

SCIENCE MUSEUM CELEBRATES ITS 100TH BIRTHDAY

26 June will see the Science Museum celebrating its hundredth anniversary. There will be a 3-day party, full of special performances and events. For 100 years the Science Museum has been world-renowned for its historic collection, remarkable galleries and inspirational exhibitions. With around 15,000 objects on public display, the Science Museum's collections form an enduring record of scientific, technological and medical change from the past few centuries. Aiming to be the best place in the world for people to enjoy science, the Science Museum makes sense

of the science that shapes our lives, sparking curiosity, releasing creativity and changing the future by engaging people of all generations and backgrounds in science engineering, medicine, technology, design and enterprise.

During the 3 day party, visitors will be able to join in the fun with science shows performed by the Museum's comedy team 'Punk Science', experience fascinating bubble shows and eye-opening curator tours, and watch scientists such as Alexander Fleming and Marie Curie come to life as drama characters reveal the great discoveries

which have shaped history. After the party and throughout the Centenary year, the Science Museum will be celebrating some other special anniversaries; for the 40th anniversary of the Moon landings, a range of family events will be on offer. Visitors will be able to venture into space with a ride in the Science Museum's extraordinary new multi-sensory experience, Force Field; all part of a special space season from 20 July. For further information visit www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/centenary or call 0870 870 4868.



Energy Gallery



Launchpad



Flights of Fancy

OPENING DOORS FOR QUALIFIED DRIVERS

As more local licensing authorities across the UK consider enforcing mandatory qualifications for taxi and private hire drivers, Further Education colleges across London have seen a significant increase in the number of firms and individuals signing up to courses. Experienced drivers who can assess these learners are in demand and those currently working in the industry could be boosting their income by working part time as NVQ Assessors.

Protocol Assessors has the UK's largest database of Assessors, and supplies staff to more than 250 Further Education colleges nationwide. Chief Executive, Philip Harrison, explained, "With GoSkills estimating around 52,000 people should be trained to NVQ level 2 and 36,000 to NVQ level 3 by 2011, the number of people enrolling on Passenger Vehicle and related courses is increasing weekly. We're expecting this to continue as the take up of funded work based training is encouraged further and some predict the introduction of compulsory qualifications for all hackney, private hire and taxi drivers.

"In order to allow these learners to qualify and deliver more of the required courses, colleges need people who can assess them. Therefore anyone with an existing assessing qualification - or who is willing to undertake one now - is highly sought after and can be very well paid."

According to Philip, full time assessors can earn up to £50,000, but there are a whole host of flexible opportunities on offer. By working in the day or during the evening assessing can fit around home life or an existing driving job to provide a bit of extra income when necessary. He added, "As well as the satisfaction that comes from helping other people in your industry to progress, assessing can also offer an interesting alternative for those looking to spend less time in the driving seat."

Assessors should have at least NVQ Level 2 or the level higher than they will be assessing, and an A1 or A2 assessing award. However, this does not restrict those without assessing qualifications as there can be opportunities to study towards them while earning. For further information regarding the opportunities that exist throughout the UK for Assessors, please call 0115 911 1200 or log onto www.protocol-assessors.co.uk

CASH IS STILL KING, BUT FOR HOW LONG?

The number of taxi drivers who accept credit cards and debit cards has been increasing over the past few years, as more passengers look to pay their fare in this way. The PCO recognised the need for drivers to be able to stop for passengers wanting to use a cash machine. Figures from the payment industry's latest publication, *The Way We Pay 2009: UK Cash & Cash Machines* tells how UK consumers are obtaining and using cash and how this is forecast to change. There were 63,916 cash machines in the UK at the end of 2008. 97% of cash withdrawn was from free-to-use cash machines. Data collected shows that whilst cash spending continues to remain relatively flat, the number of cash machine withdrawals continues to rise and is forecast to peak in 2011. Consumers are increasingly using cash machines for withdrawing cash, where previously they would have withdrawn money in bank branches or at post offices; five years ago only 54% of cash came from cash machines, last year 71% of cash was acquired that way. This shift has been driven by an increase in the availability and numbers of cash machines as well as the migration of payment for state benefits and pensions to automated methods.

The report also reveals that in 2008 consumers made 22.4 billion cash payments, with a total value of £267 billion and that UK cash machines paid out £192 billion in 2.9 billion transactions. By contrast, in 2008, debit cardholders made 5.5 billion purchases and spent £247 billion on their cards. Although consumer cash spending still amounts to more than that by any other single payment method, this may not remain the case for long - in 2010 consumer debit card spending is forecast to outstrip cash spending by value for the first time.