

United Kingdom

VET in Europe - Country Report

2010

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Abstract:

This is an overview of the VET system in the United Kingdom. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General context - framework for the knowledge society
2. Policy development - objectives, frameworks, mechanisms, priorities
3. VET in times of crisis
4. Historical background, Legislative and Institutional framework
5. Initial vocational education and training
6. Continuing vocational education and training for adults
7. Training VET teachers and trainers
8. Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)
9. Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources
11. National VET statistics - allocation of programmes

This overview has been prepared in 2010 and its reference year is 2009. Similar overviews of previous years can be viewed at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/browse-national-vet-systems.aspx>

More detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/detailed-thematic-analyses.aspx>

A new UK Government took office on May 11, 2010. As a result the content of this report may not reflect current Government policy. An update report will follow in 2011.

Keywords:

vocational education and training (VET) systems; initial vocational training; continuing vocational training; lifelong learning; VET policy development; financial crisis and VET policies; VET legislative and institutional frameworks; validation of non-formal and informal education; teachers and trainers; anticipation of skill needs; vocational guidance and counselling; VET financing mechanisms; allocation of national VET programmes; national and international qualification systems.

Geographic term:

United Kingdom

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1. GENERAL POLICY CONTEXT - FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

1.1 POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The United Kingdom (UK) is a union of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) and Northern Ireland. The UK is both a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy. There is no single document that forms a constitution for the UK, although it does have an 'unwritten' or uncoded constitution which is based on statute, precedent and the ongoing treaties of the European Community and European Union.

The UK government comprises the legislature (Parliament), the executive (the Cabinet, which consists of 20 ministers chosen by the Prime Minister) and the judiciary. The UK Parliament consists of the Queen, the appointed House of Lords and the elected House of Commons. The UK Parliament makes primary legislation, although since late 1990s it has devolved a range of issues and powers to the three devolved administrations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). Parliament is supreme and has authority over government and law making in the UK as a whole, in consultation with the devolved governments (DGs).

For education and training, the UK has a devolved system of governance. There are differences and similarities between the education and training systems of Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England, which will be reflected in this overview. Scotland, in particular, has an education system with a long history of independence from other parts of the UK.

In contrast to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, England has no separate elected national body exclusively responsible for its central administration. Instead a number of government departments look after England's day-to-day administrative affairs (e.g. the Department for Education¹, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (BIS) for policy on adult education and training, and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for welfare of people, training and employment programmes, etc.). The Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government (the administrative organisation for the Scottish Parliament) have wide powers for social policies, including education and training. The Government of Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly also have extensive responsibilities for education and training.

1.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The UK is approximately 242 514 km² (England 130 281, Scotland 77 925, Wales 20 732 and Northern Ireland 13 576). England has the highest population density of the Union (383 inhabitants per km²), Scotland has the lowest density (65 per km²).

The population of the UK has grown and changed significantly over the last 50 years. Inward migration has contributed to a vast ethnic diversity across society and accounts for approximately half of the population growth. The UK has a population of 61 million and a

¹ The new Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government that came to power in May 2010, has formed the Department for Education (DfE) replacing the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). This report refers to the state of affairs as of 2009, unless otherwise stated.

labour force of 31 million as of 2009 that makes the UK the third largest country in the EU. Current projections estimate the UK population to reach 71 million by 2031. For more information on population trends please see:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/Population_trends_132.pdf

Since the late 1990s, although there has still been natural increase, net international migration into the UK from abroad has been an increasingly important factor in population change. Although slower than in some other EU Member States, the population growth in the UK is expected to continue. In Scotland the population is now projected to increase until at least 2048:

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files2/stats/projected-population-of-scotland-2008-based/projected-population-of-scotland-2008-based-publication/j1125010.htm>

Net immigration is now the main factor in the UK population growth.

The long-term trend has been a decline in the under-16 age group and an increase in those aged 16-64 and those over 65 and over, a process that is now intensifying. In 2008², the proportion of the population over 65 (16%) exceeded the proportion who were under 16. At the same time, the proportion over 85 is rising by more than 5% a year: the ONS estimates that within 24 years almost a quarter of people will be over 65 and only 18% under 16. Almost 75% of the UK's 2020 workforce is already in work.

These demographic, economic and social trends³ have direct implications for VET in terms of employees' flexibility, occupational pathways, recognition of qualifications and up-skilling or re-skilling, particularly, in the current economic and financial climate.

1.3 ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

The UK economy is the fifth largest economy in the world and the second largest in Europe by real or nominated GDP. It is the sixth largest by purchasing power parity (PPP) country in the world. The 2010 World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report put Britain at 12th place, up from 13th position in 2009. According to the same report, the UK's €156 billion annual deficit is a significant constraint on the economy.

The UK entered a serious economic recession in late 2008, when the economy contracted by 1.5 per cent of GDP, the largest drop since 1980. The Treasury's analysis of independent forecasts shows that the economy was expected to shrink by 3.4 per cent in 2009, with slow growth resuming in 2010.⁴ As the financial crisis has deepened and led to sliding tax revenues and nationalisation of banks, the government has run up total public debts of £697.5 (£766) billion. In terms of debt-to-GDP ratio, the OECD ranks the UK 18th out of 28 members.

² HU <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?ID=949>

³ For more information on social trends please see:

HU http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_social/Social_Trends38/Social_Trends_38.pdf

⁴ HTM (2009b) *Forecasts for the UK economy: a comparison of independent forecasts April, 2009*, London: HTM.

According to the Economy Watch latest report of 2009, the UK service sector accounts for 76.2 per cent of GDP and continues to dominate the UK economy - banking, insurance and business services, in particular. Until 2007, the financial services companies dominated the UK stock market, accounting for one quarter of all corporate profits.

UK industry⁵ and manufacturing constitutes 22.8 per cent of GDP. Both manufacturing and energy (4.0 per cent of GDP) have been in long-term decline, resulting in Britain becoming a net importer of energy in 2005.

UK agriculture, which accounts for 0.9 per cent of GDP, is a highly efficient sector by European standards, producing 60 per cent of its food needs but employing less than two per cent of the workforce (fewer than 500,000 workers). Only 2.8 per cent are employed in primary sectors as compared to the EU average 5.2 per cent (Eurostat, 2010).

Prior to the first signs of recession, UK experienced high levels of economic performance and consequently high employment rates. The Labour Force Survey (LFS)⁶ shows that the employment rate among people of working age was 75.1% in 2007 (Eurostat, May 2007), dropping to 74.1% in March 2009. The UK's levels of employment have remained higher than in most EU Member States across most age groups and, at ISCED levels 5-6, in particular (Eurostat series 2003, 2006, 2010). The employment rate in Scotland is currently at a similar level to the UK rate.

Following the EU definition, about 22 per cent of the UK workforce is in low paid jobs, compared to 12 per cent in France, or 8.5 per cent in Denmark. 31.3 per cent of the UK's female labour force is low paid. Moreover, according to the OECD data, incidence of low pay and gender wage gap has increased in the last decade⁷.

In recession, the contraction in output led to decline in the demand for labour, with increasing levels of redundancies and falling vacancies. At the end of 2009, the ILO unemployment rate was 7.8%, compared to 7.6% in Scotland. The UK has also continued to have a lower unemployment rate than the € zone average (8.5 per cent unemployed in April 2009, 9.2% in June 2009 - Eurostat, press release) across all age groups, although slightly lower for the 15 to 24 year olds (19.1% in 2009, compared with the EU average of 19.7%). It should be noted that the Eurostat figures are not directly comparable with the ILO figures provided above, but allow for comparability across the EU.

OECD *Education at a Glance 2010* states that the economic crisis has hit the youngest and the least qualified the hardest. As with most other OECD countries those with below upper-secondary education have experienced at least twice the amount of increased unemployment compared to those with tertiary education between 2008 and 2009.

There has been further evidence that unemployment rates among those in elementary or low-skilled occupations have increased by 1.2 percentage points, while there has been a 0.5 percentage point increase among higher paid professional group over 2009.

⁵ Current industries include machine tools, electric power and automation equipment, transport, electronics, and communications equipment, metals, chemicals, coal, petroleum, paper and paper products, food processing and textile and clothing.

⁶ See: HU<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Source.asp?vlnk=358U>

⁷ OECD *Employment Outlook 2007*, OECD, Paris, 2007, available at HU<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/25/39041278.xls>UH

In terms of public expenditure on education, in 2007 the UK spent 2.4% of GDP that is slightly higher than the EU average of 2.2% (Eurostat, 2008), although in real terms, the expenditure has decreased in the last five years.

1.4 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

Educational attainment has risen significantly over recent years at all levels of the education system. The proportion of 16-18 year olds in education and training was the highest ever in 2009, reaching 82.7%, up more than three percentage points, compared with 77.3% in 2006. Although the number of early school leavers decreased during 2002-2006, during the economic downturn it rose to 17% (2007), higher than the EU average of 14.1% (Eurostat, 2010). In 2009, the proportion of 16 to 18 year olds not in education or training, unemployment peaked, with more than half out of work for the first time in the last 15 years. Only 47% of them had a job in 2009, compared with 50% in 2008 and 58% in 2007, respectively.

