



Report from the  
**Commission on  
Sustainable Learning**  
for Work, Life and a Changing Economy



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# Foreword

By Neil Carmichael

The Commission on Sustainable Learning for Work, Life and a Changing Economy is independent, and has been formulated and managed along similar lines to a Select Committee of the House of Commons. The Commission's authority has been underpinned by the transparent, evidence based and professional approach to its operations but, of course, the membership itself has brought expertise, intellectual rigour, imagination and boldness to all proceedings. I am hugely grateful to all of my Commission colleagues for the work they have done.

Our first report made a fundamental point – if we invest wisely and well in all our young people to be properly equipped to pursue their ambitions and careers then our economy could grow by an additional £22 billion per annum. This would, simultaneously, address the productivity challenge – so often identified as a stubborn UK problem – and help to sharply improve social mobility.

This second report is all about how this can be done. We do not think in terms of 'initiatives' or 'pockets of money' but, instead, fundamental and sustainable reform. Our vision is optimistic, long-term and realistic.

We develop several themes. Firstly, we state the case for providing more resources for education and more flexibility within the system to focus on sectors and other priorities. If we are to become more competitive internationally, then we must invest more in our key resource – our people of ages but especially the young.

Second, we want to make sure all avenues to learning are properly signposted, valued and accessible. This includes introducing young children to the world of work, ensuring genuine choice at key milestones in education including at sixteen, delivering proper support in career development and stimulating a new approach to lifelong learning.

Third, we show how the education/employer interface can be more efficient and effective in providing the workforce we need for the economy we want. This is also about making sure we make the most of our regions and cities.

Finally, I want to thank Pearson UK for supporting the Commission. Without this support – never interfering or restrictive – the scale of our ambition and the capacity to reach out for evidence and ideas would have been seriously constrained; instead, we have a report and recommendations all intended to make a positive and lasting difference to our society and economy.

Neil Carmichael.

# Executive Summary

## Our inquiry

The Commission was brought together to explore the UK skills problem. Our approach was holistic and practical. We set out to investigate how the current system meets the country's skills needs, to explore what actions need to be taken so the sector can meet the needs of our future economy, and to provide practical recommendations for change. The 24 recommendations made in this report are based on the expertise and vast experience of 18 Commissioners and over 50 witnesses, existing evidence and research, and the background provided by our own interim report.

The Commission's first report found that the economy could benefit by as much as £22bn each year if current skills deficiencies are addressed. With this in mind, we gathered evidence for our final report on the factors leading to current skills deficits, and the policies which could facilitate a reversal in such trends and create a high-skill, high-wage economy everywhere.

## Findings

To remain a competitive economy in the coming years, we need to reverse current skills trends. We need to better meet current skills needs while simultaneously preparing for the needs of our future economy. Factors including technological advancements and demographic changes are likely to exacerbate the current difficulties in the future. This report comes at a timely moment.

Our education system is a step behind our economy. Going forward, it needs to be aligned with the economy in order to prepare young people for a future of life-long learning and regular re-training, while simultaneously offering high-quality, visible opportunities for adult learners looking to train or re-train. Too many young people are leaving formal education without the skills valued and required by employers. At the same time, many older people are without the skills they need to be fully productive in their jobs.

Our first report found that there were three major factors leading to low productivity levels in our workforce: skills gaps, skills shortages and skills under-utilisation. The current education system, with its emphasis on academic knowledge, struggles to instil a broad range of technical and career-focused skills amongst young people. Adult learners looking to re-train or up-skill suffer from a lack of high-quality, affordable, visible pathways to help them progress in learning and in work. Combined, this has led to skills gaps and skills shortages which many employers are struggling to overcome.

A change is needed in mainstream education: we need to offer increased and improved technical and career-focused **pathways for learners at 16**. As a country, we can no longer afford to prioritise the academic route through education and into work. Three pathways need to be on offer: the more specialised option that allows learners to prepare for a particular occupation, a purely academic curriculum, and a broad career-focused route that can be taken on its own or in combination with A levels. Technical and career-focused qualifications need far more visibility within the system and learners should be afforded increased and improved opportunities to combine the academic with technical and career-focused qualifications and move between the pathways as appropriate.

The way we measure our schools and colleges needs to evolve to support this. The academic route pursued by so many in our education system and encouraged by school and college **performance measures** is unlikely, by itself, to produce the future skills needs of our economy.

Factors including technological advancements and demographic changes are likely to make current difficulties worse. These changes are also likely to fundamentally disrupt and distort the nature of education and work. Increasingly, individuals are likely to move between careers, re-training and up-skilling as necessary. Our **career advice and guidance** is not as good as it should be and fails to support individuals of all ages looking to improve their skills and opportunities. A properly-resourced all-age career advice and guidance needs to be offered to all.

The introduction of the apprenticeship levy has brought about a fundamental shift in the way we invest in **apprenticeships** and a substantial increase in that investment. This shift is welcome but more needs to be done to support employers of all sizes still struggling to engage. We welcome the government's commitment to reviewing the levy. This should be broad and explore how the levy could be used to support a more holistic approach to workforce development.

To support higher productivity as we face increasingly fast rates of technological change we urgently need to promote **lifelong learning** and individuals' ownership of their own lifelong learning. Individuals need to be encouraged and supported to invest. We need to develop flexible provision that meets the needs of older learners, and free provision needs to be available for qualifications up to level 3 is made available for individuals of all ages without such qualifications.

Skills under-utilisation is predominantly a demand side issue. We need employers to embrace lifelong learning and they too need to be encouraged and supported to invest. Fostering more **employer engagement**, collaboration between education and training providers and employers, is also increasingly necessary to respond to market intelligence. There is insufficient communication and cooperation between education and skill training and employment and too much disconnect between the education system and the world of work. The introduction of Local Enterprise Partnerships has helped provide region-specific labour market intelligence and increase collaboration between education and employment and there are some exceptional examples of best practice. More of this is needed. An increased focus on the move towards **a regional approach** would boost successful regional economies and represents an exciting opportunity to reconsider the way this country spends its education budget.

To achieve these aims, we call for a fundamental re-think of the national education budget. We support the Association of College's call for a long-term target to be set for **education funding** as a percentage of GDP, ensuring a clear mechanism for sustainable investment. 16 to 18 funding needs to be scaled up to narrow the gap between pre and post-16 by raising 16 to 18 funding per student by 5% a year for five years from 2019-20 to 2024-25. Funds spent on improving skills provision will be recuperated in future benefits to the economy. Regular funding cuts have had a major impact on our ability to offer skills training and provision.

This report is based on these 8 major themes. Based on the evidence heard by the Commission these eight themes are the key to fixing our education and skills system.

### Witnesses and sessions

We launched our inquiry in June 2018. We held four oral evidence sessions hearing from a range of expert witnesses and undertook a field trip to the North East to meet with local leaders, education providers and students. Recognising that many of the skills deficits are region-specific, we made sure to visit regions across the country, hearing from students, education providers, employers, Local Enterprise Partnership members and local authorities. We visited and held sessions at the Festival of Education at Wellington College, Sunderland College, Nottingham University and, London Southbank University and Gateshead. Members of the Commission also met with parliamentarians, government ministers and shadow ministers with an interest in education and skills to discuss the Commission's work. We are extremely grateful to everyone who contributed to this inquiry and offered their thoughts, their vast expertise, and in many cases their personal stories.





# Summary of Recommendations

## 1 Pathways for learners at 16

- We welcome the introduction of T Levels, which will provide quality technical qualifications for level 3 learners. To make T Levels more accessible, and to open up a pipeline to level 3 apprenticeships, T Levels should also be available at level 2 for young learners at 16+.
- Applied General Qualifications should continue to be available after the introduction and full roll out of the T Levels. 16+ pathways should offer young learners a choice of options and the range of progression routes that these options open up. To offer only two college-based routes (T Levels and A levels) is too simplistic to meet the needs of all young learners. Three routes need to be on offer: the more specialised option that allows learners to prepare for a particular occupation (which T Levels have been designed to support), a purely academic curriculum, and a broad career-focused route that can be taken on its own or in combination with A levels.
- Government should reverse the 17.5% cut in funding for 18-year-olds on 16–19 study programmes.

## 2 Performance measures

- The 'percentage of pupils entering the EBacc' and the 'EBacc Average Point Score' should be discontinued as a performance measure. Pursuit of the EBacc is not appropriate for all pupils. Not only does it fail to meet the priorities of some pupils but it also adversely limits the choices they can make at 16 regarding technical and career-focussed qualifications.
- The post-16 English and maths condition of funding for full-time learners, whose prior attainment is a grade 3 in GCSE English and/or maths, should be able to be met through continued study of GCSEs, or functional skills, or other appropriate qualifications in these subjects.

- Broader performance measures for education providers should be introduced. We suggest that more emphasis be placed on destination data, including the range of employment and alternative education destinations secured.

### 3 Career advice and guidance

- The Careers Hubs initiative should be expanded to encompass career advice and guidance for adults potentially via an online portal that gives access to resources and advice.
- Education providers should be expected to give support and encouragement to young people to take ownership of their career paths and future skills needs, and this should be integrated into the Gatsby Careers Benchmarks.
- An audit of the current career budget and an evaluation of how career advice could be better coordinated should be undertaken. The audit should assess the implementation and the impact of the various schemes in place. Following such an audit, we suspect that there may be the need for re-allocation of certain aspects of the budget to better meet existing need. The evaluation of how the service could be better coordinated should focus on how to make it easier for both individuals and employers to access career advice and guidance.
- In the long term, every education provider should be equipped with sufficient resource to coordinate career education and advice for their learners. This needs to exist alongside a single coordinated all-age career service that would afford universal access to objective and expert career advice and guidance at any stage in an individual's life. This could take the form of a virtual universal service using web advertising and national and regional resources online. Both young people and adults need to be aware of and have access to the service, and the benefits of engaging with career advice needs to be widely promoted to all age groups.

### 4 Apprenticeships

- We recommend that government urgently investigates and acts on the issues that are preventing employers from passing on levy funds to their supply chains. £450 million is a significant amount of levy funding that could usefully support the capacity for apprenticeship take-up in smaller- and medium-size supply chain employers. To date, only 1% of these funds has been passed to date. Of particular concern is whether it is cost-effectively accessible by small and medium sized enterprises, since it risks being a tax on smaller corporates with a benefit to the larger.
- The success of the move to halve the co-investment should be evaluated to understand the impact on non-levy paying employers. The evaluation should also review what other barriers are preventing apprenticeship take up by non-levy paying employers.
- More user-friendly information should be disseminated to employers to help them make better use of the levy. This could help increase the take-up of employers using the levy without necessitating any changes to the current legislation.
- The Commission supports the review of the apprenticeship levy announced in the Autumn Budget 2018. We recommend that the levy is given time to stabilise before any radical changes are made to its operation. The review should be broad and explore how apprenticeship training is complemented by other forms of skills training in the workplace, and how the levy could be used to support a more holistic approach to workforce development. The review should also explore the barriers that prevent non-levy paying employers taking on apprenticeships.

### 5 Lifelong learning

- The proposed plans to extend tax rebates for individuals investing in their own training should be revisited as part of a wider package of support for individuals investing in their own training and development. Rebates need to be available to individuals paying for their own training where a corporate employer is not able to do so. Without this, the system would be stacked against those involved in the gig economy, and the growing self-employed. The wider package should also include implementing personal training accounts for adults on low wages, in one form or another. These accounts could be credited when an individual or an individual's employer guarantees this will be matched and spent on training with an approved provider.
- The Commission supports the Association of College's (AoC) call for funding in their submission to the Autumn Budget 2018 to support every individual to reach level 3. Legislation should be introduced that would allow individuals to bank entitlements for government-supported provision up to level 3 for as long as necessary. This way, adults without a level 3 qualification could access their entitlement to such provision at any time in their lives.
- Funding for adult learning should be redesigned to support modular learning. This is currently the case for lower-level learning in further education but not for higher-level provision supported by loan funding. If loan funding supported modular learning, adults with busy schedules could build qualifications over time and according to their time constraints. Modules could be delivered online or in the classroom and adult learners would be able to blend different modules to form an overall qualification.

### 6 Employer engagement

- In response to the growing need for skills development in the workplace, a tax rebate scheme should be introduced, similar to current research and development (R&D) tax reliefs. The new tax rebate scheme should grant employers investing in training tax rebates of up to 33 pence in the pound on the funds spent. We believe that tax rebates are likely to avoid the excessive bureaucracy associated with more direct forms of funding. We recommend investing in tight accountability measures to ensure that training meets certain standards.
- An online portal for employers should be established that would hold information regarding all aspects of education and skills investment, and engagement. This would allow employers to explore options for investing in skills training (whether government- or employer funded) and should hold information on wider employer engagement, including a menu of engagement opportunities, examples of best practice and the benefits of engagement. This would act as an enabler for employers to explore wider engagement opportunities most appropriate to their capacity.
- Further research needs to be undertaken to explore and implement a technology-based solution to enhance education provider/employer relationships. This could bring employers and the work environment into the school and college classroom, without learners or employers having to travel.
- To help create pathways for smaller companies into education, businesses should be encouraged to work together to hire intermediaries. Intermediaries could be co-sponsored by a collective of businesses and organise activities that bring together employers, schools and colleges.

