

News story: New rail academy to train 500 apprentices opened by Transport Secretary

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling today (October 4 2017) opened a new north-west rail academy which is due to train 500 apprentices over the next 5 years.

Thousands of extra rail apprentices will be needed in the coming years as the network grows rapidly, and the government is investing £1 billion in the Great North Rail Project up until 2020.

The Alstom Academy for Rail in Widnes, Cheshire, is due to take on 20 new apprentices this autumn, and offer further 30 apprenticeship places to current Alstom staff. The numbers will rise to 135 by 2021.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Our rail network is growing and I have been clear we will need thousands more people working in the sector in the years ahead.

I'm delighted to open Alstom's top class new Rail Academy will help train up the next generation of talent.

We are investing £13 billion in transport across the north and there are some great, rewarding careers working on our railways.

The Alstom Academy for Rail will be giving young people and mature employees a rounded education and will work with other education providers to deliver its apprenticeship programs. Students will take engineering classes at local colleges such as Riverside College and then learn rail specific skills at the academy.

Nick Crossfield, Managing Director at Alstom UK & Ireland, said:

Today we celebrate a fantastic new industrial facility for the UK, and even more importantly, our first intake of new apprentices.

In year one the Alstom Academy for Rail will train 20 apprentices, 5 of whom have been taken on to help repaint the iconic Pendolino trains right here in Widnes.

It is a particularly proud moment for us to welcome the Secretary of State to see our progress on that project, because it demonstrates how transport contracts can deliver real jobs and training on the ground.

Not just creating a better railway, but also building a new generation of highly skilled railway engineers.

The training that students undertake will include safety and maintenance of vehicles such as Alstom's Pendolino trains which are used on the West Coast Mainline, or the Citadis trams that are used in Nottingham.

Alongside the academy, Alstom are repainting 56 Pendolino trains next to the training academy in their train modernisation facility, for use by Virgin on the West Coast Main Line.

The team is 80-strong and includes 5 new apprentices who will work on the project.

[News story: Civil news: avoiding case outcome delays and speedier payments](#)

Remember to avoid repeating actions when submitting claims in CCMS as this could lead to a delay in your payment being processed.

Duplicate outcomes

You should submit all the case outcomes in CCMS for all proceedings covered by the legal aid certificate before preparing your final bill.

If you submit further or duplicate case outcomes there is likely to be a delay in payment of any claim. This is because the case outcomes need to be processed before the claim.

Case outcomes and claims cannot be dealt with at the same time because they are separate processes in CCMS.

The system will not release your claim for processing until all case outcomes have been dealt with, including any duplicate case outcomes. So, unnecessary duplicates will cause delays.

Detailed guidance for submitting an outcome is available on the CCMS training website.

Repeated document uploads

Upload supporting documents once only when these are requested by CCMS.

Repeating a document upload means delays to the processing of your claim because:

- you are spending longer than necessary working in CCMS
- we are spending longer checking your documents

Detailed guidance is available on uploading documents into CCMS – see below.

Further information

[CCMS training website: closing cases and submitting bills](#) – guidance on completing outcomes and uploading documents for claims submitted in CCMS

[CCMS training website: navigation in CCMS](#)

[Civil processing dates](#)

[Submitting case 'outcomes' and prompt payments](#) – GOV.UK news story 9 March 2017

[News story: Government announces consultation on organ donation opt-out system](#)

The Prime Minister has announced the intention to launch a public consultation on increasing rates of organ donation. The proposals will include a new opt-out system for organ donation for England. The consultation will be launched by the end of the year.

In 2016 to 2018 there were 1,169 deceased organ donors and 3,293 transplants in England. While this was the highest ever rate of organ donation, there are still more people waiting for transplants than there are organs available. It means some people die before a suitable organ becomes available.

There are particularly long waiting times for those in black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. Consent rates for organ donation are also low in these communities, at around 35% compared to 66% in the white population.

Under the current system, anyone wishing to donate their organs has to opt in via the registration and organ donor card scheme run by NHS Blood and Transplant. A family member can also agree to the donation of organs if the person had not made their wishes known.

The consultation will outline ways to increase rates of organ donation and propose a new approach where every person would be deemed to have given consent to unless they choose to opt out. It will run for 12 weeks.

The Department of Health will seek views on:

- how government can increase rates of organ donation, particularly from BAME communities
- how the issue of consent should be managed within the NHS
- what role technology could play in helping people to discuss their preferences with family
- how opt-out could work in practice, what safeguards would be necessary, and how families could be supported

There is currently a severe shortage of suitable organs, with around 6,500 people currently on transplant waiting lists. Every day up to 3 people die while waiting for an organ to become available.

Last year just over 6% of deceased donors were from black and Asian communities, with people waiting on average 6 months longer for a kidney transplant than a white patient. Work is already underway to address the fact that consent rates for organ donation in these communities are lower than in the white population. This will continue alongside the consultation.

