

Press Release

Local MP asks Prime Minister to Support Local College

Sarah Champion, Labour MP for Rotherham, challenged the Prime Minister at Question Time about the government's support for young people.

After hearing that Rotherham College of Arts and Technology may face a reduction in the number of 16-18 students it can recruit in 2013-14, Sarah decided to support the local young people and college.

The proposed cut would reduce the College's ability to support additional unemployed (NEET) young people by being able to offer them appropriate courses starting at different points in the academic year.

The courses would help the young people improve their work skills, employability and English and Maths abilities.

Sarah Champion MP asked David Cameron:

"Rotherham College of Arts and Technology has just had a cut of 280 places for 16 to 18-year-olds. That is a 10% cut, despite Rotherham being a youth unemployment hot spot. With rising youth unemployment and a flat lining economy, why is the Prime Minister denying the young people of Rotherham an education? Will he explain why he is cutting taxes for millionaires while young people have no future?"

The Prime Ministers response:

"Let me just tell the hon. Lady that in her region, employment is up by 21,000 this quarter, and by 74,000 since the election. We have taken 192,000 people in her region out of tax altogether, and youth unemployment has fallen since the election."

Rotherham College of Arts and Technology are currently appealing against the reduction in student numbers for the College's 13/14 allocation. Sarah Champion will be supporting the College's appeal and efforts to decrease youth unemployment, which is currently 14.7% in Rotherham - more than twice the national average.

Gill Alton, Principal and Chief Executive of Rotherham College said:

“The College will continue to recruit learners to start in September 2013 and with the current allocation will be able to offer all 16-18 learners applying for full-time courses a place. However our ability to provide support with training and education to several hundred further unemployed and NEET youngsters during the year could be compromised, though we will strive to avoid this.

“The College will continue to be committed to provide educational opportunities for the local community including young people who require additional support to gain employment. We hope through the excellent work the College does for the young people of Rotherham and wider community our appeal is won and that our allocation of places is reflective of this.”

For further information on courses and apprenticeships available at Rotherham College of Arts and Technology contact Student Services on 08080 722777, email info@rotherham.ac.uk or visit www.rotherham.ac.uk.

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Notes to editors

- We offer a rich mix of full-time and part-time college courses as well as apprenticeships and degrees, plus bespoke courses delivered in the community.
- We have excellent links with over 600 local private and public sector employers.
- Over 400 courses available.
- We encourage all of our students, of every age, to achieve their full potential. Our goal is also to meet the training needs of local employers, and so we continually develop our offering to address new industries and emerging needs in the workplace.

For more information please contact Carly Jones by telephone on 01909 559 269 or by email at cjones@rotherham.ac.uk