## 7 A regional approach

- The evaluation of the impact of devolution needs to consider the effects of the current geographic limitations of devolution and the potential impact on the regional economies of decentralisation of further and substantial financial powers. Long term, we would hope to see more of the education budget dedicated to meeting regional skills needs and under local control, across more regions in England.
- Education providers across all regions should be given incentives to encourage and raise expectations around education and employment provider coordination and cooperation, to better respond to regional and employer needs.

## 8 Funding

- The Commission supports the funding asks set out by the AoC in their Autumn Budget 2018 submission.  
A long-term target should be set for education spending to be a percentage of GDP, ensuring a clear mechanism for sustainable investment, and 16 to 18 funding needs to be scaled up to narrow the gap between pre- and post-16 by raising 16 to 18 funding per student by 5% a year for five years from 2019–20 to 2024–25.





# 1 Pathways for learners at 16

- The future success of the UK economy and the employers and individuals within it, will be driven by the education and skills of our future workforce. The latest annual Education and Skills Survey published by CBI/Pearson<sup>1</sup> tells us that business demand and expectation for skills is continuing to change; its findings show that over three quarters (79%) of businesses expect to increase the number of high-skilled roles over the coming years, that businesses highly value work readiness and broader skills alongside formal qualifications, and that nearly three quarters (74%) of businesses say they prefer a mixture of academic and technical qualifications. Despite ongoing improvement, there is still work to be done to ensure our education and skills system is preparing our young learners for a fast-changing world and labour market.
- The Commission welcomes the introduction of the employer-led T Levels. Directing resources to qualifications that respond to employer needs and teach the applied skills necessary for industry is a positive step. Implementation of the full 11 pathways will take time, and that costs will need to be met and monitored. In the first few years, we predict a relatively small take-up. We understand that close attention will be paid by the Department for Education (DfE) to the implementation and outcomes of the initial wave of T Level take-up to make adjustments and develop best practice. Consistent and continued support will be necessary to transform T Levels into mainstream qualifications. At present, it is not obvious which young learners should consider T Levels nor how a large number of industry placements will be secured, especially in regions relying on a comparatively narrow set of industries. especially in regions relying on a comparatively narrow set of industries.

**“ We get so much feedback from clients on young peoples’ work readiness.”** *David Malkinson, Chief Marketing Officer, Adecco Group*

**“ On the technical side, you have initiatives, new ideas coming and going. Parents, teachers, business don’t even understand what they are. We need a coherent system.”** *John Cope, Head of Education and Skills, CBI*

- Currently, 36.4 per cent of all young learners leave education before reaching level 3.<sup>2</sup> We heard from employers and education providers that offering T Levels at level 3 only could create access issues. T Levels at level 2 could usefully create a pipeline for learner progression to apprenticeships at level 3 and provide valuable opportunities for young learners who leave education after achieving at level 2. Education providers underlined the value of level 2; there are many occupations, for example in the construction sector, that recruit those with skills at level 2.
- We welcome the introduction of T Levels, which will provide quality technical qualifications for level 3 learners, to make T Levels more accessible, and to open up a pipeline to level 3 apprenticeships, we recommend that they are also offered at level 2 for young learners at 16+.
- After the full implementation of T Levels, the current expectation is that at 16+ learners will have a choice between an academic or a technical route at 16.<sup>3</sup> The DfE will also review which qualifications will continue to be available alongside T Levels and A levels (and apprenticeships), and will engage with interested parties throughout the review. The Commission welcomes this review of other qualifications at level 3. It heard evidence that an either/or choice between an academic and a technical pathway does not reflect the needs of many young learners. Applied General Qualifications - career-focussed qualifications - in particular will need to continue to be available alongside T Levels.
- Applied General Qualifications operate as stand-alone career-focussed qualifications that prepare young learners for work within a specific industry sector. Both Apprenticeships and T Levels prepare young learners for a specific occupation, albeit in different ways. These routes cater well to young learners who are certain of their future plans but are less able to meet the needs of young learners who are not yet certain of their career ambitions. In such cases, Applied General Qualifications enable access to a number of different occupations within a sector – either directly or via university. Applied General Qualifications also need to be available for young learners who wish to study in a sector where the relevant T Level will not be available due to the reliance of T Levels on the local economy; not all areas will be able to support the industry placement required by particular T Levels. Applied General Qualifications are also available in sectors not covered by the 11 T Level pathways.
- Many young learners pursue both academic and vocational qualifications and the higher education and employment opportunities these combinations open up. Young learners are unlikely to combine A levels and T Levels, since a single T Level is expected to take around 1,800 hours, including the mandatory 45-day work placement, and is likely to be offered as a stand-alone qualification. Applied General Qualifications represent an appropriate complement to A levels for young learners wishing to take an academic qualification alongside a vocational qualification.

**“Young people do not especially wish to be confronted by a strong “academic / vocational divide.” However, the inexorable logic of “progression” within the current framework of institutions (schools, colleges and qualifications) forces them along particular tramlines regardless of whether these are the best preparation for life, work and a changing economy in the coming mid-century.”**

*Professor William Richardson (University of Exeter), General Secretary, Headmasters' & Headmistresses' Conference (HMC)*

**“We talk about distinct technical or vocational and academic routes, but job roles don't fit neatly into this. Instead of focusing on these distinctions, we should be thinking about what the outcome is for the young person? We need to think more broadly about what young people want to achieve, what are their goals and aspirations and how can these best be supported and achieved through the education system?”** *Julie Hyde, Director, CACHE*

**“Students like this mixture [A levels and Applied Generals], and don't see thing as black and white like policymakers do. And evidence suggests that this works and offers a good balance with students opting to take both, being very successful.”** *Sue Betts, Executive Director, Linking London*

- We recommend that Applied General Qualifications continue to be available after the introduction and full roll out of the T Levels. 16+ pathways should offer young learners a choice of options and the range of progression routes that these options open up. To offer only two college-based routes (T Levels and A levels) is too simplistic to meet the needs of all young learners. Three routes need to be on offer: the more specialised option that allows learners to prepare for a particular occupation (which T Levels have been designed to support), a purely academic curriculum, and a broad career-focused route that can be taken on its own or in combination with A levels.
- Many young learners at 16+ begin from level 2 or below and work up to achieving at level 2 or level 3 by the age of 18 or 19. We heard from providers that some 16+ learners often pursue one pathway before deciding another pathway might be more appropriate. The right pathways, flexibilities and support needs to be in place at 16+ to ensure that young learners achieve and progress. It should be recognised that the appropriate pathway for some young learners is not always the first path chosen.
- The Commission heard evidence that these young learners are usually those already struggling in education and that they are not helped by the 17.5% cut in funding for 18-year-olds on 16–19 study programmes introduced in 2014/15. The original impact assessment<sup>4</sup> of the cut to the funding rate found (based on 2012/13 figures) that there were approximately 78,000 young learners at 18 years of age on 31 August 2012 who undertook a full-time course of study in 2012/13. This represented 6.1 per cent of all funded 16- to 18-year-olds.
- Government should reverse the 17.5% cut in funding for 18-year-olds on 16–19 study programmes.



## 2 Performance Measures

**“ Is assessment created for the purposes of students’ development or just for league tables? At RED Academy, our focus is to deliver programmes which helps students get their dream job, not just a grade.”**

*James Potten, Managing Director, RED Academy*

- Headline performance measures for 14- to 16-year-olds now include:
  - progress across eight qualifications (Progress 8) (English, maths, three other English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects and three further subjects, which can be from the range of EBacc subjects, or can be any other approved, high-value arts, academic, or vocational qualification)
  - percentage of pupils entering the EBacc (to enter the EBacc, pupils must take seven or eight GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education) across five subjects: English, maths, science, languages and humanities)
  - percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in English and maths and;
  - the EBacc Average Point Score.

The EBacc comprises: English literature and English language; maths; the sciences (students take combined science or three separate sciences); history or geography and a language. In Progress 8, more emphasis is given to English and maths, as their scores are double weighted.

- The Commission has heard evidence that these performance measures at Key Stage 4 are creating perverse incentives in the pre-16 curriculum, leading to academic qualifications being valued above vocational qualifications. Pre-16 institutions are incentivised to encourage learners down an academic route, where possible.

**“ Why would headteachers bring more vocational elements into the curriculum? What’s the incentive as they are not measured on that. It’s all about league tables.”** *John Cope, Head of Education and Skills, CBI*

- The focus on narrow performance measures and targets such as the EBacc, more academic external assessment, and 'limiting accountability systems', are all placing pressure on schools to focus on a narrow academic curriculum. A focus on the EBacc suite of subjects is pushing creative and vocational qualifications to the side in many institutions. Fewer resources go towards teaching these subjects and fewer learners pursue them. The subsequent dearth of such skills among learners will create difficulties further down the line for employers and limit learner opportunities.
- The difficulties caused by the squeezing of creative subjects at Key Stage 4 are likely to become even greater in coming decades as the economy shifts to rely increasingly on the creative industries. Their importance to the economy is evidenced in recent government statistics<sup>5</sup> showing that the creative industries workforce rose by 50,000 to just over 2,008,000 last year - a rise of 2.5 per cent compared to the average growth of 1.5 per cent in jobs across the UK economy.

**“ Added value is being squeezed out of the system.”** *Mark Dawe, Chief Executive, Association of Employment and Learning Providers*

**“ [The] funnelling effect of the assessment regime, which starts earlier and earlier”, means that “there is no opportunity to build broader skills”. As a result, schools have to make “tough decisions and be brave to create space in the curriculum” and this requires them to make “trade-offs”.** *Beccy Earnshaw, Director, Voice 21 UK*

- The government's ambition is for 75 per cent of Year 10 pupils in state-funded mainstream schools to follow a programme consisting of EBacc subjects by September 2022. By 2025, the government aim is for 90 per cent of Year 10 pupils to be following this route.
- Studying the EBacc subjects up to the age of 16 is right for some pupils. However, it is not right for all. Meeting the requirements of the full EBacc can create perverse incentives and lead pupils to study a narrower curriculum than they might otherwise. Usually, it will result in students having only one or two opportunities to do anything creative or vocational in their study programme. Not only does this fail to meet the priorities of some pupils but it also means that they are ill-equipped at 16 to make choices regarding vocational qualifications. When T Levels are introduced, it is hoped and expected that a suitable proportion of students choose this route. Yet, if providers continue to push all students to study only EBacc subjects, then many students will be choosing T Levels without previous experience of, or exposure to, vocational qualifications. This is likely to have a negative impact on the take-up of T Levels and broader career-focussed, qualifications.
- The measure of 'percentage of pupils entering the EBacc' incentivises schools to encourage pupils to use six or seven of the eight slots in Progress 8 with EBacc subjects. Its removal would allow schools more space and freedom to consider the needs of young people. The 'EBacc element' of Progress 8 could be retained but in the 'open element' pupils would be able to choose a combination of subjects suited to their desired pathways and commensurate with their strengths. Pupils could use five slots for EBacc subjects (English, maths and three others) and have three slots left for creative and/or vocational subjects. Pupils would have more opportunity to experience creative and vocational qualifications before making decisions at 16 on their future pathways. This way, it is hoped that more students would achieve a solid foundation of qualifications at level 2 by the end of Key Stage 4 and more students would pursue the creative and vocational routes required to meet the nation's employment needs.

**“ Young people currently don't get sufficient opportunity to experiment, particularly at Key Stage 4 (KS4), where the Ebacc has limited opportunities for technical study. This means that students are required at 16 to choose technical routes when they have had very limited opportunities to try this out up to that point.”** *David Hughes, Chief Executive of the Association of Colleges*

- In October 2018, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, announced details of planned changes to the way Ofsted carries out its inspections. She reported that “these changes will move Ofsted's focus away from headline data to look instead at how schools are achieving these results, and whether they are offering a curriculum that is broad, rich and deep, or simply teaching to the test.”<sup>6</sup> This suggests that Ofsted would welcome a move away from the narrow curriculum encouraged by the current 14 to 16 performance measures.

**“ The skills of the future are collaboration, creativity and empathy.”** *James Potten, Managing Director, RED Academy*

**“ We have identified five core skills and if all young people have those five skills they will really be able to take ownership of their next steps. These are communication, teamwork, self-belief, problem-solving and self-management.”** *Laura-Jane Rawlings, CEO, Youth Employment UK*

**“ Being able to have more options in school would broaden student's knowledge about the types of careers that are out there. If teachers choose their options for them, then what are they exactly going to gain from that? Mandatory subjects must be studied but students should be able to choose other subjects that suit them and the field they want to go into.”** *Asmina Begum, Sunderland College, Level 3 Health and Social Care student*

- We recommend the discontinuation of the two performance measures relating to the EBacc, namely, the 'percentage of pupils entering the EBacc' and the 'EBacc Average Point Score. Pursuit of the EBacc is not appropriate for all pupils. Not only does it fail to meet the priorities of some pupils but it also adversely limits the choices they can make at 16 regarding technical and career-focussed qualifications.
- One of the post-16 requirements for full-time learners is that those who have prior attainment of a grade 3, or below, in GCSE English and/or maths must continue to study the GCSE(s) to meet the condition of funding. Achievement in these re-takes is reported as one of the headline measures in performance tables. Attainment has been very low. In 2018, only 33 per cent of English and 23 per cent of maths retakes were successful.<sup>7</sup>
- It is disheartening for young learners to fail again after a further year of study. It is important that young learners should continue to study English and maths post-16 if they have not yet achieved a level 2 qualification, but not necessarily through a GCSE. Functional skills, or other appropriate qualifications, may be more appropriate for some young learners where this meets the requirements of their progression route. Indeed, most T Level programmes are likely to accept either GCSEs or Functional Skills in English and maths.