Compared to other industrialised countries, attainment by the age of 16 is good, but staying-on rates after the age of 16-17 (QCF level 2 qualifications) is poor. Consequently, the proportion of the population with level 3 skills is lower than in other industrialised countries. In terms of enrolment on vocational courses, the UK has a lower number of pupils choosing vocational routes in secondary education, compared with the EU-27 average.

The UK compares favourably in terms of percentages participating in and graduating from higher education. However, growth in the number of maths, science and technology (MST) graduates was below EU average. The UK also performs well, with participation rates more than twice the EU average, on adult participation in lifelong learning (EC Progress Report towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training, 2009), reaching 19.9%, compared with 9.5% EU average in 2008.

According to Eurostat (2010), the UK scores particularly highly at tertiary education (ISCED levels 5-6 (only second to Sweden at 24%) - 20.6% in 2007 compared to the EU average of 12.2%, as well as at lower levels of attainment, where the achievement was less successful prior to 2007. The government has introduced some initiatives to narrow the gap in education achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged background and their peers. As to ISCED levels 3-4, the UK scores higher (17.2%) than the EU average (5.7%), (Eurostat, 2010)

In terms of 20 to 24 year olds who have completed at least upper secondary education, overall UK has slightly higher rates of achievement (78.2% in 2008) compared with the EU average (78.5% in 2008), the figures are consistently lower, albeit slightly lower among female graduates (Eurostat, 2010). Overall, it remains lower than in some other EU countries (from over 85% in Finland to almost 95% in Slovakia).

The UK remains high on the list for participation in both formal education by labour status (second after Sweden for training of unemployed at 14.7% compared with the EU average of 6.3% (Eurostat, 2007), whereas the non-formal participation is slightly higher than the EU average (23.8% to 20.4%, respectively). Although UK showed a high level of participation in non-formal education by highest level of achievement in 2007 (40.3% compared with the EU average of 32.7%), it substantially lags behind Sweden and Norway, where the rates stands at 69.4% and 50.6%, respectively.

In 2008, the percentage of the working population (25-64 years of age) that had attained at least upper secondary education was 67 per cent in the UK compared with OECD average of 68 per cent. The upper secondary graduation rate in the UK is 86%, compared with an OECD average of 82%. Looking at different age groups within this total reveals that the improvement was at the slower rate relative to OECD average⁸.

1.5 DEFINITIONS

There are no 'official' or nationally-agreed VET-related definitions used across the UK. The terms are usually specifically-defined by the Devolved Governments (DGs), education and training stakeholders, researchers and alike to reflect the VET-specific environment or a specific theme within a national context.

GENERAL EDUCATION - the term is not in common use. In England, it equates to the purposes of curriculum. The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) defines the purposes of education as follows:

Education influences and reflects the values of society, and the kind of society we want to be. It is important, therefore, to recognise a broad set of common purposes, values and aims that underpin the school curriculum and the work of schools. The curriculum should enable all young people to become: successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve; confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives; responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society (source: QCDA).

Wales leans more towards academically prescribed qualifications when referring to general education, as opposed to vocational (source: Strategy "Skills That Work for Wales" 2008).

PRE-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION - focuses on basic skills, such as numeracy and literacy and is below level 2. Vocational training may still contain general skills but would also include more vocation-specific training.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION - in general, the term VET is not widely used in the UK. The term 'vocational qualification' is more common. It is difficult to define VET in the UK context. Future Skills Scotland defines it as a course of education usually in a school or a learning institution that is oriented towards specific job or element of work. It can involve training in specific technical skills for certain types of job or occupation to training in general skills and aptitudes relating to an industry. It can also involve training and development specific and general soft and core skills.

There are certain occupations where a specific qualification at a certain level is required⁹ to practice. A qualification may be described as vocational but not immediately qualify the learner for work in particular occupation. Traditional academic subjects (GCSEs, A-levels, most university qualifications) are not referred to as vocational.

⁸ OECD Education at a Glance 2007, OECD indicators, Paris, 2007, Table A1.2a., p. 37, *ibid*, Briefing note for the UK, HUwww.oecd.org/edu/eag2007UH

⁹ The coalition government has announced its intention to a new generation of technical schools that will allow students aged 14 to quit mainstream comprehensive schools to study at specialist centres to be trained as mechanics, engineers or plumbers.

The Welsh government refers to academic and vocational learning. The latter is defined as learning related to a specific vocation, usually involving the development of specific technical or professional knowledge and skills (source: Strategy “Skills That Works for Wales” 2008).

TECHNICAL EDUCATION - the term is not used in the education and training sector in the UK.

TERTIARY EDUCATION - the term is not clearly defined within the UK. It has variously referred to Higher Education, Further Education and post-compulsory education, e.g. ISCED levels 5 and 6.

HIGHER EDUCATION (HE) - is the type of learning that generally takes place after the age of 18. However, it is more to do with level than the type of provision being delivered; rather than age. In Scotland it is not uncommon for learners to enter HE at 16 or 17, especially if undertaking HNC/HNDs. It is of a higher academic standard than A-level or National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3. Higher Education includes degree courses, postgraduate courses, and Higher National Diplomas (HND). This type of provision is usually delivered in universities, higher education colleges, and in some further education colleges (source: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary/glossary.htm>).

FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) - is the type of learning or training that takes place after the age of 16, but before degree level. It can be full or part time, academic or vocational. Also called post-16 education or post-16 learning (source: <http://www.niace.org.uk>).

In Scotland, tertiary education is used as a more accurate descriptive term, as provision in Scottish colleges is a mixture of non-advanced and HE qualifications. Over a quarter of Scottish full-time HE is undertaken in Scotland’s colleges; more if you include part- time higher education provision.

POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION - this term is not used in the UK.

TRAINING - there is no official definition, the notion of learning is more widely used. Future Skills Scotland (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/30154331/6>) defines training as the process of coaching in or accustoming an individual to a mode of behaviour or performance; or to make proficient with specialised instruction and practice. In the labour market context, it refers to the process of improving workforce skills, either by employer instruction or by educational institution, on- or off-the-job, with or without formal qualification. The *Skills Strategy for Wales* defines it as coaching, instruction or practice that makes someone proficient in a particular activity. It may include various kinds of learning.

INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING - this term is not widely used in the UK context.

CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING - the usual definition of ‘continuing’ in the UK context refers to learners over 19 years of age. Classifications vary.

SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMMES - the term is not used in the UK VET context.

ALTERNANCE TRAINING - this term is not used across the UK.

APPRENTICESHIP - is a structured programme (a framework developed by the Sector Skills Councils based upon the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) template) of training which gives young people the opportunity to learn on the job and build up knowledge and

transferable skills. More specifically, it is defined as a work-based learning programme that combines paid employment or work experience with on-the-job and off-the-job learning (source: Strategy “Skills That Work for Wales”) 2008.

CURRICULUM - the curriculum includes the entire planned learning experience for learners. The whole curriculum develops learners' knowledge, understanding, skills and personal qualification.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM (SCHOOL) - QCDA definition:

The national curriculum is a framework used by all maintained schools to ensure that teaching and learning is balanced and consistent. It sets out:

- the subjects taught;
- the knowledge, skills and understanding required in each subject;
- standards or attainment targets in each subject - teachers can use these to measure a child's progress and plan the next steps in his or her learning; and
- how children's progress is assessed and reported. Source: QCDA.

Wales equates curriculum to formal education offered by learning providers. Source: Strategy “Skills That Work for Wales”.

In Scotland, there is no national curriculum, although the pattern of provision in schools has similarities throughout the region. In August 2010, a new curriculum bringing with it comprehensive changes to qualifications and significant reforms to the provision of curriculum was introduced to secondary schools. Covering a 3-18 age range, *Curriculum for Excellence* enjoys broad political support in its aims.

QUALIFICATION - an award made to a learner for the achievement of a specified combination of units, credits, or credits and exemptions, required for that award.

In labour market context, it represents and endorsement or achievement (often formally certified) that demonstrates an individual's competence and proficiency in a specialised area of activity. Qualifications are often used as conditions of entry to particular jobs, sometimes as a proxy for measuring the broader and more amorphous concept of skills.

SKILLS - at its broadest level, a skill is a special ability to do something. In the context of the labour market, it relates to a special ability to perform a task in work. Skills could be personal; or it may be learnt.

In the UK government's Standards Occupational Classification, the concept of skills is defined in two ways: skill level - the complexity of the tasks and duties to be performed; and skills specialisation - the field of knowledge required for competent, thorough and efficient conduct of the tasks. In sum, the concept of skill covers a wide range of aptitudes and abilities that are necessary to make a worker competent to undertake her or his job. Source: Future Skills Scotland, 2004. Skills also relate to cognitive or "thinking" skills, such as analysis, evaluation and interpretation.

COMPETENCE - is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attributes at a level of expertise sufficient to be able to perform in an appropriate work setting (within or outside academia). It is used as measure of learning achievement. In a context of competence-based qualifications, competence is linked to the ability to perform activities within an

occupation on function; work consistently to agreed standards - a person's performance must meet specific criteria before he/she can be termed competent; transfer skills to a range of situation within, and even external occupational area. Source: Cultural Heritage National Training Organisation (CHNTO), 2004. Competence is often closely linked to the development of National Occupational Standards, which exist for most sectors and job occupations. UCAS, a HE admission service defines a competency as fundamental knowledge, ability or expertise in a specific subject area or skill set.

