department:

Further education colleges covered by statutory instrument number 2264 (The Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2007) and other learning providers in receipt of Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funding are able to apply for the Initial Teacher Training grant for eligible staff. In making a claim it is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that they are a regulated further education college or are in receipt of SFA funding and, in the case of the latter, that the eligible employees are teaching on SFA funded provision. If an incorrect or invalid claim for funding is made, the employer will be required to pay back the full amount to IfL.

In addition we have some additional support for colleges and other providers on our website:

<http://www.ifl.ac.uk/employers/funding-for-itt/funding-for-itt-fags>

<http://www.ifl.ac.uk/cpd/supporting-new-teachers-grants-for-initial-teacher-training>

JISC TechDis CMALT Independent Specialist Colleges' Initiative – places still available!

The JISC TechDis Service sees it as a priority to build on previous LSC funding initiatives for ISCs. As part of our strategy the Service is keen to consolidate previous initiatives and support the development of staff in terms of their impact on learners. For this reason we are delighted to offer technicians and those working closely with In-Folio in ISCs the opportunity to engage in a new CMALT initiative. We have a good cohort already so come along and join us!

CMALT is Certified Membership of the Association for Learning Technology, a national, cross-sector certification scheme run by ALT since 2005. Registering for CMALT involves the creation and peer assessment of a portfolio of evidence against a set of core and specialist options defined as central to the role of someone with learning technology as part of their professional role. Further Information on the initiative can be found at http://www.alt.ac.uk/docs/cmalt_prospectus_v5_2010.pdf

As part of the initiative eligible candidates are entitled to register for CMALT on payment of Certification Fee of £25 only, reduced from its usual £95.00. JISC Techdis will contribute the remainder.

The registration form is downloadable from www.alt.ac.uk/cmalt.html

For further information please contact admin@techdis.ac.uk

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'Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, that's why most people don't recognize them.'
Ann Landers

Significant Progress at Inspection – the role of technology **A Programme of workshops via Instant Presenter**

JISC TechDis and Natspec are delighted to announce the following programme of events to be held remotely via Instant Presenter over the next three months.

The programme consists of the workshop presentations featured at the Natspec/JISC TechDis conference on November 8th 2010 - Significant Progress at Inspection - the role of technology. The programme in this format enables extended sessions so there will be new information and opportunities for discussion. In other words if you were at the original presentations you are more than welcome to attend these as well!

In general the sessions are suitable for a wide audience (except for the Strategic Planning which is more relevant to managers). We really hope that this programme will enable participants who cannot easily attend a f2f meeting to engage with and share in all the good practice that is going on and was very well evidenced at the November 8th conference.

Friday 10th December 2010 - 3 to 4.30 pm. Inclusive learning in practice – Alistair McNaught (JISC TechDis).

Friday 7th January 2011 – 3 to 4.30 pm. CPD (CMALT – Shirley Evans, JISC TechDis; Maren Deepwell, ALT and Matt Lee, Pengwern College).

Thursday 20th January 2011– 3 to 4.30 pm. Strategic Planning (Rohan Slaughter, Beaumont College and John Burke, JISC InfoNet)

Friday 4th February 2011 – 3 to 4.30 pm. e-Safety (Dawn Green, Landmarks College; Julia Taylor, RSC SW; Sally Warr, Linkage College).

Friday 4th March 2011 - 3 to 4.30 pm. Transition (In-Folio – Matt Harrison, Portland College and Andy Minnion, Rix Centre).

Accessing Instant Presenter – the session will be open 15 minutes before the start of the workshop. Please test your sound when you enter the session

To enter the meeting you will need to open the following URL in your web browser
<http://tinyurl.com/368wqgu>

The minimum requirements to attend fully interactive meetings using InstantPresenter is: -

Microsoft Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari or Chrome

JavaScript and cookies enabled in the browser

Broadband connection

Webcam and microphone for Presenters and computer speakers for Attendees. Input from attendees will normally be limited to the chat pane due to bandwidth issues.

If you require any further information or support please contact admin@techdis.ac.uk

We look forward to seeing you there!

Ten new **Quick Reads** will be published on World Book Day next year, 3 March 2011. GALAXY®, sponsors of the GALAXY® National Book Awards 2010, have also announced that they are teaming up with Quick Reads to promote the books to millions of households.

The [ten new Quick Reads for 2011](#) include stories from the world Number One James Patterson, leading light of Irish novelists, Sheila O'Flanagan, rising star Linwood Barclay and ex-Python, Terry Jones.

Now in their sixth year, Quick Reads have introduced hundreds of thousands of people to the joys of reading by providing short, beautifully written books by bestselling writers and celebrities.

[Read more on this news story](#)

Nominate inspirational learners for national awards

Nominations are now open for the 20th Adult Learners' Week Awards 2011, giving you the chance to give someone you know - a friend, a relative, a colleague or someone you teach – the recognition they deserve for their outstanding learning achievements.