**“ Evidence suggests that some students are resitting maths and English well into their 20s. Functional skills should be offered as an alternative. This would help young people to succeed and not feel like they like they’ve failed and that what we should be doing here – helping young people to succeed.”** *Julie Hyde, Director, CACHE*

*This was supported by Andy Walls, Head of Vocational Policy, JCQ, and David Hughes from the AoC, who highlighted the importance of literacy and numeracy but questioned the focus on students achieving the GCSE.*

*Witnesses also spoke of the importance of avoiding the “cliff edge at 16”, with too many young learners condemned as failures based purely on outcomes and failure to meet prescribed measures at 16.*

- In their 2015/16 Annual Report<sup>8</sup>, Ofsted highlighted that while they believe the government’s policy on GCSE retakes is well intentioned, it is not having the desired impact. In a more recent report<sup>9</sup> Ofsted reiterates this evidence and recommends that the DfE should consider the evidence that the majority of learners feel they are making progress with English and maths, but only a quarter are getting a good GCSE pass when they resit the exam. Ofsted recommended that the DfE evaluate the impact of the policy of requiring students to continue to study English and maths and to take a GCSE.
- We recommend that the post-16 condition of funding for full-time learners, whose prior attainment is a grade 3 in GCSE English and/or maths, may be met through continued study of GCSEs, or functional skills, or other appropriate qualifications in these subjects.
- In Section three we discuss the success of the recent steps in career guidance and how they can be built on in the future. Performance measures could play a part in helping to implement high-quality sustainable career guidance. The Commission would like to see additional performance measures introduced to support aspects of the Gatsby Benchmarks. In particular, we would like more attention paid to destination data and engagement with other education providers. If these new performance measures were to be afforded equitable status and value, then education providers would be empowered to better meet the needs of young people and, in the long term, the wider needs of employers.

**“ There’s nothing wrong with assessment, however there needs to be a clear focus on outcomes and skills.”** *Mark Dawe, Chief Executive, Association of Employment and Learning Providers*

**“ We should be asking how many of your kids go into jobs when they leave school? And what do employers think of those kids when they go out there?”** *John Cope, Head of Education and Skills, CBI.*

- We recommend introducing broader performance measures for education providers. We suggest that more emphasis be placed on destination data, including the range of employment and alternative education destinations secured.





## 3 Career advice and guidance

**“ From our perspective, what we hear from young people is that they feel they are not getting is the career advice they need.”** *Laura-Jane Rawlings, CEO, Youth Employment UK*

**“ Schools know it is important but too many don’t do it. This can be for a number of reasons whether it is lack of resources and access, a shortage of time and space in the curriculum or inadequate funding.”** *Beccy Earnshaw, Director, Voice 21 UK*

- Currently, the quality and quantity of career guidance for young people in this country is uneven. Too often, young learners are required to make important decisions on qualifications and progression routes without the necessary career information. While parents/guardians can provide informed guidance in some cases, this is not guaranteed. More is needed in the way of school- and college-based career guidance, not only to further the progression of individuals but also to guarantee the future skills requirements of the economy. Young people should be fully aware of the careers that different qualifications could open up to them. Furthermore, they should have had exposure to, and experience of, those careers before making their decisions.

*Ruth Lowe, External Affairs Manager at Parentkind, highlighted the findings of their Annual Parent Survey 2017, which showed that 80% of parents regularly discuss careers with their children. However the survey revealed different levels of confidence amongst them and variations based on socio-economic status. It also found that the majority of parents rely on their own experience to advise their children.*

**“ Parental engagement is excellent and important if you can get it, but you can’t rely on it or assume that it will be there, as making this assumption could disadvantage some students and work against social mobility.”** *Mark Dawe, Chief Executive, Association of Employment and Learning Providers*

*During the Commission’s visit to the North East, Commissioners also heard from students at Sunderland College that many had limited awareness of their career options, largely based on the experiences of their parents.*

- Most education providers encourage young learners to remain with them throughout their educational journey. While this might be appropriate for some young people, it is not appropriate for all. Education providers should be encouraged to give objective information and guidance to learners who are looking to study elsewhere. Providers' awareness of and engagement with other providers in their region, who may specialise in different subject areas, could help support and inform this guidance. The Baker Clause, which mandates that all education providers raise awareness among learners about alternative education provision, goes some way to meeting this need. The implementation of this clause should be monitored closely to evaluate and benchmark how it is being implemented and adhered to in schools.

**“ The current system is driving schools to just say ‘actually we think you can get C, B or A at A level, so stay on at our sixth form and we can get that funding for you’. That’s not right. That’s not the market we should be creating. We should be giving young people that choice to be able to explore what’s right for them.”** *Bhavina Bharkhada, Education and Skills*

*Policy Advisor, EEF, the Manufacturers Organisation*

*Samuel, a student who gave evidence to the Commission, outlined his own experiences highlighting the negative impact that this can have by limiting a learner’s awareness of their post-16 options:*

**“ My sixth form was very prominent on going to university and that was literally the only option they provided you. It was a grammar school, so they wanted people to go to university. I didn’t know about apprenticeships until I actually applied for one, which I heard about through a friend of mine who also didn’t want to go to university and had found out about alternatives.”**

*James, another student who gave evidence to the Commission, outlined his experiences:*

**“ I didn’t want to go to university, I was looking for a more practical sort of real, hands on side of things. For me, I just wanted to go straight to work. I’d had enough of the standard education we received.”**

- Gatsby has produced eight benchmarks that schools can use as a framework for improving their career provision. The benchmarks recommend that all schools name a career lead, publish a regularly updated career plan and guarantee every student access to work experience and career guidance interviews with an expert. Furthermore, the benchmarks recommend that all schools permit access to vocational education providers to disseminate information on courses to students. Gatsby has also produced separate guidance for colleges around the eight benchmarks. Following a successful pilot scheme, involving 16 schools and colleges in the North East of England, the Gatsby Benchmarks are now widely acclaimed. The Commission endorses the wide-scale adoption of the Gatsby Benchmarks by all secondary schools and colleges. We heard evidence that parents/guardians play a crucial, and often overlooked, role in the career decisions made by young people and we welcome the benchmarks’ insistence on parental engagement in all aspects of the framework. In the long term, we would wish to see all secondary schools and colleges in the country able to meet these eight benchmarks – a challenging but achievable aim.

**“ There are some really great schools, like Chase Terrace school in Staffordshire. They have a career leader who has built local business networks and every subject has to do with the curriculum skills learning and learning about the range of careers that are available.”**

*Laura-Jane Rawlings, CEO, Youth Employment UK*

*Witnesses highlighted the need for “meaningful encounters with employers and the world of work”, whilst others highlighted the importance of getting students undertaking an apprenticeship or other vocational route to go back into schools and talk about their experiences and the benefits, describing the importance of “selling back into schools”.*

**“ What we are seeing is a shift toward making use of school networks, alumnae networks, graduate schemes and those who’ve done apprenticeships to go back to their old schools and sell that dream.”**

*Bhavina Bharkhada, Education and Skills Policy Advisor, EEF, the Manufacturers’ Organisation.*

**“ I think it is important to have work experience in every secondary school as you are at the stage of deciding what you want to do with your life. Although I did not receive any work experience at my secondary school and this only happened when I started studying at college, I still received career advice as well as going to an open evening and a taster day at a college which was helpful for my next step after secondary school.”** *Asmina Begum, Sunderland College, Level 3 Health and Social Care student*

**“ I am worried about going to university. I know what I want to do, but I’m struggling with what would be suitable for me and it’s hard for me to go and see what they can offer. I would find it really beneficial if the college did trips to universities for each department, and helped with travel costs for those who can’t afford it.”** *Zainab Nadeem, Sunderland College, Level 3 Photography student*

- In July 2018, the government tasked the Careers and Enterprise Company with the introduction of 20 Careers Hubs around the country. Each of these will include up to 40 schools and colleges working together and in collaboration with universities, training providers, employers and career professionals to share best practice and support the implementation of the Gatsby Benchmarks to improve career education for young people in the region. The Commission endorses the expansion of the Careers Hubs initiative, which has recently doubled from 20 to 40 Career Hubs and supports current plans to expand this programme to eventually include all secondary schools and colleges. We suggest that given the range of provision these hubs will cover, that they are expanded to provide career advice for adults. In a world where parents may also be changing career several times in their working lives, they too may need advice.

**“ We have a clear idea of what schools and colleges should be doing in terms of careers and work and we now have an infrastructure that can be built around with the coordinators, the hubs and so on.”**

*Dr Tristram Hooley, Director of Research, Careers and Enterprise Company*

- We recommend the Careers Hubs initiative be expanded to encompass career advice and guidance for adults potentially via an on line portal that gives access to resources and advice.
- Young people will change career more frequently than in the past and have to develop new skills over time as technology advances at ever-increasing speeds. Lifelong learning, reskilling and upskilling is becoming a necessity in order to flourish in the modern world. We should encourage young people to consider training as an ongoing process and instil in them a sense of lifelong learning.

**“ Lifelong learning should maybe start at five, so that you’re embedding all those skills early on about business, teamwork and problem solving, right from the beginning. So as kids move through their school experience, they actually have a focus on what’s coming down the line, the next stop to make some good decisions about where they’re going next.”** *Alice Barnard, CEO, the Edge Foundation*

- We recommend that education providers be expected to give support and encouragement to young people to take ownership of their career paths and future skills needs, and this should be integrated into the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Based on evidence received by the Commission, more also needs to be done to introduce appropriate career guidance provision at the primary level. Given evidence that suggests that gender stereotypes are formed at age five or six, and career aspirations formed by 14, it is necessary for primary schools to offer informed guidance to students and parents/guardians.<sup>10</sup> We endorse the pilot scheme, being implemented by EY<sup>11</sup> in partnership with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), which is considering ways to translate and introduce the Gatsby Benchmarks at the primary level. This is not to place undue pressure on young children to formulate their career goals but rather to ensure that by the age of 14, young people can make informed decisions based on existing experience and knowledge of the world of work. To build inspiration and aspirations at an early age, primary school children could be afforded insight into the world of work, in the form of field trips and exposure to employers.

**“ Career guidance should start at a young age, schools start when children are in Year 11 or Year 12, I think it should start sooner. We have been working with schools in Derbyshire and they start in Year 6 talking about what pathways, what careers there are. So it should start at a younger age, rather than leaving it until the end.”**

*Eric Baumgartner, Head of Sociology, Nottingham Trent University*

- At present, career guidance policy is fragmented. A large number of organisations work in this space. The budget is divided between a myriad of different providers and the system lacks coherence. Better coordination and pooling of resources could make it easier for both individuals and employers to engage. There is a need for a more holistic approach and we suggest that appropriate division of the budget could play an important role in facilitating this.

**“ What is missing is that strategy across the board and the funding for our schools to make sure that every child benefits.”** *Laura-Jane Rawlings, CEO, Youth Employment UK*

**“ We currently work with half of secondary schools. We think all schools and colleges should be offering young people work experience, talking to their parents, having encounters with employers and they should not just take them to see universities, they should take them to see apprenticeships.”** *Dr Tristram Hooley, Director of Research, Careers and Enterprise Company*

- We recommend that an audit of the current career budget and an evaluation of how career advice could be better coordinated be undertaken, in order to make it easier for both individuals and employers to engage. The audit should assess both the implementation and the impact the different schemes in place. Following such an audit, we suspect that there may be the need for re-allocation of certain aspects of the budget to better meet existing need.
- Looking to the future, the Commission would like to see improved career guidance for people of all ages across the country. Career education and guidance should begin earlier in schools, should be embedded throughout the curriculum in secondary schools and colleges, and should continue to be available throughout people’s career journeys. As employees increasingly look to upskill or retrain, there is a need for provision that targets those at 19 and over. While career education and guidance should be improved in schools and colleges, it should not finish there. Instead, good quality career guidance should be available for all.
- In the long term, every education provider should be equipped with sufficient resource to coordinate career education and advice for their learners. This needs to exist alongside a single coordinated all-age career service that would afford universal access to objective and expert career advice and guidance at any stage in an individual’s life. This could take the form of a virtual universal service using web advertising and national and regional resources online. Both young people and adults need to be aware of and have access to the service, and the benefits of engaging with career advice needs to be widely promoted to all age groups.



