



## **College welcomes drive to inform pupils of post-GCSE options**

Havering Sixth Form College has welcomed national publicity which revealed the majority of pupils are unaware of the complete set of post-GCSE choices.

Working very closely with Havering schools, the college overhauled its admissions procedure this year in order to give incoming students more Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) because it was finding that many needed more support to understand the options available to them.

Now BBC Radio 4 has highlighted the nationwide problem, with a news report on research by the Association of Colleges (AoC) which showed considerable confusion among Year 10 students about what qualifications are available to them after taking GCSE exams.

The AoC survey revealed that half of 14 and 15-year-olds were unable to name more than two post-GCSE qualifications and a quarter could name only one.

Havering Sixth Form College Principal Paul Wakeling said: "The strength of the approach here is that we work so closely as a partnership with Havering College of Further and Higher Education and our partner schools in the borough. Together, we ensure that Information, Advice and Guidance is impartial and effective."

The survey, involving interviews with 500 pupils who are currently studying for GCSEs, found that while 63% of young people were able to name A Levels as a post-GCSE qualification, very few could name any of the other choices available.

- Only 19% of pupils were able to name BTECs
- Only 9% of pupils were able to name Diplomas
- Only 7% of pupils were able to name Apprenticeships
- Only 3% of pupils were able to name Foundation learning courses

Mr Wakeling said: "The research has highlighted that young people are having to make serious decisions about their future without really having access to all the necessary information. Our partners and ourselves work hard to give careers and further education advice. The improvements that we have made with them, including a longer interview, a Freshers' Week and a guaranteed place, means that young people can make the best decision possible.

“This is why we launched our new admissions and Information Advice and Guidance interviewing system for applicants this year and it has been a great success.”

The College is holding two Open Days for parents and prospective students where they can get advice on the different courses and qualifications on offer. The days are being held on Saturday November 26<sup>th</sup> 2011 and Saturday January 14<sup>th</sup> 2012.