Every year, NIACE receives around 1,500 nominations from colleges, workplaces and other adult education providers and 2011 will be extra special as it is the 20th Adult Learners' Week (14 - 20 May 2011).

Adult Learners' Week Awards recognise extraordinary individuals who have had inspirational learning journeys that have helped them transform their lives, often beyond what they ever thought was possible. The Awards are also given to learning projects that give adults the opportunity to learn and improve their lives. The impact from winning an award is demonstrated by some of this year's winners:

[Read more on this news story](#)

5th Annual **NEET** Conference 2011
working with NEET groups in a climate of austerity

Wednesday 9th February 2011, Austin Court, Birmingham City Centre

**Early Bird Booking Offer - 10% Discount off Published Rates
for all bookings received before 5pm on 23rd December 2010**

[< Click Here For More Information >](#)

Overview

Despite an on-going focus of Government policy and funding, the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) has remained a huge challenge. The most recent statistics showing that 1,026,000 (17.1 per cent) of young people aged between 16 and 24 nationwide were classified as NEET during the third quarter of 2010, slightly down on the equivalent period last year, but still 'too high'. The coalition government has outlined plans to "Get Britain working"; but in the current climate of austerity and at a time when there is increasing competition for jobs, the solution is not going to be easy.

Due to the success of our previous NEET Conferences held in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 this follow-on Fifth Annual National conference will bring together leading Government, educational and sector experts, to share and explore fresh approaches, latest research, current policy and good practice. The day will use a blend of plenary sessions and interactive workshops to bring out these issues.

The speakers and approaches include: Dr Ian Finlay, the chairman, outlining preventative measures; a policy update from Oly Newton from DfE; Entrepreneurship the missing E in NEET; the relationship with the Big Society and other case studies covering feedback from successful projects and positive interventions helping to define what works in terms of tackling NEET's.

The Conference will be Chaired by Dr Ian Finlay, Research Fellow in the Department of Education at the University of Oxford.

[< View Programme >](#)

Fees, Discounts & How to Book

Standard Delegate Fees:

£259.00 + VAT for a first delegate

£199.00 + VAT per head for second or subsequent delegates from the same organisation

£199.00 + VAT for Small Charitable/Voluntary Organisations (Turnover <£1m)

Early Booking Fees (10% Discount): **VALID UNTIL 5PM 23/12/10**

£233.10 + VAT for a first delegate

£179.10 + VAT per head for second or subsequent delegates from the same organisation

£179.10 + VAT for Charitable/voluntary Organisations (Turnover <£1m)

To Book a Place Please Follow the Link Below and Follow the Online Booking Instructions

[< BOOK NOW >](#)

There is a whole bunch of new websites on [Dobson's Choice](#) - so people with learning disabilities can find out more information by themselves.

We have added:

- Mencap's Talk Learning Disability Site - Click the People Button
- Wild Bunch website - Click the People Button
- Moving on up website - Click the Services Button
- The Specials Website - Click the People Button
- BBC Children in need - Click the Entertainment Button
- and a whole new section with lots of new links about football - Click the Sport Button and then Football Button.

Dobson's Choice is designed for people who can't read and it will help them to find local information, local news, local services, and lots of other interesting information from around Britain and the world.

We are currently demonstrating Dobson's Choice at Partnership Board Meetings and with groups of people with learning disabilities. Invite us to come to your board, conference or management group to demonstrate how easy it is for people with learning disability to get information by themselves. email us on dobson@dobsonschoice.co.uk

We want your Local Council to set it up in your area. They could save money with [Dobson's Choice](#) because people could find information by themselves. People could look for services that are available locally on their own.

With [Dobson's Choice](#) your council would be able to communicate with people with learning disabilities - giving them up-to-date information, news and 'What's On'.

Ask your local council to get [Dobson's Choice](#) in your area. [Councils can click here to get more information.\(pdf\)](#)

Phone Martin Dobson on 0845 094 6051 or Catherine Titherington on 01772 601853 to find out more.

We are looking for more websites that are accessible to people with learning disabilities, or that have information for people with learning disabilities.

[Email us](#) with sites that you know about, or join our [Facebook group](#). We are wanting to use this Facebook group to.. discuss new websites that are good for people with learning disabilities and..

features or designs that you think help people with learning disabilities to understand the site.

Encourage someone with learning difficulties to have a go, and let us know how they get on.

Make a link on your desk top so that people with learning difficulties can get to the site quickly and easily.

[Let us know what web sites they have found.](#)

We will be constantly making changes and improvements, and we will be adding new websites, so it's always worth having a look at what's going on.

[If you have been sent this email by a colleague and you want to get our news directly - please click here to see our sign up form](#)

Dobson's Choice is a project of [Easy-Read-Online Limited](#)

Do you work for an Educational Trust accommodating students with local families?

Most Educational Trusts accommodating people in family homes have been resigned to the fact that these homes have to be regulated as 'care homes', even though this runs counter to the ethos of their service.

But there is another way.