## 4 Apprenticeships

- The Commission supports the recent developments in apprenticeship policy, and the substantial increase in investment in apprenticeships in the form of the levy. While the decline in apprenticeship numbers since the introduction of the levy is well documented<sup>12</sup>, and employers have yet to draw down even a small percentage of their levy investment, more than 50,000 organisations across the UK have contributed to the apprenticeship levy since its introduction, at a total cost of £1.8 billion.<sup>13</sup> The apprenticeship levy and the associated reforms can be used to drive an increased awareness of the business case for training, for diversifying the workforce and for developing talent. The Commission believes that apprenticeships can make a significant contribution to workforce development as employers increasingly see apprenticeships as part of their bottom line.
- We heard some negative narratives concerning recent changes in apprenticeship policy, including the apprenticeship levy. While the concerns set out by some who are dissatisfied with the speed of the reforms and the impact of the reforms on apprenticeship take-up are legitimate, and we explore these below, the Commission is conscious that the full impact of the reforms is yet to be seen and urges caution about calling for significant change before the reforms have had time to have a deep impact.
- Recent reforms announced in the Autumn Budget<sup>14</sup> mean that £450 million of levy funding will be made available by allowing levy-paying employers to transfer up to 25 per cent of their funds, up from 10 per cent, to pay for apprenticeship training in their supply chains. This will support apprenticeship training in small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills, Anne Milton MP confirmed in Parliamentary Questions that in the three months from May to July “less than 1 per cent of levy funds in employer apprenticeship service accounts were used to fund apprenticeships in this way for non-levy paying employers.”. It is not clear what the issues are that are preventing levy-paying employers passing on these funds. Of particular concern is whether it is cost-effectively accessible by SMEs, since it risks being a tax on smaller corporates with a benefit to the larger.
- We recommend that government urgently investigates and acts on the issues preventing employers passing on levy funds to their supply chains. £450 million is a significant amount of levy funds that could usefully support the capacity for apprenticeship take-up in small- and medium-size supply chain employers.

- We heard criticism of the levy from those who understood that, increasingly, levy-paying employers are using funds to deliver apprenticeships to older and to existing employees. This was seen as being at the expense of funds being used to support younger and unemployed learners. These views were not necessarily borne out by the evidence, and we should not overlook the positive benefit of using apprenticeship training to upskill the current workforce, particularly in a world where lifelong learning is key to competitive advantage.
- At the time of writing, the latest comparative figures<sup>15</sup> show that in 2017/18, a higher proportion of starters was aged under 19 than the year before and a lower proportion was over 24. 152,400 (41 per cent) of the apprenticeships started in 2017/18 were by people over the age of 24. The remaining starts were split fairly evenly between those aged under 19 and those aged between 19 and 24 (around 30 per cent of starts for both age groups). In 2016/17, 46 per cent of apprenticeships were started by people over the age of 24, 25 per cent by those aged under 19 and 29 per cent by those aged 19–24. The 2017 apprenticeship evaluation found that three-fifths (60 per cent) of employers provided apprenticeships to people who were recruited specifically to start an apprenticeship, with the training starting straight away. This has increased since the 2015 evaluation, where 56 per cent of employers did so.<sup>16</sup>
- The Commission is aware of the benefits of providing apprenticeships to younger learners, and would welcome any moves to support younger learners into apprenticeships. As discussed in Section one, T Levels at level 2 could usefully create a pipeline for learner progression to apprenticeships at level 3, and we recommend that T Levels are also offered at level 2 for young learners at 16+.
- Non-levy-paying employers often find it difficult to engage with apprenticeships partly because the costs associated with hiring an apprentice can be prohibitive for non-levy-paying employers, despite the government contribution of 90 per cent towards training costs. It is clear that government is listening to these concerns. In the Autumn Budget, it was announced that up to £240 million will be provided to halve the co-investment rate for apprenticeship training. Non-levy-paying employers will now be expected to contribute 5 per cent rather than 10 per cent towards the costs of training an apprentice.
- The engagement of SMEs in workforce development is crucial to the success of the apprenticeship reform and to the economic prosperity of the country, yet low levels of training are particularly pronounced in smaller organisations, which make up a large proportion of the British economy. The focus of current policy has been on the apprenticeship levy but approximately 1.3% of all employers are eligible to pay the levy, and the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) suggests that 60 per cent of employees work for a levy-paying employer. This leaves the vast majority of small- and medium-size employers, and 40 per cent of employees, without access to levy funds. Large levy-paying employers are also more likely to be based in London and the south east, meaning that any decline in SME engagement will have a significant regional bias.

- We recommend that the success of the move to halve the co-investment is evaluated to understand the impact on non-levy paying employers. The evaluation should also review what other barriers are preventing apprenticeship take up by non-levy paying employers.
- Many levy-paying employers do not utilise apprenticeship funds because they do not fully understand the funding rules. The upcoming 2019 document for employers, outlining the rules associated with the levy, is 60 pages long. Smaller employers just big enough to pay the levy may not have the internal resources and support in place to manage the engagement and bureaucracy associated with apprenticeships.
- We recommend that more user-friendly information be disseminated to employers to help them make better use of the levy. This could increase the take-up of employers using the levy without necessitating any changes to the current legislation.
- The Commission heard evidence that levy-paying employers would welcome more flexibility on how levy funds can be spent, reflecting continuous calls from the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) to allow firms to deliver various forms of high-quality training in their area or sector, including apprenticeships.<sup>17</sup>
- Government has responded to these employer concerns in part; in the Autumn Budget<sup>18</sup> it was announced that the “Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury and the Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills will work with a range of employers and providers to consider how they are responding to the apprenticeship levy across different sectors and regions in England, as well as the future strengthened role of apprenticeships in the post-2020 skills landscape.”
- The Commission supports the review of the apprenticeship levy. We recommend that the levy is given time to stabilise before any radical changes are made to its operation. Once it is stabilised, the review should be broad and explore how apprenticeship training is complemented by other forms of skills training in the workplace, and how the levy could be used to support a more holistic approach to workforce development. The review should also explore the barriers to apprenticeship take-up by non-levy-paying employers.

**Degree apprenticeships offer people of all ages a chance to combine part-time university study and full-time paid work to gain a full Bachelors or Masters degree while partaking in practical, on-the-job training. Degree apprenticeships are created by partnerships between employers and universities. Aaron, a Chartered Manager Degree Apprentice, tells his story:**

I'd had two previous attempts at university, but I hadn't had much luck. Firstly, due to illness and secondly, because of a serious car accident I had to drop out of the courses. When I was able to, I went back into full-time work at Pizza Hut.

I worked really hard and developed myself and progressed within the company, so when this opportunity came up to do a degree apprenticeship, I just knew I couldn't turn it down. I would have been an idiot to say no to it! It was perfect and a way for me to work and study at the same time and not have any debt at the end of it. The fact it was a degree apprenticeship was definitely a huge tick in the box for me. I wanted to do a degree and go back to university.

I'm absolutely loving being a student. The tutors are fantastic and because they are people who have worked in the industry as well, there is so much that you can learn from them. With the apprenticeship, you are mixed in with people from different backgrounds and from different companies and you learn so much from them as well. It's not just learning for learning's sake. It's learning to develop you and your job role, to benefit you and your company.

At Pizza Hut, I'm just seen as me, I'm Aaron, I'm a deputy manager. Being an apprentice doesn't change that. The word apprentice within our company is looked at in a good way and a positive light. It's a way for us to help people develop and grow, get a qualification while working.

*With thanks to Manchester Metropolitan University for use of this apprenticeship case study.*



# 5 Lifelong learning



**“ Rather than piecemeal reforms, the rapidly changing economy needs a dynamic education and training system based on creating opportunities for engagement and re-engagement in education and training throughout life.”** *David Hughes, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges*

- In the addendum to the Commission’s first report<sup>19</sup> it is estimated that in a year there will be roughly 209,000 vacancies that cannot be filled because of skills shortages; there are around 1,602,800 people in the UK working in a role for which they lack some of the required skills; and 1,900,000 people are underemployed. These figures all have a financial impact on individuals, their communities, employers, and the UK economy.
- The addendum also highlights that in 2014, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) found that 4% of employers have skills shortages. Given that there are 5.7 million businesses in the UK, this means at least 228,000 shortages. Similarly, the Edge Foundation report in June 2018 found that “nine out of ten UK employers struggle to recruit” because of skills shortages in the market, and that 5 per cent of employers reported having vacancies but not having recruited in the last 12 months. The roles that are hardest to recruit for are higher-level management and leadership roles.
- Maintaining appropriate skills in our workforce is a long-term challenge. As technology advances at ever-increasing speed, this issue is now more urgent than ever. There is a clear need for a skills development system that is accessible long after the formal phase of education ends. Lifelong learning, reskilling and upskilling, often while people are in work, is becoming an increasing necessity in order for them to flourish in the modern world.

- Above and beyond specific initiatives and funding pots, we should aim to affect change in the attitude of individuals towards their own skills and training. To ensure long-term, sustainable change, we need to instil a sense of lifelong learning in younger students. We should encourage young people to consider training as an ongoing process and support them to begin considering their long-term pathways. In Section three of this report, we recommend that more is done to instil a sense of lifelong learning in young people, encouraging them to take ownership of their learning and training needs throughout their careers. We recommend that the Gatsby Benchmarks should include a specific benchmark around this factor.

**“ People have to take responsibility for their own learning. Developing a growth mindset is key.”** *James Potten, Managing Director, RED Academy*

- Most adults looking to upskill or retrain take full- and part-time courses at further- and higher education institutions. The IFS report<sup>20</sup> tells us that spending and numbers in 19+ further education have both fallen significantly over time. The total number of adult learners fell from 4 million in 2005 to about 2.2 million by 2016. Total funding for adult education and apprenticeships fell by 45 per cent in real terms between 2009–10 and 2017–18, and 19+ apprenticeship spending now represents 36 per cent of total adult education funding. Mature students tend to study in higher education on a part-time basis. Part-time higher education numbers have also been in long-term decline, falling by 140,000 students, or over 20 per cent, between 2012–13 and 2016–17<sup>21</sup>, and collapsing by over half over the past decade.
- Evidence heard by the Commission suggests that there are several factors behind reductions in adult learning. Cost and funding feature heavily in adults’ decisions to study further. In many cases, adults do not feel they have the funds to justify spending money on study or training. Time is also a factor; people are busy and find it difficult to fit education and training into their day-to-day lives. Time is also a factor; people are busy and find it difficult to fit education and training into their day-to-day lives. Limited access to information, and lack of local provision can also act as barriers.
- The shift to a higher-skilled economy cannot rely on government investment alone; investment is needed from all who benefit – individuals, employers and the government. The introduction of the apprenticeship levy is a clear recognition of this; more than 50,000 organisations across the UK have contributed to the apprenticeship levy since its introduction, at a total cost of £1.8 billion.<sup>22</sup> Higher-education students have long been expected to contribute to the costs of their education and Advanced Learning Loans have been introduced to support adult learners to invest in education and training at levels 3–6.
- Encouraging individuals to take ownership of, and financially invest in, their learning and skills does not negate the need for government support. Initiatives and government-funding pots have been introduced over the years to encourage adult learners to gain the skills and qualifications needed to progress in learning and work. These include: Train to Gain, which supported employees with low skills and was discontinued in 2010; the Adult Skills Budget, which has morphed into the Adult Education Budget (AEB) and prioritises public investment in further education to support young people and those with low skills; the introduction of Advanced Learning Loans; and the current plans for a National Retraining Scheme, which aims to give employees the opportunity to upskill or retrain for the new economy.
- These policies are not succeeding in developing the skills the economy needs. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)<sup>23</sup> report on skills in the UK tells us that labour productivity growth remains weak and the job prospects of many adults are hurt by their poor literacy and numeracy skills. To boost growth, productivity and earnings, the UK should encourage lifelong learning among adults and promote better skills utilisation. We need a far more ambitious adult skills policy to make the shift to a higher-skilled economy, which develops the infrastructure, and a wider package of policies to support adults looking to retrain or improve their existing skill sets, and to stimulate individual investment in skills.