2. POLICY DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVES, FRAMEWORKS, MECHANISMS, PRIORITIES

2.1 OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES OF THE NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT AREAS OF VET

2.1.1 NATIONAL LLL STRATEGY

A new UK Government took office on May 11, 2010. As a result the content of this report may not reflect current Government policy. An update report will follow in 2011.

Lifelong learning in England, Wales and Northern Ireland often refers to learning that takes place after the young person has finished formal education and training. In Scotland lifelong learning has a broader 'cradle to grave' definition.

In the UK, the decision on access to further education beyond statutory school age is left to the individual (an individualistic approach), except in cases where a job requires certain entry qualifications. Although government places increasing importance on up-skilling the workforce, training policies are left to employers (a 'voluntarist' approach). The UK performs comparatively well on short, workplace training courses, but overall levels of qualification compare unfavourably with a number of other EU countries.

Since 2002 vocational education has received greater attention from policy-makers with a view to increasing the skills levels of the current and future workforce, with acquisition of qualifications used as the principal evidence. Governments in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have identified priorities in lifelong learning and adult learning, in particular. For example, the Lifelong Strategy for Scotland emphasises the 'cradle to grave' idea of lifelong learning and widening access to learning for all citizens. In Wales, the Assembly's government's strategy for the promotion of lifelong learning emphasises broadening learning pathways.

The governments have set priorities for lifelong learning in the UK as follows:

- achieve cross-government action to tackle skills gaps and shortages;
- encourage employers to use higher levels of skills in the workforce to develop more ambitious and innovative business strategies;
- motivate learners to continue in and return to learning;
- make VET responsive to employers' needs; and
- raise the status and quality of initial VET.

Wales and Northern Ireland have a particular focus on the employability skills of the economically inactive.

Scotland has its own version of the NEET policy; called More Choices, More Chances (MCMC 2006) This represents an action plan to reduce the proportion of young people not in education employment or training in Scotland Scotland's approach to lifelong learning also seeks to enhance development for learners through the development of structure learning opportunities and continuous development of knowledge and skills aimed at enhancing the individual's quality of life and society's wellbeing.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/committees/historic/x-enterprise/inquiries-01/li-submissions/mapping-ofll-provision.pdf>

Key principles of the government strategy across the UK are increased engagement of learners, parents and employers, the extension of individual choice, the raising of standards for all, and the easing of transitions between the phases of education.

Some specific challenges include the creation of a model of lifelong progression which stresses continuity throughout the education and training process; a less directive approach to quality assurance across all sectors; and a coherent qualifications framework.

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (England, Wales and NI) aims to provide a simple qualification structure for individuals and employers across all levels and sectors, and promote lifelong learning and facilitative transfer between pathways. Current changes in the wider vocational qualifications system aim to make it less bureaucratic and more responsive to learner and employer needs.

Addressing a 'greying workforce' challenge, the government has created an Education and Training Committee, which brings together all the relevant government departments and national agencies. The Committee examines the implications for lifelong learning policy, including the effects of broader educational policy and collection of data on older learners, as well as the implications of age discrimination law for older learners.

2.1.2 POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN THE MAIN VET POLICY AREAS

For the last decade, a UK-wide policy objective has been set to improve the national skills base of the population throughout their working lives and create sustainable employment in order to compete in the globalised markets. Government has become proactive in leading vocational education and training (VET) strategy - to raise levels of qualification in the population, to increase employability, and to improve the competitiveness and productivity of the UK economy through introducing the skills agenda.

The inter-departmental national skills strategy emphasises the economic and social benefits of skills and their role in supporting more high-quality sustainable jobs. The government has also continuously targeted unemployed and inactive population.

The government aims to achieve an employment rate of 80%, as a long-term aspiration. With the economic downturn looming and on current rates of progress, some of these ambitious targets are not likely to be achieved by 2020 and have been under review by the previous and current Coalition governments.

In response to meeting these targets, the government published a series of policy documents, to close skills gaps at every level by 2020, through a demand-led system, where the needs of adult learners and employers are given priority. The reforms includes, amongst others, legislation on funding entitlement to free training in basic skills and first full level 2 qualifications, a guarantee of free training up to level for those aged 19-25, and a legal right for suitably qualified young people to enter Apprenticeship.

These policy papers have also concern with young people education. A number of early school leavers, although improved lately, still remains quite high compared with other EU member states.

Reducing the proportion of 16- to 18-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) is a priority for the Government. Being NEET between the ages of 16-18 is a major predictor of later unemployment, low income, teenage motherhood, depression and poor physical health. No single agency holds all the keys to reducing NEET; LAs, schools, the <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/Youth/ypnieet/neet/>). The government has adopted a strategy¹⁰ to reduce the number of NEETs by building partnerships of schools, career services and families and providing attractive alternatives to post-compulsory education and throughout impending legislation to raise the education participation age to 18 (England).

Scotland adopted its strategic approach to tackle the issue of NEETs in 2006¹¹. The government implements its programme of September guarantee, which offers every school leaver an offer of a place in post-16 learning. Financial support (Education Maintenance Allowance -EMA) to those from poorer backgrounds to stay on in education or training has been a successful government measure. The EMA was introduced in 2004 and the evaluation results¹² were very positive.

To raise attainment and widen participation, especially among disadvantaged and disaffected young learners, the government is reforming 14 to 19 provisions¹³, with increased flexibility in the last two years of compulsory education (work-related learning engagement programmes) and by introducing 14-19 Diplomas in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which intend to provide a vocational alternative to general secondary education. Reforming the apprenticeship scheme by investing more resources, removing the age limit and opening up progression routes to those coming up through vocational route has also been central to government agenda. The previous government intended to rise participation age, to 17 by 2013 and to 18 by 2015, although the new coalition government plans to review this initiative.

The government's aim for students with special needs (SEN) is that they reach their full potential in school and make a successful transition to further and higher education, training or work. Students with SEN are normally taught within a main stream environment at schools or part of the time at the specialised school. The government through local authorities and partnership arrangements provides advice and materials for teachers, parents and students. A major Ofsted, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, review published in September 2010, reveals a range of concerns about the current system. The Coalition government is reviewing the SEN provision in England.

The FE strategy for VET students with SEN is based on partnership with key agencies and learning providers to build flexible packages for provision, including appropriate progression and transition routes that meet the learning needs of this cohort of learners. The lower levels (Entry levels, in particular) of qualifications frameworks across the UK are also designed to promote equity in VET provision among learners with SEN.

¹⁰ *Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training, NEET, The Strategy*, DCSF, 2008, HU www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/documents/neet_strategy_0803.pdfUH

¹¹ *More Choices, More Chances: A strategy to reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training in Scotland*, Scottish government, 2006.

¹² HU <http://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/3456>UH

¹³ *Since coming to power in May 2010, the new coalition government has announced a review of the education and training reform and has abolished some of the programmes of the previous government. For more details of the ongoing consultations, please refer to 2.1.3.*

Initial teacher training course normally include a special needs element. Once qualified, an experienced teacher or training can take further training for special educational needs or in more specialised areas as post-graduate studies or Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

The government approach is that lifelong learning should be supported by fair chances, fair funding and fair rules. The current government initiatives are targeting some groups within the labour market that need additional support by offering second chances to the most disadvantaged, i.e. those from low income families, agency workers, disabled people and increasing support for those out of work.

The overall aim of government policy is to develop careers services available to all and to provide an easily accessible source of information, impartial advice and guidance (IAG) to both young people and adults. The Devolved Governments across the UK have been reviewing their career services to establish new universal adult career services, providing labour market focused careers advice for all adults, as well as school career education services. ICT and new media means are considered to be an effective medium providing that ways can be found to provide equal access to disadvantaged and excluded groups (see chapter 9 for more details).

The vocational qualification reform programme aims to make qualifications more flexible through the unit and credit-based frameworks, which allow for better horizontal and vertical flexibility of the system. The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) in England and Northern Ireland is currently being populated, whereas the Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework (SCQF) is already well developed. The underlying aims of the ongoing reforms are to ensure 'parity of esteem' between vocational and academic education and ensure more flexible pathways for all.

A major aim has been to move from a model where institutions respond to government priorities to one where they respond directly to the needs and demands of individual learners, parents and employers. One reason for this has been to rebalance the roles and responsibilities of the state, employer and individual, recognising that, when potentially unlimited demand confronts limited public resource, the role of public funding must be clearly defined. Although funding remains a key factor in many of the options available and choices made.

In terms of governance and funding, arrangements have been changed to support government priorities, i.e. by merging or creating semi-independent agencies (e.g. for inspection, regulation of qualifications, etc). The new performance assessment framework for colleges and providers in England (Framework for Excellence) helps to trace destinations of learners and aims to improve progression and choice for learners. The switch to demand-led funding and end to the supply-side planning of adult skills provision has led to the institutional reform of planning and funding bodies. At the beginning of 2010, the responsibilities for 16 to 19 year olds were transferred to local authorities from the Learning and Skills Council (England) and the new Skills Funding Agency to distribute funding for adult learners in the FE colleges was created.