The government will carefully consult, listen and take account of the views of people from a diverse range of ethnic, religious and cultural communities when considering any changes to the law.

A model of 'presumed consent' was introduced in Wales in 2015 and the Scottish government announced its intention to introduce similar legislation earlier this year.

Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt said:

Too many people still wait too long for an urgent transplant and we must urgently address this. Just as most people would be willing to accept an organ if their life was at risk, most people would be willing to donate one to help save somebody else.

All these issues will be looked at in the consultation and we welcome all those with views to come forward with their contributions.

Full details of the consultation will be released later in the year. The government is seeking a wide range of opinions and asks anyone with a view to take part.

If you would like to receive updates on this issue please sign up to our [organ donation mailing list](#).

News story: WW2 fusilier's grave rededicated 74 years after his death

The World War 2 resting place of Edward Graham, a Soldier of 1st Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers, has finally been identified. A new headstone has been installed and a rededication service has taken place today (4 October 2017) in a moving ceremony at Catania War Cemetery, Sicily, attended by the twin sons Fusilier Graham never had the chance to meet.

The service was arranged by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) and led by the Regimental Chaplain of the Royal Irish Regiment.

In 1935, Edward joined the Territorial Army as a Private in the Durham Light Infantry and attended the annual camp for the following 3 years. He signed on for a further 2 years, but at the outbreak of the war, he joined full time on 1 September 1939. He was then promptly transferred to the Royal Irish Fusiliers and posted to Ballykinler in Northern Ireland. It was while he was stationed here that he met and married Eveline McBride.

On 22 November 1942, the regiment embarked for service overseas, going initially to North Africa and then on to land in Sicily 1943. During the advance through Sicily, near the small town of Maletto, Edward was posted missing on 13 August 1943, presumed killed in action. The final resting place of Fusilier Graham was unknown until recently.

Tragically, unknown to Edward, 22 days before his death, his wife gave birth to twin sons, Edward and Sydney. It was these sons who have been instrumental in finding the final resting place of their father.

How was Fusilier Graham identified?

Sons Edward Graham and Sydney Graham, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

The identity of the graves was discovered when one of Edward's sons, Edward Graham, began researching into the final resting place of his father. Further research was completed by the MOD's JCCC to corroborate the evidence and the identification of the "Unknown Soldier" grave was found to belong to Fusilier Edward Graham.

Sons Edward Graham and Sydney Graham, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Edward's son, Edward Graham, was able to attend the service and travelled from his home town of Prudhoe in Northumberland with his twin brother, Sydney. Edward said:

It was a very emotional service and the culmination of years of hard work and research. We are very grateful to everyone involved who made today so special.

Nicola Nash, from the Joint Casualty & Compassionate Centre (JCCC), said:

We feel privileged to bring some closure to Edward and Sydney after 74 years.

[Press release: From Scotland with love: British Ambassador hands over funds to Muday Charity Association](#)

On 3 October, British Ambassador to Ethiopia Susanna Moorehead presented the Muday Charity Association with almost 200,000 Birr (£6500) – the result of a fundraising drive centred on one of Scotland’s best-loved writers.

Burns Night, on January 25th, remembers the life and works of famous poet Robert Burns and is celebrated by British communities all around the world. This year’s Addis Ababa event, organised by staff from the UK Embassy and others from the British community, was attended by 320 people. The evening included poetry readings and traditional Scottish Ceilidh dancing as well as a glass or two of Scotland’s world-class whisky.

The evening raised 199,426 Birr for charity, and after a careful selection process the organising committee decided to give the funds to the Muday Association, which supports street children, children with disabilities and their mothers. The charity provides 600 children with meals, clothes and education. The Association has also set up a Mothers’ Cooperation, enabling 400 women to make and sell handicrafts. Ambassador Moorehead presented the funds to the association’s founder Muday Mitiku.

Speaking after the presentation, the Ambassador said:

The Muday Charity is doing vital and extraordinary work in Addis Ababa – giving destitute children a chance to have a happier childhood and a better future. British people have a long tradition of charitable giving, and our community here in Addis Ababa is no exception. It gives me great pleasure to hand over these funds, which I know will make a real difference to the lives of the women and children supported by Muday.

Notes to Editors

- Burns Night marks the anniversary of Scotland’s national poet, Robert

Burns', birth on 25 January.

- Held throughout the world on Burns Night (or on an evening close to it) a traditional Burns supper is held on Burns night and celebrates Robert Burns' life and work.
- Ceilidh dance is a traditional Scottish/Irish social gathering where people can gather to dance and hear the Ceilidh band play. 'Ceilidh' is a Gaelic word. Its meaning is literally 'a visit' but is more commonly used to mean a dance, a concert or just a party.

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