**“ The idea of training being something you do at the beginning of your career also needs to be discarded.”** *James Potten, Managing Director, RED Academy*

**“ If we are talking about people that are transitioning careers, there’s going to be many more of them in the future who will change careers or whose aspirations will change by their mid-20s and shift to something completely different because there’s a new element of work that’s appeared in the time frame. So for me, that’s the real future of it. It’s this real agility we need.”** *David Malkinson, Chief Marketing Officer, Adecco Group*

- In March this year, HM Treasury consulted<sup>24</sup> on proposals to help adults overcome financial obstacles to further training. In scenarios where employers are unable or unwilling to cover the costs of training or where individuals are self-employed, then government would ensure tax rebates for any money spent on training to better incentivise adults to invest in furthering their skills base. To simplify implementation, rebates could be granted only in scenarios where individual applications would have qualified under R&D tax reliefs<sup>25</sup>, should an employer have paid for the training.
- The proposed plans to extend tax rebates for individuals investing in their own training should be revisited. Rebates need to be available to individuals paying for their own training where a corporate employer is not able to do so. Without this, the system would be stacked against those involved in the gig economy, and the growing self-employed.
- The government has concluded that there is insufficient evidence that extending tax relief is likely to be effective in incentivising self-funded, work-related training and that other policy interventions will be more effective in delivering support and addressing the barriers to learning. These include launching the National Retraining Scheme to help those in work, including the self-employed, to develop the skills they need.
- For adults earning below a certain amount each year, the government should also consider resurrecting personal training accounts in one form or another. These would give credit to all adults below a certain income band, which could be matched by personal or employer investment. Further, in cases where the government has identified areas of skills shortage, they could match credit to encourage adult learners to train in sectors with skills shortages. These accounts would encourage a greater number of adults on low wages to retrain or upskill and aid their own progress, while meeting the skills needs of the economy.
- The Commission is aware of the controversy surrounding personal learning accounts, given the history of the Individual Learning Accounts introduced in England in September 2000. Despite the success of the scheme, which attracted over one million people back into learning, it was withdrawn in November 2001, following allegations of fraud and abuse. If a new scheme were to be introduced it would need to be subject to far tighter quality controls. According to the Select Committee<sup>26</sup> “the design of the original scheme was not informed by a formal risk analysis and risks identified in the pilots were not addressed sufficiently”.
- If robustly managed, these accounts would give adults more control over the investment they make in their own lifelong training and skills, and the idea is growing increasingly popular with a range of policy experts.<sup>27</sup>

- We recommend that the proposed plans to extend tax rebates for individuals investing in their own training are revisited as part of a wider package of support for individuals investing in their own training and development. The wider package should also include implementing personal training accounts for adults on low wages, in one form or another. These accounts could be credited when an individual or an individual's employer guarantees this will be matched and spent on training with an approved provider.
- The lack of higher-level skills is an issue in the UK. We have a lower proportion of people qualified to level 4 and 5 qualifications compared to many European countries. In their 2018 report HEPI<sup>28</sup> argue that the most significant issue in the country's failure to graduate sufficient numbers of people at these levels is the very high number of learners who fail to achieve even level 2 qualifications. The UK is ranked 19th out of 35 OECD countries for the proportion of its population whose highest qualification is below level 2. The number of young learners who do not proceed from level 2 to level 3 is 36.4 per cent and a further 20.9 per cent of all learners do not progress from level 3. In 2016, only 82.8 per cent of adults were qualified to at least level 2, 65.3 per cent were qualified to at least level 3, and 43.8 per cent were qualified to at least level 4.<sup>29</sup>
- Before the 2012/13 funding year, government fully funded level 2 for learners who did not have a level 2 qualification, for learners of all ages, and level 3 for learners who did not have a level 3 qualification and were under 25. Students over 25 were expected to contribute 50 per cent towards the costs of their full level 3 where they did not have a level 3 qualification.
- Under current funding arrangements, government fully fund level 2 and 3 for learners who do not have a level 2 or 3 qualification, for 19–23-year-olds only. This is known as 'the entitlement'. 24+ year-olds are fully funded to take level 2 only if they are unemployed or low waged. Employed 24+ year-olds taking their first level 2 qualifications have to contribute 50 per cent towards the costs of their course. 24+ year-olds who do not have a level 3 qualification have to take out a loan to cover the costs of the course.
- Many young adults do not make use of their entitlement before it runs out. As a result, a disconcertingly high proportion of 19–64-year-olds have less than a level 2 qualification – 18.3 per cent in 2015.

**“ The system works reasonably well for those that undertake an undergraduate degree, however, lifelong learning only truly exists for those that can afford it and our high-stakes system fails young people and adults that wish to change path or take the ‘wrong’ path.”**

**“ Critically, at present there is no space to ‘fail’ in education – once you drop off the system, it is far too difficult to reengage. This is compounded by the fact that funding is removed or reduced once you hit the age of 19, unless you move into higher education.”** *David Hughes, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges*

- In their submission<sup>30</sup> to the Autumn Budget, the AoC call for funding to support every individual to reach level 3. This, they argue, would boost support technology transfer in businesses and higher productivity as we face increasingly fast rates of technological change, and every adult will be retraining and learning throughout their working lives.
- The Commission supports the AoC's proposal and recommends introducing legislation that would allow individuals to bank entitlements for government-supported provision up to level 3 for as long as necessary. This way, adults without a level 3 qualification could access their entitlement to such provision at any time in their lives.
- The Commission welcomes the introduction of the National Retraining Scheme, which will include a new career guidance service offering expert advice to help people identify work opportunities in their area and what they need to do to get the skills to find a job. This will be backed up with state-of-the-art courses that combine online learning with traditional classroom teaching to help people develop the key transferable skills for jobs of the future. Online learning can help them to fit learning into their existing schedule, should they remain employed during training. The recognition that the provision on offer needs to be accessible to adults who may not have the time to attend a 'traditional' full-time course is central to our ambition to upskill adults in the workforce.
- In a similar vein, we recommend that funding for adult learning be redesigned to support modular learning. This is currently supported by funding at lower levels in further education but not for higher-level provision supported by loan funding. If loan-funding-supported modular learning adults with busy schedules could build qualifications over time and according to their time-constraints, modules could be delivered online or in the classroom and adult learners would be able to blend different modules to form an overall qualification.

## 6 Employer engagement



**“ In the 21st Century, we need to bring the real world/world of work and education together not just for the obvious economic reasons, but ultimately because the world of work is important to all of us regardless of where we end up.”** *Sue Betts, Executive Director, Linking London*

- Employer engagement is an umbrella term; employers engage with the education and skills system in a number of ways. Employers invest financially; work on developments in the curriculum, and awarding organisations and education providers have long relied on employer involvement in the qualification development process; and employer panels define Apprenticeship Standards and will define the new T Level standards. Employers offer work experience, work with education providers to define and support specialist technical provision and work with education providers to offer career advice.
- Employers invest in apprenticeship training. Larger employers pay the apprenticeship levy and companies of all sizes invest in apprenticeships. In 2016–17, 46 per cent of apprenticeship starts were with large employers (those with 250 or more employees). This figure has remained relatively stable since 2013–14. 17 per cent of apprenticeship starts in 2016–17 were with medium-sized employers (those with 50 to 249 employees) and 37 per cent were with small employers (those with 0 to 49 employees).<sup>31</sup>
- Employers also invest in other forms of training and development. The Employer Skills Survey 2017<sup>32</sup> reports that employer expenditure on training and development in 2017 was £44.2 billion. This figure represents fees to external providers and expenditure on equipment or materials, the wages of staff while being trained and of staff delivering training. The 2017 training expenditure of £44.2 billion represents a 1% increase in real terms on the 2015 figure of £43.6 billion and the 2011 figure of £43.8 billion, and is around 8 per cent higher than in 2013 (£41.1 billion). This investment was equivalent to around £2,470 per person trained and £1,530 per employee, and has decreased by 1% and 2% respectively since 2015, reflecting increases in the number of people trained and employed in 2017.

- Ongoing and meaningful employer investment in the education and skills system is critical. The benefits of hard investment are clear. While the solutions to the UK's productivity problem are varied, improving skills has been identified as a key priority for boosting innovation and productivity.<sup>33</sup>
- Softer' engagement is also crucial. Employer involvement in the curriculum and the design of provision ensures that the skills system is responsive to employer needs and that it can secure a supply of skills that meets demand. Individuals are given the skills they need to gain employment and progression, and employers meet their skills requirements, which helps create a productive economy. Work experience and employer visits can inspire and inform learners, advising them on particular occupations and sectors, and enhance the provision of career and work-related education in the curriculum. Employer engagement helps learners and employers make that link and bridge the gap between formal learning and work.

**“ My family and teachers have supported me a lot in my journey to become a paediatric nurse. I have received a lot of information regarding this career as well as having the chance to visit the Royal Victoria Infirmary to get a proper insight into what nurses do daily.”**

*Asmina Begum, Sunderland College, Level 3 Health and Social Care student*

- Despite all that is being done to improve the situation, the UK continues to have a long-standing productivity gap relative to international competitors. The UK needs to better connect businesses and educators so that we prepare people with the right skills for careers now and into the future. More is needed to persuade all employers of the long-term benefits of investing and engaging in the education and skills of young people. Given that SMEs represent an overwhelming majority of employers in this country, we must ensure that they are investing and engaging alongside bigger companies. Small businesses accounted for 99.3 per cent of all private sector businesses at the start of 2018 and 99.9 per cent were small- or medium sized. The total employment in SMEs was 16.3 million; 60 per cent of all private sector employment in the UK.<sup>34</sup>
- The Commission recognises that companies of different sizes and types have different capacity to engage with schools and colleges. While many SMEs want to invest and engage, some find it too expensive or too confusing or difficult to achieve.
- When it comes to investment, recent reforms to the apprenticeship levy, announced in the Autumn Budget, mean that £450 million of levy funding will be made available by allowing levy-paying employers to transfer up to 25 per cent of their funds, up from 10 per cent, to pay for apprenticeship training in their supply chains. This will support apprenticeship training for smaller- and medium-size employers. Only a fraction (1%) of these funds is currently being transferred. We reiterate our recommendation in Section four of this report that government urgently investigates and acts on the issues preventing employers passing on levy funds to their supply chains. £450 million is a significant amount of levy funds that could usefully support the capacity for apprenticeship take-up in smaller- and medium-size supply chain employers.
- People already in the workforce will increasingly require skills training and this might not be appropriately delivered via an apprenticeship. We need to incentivise employers to invest in their existing workforce.

**“ For organisations to stay relevant they need to support lifelong learning. It is not enough to just offer graduates the training they need to start their career, we need to be challenging and developing our employees all the time in order to stay relevant.”** James Potten,  
Managing Director, RED Academy

- In response to the growing need for skills development in the workplace, we recommend the introduction of a tax rebate scheme (similar to the current R&D tax reliefs<sup>35</sup>) which would grant employers investing in training, tax rebates of up to 33 pence in the pound on the funds spent. We believe that tax rebates are likely to avoid the excessive bureaucracy associated with more direct forms of funding. We recommend investing in tight accountability measures to ensure that training meets certain standards.
- Government invests heavily in the development of skills and this, along with the private investments employers themselves make, can benefit the individual, the employer and the UK economy. To help employers make the most of the government investment on offer and understand how this can be combined with their own investment to develop their workforce strategy, we need to bring this information together and better connect employers and providers.
- When it comes to wider engagement, we believe that encouraging businesses to engage is likely to be more conducive to successful partnerships than placing direct obligations on businesses. While the widespread implementation of the Gatsby Benchmarks will encourage and support schools and colleges to engage with employers, there is, as yet, no corresponding incentive framework that would encourage and support businesses to engage with schools and colleges. The dissemination of information and examples of best practice, and providing clear, user-friendly documentation on how employers can engage with schools and colleges, could help more employers understand the benefits with education providers who can help them devise training most appropriate to their needs and work experience and employer visits can inspire and inform learners to work in a sector and help employers secure the talent they need. A 'menu' should be made available that explains the engagement opportunities available, and the benefits of different types of engagement. Examples of best practice should be showcased to encourage employers to experiment with models that suit their capacity and needs. These models could include offering field trips to students, tasking employees to work with education providers to co-deliver lessons with subject leads, offering training to subject leads in schools and colleges, and organising activity days.

*Trade bodies highlighted the role that they can and should play in reaching out to young people and making them aware of their options. The EEF highlighted their efforts to reach out to students through their 'This is Engineering Campaign' to change perceptions of the industry. The EEF view is that it is the "responsibility of employers and representative bodies like ourselves to go out and do that."*

**“ Most businesses we found are willing to, but they need some brokerage. We need a clear rationale about why they [businesses] would do this. There are many reasons why businesses would want to be involved, we just need to make it work properly.”** Dr Tristram Hooley,  
Director of Research, Careers and Enterprise Company

**“ Employers need to do more, there is a real lack of investment in training and development in this country.”** Sue Betts, Executive Director,  
Linking London

- We recommend establishing an online portal for employers, which would hold information regarding all aspects of education and skills investment and engagement. This would allow employers to explore options for investing skills training (whether government- or employer funded) and should hold information on wider employer engagement, including a menu of engagement opportunities, examples of best practice and the benefits of engagement. This would act as an enabler for employers to explore wider engagement opportunities most appropriate to their capacity.
- In addition to the existing examples of best practice, we recommend that further exploration is undertaken on the role that technology could play in facilitating education provider/employer cooperation. It is often logistically and financially challenging for schools to take students to visit employers and vice versa. Technology could allow students, virtually, to access workplaces without leaving the classroom. This could make it significantly easier and less expensive for companies and schools to give students exposure to different sectors. It could also help embed this kind of learning into the existing curriculum.
- We recommend further research be undertaken to explore and implement a technology-based solution to enhance education provider/employer relationships. This could bring employers and the work environment into the school and college classroom, without learners or employers having to travel.
- The Commission heard evidence about a model employed by the NE1 Business District in Newcastle, which has had significant success in bringing together smaller businesses in school-focused activities. ‘Intermediaries’ who bring together employers, schools and colleges, organise activities that individual companies might not have had the capacity to achieve by themselves.
- To help create pathways for smaller companies into education, we recommend encouraging businesses to work together to hire intermediaries. Intermediaries could be co-sponsored by a collective of businesses and organise activities that bring together employers, schools and colleges.
- Taken together, we hope these recommendations would create a connected system of schools, colleges, other providers and employers, working together to guarantee exposure and experience for all young people. We highly commend some of the work carried out by employers engaging with schools and colleges, and believe that if best practice were to be adopted by employers across the country that this vision for a holistic system could take shape.