The FE sector has undergone a major change in the last three years through the introduction of new quality measures to improve the transparency and provide greater coherence of planning where decisions are based on the quality and responsiveness of the provision. The series of government policy documents aimed to:

- develop a network of colleges who have the confidence, independence and autonomy to shape their own futures for the benefit of learners, employers and their local community; and

- reduce bureaucracy by introducing a lighter touch inspection regime, based on colleges' own assessment of their performance, and a more streamlined planning and funding system that increasingly allows colleges to become more focused on priorities.

As the UK labour market is relatively unregulated, the social partnership in vocational education and training remains largely voluntary. In terms of VET policy formulation, there have been some increased strategic involvement and cooperation, despite different approaches on the part of employers and trade unions, particularly over financing of training and degree of control.

The employer-dominated Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), 23 quasi-governmental bodies coordinate enterprise training and are involved in the allocation of state funds for skills training. They take a lead in collating and communicating sectoral labour market data and intelligence that provide their input into the development and revision of occupational standards, on which qualifications and training programmes are based. They also consider collective actions to address specific sector skills needs. All SSCs have representatives of trade unions and professional bodies on their boards in their advisory roles.

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) is an umbrella organisation for SSCs (executive function) and has a skills agenda strategic leadership and advisory role, by providing evidence-based advice to the government. In 2010, it advised the government to introduce a statutory entitlement to training and to simplify the number of publicly funded bodies involved in skills agenda.

VALIDATION AND RECOGNITION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

The UK has considerable experience and expertise in the recognition of the informal and non-formal learning either as a non-traditional entry route into further or higher education or helping adult unemployed to return to work by identifying their job-related skills. The introduction of National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications (N/SVQs) switched the emphasis on the use of prior experience and learning in assessment for formal qualifications (accreditation of prior learning - APL).

Arrangements for the recognition of non-formal learning are linked to the outcomes-orientation of competence-based NVQ qualifications and outcome-based non-N/SVQ qualifications. They do not depend on fixed syllabuses, fixed location or fixed time. Any learner, employed or not, who can provide evidence that meet the demands of the evidence requirements for a whole or partial qualification can be awarded credit. However, the burden of providing evidence and the practicalities of assessment of non-formal/informal learning are considerable and the problems of cost and complexity are widely reported. The importance of non-formal and/or informal learning is clearly acknowledged in employers' increasing use in selection of accounts of experience, rather than formal qualifications, as evidenced in QCDA research on trends in the use of qualifications.

Typically, a portfolio evidencing the learning is produced, indicating the level and areas of expertise, then the level and content of the learning that will be assessed. APL is most likely to apply to a mature applicant.

The possibility of recognising prior learning is being incorporated into the qualifications and credit frameworks in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This is also part of the arrangements for the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) that allows credit rating and levelling of all learning, including core skills, generic skills and subject-specific learning as long as it is based upon outcomes; is assessed and is quality assured.

This process is governed by a set of guidelines for the recognition of informal and non formal learning within the corresponding frameworks.

2.1.3 CURRENT DEBATES

The ongoing debate on the UK skills base, particularly in times of economic downturn , calls for some urgent action. Thus the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) warns in their progress report *Ambition 2020*¹⁴ that as the supply of higher-level skills outpaces the demand: while the proportion of over-qualified employees is rising, there is no sufficient or adequate training where it is most needed. UKCES proposes an integrated strategy and demand-led skills and employment systems.

One of the first consultations launched by the coalition government has been on Skills for Sustainable Growth (England) that outlines the new ministerial vision for skills by committing to further enhancing in-work training and workplace training and includes references to the QCF. It also explores some key areas to seek further views, i.e. on how real gains in skills can be best achieved and invites comments and ideas on the role of colleges and training organisations in helping people make a smooth transition from learning to the world of work.

In terms of VET agenda, the new Coalition government has announced an independent review of vocational education for 14 to 19 year olds in England with an aim to increase parity of esteem of vocational qualifications that had left to the gap in the country's skills base. The review will examine

- the institutional arrangements of vocational education, for example, establishment of university technical schools and colleges;
- its responsiveness to a changing the labour market;
- funding mechanisms including arrangements for who bears the cost of qualifications;
- progression from vocational education to work, higher education and higher level training;
- the role of the third sector, private providers, employers and awarding bodies.

The study and recommendations, which are due in spring 2011, will consider ways to increase incentives for young people to participate by taking explicit account of good practice in a selection of developed economies.

As part of making post-compulsory education and training more efficient, a consultation A Simplified Further Education and Skills Funding System and Methodology (England), which seeks views on simplifying the funding system has also been launched.

¹⁴ *Ambition 2020, UKCES, 2009.*

2.2 THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF EUROPEAN TOOLS

CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

The ongoing Vocational Qualification reform across the UK Devolved Governments (DGs) has been refining qualifications frameworks. It aims to make qualifications landscape more understandable to employers and learners while meeting the needs of both and providing clear and accessible routes to employability and flexible learning progression.

England has begun the process of converting the National Qualification Framework (NQF) into the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), which is a unitised, credit-based and web-based regulated framework. In England, The QCF is a new way of recognising achievements of learners through the award of credit for units and qualifications that enables qualifications to be achieved gradually by the accumulation and transfer of credit. The work includes both academic and applied knowledge and skills. The aim is that the linkage of all levels, including school-based, vocational qualifications and higher education will be completed by 2010-11.

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework was instrumental in developing this process in 2002, by promoting lifelong learning in Scotland and ensuring a better understanding of qualifications in Scotland. It enabled learners, provider and employers to identify how the range of Scottish qualifications, related to each other and to other forms of learning, and how different types of qualification can contribute to improving the skills of the workforce.

From 2003 In Wales, all learning, including mainstream qualifications, was brought into a single unifying structure - the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW). The framework merges the concepts of volume of learning achievements (credit) and the demands made by that learning on the learner (level) to create a system that is able to embrace all types and styles of learning, and all qualifications.

The QCF will incorporate systems for Wales and Northern Ireland. The framework has been approved by ministers for national roll out and now is being populated with units. Training providers and Awarding Organisations have been tasked with developing common and consistent approaches to providing information, advice and guidance to learners and employers on achieving credit and qualifications from the QCF, alongside course description/s and marketing and promotional materials. This includes a review of the assessment methodology and the implementation of processes to accommodate the award of credit consistent with the requirements of the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) and regulators.

The QCF operates in England and Northern Ireland. In Wales the QCF forms part of the larger Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW). Both Scotland and Wales operate overarching credit and qualification frameworks: the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW), respectively. Both the SCQF and CQFW are meta-frameworks which encompass the relevant qualification frameworks for higher education qualifications; the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education institutions in Scotland (FQHE, Scotland) and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ, EWNI).

All UK countries have outcomes-based education systems, and the development of the outcome-based methodology has been central to the VET reform, including qualification

frameworks. Most VET qualifications, school qualifications and first degrees are described and assessed in outcomes terms. Within the QCF, every unit and qualification in the framework has a credit value and level. Units are building blocks of all qualifications. The qualifications are of three sizes (award, certificate, diploma). The framework has nine levels of difficulty (in Scotland, the SCQF has 12). When a learner completes a unit, they are awarded the relevant credits, which are recorded electronically on their learner record. The SSCs have a major role in defining learning outcomes in terms of employability.

One credit is awarded for those learning outcomes achieved in ten hours of learning time. Organisations that have been recognised to develop and submit units place units in the QCF unit database. Once they are available in the databank, they may be used to build qualifications by using approved and agreed rules of combination (RoC). Rules of combination specify the credits that need to be achieved, through particular units, for a qualification to be awarded. All qualifications within the framework have rules of combination, developed through consultation with awarding organisations, SSCs and employer representatives. They are the mechanisms through which sets of achievements are grouped together into a qualification. The other purpose of rules of combination is to develop the structure through which credits may be transferable between qualifications and awarding bodies. This is a new feature of the QCF.

Awarding organisations subsequently use agreed RoC to develop assessment arrangements for qualifications and submit qualifications for accreditation. Once accredited, awarding organisations offer these units and qualifications to approved centres who are responsible for supporting learners; for carrying out assessment of units and ensuring the awards of credits and qualifications¹⁵. The regulatory arrangements for the QCF are maintained by respective qualifications regulators in England (Ofqual), Wales (DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (CCEA) and are centred around the learners' interests, public value for money and ensuring that quality and standards are maintained by organisations operating within the QCF.

As part of the framework development, the QCF has published guidelines for credit accumulation and transfer and accreditation of informal and non-formal learning. Scotland has had this mechanism as part of the SCQF for some time. Wales adopted Recognition of non formal learning working document in 2006.

For learners the frameworks have a number of perceived benefits as they are:

- Flexible: possibility to recognise prior learning, including non-certified learning, towards a recognised qualification
- Transferable: possibility to transfer work-based skills and learning into credit that can then be put towards units and qualifications
- Quality-assured: and completion of units at a pace and in a way that fits around their lives
- Easy to understand: and compare the difficulty of each qualification and the amount of work involved, so they can make a more informed choice

¹⁵ Adopted from *Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework*, Ofqual, August 2008.

- Geared toward progression: they include unit-based learning that allows them to decide whether to progress further with a skill or change direction and put learning to new use.

GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY IN VET

Both the inward and outward mobility of learner in the UK remains quite low compared with other EU MS due to several reasons¹⁶. Although the previous government introduced some measures to promote the mobility of learners within the remit of the EU programmes, these measures did not lead to a systemic government approach or strategy. The policy measures mainly concentrate on emerging economies and promotion of national education and attract overseas students to the UK.

Both inward and outward geographical mobility of learners in the UK, although growing remains quite low, compared with other EU Member States. Leonardo da Vinci Mobility programmes promote mobility across a varied programme of European placements and exchanges. In 2008 the Leonardo da Vinci mobility statistics showed 738 out of 1677 total mobility placements.

Europass aims to help people make their skills and qualifications clearly and easily understood in Europe, thus facilitating the mobility of both learners and workers. The Europass documents have been designed in such a way as to help people chronicle their skills and competences in a coherent manner, whether they are planning to enroll in an education or training programme, looking for a job, or getting experience abroad (<http://www.europass.ie/europass>) initiative is not taken up readily in the UK, although the situation has improved in the last two years. There is no formal requirement for the awarding bodies to produce the Certificate Supplement, so the uptake is quite slow. The most advanced is the City and Guilds awarding body that launched the Europass Certificate Supplement in 2008. Edexcel are in the process of creating theirs.

City & Guilds has a portfolio of over 500 qualifications, therefore the launch of the Certificate Supplement for every award has been phased out. An additional challenge is that a qualification might lead to more than one specialisation (i.e. certificate) at the same level. This then requires a Certificate Supplement to be produced for each individual certificate achieved because the Supplement relates not only to the qualification, but also to the route a learner has chosen to complete.

A dedicated Europass website has been created where the Certificate Supplements can be downloaded: www.cityandguilds.com/Europass. This provides an easy, 24-hour and free access to the documents for all users.

City & Guilds promoted the scheme by producing two press releases: one targeted the corporate sector to raise awareness among employers who are yet to accept Europass as a meaningful tool, while the second was aimed at managers responsible for selection and recruitment. The Europass initiative is also widely advertised in City & Guilds qualification documentation and promotional materials.

In Scotland, the HE sector has engaged with the provision of Europass Diploma Supplements and other education stakeholders are exploring the possibility of utilising the Diploma and Certificate Supplements as part of an ongoing engagement with European activity.

¹⁶ For more details, see the 2010 UK VET policy report.

3.1 OVERVIEW

The UK experienced a major economic downturn during 2008-2009 that affected most of the economic sectors in the UK. In its *2010 UK Economic Outlook*¹⁷, PWC states that almost all industry sectors are being affected to some degree by the current economic downturn. The PWC Sector Vulnerability Index that combines ten key economic and financial indicators for 15 major industry sectors suggests that the metal products, financial services and hotels and restaurants sectors are currently the most vulnerable in the short term. Other sectors with above average vulnerability include engineering, transport and construction. The main factor behind these rankings is the relatively high cyclical nature of these sectors in the past, combined in some cases with weak current financial positions.

As stated in the *2010 Education at a Glance*¹⁸, the economic crisis has hit the youngest and the least qualified the hardest. As with most other OECD countries, those with below upper-secondary education have experienced at least twice the amount of increased unemployment compared to those with tertiary education between 2008 and 2009. In November 2009, the number of 16-24 year old NEETs reached 1.074 million, with a 105 000 increase compared to November 2008¹⁹. The number of long-term unemployed, younger than 25 years of age, has grown 66% over 12 months to November 2009. Youth, women and temporary workers have also been affected, e.g. of the 100 000 job losses, 40% were among the young, though they comprise only 14% of all employees and 36% among temporary workers, although they comprise only 5% of all workers²⁰. Data from Scotland is available but focuses on the 16-19 age group and is therefore not directly comparable. (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2009/07/28092044/19>)

3.2. EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS ON THE VET AND CORRESPONDING MEASURES

3.2.1 TRENDS IN LEARNERS' BEHAVIOUR

Similar to the recession of the 1990s, the applications to FE colleges and universities has been on an unprecedented rise. The Universities and Colleges Admission Services (UCAS) saw a 12% increase in applications in April 2009, reaching by 2010, a 22.9% increase. The biggest increase was from candidates aged over 25, which rose by 15.8% in 2009 (63.4% by 2010)²¹ despite a government withdrawal of funding (September 2007) for people who want to retrain in a different sphere rather than become or stay unemployed, by studying an

¹⁷

http://www.pwc.co.uk/eng/publications/which_industry_sectors_are_most_vulnerable_to_the_economic_downturn.html

¹⁸ http://www.oecd.org/document/52/0,3343,en_2649_39263238_45897844_1_1_1_1,00.html

¹⁹ <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000913/NEETQBQ42009final.pdf>

²⁰ *Skills in the Recession*, TUC, London, January 2009, page 5.

²¹ UCAS Media Release, 'Application numbers hit record highs for the fourth year running, 8 February 2010.

equivalent or lower qualifications than the one they already hold. The increase for applicants between 21-24 years of age was very high (up 44.8 per cent) in early 2010. It should be noted that some of the increase can be accounted for by 'new' categories of applicant coming into the UCAS applications process for the first time, such as those applying for nursing and midwifery courses, as well as the ending of later application deadlines for some courses (e.g. fine art).

Adults hoping to invest in education and training by retraining can face serious competition for places, due to the cuts in publicly funded places (5,000 in total) ordered by the government for 2010-2011.

In Scotland, the increase in UCAS applications for 2010 entry to higher education is much higher than the UK average (over 31 per cent), particularly among mature applicants, with a rise of 58 per cent for ages 21-24 and a 108 per cent for the over 25s²². Since at least the start of the 2009-10 academic year, colleges have seen their applications rise phenomenally for all types of programmes, not least those which are full-time.

3.2.2 TRENDS IN ENTERPRISERS' BEHAVIOUR

The last recession of the 1990s showed that the level of training in companies fell. Although it may be too early to see the full impact of the current recession, it can be seen that, previously the proportion of people in receipt of training was 27 per cent in October-December 2006 (pre-recession) and stayed at that level for the same period in 2007 and 2008 (LFS Autumn 2006-2008)²³. UKCES's *Ambition 2020* notes that during the recession the nature of the training has changed: as recruitment levels fall, the companies spend less resources on induction and safety, and more on developing the necessary skills to survive through the current recession and thrive when the economy upturns.

Some businesses have been conducting surveys in anticipating skills needs in the economic slowdown climate as part of the future skills needs projections. Those with a wide range of skills, i.e. 'all rounders' are predicted to do well in terms of sustained employment and those in possession of management, leadership and risk management skills are most likely to sustain their jobs.²⁴

The Cegos²⁵ survey reveals that the biggest area of growth will be e-learning, with nearly three quarters (73%) of organizations planning to use it for professional development in 2009. E-learning is set to increase 18 percentage points compared to survey figures released by Cegos in June 2008, which showed 55% of organizations to be using e-learning. More than half of respondents said blended learning will be a key part of their training strategy and one in five respondents plan to embrace mobile learning in 2009. Blended and mobile learning are also preferred modes of learning.

²² See 'Universities see rise in applications from older people', at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/8504428.stm> (8 February 2010).

²³ *Ambition 2020*, UKCES, 2009, page 100

²⁴ *Accounting Web, International Survey Accountancy: The future outlook, part of the ACCA paper, April 2009*

²⁵ *Survey of training budgets(online and hard copy forms) of 500 companies across every key industry sector, Cegos, November 2008*

Although the Cegos survey covers only companies of the industrial sector, the findings are indicative of more general trends in most large companies to maintain, if marginally reduce, corporate L&D budgets and shifting to more accountable, cost-effective and less time consuming modes of training delivery, (i.e. e-learning) or developing in-house trainers. The CBI/Nord Anglia education and skills survey shows that in response to the recession, over half of the employers (51%) say that they want to target their training more effectively to get maximum return on their spend²⁶. Situation across sectors and size of the companies varies.

Despite government's substantial investments in expanding Apprenticeships programme to help young people in the recession, the number of 16 to 18 year-olds start-up Apprentices fell by 7.5% in 2009, whilst the number of 19 to 24 year olds starting Apprenticeship dropped by 5.9% over the same period, although the completion rates overall have improved. Figures released by the Department for Business, Innovations and Skills in October 2009, showed that there were 33,900 new Apprenticeship starts in the fourth quarter of the academic year 2008-09. This is 29% lower than in the previous three months and 36% lower than in the same period in 2007-08. The reason for the decreasing number of Apprentices is partly the unwillingness of the firms to recruit Apprentices who have initial training needs and their wish to reduce discretionary spending²⁷.

Apprenticeship figures in Scotland have increased significantly over the past ten years from 8110 in 1998 to 28,028 in 2007.²⁸ The Scottish Government stated in their recent skills strategy that they were committed to ensuring Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) meet employers current and future needs". However the Scottish Government has made no commitment to set targets for modern apprenticeships.

In contrast the previous UK Government was aiming to have 90000 more young people in modern apprenticeships by 2013 to ensure a place for every suitably qualified person between the ages of 16 and 18 who wanted one.