Shared Lives is an established and highly successful model - a partnership between a local agency (a Shared Lives Scheme) and local people (Shared Lives Carers).The Scheme is regulated rather than the homes and that frees people to live ordinary lives in normal family homes, and at the same time get full access to their rightful benefits.

Transforming regulated care home accommodation into Shared Lives arrangements means that people can live in a safe, high quality home without the bureaucracy that comes with care home regulation. Regulation of the Scheme means that unnecessary regulations and red tape are swept aside, and normal living can flourish.

And because people can access benefits denied to people living in regulated care homes they have greater financial independence. What's more the net cost of their service is reduced by as much as £6,500 per person per year.

Association of National Specialist Colleges (NATSPEC), a company limited by guarantee.

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Registered office: Derwen College, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 3JA

Shared Lives fits better with the philosophy of organisations caring about community and is cost effective for the funder.

Community Catalysts is a social enterprise and a wholly owned subsidiary of NAAPS UK, a charity representing and supporting Shared Lives. We are currently helping one Educational Trust to transform their regulated care home accommodation into Shared Lives arrangements. Their CEO and we thought other Education Trusts might be interested in knowing more about this approach.

If you would like to know more contact me Sian Lockwood on sian.lockwood@communitycatalysts.co.uk or telephone 01423 790126

Request for help

We're currently implementing a new MIS system, Databridge. I need to put a detailed project plan together (preferably in MS Project) and I am hoping there is a Natspec college out there with a project plan I could adapt for this purpose. Please contact me if you can help

Many thanks

Dean Carey
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BIS - FE & Skills e-newsletter

- [Cable and Hayes launch Skills Strategy and Investment Strategy](#)
- [Hayes outlines crucial role of colleges](#)
- [Becta launches ICT Services Framework for schools and FE](#)
- [UK Squad for Worldskills 2011 announced](#)
- [Get involved in Apprenticeship Week, 7-11 February 2011](#)
- [John Hayes calls for a new arts and crafts movement](#)
- [Online basics for adults](#)

LSIS Equality & Diversity events and programmes

NEW - Equality and Diversity - mainstreaming into the curriculum

Equality and Diversity in the Curriculum is a one day workshop for those who wish to develop the confidence and skills to address the need for equality and diversity issues to be embedded in the design and delivery of the curriculum. The workshop is delivered as two programmes, one for FE colleges, sixth form colleges and ACL providers on **25 January** in Manchester and another for WBL providers on **26 January** in London. Find out more [here](#).

Deaf/deaf/hearing impaired learners project

Please be on the look out for further information about our Learner Voice event (event shaped and led solely by learners on 17th of March 2011). Further details will be available in December. Learners from various institutions and colleagues have worked and continue to work very hard with LSIS to develop this event. The learners involved are working hard to deliver an interactive, engaging as well as inspirational event.

Equality and Diversity: Prepared for Inspection?

Sessions aimed at supporting providers improve organisational practices around E&D, enabling them to make a real difference to the experiences of learners, staff and stakeholders.

For further details visit the LSIS [website](#).

Please note that additional sessions will be held at EMFEC on **5 January** and at Doncaster GTI on **24 February** (work based learning provider).

CMI Level 6 qualification

This four-day programme, running on 23 - 24 February (days 1 and 2) and 15 -16 March (days 3 and 4), is designed to help participants evaluate their organisation's commitment and application to equality and diversity, and to identify organisational and personal responsibilities and liabilities under equality legislation and/or codes of practice. Find out more [here](#).

Promoting Transgender Equality - 7th Strand

A special one day event will be held at EMFEC in the East Midlands on 17 January. For further information and details of how to book visit the LSIS [website](#).

Black Leadership Initiative (BLI)

The [BLI](#) part of the Network for Black Professionals is funded by LSIS to deliver career development programmes and activities for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff in the sector. [Read more](#) about the recommendations made by the Commission for Black Staff in Further Education and find out how to book [here](#).

Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme

The Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme promotes a philosophy based on active learning and participation and a willingness to tackle controversial issues.

Find out more [here](#).

Continuing Professional Development Programme for disabled staff in FE

LSIS have commissioned NIACE to develop a career development programme for disabled staff working in FE. The project is at an interesting phase, with partnerships now established in the regions to ensure that we reach as many disabled staff who would benefit fully from the programme.

If you wish to be involved or find out more contact margaret.adjaye@lsis.org.uk.

Member news

Following the retirement of Anne Jordan as Principal of Dawn House Specialist School, welcome to the new Principal, Angela Child

Natspec endorsements

Events or consultants advertised in this bulletin are not necessarily endorsed by Natspec. Individual colleges or staff who are asked to present on behalf of Natspec, please check with a member of the Board of Directors before committing yourself to an event.

Natspec website

Any problems accessing the Principal's forum contact Julian: webmaster@jewelion.com

Please let us have any news, events or job vacancies that you want placing on the website.

www.natspec.org.uk

Natspec Directory

To request a Natspec directory please contact:

Queen Alexandra College

0121 428 5050

allformats@qac.ac.uk

Derwen College

01691 661234

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Andrew Harris

November 2010