## Example of best practice NE1 Business District

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In Newcastle, the NE1 Business District funds intermediaries to help schools and employers engage with one another. It recognises that smaller businesses do not always have the time or capacity to arrange career guidance activities, so intermediaries design and implement events that employers and students can then attend. Typically, NE1 runs at least three career-focused activities a month, ranging from job fairs accessible to all, to more specific events such as ‘Females in Construction’ which encourages female students from local schools to engage with construction companies on live sites around Newcastle.

## Example of best Practice Virgin Money in the North East

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Virgin Money has recently trained volunteer members of staff in their Gosforth office to enter local schools and raise awareness around careers. These Virgin Money ‘ambassadors’ have been trained to help schools run career events and CV workshops and raise awareness of apprenticeships and other pathways into training and careers. As part of their role, these ambassadors will aim to forge relationships with subject leads in various local schools, in order to collaborate on lesson delivery and the incorporation of careers awareness into the mainstream curriculum.



## 7 A regional approach

- Devolution in England<sup>36</sup> aims to transfer certain powers and funding from national to local government. Devolution of regional skills policy, alongside other public services, could be one of the most fundamental changes to the way decisions are made for local areas and how public services are funded. 36 per cent of people now live in an area with a directly elected city-region mayor, with new powers to stimulate job creation and improve skills. The aim is to ensure that decisions are made closer to the people, communities and employers they affect and is based on the principle that providing greater freedoms and flexibilities at a local level means that councils can work more effectively to improve public services. Devolution is still a work in progress in terms of the powers being devolved and of the regions that are receiving devolved powers.
- The devolution of education and skills is limited to the AEB. This budget funds, in the main, unemployed and low-waged, 19+ year-olds to take lower-level qualifications to help them progress in learning and work. It is worth approximately £1.5 billion a year.<sup>37</sup> From 2019–20, seven authorities<sup>38</sup> will take control of the AEB. In 2018/19 these authorities will, for a transitional year, assume a role in influencing adult further education and training provision. Two further authorities are exploring the possibility of taking control of the AEB from 2020/21. These nine authorities pull down around 46 per cent of the total annual AEB. No other education budgets will be devolved (i.e. schools, 16–19, higher education, and apprenticeships) and authorities will have influence only, rather than control, on these areas, limited by provider autonomy.
- The Commission is open minded and optimistic about the potential impact of devolution. It recognises the potential for devolution to allow for a focused, strategic approach that would boost successful regional economies and represents an exciting opportunity to reconsider the way this country spends its education budget. Evidence suggests that there are many regions in this country currently experiencing a low skills equilibrium. Individuals with higher levels of skills have few incentives to remain in these areas, thus leading to ‘brain drain’ and a continuation of regional inequalities. To help create a high-skill, high-wage economy in all regions of the UK, different kinds and levels of education and skills training need prioritisation.

- It is yet to be seen if devolution will bring about fundamental change and improve public services as envisaged. Critics argue that the ambitions of devolution are limited by the fact that so few powers are being devolved<sup>39</sup>; devolution has stalled and successful roll out is hampered by a lack of clear purpose, process or timescales and a culture of centralised thinking.<sup>40</sup>
- Combined Authorities may find they do not have the influence they need to bring about successful change and may be impeded by the limits to the powers they have. Increased regional decision-making power is unlikely to be successful without empowering local leadership to manage more of the education budget. Without corresponding control over education for young people and apprenticeships, regional stakeholders are likely to be solving skills shortages through adult education rather than preventing skills shortages through education at all levels.
- Devolution is also limited in geographic scope. Devolution of the AEB is limited to certain regions in England, which are subject to 'readiness conditions'. In other regions, the AEB will remain centrally managed. This uneven and cautious implementation of devolution seems likely to produce correspondingly uneven quality in adult education.
- Government is currently focused on implementing the existing devolution deals. Government will undertake detailed monitoring and evaluation to assess the impact of devolution as further decentralisation of powers and decentralisation to further regions are considered. It is in the process of developing a devolution framework for England, in line with the manifesto commitment to provide "clarity across England on what devolution means for different administrations so all authorities operate in a common framework".
- We recommend that the evaluation needs to consider the impact of the current geographic limitations of devolution and the potential impact on the regional economies of decentralisation of further and substantial financial powers. Over the long term, we would hope to see more of the education budget dedicated to meeting regional skills needs and under local control, across more regions in England. This way cities and local areas could better focus investment on their unique needs with regard to skills development.
- The coordination of education and skills across regions, whether they hold devolved powers or not, is also hindered by the fact that our education system is not currently designed in a way that encourages or is conducive to local co-operation between education providers. Despite good intentions on all sides, there are few examples of best practice regarding joined-up systems of local coordination. Action is needed to build a coherent joined-up system in all regions, to coordinate provision across schools, further education colleges, higher education institutions, training providers, employers and Combined Authorities and LEPs. The difficulty in regions, whether skills are currently devolved or not, is the ability to build up both supply and demand, and to create a dynamic local system where employers and individuals are authentically engaged with the system. Skills provision in a local area needs to meet individual employer needs and the skills needs of the individuals in a region.
- We recommend incentives are given to all education providers across all regions to encourage and raise expectations around education and employment provider coordination and cooperation, to better respond to regional and employer needs.

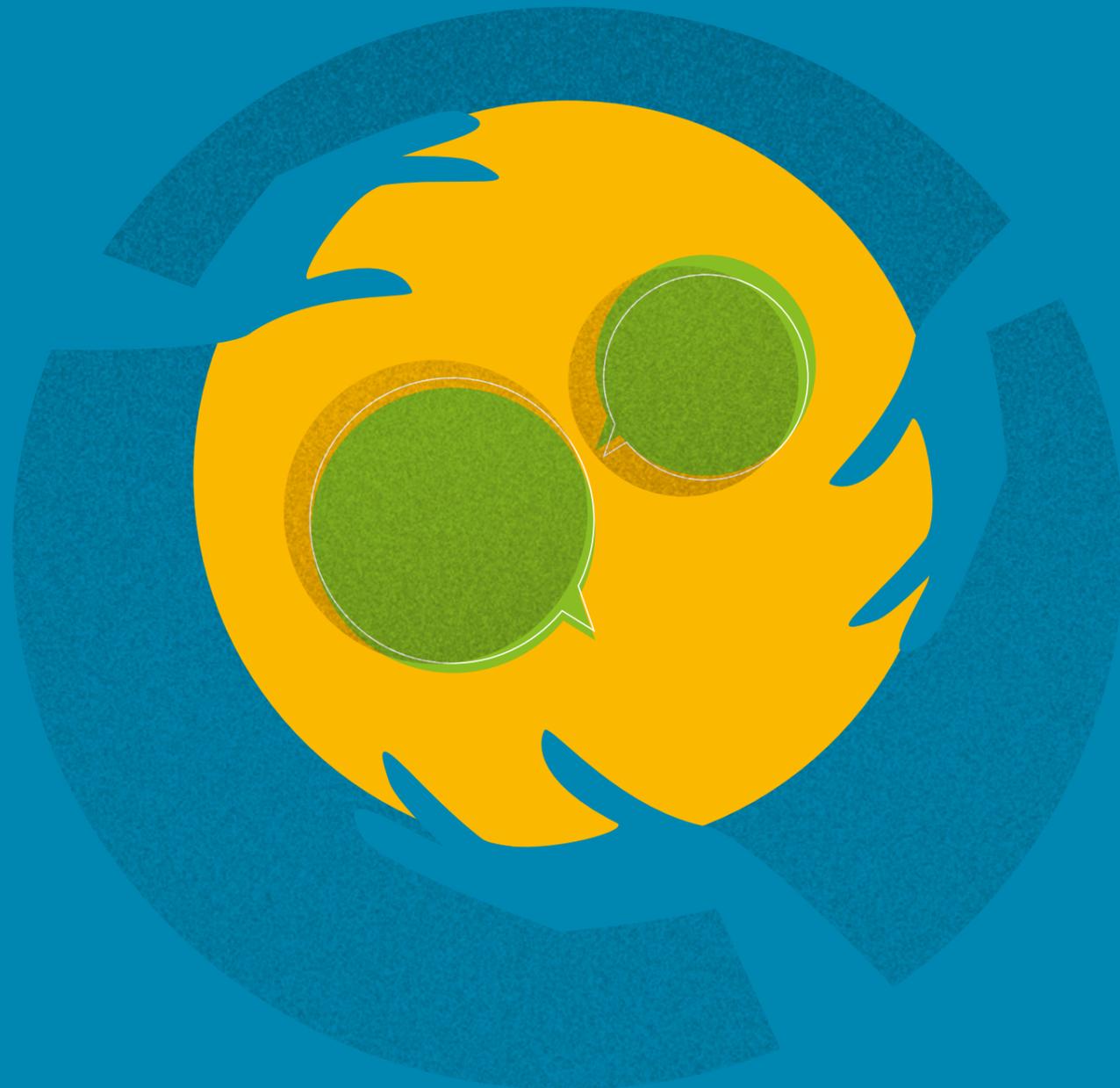




## 8 Funding

- Education and skills has suffered drastic cuts in funding over previous decades. The IFS report<sup>41</sup> tells us that total school spending per pupil fell by 8 per cent in real terms between 2009–10 and 2017–18, and will be about only 14 per cent higher in real terms in 2017–18 than in 2003–04. 16–18 education has been hit particularly hard. Spending on further education fell faster during the 1990s, grew more slowly in the 2000s, and has been one of the few areas of education spending to see cuts since 2010. As highlighted in this report's section on Lifelong Learning, spending and numbers in 19+ further education have both fallen significantly over time. The total number of adult learners fell from 4 million in 2005 to about 2.2 million by 2016. Total funding for adult education and apprenticeships fell by 45 per cent in real terms between 2009–10 and 2017–18. This 19+ further education is sharply focused on apprenticeships, which represents 36 per cent of total adult education funding.
- The Commission's interim report found that if we manage to address current skills difficulties, the economy could experience a boost of £22 billion each year. The costs of sensible investment in skills provision would be fully repaid in future economic improvements.
- The Commission finds that in many regions, education and skills provision is lacking in crucial areas because of cuts in funding. Further education colleges are often especially targeted during times of economic difficulty. This has an impact on teaching hours, availability and the resources needed to successfully deliver, specialist and technical courses, making it extremely difficult to plan for the long term. The IFS<sup>42</sup> estimates that further education colleges experienced a 7 per cent fall per student in spending in real terms up to 2015/16, likely increasing to up to 13 per cent by 2019/20. Given that further education colleges are often catering to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, those who, perhaps, have not managed to succeed first time around, regular disruptions and cuts to their funding appears counterproductive to our long-term skills and social justice aims.
- Increased and sustainable investment for education and skills is needed. As highlighted in this report's section on Lifelong Learning, this includes investment in policies to stimulate individual investment in skills, as well as direct funding of provision.
- The Commission supports the funding asks set out by the AoC in their Autumn Budget 2018 submission.<sup>43</sup> These call on government to set a long-term target for education spending as a percentage of GDP, ensuring a clear mechanism for sustainable investment. They also call on government to scale up funding for 16- to 18-year-olds to narrow the gap between pre- and post-16 by raising 16 to 18 funding per student by 5 per cent a year for five years from 2019–20 to 2024–25.
- The Commission also supports the AoC's call for funding in their submission to the Autumn Budget 2018 to support every individual to reach level 3. This is discussed in detail in Section five.

# Commission members



## Neil Carmichael

Chair of the Commission

Neil Carmichael, Honorary Professor of Politics and Education, University of Nottingham, is Senior Adviser, PLMR, providing strategic advice and support across all sectors; Chief Education Consultant at Christine Lee & Co (solicitors); and, Senior Adviser at Wild Search.

Neil is also Chair of the Board of FESTOMANE (Festival of Manufacturing and Engineering); Trustee of the Sir Heinz Koepler Trust, Wilton Park, promoting international peace and security; and a member of the Advisory Board of the D Group, strategic advice and international network. He is now a Trustee of the Sir Edward Heath Charitable Foundation.

Neil was Member of Parliament for Stroud (2010-2017), serving on the Education Select Committee throughout the period and latterly as Chair. He established the All Parliamentary Party Group (APPG) on School Leadership and Governance, acts as Chair of Vascular Disease APPG producing influential reports on clinical methods, and took the Antarctic Act 2013 through Parliament. Neil was Chair of the Conservative Group for Europe and is Director of Modern Europe.

Neil is writing a book: "Progressive, Productive, Proper: A new reform agenda for education" to be published spring 2019 by John Catt Educational. He frequently appears on the media and regularly speaks on education, Europe and the environment.