The economic downturn led to the previous government in England to re-assessing and re-aligning the skills policy, which has been developed and started to be implemented during a relatively continuous period of economic and labour market growth of the last decade. In its report examining the impact of Leitch's 2006 review of skills, the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Committee (January 2009) recommended that the government would have to focus on tackling skills shortages and approaching skills as part of wider national economic development planning by building more flexibility into training support and making emphasis on re-skilling rather than upskilling as redundancies make people move to other sectors.

A more specific targeted approach was developed in order to address immediate needs of the most vulnerable through a range of training and career guidance and counseling initiatives; and by restructuring institutional arrangements and introducing easier access to training and less rigid entry requirements.

²⁶ 'Emerging stronger: the value of education and skills in turbulent times', *Education and Skills Survey, CBI/Nord Anglia, 581 respondents, (November to December 2008 reference period). Published April 2009.*

²⁷ *Ambition 2020, UKCES, 2009, page 100*

²⁸ *Destinations of Leavers from Scottish Schools 2006/07, National Statistics Publication for Scotland, The Scottish Government, (2007).*

The current recession brings the greatest mismatch in the labour market between a weak overall demand for and the available supply of labour creating both unemployment and unused skills. It brings social costs as well as lost productivity²⁹

In 2009, the government intention was to put emphasis on quality of training provision and shift to skills for employability rather than pure qualification attainment, as there was a growing pressure from employers and their representative bodies for publicly-funded education and training to give the development of employability skills more priority to help recession-proof learners acquire work-related skills, which are based on real work practice and are practical and applied in nature³⁰.

3.2.3 MEASURES TAKEN AT GOVERNANCE LEVELS (NATIONAL, REGIONAL, LOCAL)

The recession has led to an increased public debt and government's decision to curtail public expenditure. The UK budget deficit is predicted to reach more than € 150 billion in 2010-2011. The previous government started reducing public spending in 2009. As part of the €4.9 billion cuts required across all public spending in the immediate future, the further and higher education sectors and some skill investment programmes will have to have substantial funding cuts in the academic year 2010-11 (£1.4 (£1.5) worth of cuts over the next three years). Overall, over 133,000 further education and training places will be lost in 2010-11 due to the €320 million cuts in spending for provision of training places, with a further €218 million cut from programmes, such as Train to Gain, adult Apprentices and Skills for Life.

The new coalition government has introduced even bigger cuts that will affect the education and training sector across the UK. Education spending in England could be cut by as much as 25%³¹ over the next four years, with front line spending on schools being protected for one year. Teachers and lecturers also face a two-year pay freeze from 2011.

Early into the economic downturn, the government in England introduced a series of measures using existing skills framework to offer a rapid response to the current challenges aiming at both the VET systemic level and individuals, by offering them financial assistance and fast access to training provision.

The 2009-2010 budget report pointed out that the recession accelerated government's shift from purely employer-driven to more interventionist strategic longer-term sectoral approach. With a more targeted approach, the government intention was to protect the key sectors and economic infrastructure industries, such as construction and transport during the economic downturn; to promote key skills such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM); and to support growth in green industries, i.e. renewable energy and green manufacturing.

In September 2008, the government introduced initiatives to safeguard skills during the economic downturn in most affected sectors by establishing apprenticeship 'Clearing

²⁹ Ibid, *The 2009 Report Ambition 2020: World Class Skills and Jobs for the UK, Key Findings and Implications for Action*, UKCES, 2009.

³⁰ *The Employability Challenge*, UKCES, London, February 2009.

³¹ *The detailed settlements would be set out in the comprehensive spending review in October 2010.*

House'. The rapid response service was aimed to find new employer places for apprentices facing redundancy and will ensure there were enough new apprentices in the system to deliver government plans for the future and meet the sectors' future needs. To help employers take on apprentice and stimulate demand there was financial support ranging from £3,000 (£3,300) direct funding to £9,820 (£10,200) depending on the apprenticeship programme. In addition, through a network of trained advisors ongoing mentoring and support was provided. The service was based on close co-operation of sectoral regional networks and government agencies and was operational in some sectors, such as construction.

In Northern Ireland, the Skillsafe scheme (2009) assists Apprentices who have been placed on short-time working as a result of the economic downturn. The scheme aims to fill apprentices' downtime with accredited training that will contribute towards their Apprenticeship. They also receive a training allowance to help offset the reduction in their pay. There are measures in place for those with disabilities and health conditions to move into work through a series of active labour market programmes, e.g. Pathways to Work, the Work Preparation Programme.

In the 2009-2010 budget, over £3.1 (£3.4) billion was earmarked for providing training opportunities in the public and voluntary sectors, as well as in growing sectors for long-term young and older unemployed. In 2009, the government initiated a move to increase the role of public procurement by encouraging contractors to meet social objectives such as skills development, equality and employment opportunities. The new guidance on how to embed skills training and apprenticeship in all aspects and stages of the procurement process was published and covered all types of public contracts for products and services from facilities and IT to construction. Further public cuts, announced by the coalition government in 2010, will have an impact on this and other initiatives, described in this chapter.

One of the first initiatives to go through the Parliament in 2010 in the light of deeper cuts to public spending, was the 'Small Change, Big Difference' Ten Minute Rule Bill, which aims to increase the number of private sector work-based apprenticeships available to young people by effective use of public resources. The Bill will seek to place a duty on companies who receive large public sector contracts to employ additional apprentices. It calls for each million pounds spent outside of the public sector to result in at least one additional apprentice. This builds on a UCATT's 'one in a million' campaign which has a similar ethos within the construction sector.

For the unemployed, a Job Centre Plus Rapid Response Service (RRS) was established in November 2008 to help "every employer with 20 or more redundancies and in local communities who have been disproportionately affected by multiple smaller scale redundancies". It is based on a partnership with Regional Development Agencies, local authorities and post-16 planning and funding bodies, which helps with "skills matching, job search skills and access to training and re-skilling opportunities"³². An established integrated employment and skills service (JCP/LSC) provides the unemployed with essential skills through tailored programmes. Another scheme, the Local Employment Partnership aims to provide a rapid pre and post employment skills response (within two weeks) for priority JCP customers. Training on offer ranges from new skills or qualifications to on-the-job training in entirely new field.

³² *Department for Work and Pensions Press Release, 12 November 2008.*

In Wales, a €11 million innovative project is intended to assist around 3 000 women through training and mentoring, to progress their careers and higher skilled employment opportunities. The training allowance scheme is also available to women wishing to improve their range of skills, as well as identifying quality part-time work.

In January 2009, to combat a short- and long-lasting consequences the recession can have on SMEs, the government introduced a financial package to the sector through T2G programme to support re-training of their staff to level 2 and additional measures to fund training to level 3, which give firms a greater competitive edge. The £350 (€380) million package enables SMEs to access state funding for employees training for accredited units or modules of qualifications as opposed to whole qualification in 'bite-sized chunks' in subjects known to be important to SMEs, such as business improvement, team-working, customer services, and risk management. The brokers within the T2G offer tried and tested skills diagnostic and audits tools, which were fine-tuned to the needs of the sector.

The present public spending cuts will also affect the Future Jobs Fund, which was expected to provide funding for 150,000 jobs for 18-24 year olds in the public and private sector in local communities and across the voluntary sector. Another initiative for long-term unemployed, was meant to create 100,000 jobs in growing sectors (e.g. social care, hospitality) by providing specifically tailored pathways into profession and offering either a financial incentive of £1,500 (€1,600) as a recruitment subsidy for sustained employment and training or pre-employment training and £2 000 (€2,100) recruitment subsidy.

At the regional level, 'unionlearn' (a training fund supported by the trade unions and the government) has piloted Collective Learning Fund in the North West and East Midlands, which aims to help lever in more employer investment for training their workforce in transferable skills to equip them both for different jobs in the company/organization and for jobs in the wider labour market. The project will consider the implication of the economic downturn in the further development of the fund.

SCOTLAND

Scotland remained in recession in 2009. In Q3 2009 the Scottish economy contracted by 0.2%, while the UK economy declined by 0.3% over the same period. The latest evidence from the Scottish business surveys suggest that the Scottish economy is close to moving out of recession, with the monthly PMI survey for January 2010 reporting that private sector output in Scotland has grown for the seventh consecutive month³³. The Scottish Government focuses on recovery and is committed to protecting jobs, supporting communities and investing. In autumn 2008, it introduced the Economic Recovery Programme, which is built on the Government Economic Strategy³⁴. The Strategy identified five strategic priorities for economic growth: infrastructure and place; learning, skills and well-being; a supportive business environment; effective government; and equity. The Economic Recovery Programme sets out how these priorities will drive economic growth during the downturn. The Economic Recovery Programme is a constantly-evolving framework for action, undertaken collectively by the Scottish Government, local government, public bodies and social partners.

³³ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/03/03084300/3>

³⁴ *The Economic Strategy was adopted in 2007 to create a more successful country through increasing sustainable economic growth.*

SUPPORTING JOBS THROUGH BRINGING FORWARD CAPITAL SPENDING

The Budget for 2009-10 accelerates £293 (€322) million of capital spending into 2009-10 (across public sectors, including national health and transport), on top of £53 (€58) million in 2008-09. In total, this accelerated investment is expected to support around 6,350 jobs in the Scottish economy in 2009-2010.

