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**College Principal appointed as Professor of Practice in Collaborative Education Leadership**

The Principal and Chief Executive of Furness College has been appointed to a prestigious role with the University of Cumbria to help shape the future of education across the county.

Andrew Wren, who is the principal and chief executive of the college in Barrow, will take up a position as Professor of Practice. His appointment recognises his industry expertise and innovative leadership and will help to further strengthen seamless collaboration between the further education and higher education sectors.

Professors of Practice are experts in their field, recruited to enhance the curriculum, experience and environment provided for students and staff.

Andrew said he was delighted to be appointed to the role and passionate about the future of the county in which he grew up.

He said: “I will be joining the team at what is a very challenging time for the education sector nationally as we adapt to our new and changing environment.

“It is vital we work together to ensure our curriculum offers the right skills for the future Cumbrian workforce as well as giving people the chance to progress into higher and degree-level courses.

“Education is a cornerstone of the economy and can have a transformative impact on people’s lives.

“Alongside working at a strategic level to further develop our curriculum, I am also looking forward to working with staff and students, listening to their ideas and helping to share my expertise through mentoring.”

Andrew, who grew up in North Cumbria, took up his role as Principal and Chief Executive at Furness College in September 2015, joining from East Riding College where he was Vice Principal.

He holds a Postgraduate Certificate in Education from the University of Huddersfield and has a Postgraduate Diploma in Management with the Chartered Management Institute.

He is also a fellow of the Chartered Institution for Further Education, a board member of the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), deputy chair of the board of St. Mary’s Hospice in Ulverston and vice-chair of the governing body at his son’s school.

During his first year in post in Barrow, he led the successful merger of Furness College and Barrow Sixth Form College, securing the breadth of post-16 education in Furness.

University of Cumbria’s Institute of Education director Ruth Harrison-Palmer said: “We are delighted that Andrew is joining us as a Professor of Practice.

“His appointment further strengthens the links we have between the further and higher education sectors and will support our vision to transform the education landscape in Cumbria.

“Appointing professors of practice brings an added dimension to the range and quality of teaching we can offer at the University of Cumbria.

“By bringing industry experts in to work in collaboration with the university, means our students gain even more real-world experience from those who are actively involved at the highest level.”

Andrew joins a growing number of professors of practice at the university who are sharing their expertise with staff, students and alumni. Earlier this year Penrith businesswoman Jane Baker was appointed as a Professor of Practice for the university’s Centre for National Parks and Protected Areas, and Managing Director of Langdale Leisure Ltd, Nick Lancaster was appointed to support the university’s tourism and visitor economy portfolio.

Professor Dave Dagnan, Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Dr Leon Junker, Science and Innovation Manager from the North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust along with Dr Asan Akpan, Consultant Geriatrician at Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Sarah Swindley, Director of the Lake District Foundation have all joined as Professors of Practice for the university’s Institute of health.

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