## Ian Ashman

Consultant

Ian Ashman is a consultant, executive coach and former college executive, working in the field of further education and skills. Ian supports colleges and employers to develop high quality technical education and is currently working as skills adviser to the developer of a £300m regeneration project in London's docklands.

He was formerly President of the Association of Colleges, the membership organisation for colleges in England. The President's role is to act as an ambassador and advocate for the further education sector, working closely with colleges and government.

Ian was Principal of Hackney Community College for 10 years. During this period, the College saw significant improvements in student success rates, teaching quality and inspection grades. He increased the college's employer engagement, including facilitating training of 50,000 Gamesmaker volunteers for the 2012 Olympic Games and implementation of an innovative Tech City Apprenticeships Programme.



## Alice Barnard

Chief Executive, The Edge Foundation

After graduating from Cambridge University with an MA in History, Alice pursued a career in journalism before moving into publishing.

Since then, she has led several high-profile organisations, notably the Countryside Alliance, where she worked as a Regional Director and then Chief Executive from 2007-2012 and the Peter Jones Foundation, from March 2012 to February 2016 before joining Edge. Tech City Apprenticeships Programme.



## Rod Bristow

Rod Bristow as Rod Bristow, President, UK & Core Markets, Pearson

Rod is President of UK & Core Markets for Pearson. Core markets include those 100+ countries with, in general, developed economies and education systems.

In 2010, Rod became President for Pearson UK and was appointed to lead all other core markets for Pearson in January 2017.

Rod has worked in education, publishing and assessment for 30 years in universities, schools, colleges, professional training and learning technologies in the UK and internationally. He is a Trustee for the Education and Employers Taskforce; a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts; Governor for Sir Charles Kao University Technical College; and past President of the Publishers Association. He is also Chair of the judging panel for the National Teaching Awards.

Rod is a graduate of University College London.



## Professor Robert Campbell

Quality Assurance Director, Finito

Rob is responsible for overseeing the Work Ready course and all outputs, and ensuring attendees always benefit from the highest possible standards.

He is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Bolton, and until March 2015 was Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at the University. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts; Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine; a Trustee of the National Forum of Health and Wellbeing; and Chair of the NHS North West Advisory Committee for Clinical Excellence Awards.

He works with two private providers of vocational HE; as Governor of one in London and a Director and Chair of the Board of the other in Manchester.



## Jim Clifford OBE MSc FCA FRSA

Partner, Director of BWB Impact and BWB Advisory

Jim Clifford heads BWB Advisory and BWB Impact, divisions of Bates Wells, the UK's leading public service, charity and social enterprise law firm, and helps organisations to create, analyse, enhance and realise value through acquisitions, disposals, mergers and other transactions as well as through outcomes-based planning, strategy and evaluations.

Jim is a visiting Fellow at Cass Business School, where he teaches impact measurement and social impact bond design on the Charities, Voluntary Sector, and NGO Masters Degree programmes. He was the Scientific and Technical Chair to the subgroup of the Groupe d'Experts de la Commission sur l'Entrepreneuriat Social for the European Commission, reporting on Social Impact Measurement standards in the EU, and leading author of the published standards.



## Professor Jean-Noël Ezingard

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Manchester Metropolitan University

Jean-Noël Ezingard is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Manchester Metropolitan University. The university is an ambitious, modern institution, in the heart of a global city, striving to widen access to higher education to all those with the ability and passion to succeed. Jean-Noël chairs the university's Estate Strategy Group overseeing a £450m investment masterplan and the university's Diversity and Equal Opportunities Committee which oversaw a climb of 125 places in the Stonewall Equality index to fourth higher education institution.

Jean-Noël Ezingard is an engineering science graduate from Ecole Centrale de Lille - an Engineering Grande Ecole. He later obtained an MSc in Advanced Manufacturing Systems and his PhD from Brunel University. Before joining Manchester Metropolitan University, he was Executive Dean of Kingston Business School in London where he oversaw a £30m transformation of the school's buildings. His early career was as a Lecturer at Brunel University and Course Director for the Special Engineering Programme.



## Ann Francke

Chief Executive Officer, Chartered Management Institute

As the Chief Executive Officer of the Chartered Management Institute (CMI), Ann is a transformational leader with vision, pace and proven ability in increasing impact of management and leadership excellence. She is an expert on gender balance in the workplace and on the gender pay gap.

Ann has authored 'Financial Times Guide to Management' and has been named in the top 100 women to watch in the 2015 Female FTSE Cranfield Board Report. Ann was awarded the MemCom Louis Armstrong Award for outstanding leadership of a UK professional body in 2016.

Prior to CMI Ann held executive board positions at Boots and Yell and was European Vice President at Mars. Ann began her career at Procter and Gamble and managed a variety of international brands including Pampers, Always and Olay before rising to Global General Manager at the British Standards Institution.



## Liz Gorb

Director of Apprenticeships, Manchester Metropolitan University

Liz Gorb is Director of Apprenticeships at Manchester Metropolitan University. Liz is currently leading on the development and delivery of degree apprenticeships across the university.

Liz and her team work with over 200 global corporates and SMEs to develop and successfully deliver a leading programme of university-based degree apprenticeships to over 1,000 apprentices including Digital & Technology Solutions, Chartered Manager, Chemical Science and the MBA Degree Apprenticeship.

Previously holding senior roles at the City Lit in London, and the East Cheshire Business School, Liz has substantial experience of leadership and management in a variety of settings in both London and the North West.



## Nick Hudson

Chief Executive Officer, Ormiston Academies Trust

Nick first joined Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) to lead the work of the OAT school improvement team and was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer in October 2017.

Nick was Ofsted Regional Director for the North East, Yorkshire and Humber region from January 2013 and for a period of time, whilst still an RD, assumed responsibility as Ofsted National Director for Early Education. He was also a member of the Ofsted Executive Board.

Nick started his career as a secondary school teacher, and having built his career working in senior roles within LEAs children, young people, families and adult services, Nick is an outstanding educational leader. He spent two years working abroad in West Africa as an Education Management Consultant for the United Nations Association International Service.



## James Kirkup

Director, Social Market Foundation

James Kirkup was born and raised in Northumberland, where he attended a comprehensive school. The first member of his family to go to university, he studied politics at Edinburgh University and began his career in journalism at The Scotsman in 1997.

He later covered European politics and economics for Bloomberg News, moving to Westminster in 2001. He returned to The Scotsman as Political Editor and columnist before joining the Telegraph in 2007.

He was Political Editor of the Telegraph and then Executive Editor – Politics, overseeing and writing commentary and analysis on politics, policy and economics.



## Ian Koxvold

Head of the Education Strategy Practice, PwC

Ian Koxvold is Head of the Education Strategy Practice at PwC and is responsible for both transaction-related work and corporate strategy development. Prior to this, he worked for almost 8 years at Cairneagle Associates as Partner, and where he established, developed, and headed up their Education Practice.

PwC work for investors, school groups (international and UK-focused), higher and further education institutions and suppliers of goods and services into the education sector.

Prior to joining Cairneagle Associates in 2008, Koxvold worked for IT services firm Opera Solutions as Engagement Manager for just under two years. Between 2005 and 2006, he was a Senior Consultant at CIL and between 2003 and 2005 a Senior Associate at Tyler & Company.

Koxvold started his career as Consultant at Credo in 1999 and holds a Masters in Engineering from Queens' College, University of Cambridge.



## John Laramy

Principal and Chief Executive, Exeter College

John Laramy became Principal and Chief Executive of Exeter College in April 2016. Prior to this John was Vice Principal at the College. His background in quality improvement has supported the college's drive for excellence which was recognised in 2014 by an outstanding rating in a full Ofsted inspection.

John started his career in the construction industry, whilst teaching karate in his spare time. After undertaking a full-time PGCE at the University of Greenwich, whilst teaching part-time in Kent, he started as a Lecturer at North Devon College in 1997, and joined the senior management team in 2005.

He holds an MSc in Educational Leadership and is a Member of the Chartered Institute of Building. John was the founding Chair of the Exeter Specialist Mathematics School and is a member of the Ted Wragg Multi-Academy Trust.



## Jonathan Lawson

Director of Strategic Partnerships, Faculty of Business & Law, and  
Apprenticeship Development Lead, Manchester Metropolitan University

Jonathan's focus is on engaging with businesses and the community to further the faculty's strategic aims in knowledge exchange, research impact and commercial offerings, especially degree apprenticeships.

Jonathan's previous roles specialised in leading major regional programmes to support high-growth SMEs. He has been one of the Directors of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses UK programme since 2011. He has also directed large scale ERDF and RDA initiatives in the North West, designing, delivering and managing the development of more than 1,000 CEOs/MDs. He has served as an Assessor Chair for the Small Business Charter Mark; as Chair of the Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship's special interest group on growth; and as a member of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP Business Advisory Board.



## Cindy Rampersaud

Senior Vice President, BTEC and Apprenticeships, Pearson UK

Cindy is responsible for the development of all Pearson UK's technical, vocational and apprenticeship qualifications delivered by colleges, private training providers and employers. She moved into the education sector in 2011 when she took up the role of Deputy Principal at City and Islington College. In 2016 she was appointed Deputy Further Education Commissioner by the Department for Education working on the government's area based reviews of the further education sector nationally. Before moving into the education sector Cindy held a number of senior roles in the entertainment media sector including EMI, Warner Brothers and Virgin.

Cindy is passionate about the vital role education and skills-based learning can play in helping individuals make progress in their lives but also in driving economic growth and productivity. She has a particular interest in the increasing role of technology in providing access to education and lifelong learning and how it can innovate what and how we learn. Cindy sits on the boards of The Children's Society, and Speakers Trust.



## Mark Stewart

General Manager and Human Resources Director, Airbus Operations Ltd

Mark Stewart became Human Resources Director of Airbus UK in April 2001, after having previously been Head of HR for Airbus UK Manufacturing and the Wing and Pylon Centre of Excellence in France and Germany.

After completing his Honours Degree in Industrial Relations and a Postgraduate Diploma in Personnel Management in 1985 from the University of Strathclyde, Mark joined British Aerospace's commercial aircraft business at Prestwick as a Personnel Officer.

During his time at Prestwick, Mark held a variety of roles including Employee Relations Manager, before being appointed as Head of HR in 1995 for the newly created aerostructures division. Following this Mark joined Royal Ordnance and held a number of roles before joining Airbus in 1999.



## Geoffrey Wake

Professor of Mathematics Education, University of Nottingham

Geoff Wake's research focuses on the teaching and learning of applications of mathematics. He has carried out design-based research of curriculum, materials and assessment in mathematics generally, but primarily with a focus in the post-16 sector.

His work has been informed by research into the use of mathematics in workplaces understood from a pre-vocational student perspective and has involved developing freestanding mathematics qualifications, and core mathematics qualifications.

Geoff has collaborated extensively with European and Japanese researchers and the Centre for Research in Mathematics Education which he convenes, and has strong connections with colleagues in the United States. He is currently working extensively with teachers in further education researching teaching to improve GCSE Maths resit outcomes and working to develop maths for T Level qualifications.



## Rob Wall

Head of Policy, Chartered Management Institute

Rob has been Head of Policy at the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) since June 2018. The CMI works with businesses and education providers to support people to become skilled, confident and successful chartered managers and leaders. He served as Head of Policy at the Cabinet Office from September 2007 to June 2011.

On this year's A level results day, CMI called on employers and schools to work more closely together to boost employability and open up work experience and apprenticeships. Rob commented that as the professional body for management and leadership, the CMI is helping to raise awareness of new management apprenticeships open for young people.

Rob also previously served as the Head of Policy Programmes at the Bar Standards Board for over two years. Before that, Rob was the Head of Education and Employment Policy at the Confederation of British Industry (CBI).

## Evidence sessions and events

### The Future World of Work

11th June – London South  
Bank University

At the first meeting of the commissioners Jim Clifford presented the first report: a summary of where we are now and an overview of existing literature and work in this area, with some clear signals pointing to the way forward. This concluded with an evidence-based prediction on how the economy could respond, if policies are introduced to bring about a fundamental change in culture.

Evidence was heard from four Pearson College students.

— **Emily Hale** — **Mitchell Scarle**  
— **Samuel Okusaga** — **James Wright**

### Festival of Education

21st June – Wellington College

The session focussed on two key issues.  
— Understanding the relationship between curriculum design and assessment/awards  
— Routes and signposting in the education system for the learner, including lifelong learning

Evidence was heard from four witnesses.

— **Mark Dawe** *Chief Executive, Association of Employment and Learning Providers*  
— **Beccy Earnshaw** *Director, Voice 21 UK*  
— **Ruth Lowe** *External Affairs Manager, Parentkind*  
— **Dr Greg Walker** *Chief Executive, MillionPlus*

### 19th July – Nottingham University

The session focussed on two key issues.

— The interface between employers/entrepreneurs and educators and establishing the equilibrium, between supply and demand  
— The relationship between academic study and technical or career-focussed training

Evidence was heard from seven witnesses.