In particular, Local Authorities are investing £90 (€90.9) million to accelerate a range of capital spending programmes spread across Scotland. These include new and refurbished schools, social work facilities, new recreational facilities and a range of key infrastructure projects to support the economy and community development. Colleges and universities are benefiting from £20.5 (€22.5) million of extra infrastructure improvements from the acceleration of capital spending over 2008-10.

STRENGTHENING EDUCATION AND SKILLS

The Scottish Government has taken forward a wide range of actions to support education and skills during the economic downturn.

Curriculum for Excellence is the national curriculum for Scottish Schools for learners from age 3 to 18. It was developed out of a 2002 consultation exercise - the 'National Debate on Education' - undertaken by the Scottish Executive on the state of school education. In response to the National Debate, Ministers established a Curriculum Review Group in November 2003 to identify the purposes of education for the 3 to 18 age range and determine the key principles to be applied in redesigning the curriculum. Its work resulted in the publication in November 2004 of *A Curriculum for Excellence*

Curriculum for Excellence, Building the Curriculum 3 entitles young people to a senior phase of learning to increase a stay-on in post-compulsory school leaving stage. To support this, 16+ Learning Choices programme will offer a place in learning to all young people by December 2010 (60,000 individuals each year). For 2009-2010, £16 (€17) million is earmarked to support school leavers who go into negative destination³⁵ to develop pilots of Activity Agreements - an improved way of recognising and supporting their learning in a community or third sector setting.

In order to create thousands of additional college places to meet the rising demand caused by the economic downturn, in particular from school-leavers, an additional £16.1 (€17) million has been allocated for 2009-2010. £200 (€210) million European funding, including £100 (€110) million of European Social Funds will support individuals entering or remaining in work. Early 2009, the successful second round of the EU-funded projects, made up of £5.6 (€6.1) million in the Highlands and Islands, funding 33 projects, supporting 7,000 people, and £24.1 (€26) million to fund 79 projects, supporting 75,000 people in the rest of Scotland was announced.

ScotAction is the Scottish Government's skills support package (launched summer 2009) for helping Scotland out of recession and into longer-term economic growth. ScotAction is an integrated package that provides skills assistance to individuals and businesses- including wage subsidies in some circumstances - for training for work, training in work and training from work to work. This includes extensive activity in support of apprenticeships.

STRENGTHENING SKILLS THROUGH SUPPORTING APPRENTICESHIPS

³⁵ There were 7 000 such young people in 2007-08.

Skills Development Scotland, Scotland's national skills agency, has responded to employers to ensure that Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) and other skills interventions meet both the current and future needs of businesses. As a result of this collaboration a number of changes have been made:

- funding for adult MAs being re-introduced in areas where employers have demonstrated evidence of demand, such as Meat Processing, Bakery and Printing;
- level 2 MA Frameworks being approved in sectors such as Construction and Food and Drink; and
- a new Life Sciences MA Framework.

Early 2009, the Scottish Government announced £16 (€17) million in funding to support an additional 7,800 new apprenticeships this year, including:

- 1,000 apprenticeships for young people in Glasgow to support the Commonwealth Games Legacy proposal;
- 50 all-age apprenticeships for the Creative industries; and
- 100 all-age Home Energy and Efficiency Apprenticeships.

Over 150 employers and key partners attended a first ever Apprenticeships Summit in April 2009 to determine how to stimulate apprentice recruitment and ensure that the apprenticeship programme adapted to the challenges of the recession. As a direct result, the following measures have been introduced through *ScotAction*:

- adult apprenticeships in sectors with clear employer demand starting with 500 in Hospitality and Tourism; and
- the 'Adopt an Apprentice' scheme which provides a subsidy of up to £2,000 (€2,100) for employers who take on a redundant apprentice, and where the apprentice cannot secure alternative employment an opportunity to undertake alternative training in a college. The Adopt and Apprentice scheme is supported by European Social Funds.

SUPPORT FOR ADULTS

As part of the Economic Recovery Plan, Scotland has introduced a range of initiatives that are closely co-ordinated with the Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) - Scotland's partner initiative, which provides help to employees when an organization faces potential redundancies.

The Scottish Government's national strategic partnership framework, Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE), for responding to redundancy situations has been strengthened by:

- launching a national dedicated helpline and a media campaign; revamped website and improved information resources in February to make PACE services more accessible to individuals and employers.
- Launching a £1.4 (€1.5) million project - including European Social Fund support - that will help an additional 4,600 individuals through a variety of support including individual career planning interviews, individual employability and career planning group sessions.
- Holding a PACE Summit to share best practice and consider how the service can be further improved.

- Establishing a high-level national strategic PACE Partnership to continue to make the service more flexible and effective.

Under the PACE Framework, local PACE teams, involving key local and national agencies, have responsibility for devising and implementing a local action plan targeted at finding alternative employment or training opportunities for those affected by redundancy. It is now the role of Skills Development Scotland to co-ordinate national and local level response teams to provide tailored help and support and to identify training activities.

STRENGTHENING SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS TO WORK

Pilots have been launched in 25 sites - in Jobcentres and careers offices - to test the delivery of an integrated employment and skills service between Jobcentre Plus and Skills Development Scotland. This will enable those who have recently become unemployed to access a skills check alongside careers advice with onward referral to skills training where appropriate. Since the pilot was launched in February 2009, over 1,000 people have been referred by Jobcentre Plus to Skills Development Scotland services.

The eligibility rules of the Training for Work, a vocational training programme to enable people to access it as soon as they have notice of redundancy, have also changed. Further changes have been made to enable unemployed individuals to access it after three months of unemployment (rather than six months, as it had been previously).

3.3 LONGER-TERM CONSEQUENCES AND FUTURE RESPONSES

It is evident, that the policy initiatives introduced at the onset of the current recession, took into account the necessity to invest into skills and training of the workforce. The public spending cuts will have a serious effect but it's too early to say to which extent.

4.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND³⁶

The history of the VET in the UK countries is quite diverse and complex, being subject to different initiative with different purposes. This synopsis highlights some of the historical aspects of the VET developments in England.

According to some researchers, the history of VET in the UK is closely associated with the development of relationship between technical education and industrial growth and the influence of the English culture and history. The Statute of Artificers of 1563 is the first example of state intervention and provided the legal basis for vocational training until 1814 when the 'laissez faire' attitudes of the time opposing any state regulation brought about its abolition.

During the 19th century, vocational and technical education was initially left to voluntary groups and employers, for example the Mechanics Institutes founded in the 1760s to provide technical education. During the next century, technical schools and colleges offering part-time technical education gradually came into being, some funded by employers and some by private subscription. Under the Technical Instruction Act 1889, responsibility for these institutions was assumed by the new county councils and county boroughs, and many existing FE colleges and universities came into existence in this way. Typically, the education provided by these technical colleges was for supervisory and technical staff rather than ordinary manual workers and was mostly carried out in the evenings, in individuals' own time. The first technical school was opened in London in 1907.

The gradual industrial decline of the 19th century is partly associated with the lack of a national strategy for technical education and training and the resultant failure to establish a network of technical education institutions until early 20th century, compared with France and Germany, who had already established technical universities in the early 1800s. The preoccupation with greater valued of the academic over the practical subjects and the urge to push practical subjects into an academic subject culture i.e. academic drift were also considered as critical factors that slowed down the development of an effective national technical education system at all levels. These factors largely explain why such issues as the so-called academic/vocational divide and the value of parity of esteem between work-based and other qualifications still dominant in political and educational debates even today³⁷.

The system of vocational education in the UK initially developed independently of the state, with bodies such as the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and City & Guilds that set examination for technical subjects, followed by universities, colleges, and a later stage by government. Currently, there are over 150 awarding organisations, recognised by Ofqual.

³⁶ Adapted from <http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/lrnanddev/general/thistory>;

³⁷ Adapted from Dick Evans The History of Technical Education http://www.tmag.co.uk/extras/history_of_Technical_Education_v2.pdf

In the times of the Second World War, when the demand for skilled labour was growing, the Education Act 1944 made provision for a tripartite system of secondary modern, secondary technical and grammar schools. But by 1975, only 0.5% of British senior students were in technical schools, whereas in Germany it reached two-thirds of the cohort³⁸.

Successive governments have continued to promote vocational and technical education and industry involvement, with different approaches and degrees of success. The 1960s were marked by the establishment of 29 Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) and the levy/grant system. This was a marked shift from the previous voluntarism to financial and institutional inducement to industry to extend its training. In the 1970s, to achieve national, rather than partial coverage a national Training Services Agency (TSA) was established. Through a Training Opportunities Programme adults could receive accelerated training in key trades. The Employment and Training Act created a tripartite Manpower Services Commission (MSC), with the TSA under it, to develop a national strategy for training, an acknowledgement of a more active role for the state and of training's importance to the economy.

In the 1980-90s, the Youth Training Scheme that was later replaced by the New Deal was introduced to alleviate the adverse effects of youth unemployment. At the same time, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) was established to design and implement a new National Vocational Qualification (NVQ; SVQ in Scotland) framework to bring order and structure to qualifications, including accreditation for what had already been accomplished. In 1994, in recognition that traditional apprenticeships had virtually died during the 1980s, Modern Apprenticeships were introduced, linked to the N/SVQ system.

Over the latter half of the 20th century there was increasing demand for courses that gave entry to higher education.