— **Adrian Anderson** *Chief Executive, University Vocational Awards Council*  
— **Bhavina Bharkhada** *Education and Skills Policy Advisor, EEF, the Manufacturers' Organisation*

— **John Cope** *Head of Education and Skills, CBI*  
— **Dr Tristram Hooley** *Director of Research, Careers and Enterprise Company*  
— **David Malkinson** *Chief Marketing Officer, Adecco Group*  
— **Laura-Jane Rawlings** *CEO, Youth Employment UK*  
— **John Widdowson** *Chair, Mixed Economy Group*

### 4th September – London

The session focussed on two key issues.

— The relationship between academic study and technical or career-focussed training.  
— Understanding the relationship between curriculum design and assessment/awards  
— Access and barriers to institutions for learners and employers, especially in relation to diversity and social mobility.

Evidence was heard from seven witnesses.

— **Sue Betts** *Executive Director, Linking London*  
— **David Hughes** *Chief Executive, Association of Colleges*  
— **Julie Hyde** *Director, CACHE*  
— **James Potten** *Managing Director, RED Academy*  
— **Dr William Richardson** *The Headmasters' & Headmistresses' Conference*  
— **Andrew Silverman** *Head of Public Policy, National Citizen Service*  
— **Andy Walls** *Head of Vocational Policy, JCQ*

### Field Trip

13-14th September – North East

— Meeting with representatives from the North East LEP  
— Drinks reception with local business, education and skills stakeholders  
— Meeting at Sunderland College – with senior leadership team and students  
— Meeting with Ian Mearns MP for Gateshead and Member of the Education Select Committee

Evidence was heard from eight Sunderland College students.

— **Stephanie Allen** — **Jade Liddle**  
— **Asmina Begum** — **Zainab Nadeem**  
— **Craig Burns** — **Emily Ward**  
— **Nathan Jones** — **Lauren Wilson**

## Party Conference Events

### Labour Party

Conference 24th September –  
Liverpool

PANEL SESSION

Fit for the future: How do we deliver sustainable learning for life, work and a changing economy?

PANEL MEMBERS

— **Dr Mary Bousted** *General Secretary, National Education Union*  
— **Professor Neil Carmichael** *Chair, Commission on Sustainable Learning for Life, Work and a Changing Economy*  
— **Gordon Marsden** *MP Shadow Minister for Higher Education, Further Education and Skills*  
— **Cindy Rampersaud** *Senior Vice President BTEC and Apprenticeships, Pearson*  
— **Rob Wall** *Head of Policy, Chartered Management Institute*

### Conservative Party

Conference, 2nd October –  
Birmingham

PANEL SESSION

Reimagining our education and skills system: Delivering sustainable learning for life, work and a changing economy and the cost of failing to act

PANEL MEMBERS

— **Chaired by Jay Elwes** *Executive Editor, Prospect*  
— **Katherine Bennett** *Senior Vice President, Airbus*  
— **Rod Bristow**, *President Pearson UK and Core Markets*  
— **Professor Neil Carmichael** *Chair, Commission on Sustainable Learning for Life, Work and a Changing Economy*  
— **John Cope** *Head of Education and Skills, CBI*  
— **Rt Hon Anne Milton** *MP Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills*

## Witnesses

**Stephanie Allen** Sunderland College student

**Adrian Anderson** Chief Executive, University Vocational Awards Council

**David Barker MBE** Chief Executive, North East Learning Providers / Springboard

**Eric Baumgartner** Head of Sociology, Nottingham Trent University

**Asmina Begum** Sunderland College student

**Cllr Ged Bell** Cabinet Member for Employment, Newcastle City Council

**Sue Betts** Executive Director, Linking London

**Bhavina Bharkhada** Education and Skills Policy Advisor, EEF, the Manufacturers' Organisation

**Craig Burns** Sunderland College student

**Paul Carbert** Policy Adviser, North East Chamber of Commerce

**Mandy Corbitt** Commercial Manager, MTC Training

**John Cope** Head of Education and Skills, CBI

**Mark Dawe** Chief Executive, Association of Employment and Learning Providers

**Shona Duncan** Head of Skills, Education and Employment, Tees Valley Combined Authority

**Beccy Earnshaw** Director, Voice 21 UK

**Pieter Eksteen** Business Training Programmes Manager, East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire)

**Councillor Louise Farthing** Children, Learning and Skills Portfolio Holder, Sunderland Council

**Ryan Gibson** Facilitator for Career Benchmarks Pilot, North East LEP

**Helen Golightly** Chief Executive, North East LEP

**Councillor Olwyn Gunn** Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services, County Durham Council

**Emily Hale** Pearson College student

**John Hardy** Chairman, SNE & lead coordinator of all the teaching schools in the North of England region, SCHOOLS NorthEast

**Dr Tristram Hooley** Director of Research, Careers and Enterprise Company

**David Hughes** Chief Executive, Association of Colleges

**Julie Hyde** Director, CACHE

**Nathan Jones** Sunderland College student

**David Land** Member, LEP Board

**Jade Liddle** Sunderland College student

**Ruth Lowe** External Affairs Manager, Parentkind

**Lord Ralph Lucas** House of Lords, Director, Lucas Publications Ltd (publishing) and the Good Schools Guide Ltd

**David Malkinson** Chief Marketing Officer, Adecco Group

**Karen Marshall** Apprentice, Education and Engagement Lead at Accenture

**Ian Mearns MP for Gateshead**

**Sir David Melville CBE** Chair, Pearson Education Limited, board member: Policy Connect, Network for Black and Asian Professionals, Higher Education Commission, Faversham Society

**Ammar Mirza** Member, LEP Board

**Councillor Michael Mordey** Deputy Leader of the Council, Sunderland Council

**Zainab Nadeem** Sunderland College student

**Samuel Okusaga** Pearson College student

**Mike Parker** Director, SCHOOLS NorthEast

**Sophie Pickup** Learning and Development Manager, Northumbrian Water

**Michelle Rainbow** Skills Director, NE LEP

**Guy Pike** Communications Coordinator, Ryder Architecture

**Kevin Pearson** Principal Learning Skills Manager, Gateshead Council

**James Potten** Managing Director, RED Academy

**Judith Quinn** Vice Principal, Sunderland College

**Laura-Jane Rawlings** CEO, Youth Unemployment UK

**Dr William Richardson** The Headmasters' & Headmistresses' Conference

**Hannah Richmond** Senior Policy Advisor, CBI

**Mitchell Scarle** Pearson College student

**Andrew Silverman** Head of Public Policy, National Citizen Service

**Ellen Thinnesen** Principal and Chief Executive, Sunderland College

**Iain Veitch** Vice Chair, SCHOOLS NorthEast

**Dr Greg Walker** Chief Executive, MillionPlus

**Andy Walls** Head of Vocational Policy, JCQ

**Emily Ward** Sunderland College student

**John Widdowson** Chair, Mixed Economy Group

**Neil Willis** Project Manager, Education Challenge, North East LEP

**Lauren Wilson** Sunderland College student

**James Wright** Pearson College student

## Glossary

**16 to 19 study programmes** – All 16 to 19 learners should be on study programmes which should be designed to provide students with a structured and challenging learning programme that supports their development and progression in line with their career plans. Study programmes should be individually tailored but will typically combine a substantial academic, applied or vocational qualifications, English and maths where students have not yet achieved a GCSE grade 4, work experience, and other non-qualification activity to develop students' character, skills, attitudes and confidence, and to support progression.

**AEB – Adult Education Budget** – Funds the delivery of education and training for learners aged 19+. Some of the qualifications funded through the AEB include basic English and maths skills, basic digital skills and adult community learning.

**Advanced Learning Loans** – Available for individuals aged 19 or above to undertake approved qualifications at levels 3 to level 6, at an approved provider in England. Advanced learner loans give individuals access to financial support for tuition costs similar to that available in higher education and are administered by Student Finance England.

**A levels** – Subject-based qualifications that can lead to university, further study, training, or work. Individuals normally study three or more A levels over two years. They are usually assessed by a series of examinations.

**Applied General Qualifications** – Applied general qualifications are level 3 qualifications for post-16 students who want to continue their education through applied learning. They are career-focussed qualification which enable access to a number of different occupations within a sector – either directly or via university. Students learn about an industry, and learn by doing, and how to apply knowledge.

**Apprenticeship** – Allow individuals to gain the skills, knowledge and experience they need to get into many careers. They combine paid work, training, and study.

**Apprenticeship levy** – The levy applies to employers in England, who have an annual pay bill above £3m. The levy is 0.5 per cent of the annual pay bill. Funds can be draw down by levy-paying employers to pay for apprenticeship training.

**Apprenticeship Standards** – Sets out in simple terms the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for an apprentice to be competent and capable in their role, as determined by employers.

**The Baker Clause** – The duty on schools to allow FE and other providers to speak to their pupils about technical qualifications and apprenticeships. It came into effect in January 2018.

**Careers Hubs** – Link together schools, colleges, universities and other local organisations. Each Careers Hub will work with the Careers Enterprise Company network structure within the LEP and, if located within a Combined Authority, will work closely with the local Combined Authority. Hub activities will be focused on groups of young people and areas most in need of targeted support, to help deliver improvements in social mobility.

**Combined Authorities** – A legal structure that may be set up by local authorities in England. They can be set up with or without a directly-elected mayor. The relevant legislation is the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016.

**EBacc – English Baccalaureate** – The EBacc refers to a combination of subjects that the government thinks is important for young people to study at GCSE. It includes English language and literature, maths, the sciences, geography or history, and a language. Performance measures capture the 'Percentage of pupils entering the EBacc', and the 'EBacc Average Point Score' which is calculated by taking an average of the points scored in the 5 EBacc subject areas by each pupil, adding these average point scores for all pupils at the end of key stage 4, and dividing this by the number of pupils in the group.

**Functional Skills** – Essential skills needed for English, maths and ICT available at Entry Level, Level 1, and Level 2.

**Gatsby Careers Benchmarks** – A framework of 8 guidelines that define the best careers provision in schools and colleges. The Careers Strategy is built around them.

**GCSE** – General Certificate of Secondary Education – the main qualifications taken by 14 to 16 year-olds in schools and colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. GCSEs are usually studied full time, taking two years to complete. They can be taken at any age and adult learners can take evening classes or teach themselves. A new grading scale is currently being introduced which runs from 9 (the highest grade) to 1 (the lowest grade) (rather than from A\* to G). The reform will be phased over a number of years and it will take until summer 2020 for all reformed GCSE subjects to move to the new grade scale. However, most of the subjects taken in large numbers by students will be graded from 9 to 1 in summer 2018.

**Headline performance measures** – The headline measures which will appear in the 2018 performance tables are: 1) progress across 8 qualifications (Progress 8), 2) percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate (EBacc entry), 3) percentage of students staying in education or going into employment after key stage 4 (pupil destinations), 4) percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in English and maths (Attainment in English and maths), 5) attainment across the same 8 qualifications (Attainment 8), and 6) English Baccalaureate Average Point Score (EBacc APS)

**Individual Learning Accounts** – Scheme announced in the 1997 Labour Party manifesto to support adult education with a system of tax incentives from employers, as well as a cash contribution of £150 to each of a million individuals.

**Key Stage 4** – The term for the two years of school education which incorporate GCSEs, and other examinations, in maintained schools in England.

**LEPs** – Local Enterprise Partnerships – Business led partnerships between local authorities and local private sector businesses that play a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and job creation, improve infrastructure and raise workforce skills within the local area. LEP boards are led by a business Chair and board members are local leaders of industry, educational institutions and the public sector. There are 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships across England.

**National Retraining Scheme** – New scheme, still under development to give every worker the opportunity to upskill or retrain for the new economy. The scheme will be rolled out next year. It will include a new careers guidance service with expert advice to help people identify work opportunities in their area and what they need to do to get the skills to find a job. This will be backed up with state-of-the-art courses combining online learning with traditional classroom teaching.

**Post-16 English and maths condition of funding** – Students must study English and/or maths as part of their programme in each academic year. This applies to students aged 16 to 18 and 19 to 25 with an education, health and care (EHC) plan who do not hold a GCSE grade 9 to 4, A\* to C (a standard pass grade) or equivalent qualification in these subjects. This applies to students doing a programme of 150 hours or more, which started on or after 1 August 2014. This requirement is a condition of funding.

**Progress 8** – Progress 8 was introduced in 2016 as the headline indicator of school performance determining the floor standard. It aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of primary school to the end of key stage 4. It is a type of value added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the progress of other pupils nationally with similar prior attainment. Every increase in every grade a pupil achieves will attract additional credit in the performance tables. Progress 8 is calculated for individual pupils solely in order to calculate a school's Progress 8 score.

**SMEs** – Small and medium sized enterprises – Any business with fewer than 250 employees. There were 5.7 million SMEs in the UK in 2017, which was over 99% of all businesses.

**T Levels** – New two-year, technical programmes designed with employers to give young people the skills that industry needs. From 2020, they will give students aged 16 to 18 a technical alternative to A levels and will help them to get a skilled job. T Levels will provide a mixture of technical knowledge and practical skills specific to their chosen industry or occupation, an industry placement of at least 45 days in their chosen industry or occupation, relevant English, maths and digital skills, and workplace skills. Both T Levels and apprenticeships will be based on the same standards for their relevant occupations, approved by Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA).

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