The late 1990s and early 2000s, saw an increased government intervention in VET and an increased industries' representation in the VET policy making process. The weak industry training organisations were replaced by more broadly-based Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) from 2002. In the same spirit of greater co-ordination, in the 2000s the Government issued its Skills Strategies with the aims of ensuring that employers had the skills to support the success of their business, and that employees had the necessary skills to be both employable and personally fulfilled throughout their lives.

West and Steedman³⁹ concluded that the impact of initiatives, courses, qualifications and indeed philosophies had resulted in:

- a plethora of qualifications;
- high degrees of non-completion and a dropping off of participation at 17;
- poor linkages both between the various types of vocational courses on offer, and between them and vocational offerings in higher education;
- poor linkages to the labour market, not helped by the fact that the industry bodies who are meant to set standards have been reorganized five times in the last thirty years.

³⁸ Wolf, A. (2002) *Does Education Matter? Myths about Education and Economic Growth* London: Penguin.

³⁹ West, J. and Steedman, H. *Finding Our Way: Vocational Education in England*, LSE, 2003

The new coalition government aims to increase the esteem with which vocational studies are held and plans to establish university technical schools and colleges specialising in practical skills.

4.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

No single piece of legislation provides the basis for the legal framework for education and training in the UK. Governance and system development has been regulated in a series of laws, each tackling different aspects of education and training. Moreover, there is no clear cut off between the IVET and CVET.

Devolution of powers to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland has required legislation to define the boundaries of responsibility of each of devolved administration. Other legislation has covered:

- reforming the organisations and structures for planning and funding provision;
- giving colleges in the further education sector independence from local authority control, allowing them to control their own budgets;
- revising the arrangements for approval of qualifications and the organisations responsible for that approval, as well as attempting to improve the flexibility and relevance of the qualifications; and
- making provision for training for the unemployed.

Detailed regulations (for example lists of approved qualifications) do not form part of the legislation itself; instead the law provides for the government minister (acting on advice from the relevant advisory body) to issue lists or regulations from time to time.

Training in the UK has traditionally been 'voluntary' on the part of employers, rather than 'regulated' by the state, or 'negotiated by' the social partners, thus there is little legal obligation for employers to train staff, except where licensing of organisations or individuals is a requirement. Except in the construction, engineering and film-making industries, companies do not pay training levies.

The extent of collective agreements vary by industry and sector, although training has tended to be a matter left more to individual employers. For the last decade, the government places increasing importance on up-skilling the workforce and has strengthened sectoral approach to skills policy in the UK by enhancing the role of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). SSCs are tasked with securing increased levels of investment in skills and training. In June 2007, the government launched the Skills Pledge, a voluntary, public commitment by the company's management to support all its employees to develop their basic skills and work towards relevant qualifications (at least level 2).

Unions are taking a stronger interest in training than previously with an increased state support by providing statutory status to Union Learning Representatives (ULR) and establishing Learning Fund. But the link between training, access to a job, salary level and progression is less clearly defined or regulated than in countries where a social partnership approach structures these arrangements.

4.3 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

There is no official definition of IVET in the UK and it can take place in various settings, which are administered by different bodies.

The devolution of governance in the UK means that the government and institutional frameworks differ between England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales, all of which have extensive autonomy. The institutional framework is complex, the table below (table 1) shows the allocation of responsibilities in broad terms, but the details may differ across the four nations of the UK.

The general pattern is as follows:

- Overall policy for vocational learning and skills is the responsibility of the Learning / Skills or Education Department of each national government, which also deals with school education.
- The funding, provision and management of learning opportunities within the learning and skills sector (see definition below) in each nation is delegated to a funding council (LSC in England until 2010, then to be replaced by two new bodies, which determine priorities and the allocation of funding, as well as overseeing data collection).
- Regional and local bodies advise on the provision of learning opportunities to meet local needs, within the overall national policy and funding arrangements, but individual colleges have considerable autonomy.
- Inspection of the quality of provision is the responsibility of an independent body in each nation, as is research, evaluation of initiatives and staff development.
- Approval of qualifications for use in publicly funded provision is the responsibility of an 'accrediting body' for each nation, although those for England, Wales and Northern Ireland work closely on accreditation issues.
- Training programmes for the unemployed are the responsibility of the UK Department of Work and Pensions, working with the governments of the devolved administrations.
- Sector Skills Councils, responsible for identifying skills needs in economic sectors and for defining the occupational standards on which occupational qualifications are based, work across the UK, as does their co-ordinating body, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES).
- The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was set up in April 2009 under the two departments (DBIS and DCSF⁴⁰) that is totally responsible for the delivery of Apprenticeships and by December 2010, will take responsibility for the certification process for England.
- Awarding bodies develop and award a wide range of qualifications. Awarding bodies are private companies in their own right (with either commercial or charitable

⁴⁰ Department for Education, as of May 2010

status), although they are subject to regulation by accreditation bodies, e.g. Ofqual⁴¹ (England), Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) (Wales), and Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) (Northern Ireland). In Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is the national awarding body and, as such, is a non-departmental public body (NDPB) answerable directly to Scottish Ministers. SQA Accreditation is branch of SQA which has regulatory responsibility for qualifications in Scotland other than those awarded by organisations with degree awarding powers.

Partnerships

At policy level, the government has encouraged and invested in forming different partnerships representatives of various stakeholders. The creation of the SSCs and their umbrella organisation, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) is seen as the formation of a strategic partnership of major stakeholders, to strengthen the employers' voice and to ensure that vocational qualifications meet their needs. At the same time, there was progress in recognising the positive role of trade unions in helping to deliver government's Skills Strategy. Legislation in 2002 gave statutory recognition to the union learning representatives (see section 4) and in 2006, Unionlearn was set up as a coherent framework within the TUC to support the learning activities related to the workplace.

Vocational Qualifications Partnership Project (VQPP) (under BIS) has been in place since April 2010 to develop communications, capacity building and employer engagement for post-19 qualifications.

At regional level, Regional Skills Partnerships bring together government agencies (RDAs in England, for example), employers and education and training providers in strategic partnerships to develop coherent approaches to skills challenges in the regions. A similar scheme operates in Scotland, as part of the Innovation for Scotland framework (2009).

Some employers are also involved in local education-business partnerships (EBPs), which are funded in England through local funding bodies to offer work experience, mentoring, workplace visits, and most importantly enterprise activity and professional development and to promote sustained links between education and business organisations for the benefit of students.

At local level, innovative approaches to lifelong learning are being promoted through Lifelong Learning Partnerships (LLPs). Scotland has a similar nation-wide network of LLPs, together with the Adult Guidance Networks (AGNs). LLPs work collaboratively with the Scottish University for Industry.

Locally, AimHigher Partnerships aim to widen participation in higher education, including via vocational routes. Trade Unions have a prominent role in this initiative. Many government programmes are delivered in partnership with others from the public sector, voluntary and community sector or private sector; this allows for the introduction of specialist skills and knowledge. The Campaign for Learning through museums and galleries is one of the numerous initiatives, encouraging fresh thinking and innovation in the cultural sector. The Campaign for Learning also manages the National Workplace Learning Network (NWLN).

⁴¹ The regulatory function was taken over from QCA by Qfqual, a new body established in 2008-09.

The Private Finance Initiative (PFI) is an example of a successful initiative to attract financial contributions from the private sector. Many local authorities have partnering arrangements with the private sector to invest in school building projects and Skills Academies are another good example of PFI.

PPPs (public-private partnerships) had been promoted by the previous Labour government as a powerful tool for attracting resources from employers and individuals and have been successful in establishing new types of school.

Within the Strategic Partnership strategy (excluding Northern Ireland), BIS finance projects are based on partnerships between companies, business intermediaries including employer federations, trade unions and other employee representatives, trade associations, Business Links, Learning and Skills Councils (or equivalents), public sector bodies and charities. Their aims are to address sectoral and regional issues in six priority areas that have been agreed with TUC and Confederation of British Industry, including innovative approaches to learning and skills.

The learning and skills sector comprises further education colleges (including both general and specialist colleges and also Sixth Form colleges), post-compulsory education in school sixth forms, government funded work-based learning for young people (including Apprenticeships) and adult and community learning. The sector also has responsibility for workforce development issues, guidance for adults and education/business links.

Vocational Higher Education, whether undertaken in universities, in other institutions of higher education or in further education institutions, is the responsibility of the higher education funding and quality agencies.

TABLE 1: ALLOCATION OF VET RESPONSIBILITIES				
	ENGLAND	WALES	N. IRELAND	SCOTLAND
OVERALL POLICY FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS	Department for Education (DfE) ⁴² , Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) ⁴³	Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS)	Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI)	Scottish government Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department (SEETLLD)
FUNDING OF PROVIDERS IN THE LEARNING AND SKILLS SECTOR (COLLEGES OF FURTHER EDUCATION, ADULT LEARNING AND WORK-BASED LEARNING PROVIDERS); DETERMINING NATIONAL PRIORITIES	Skills Funding Agency (SFA); Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) ⁴⁴	Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS)	Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI)	Scottish Funding Council (SFC)
DETERMINATION OF PRIORITIES AT REGIONAL LEVEL AND RATIONALISATION OF PROVISION	Local Skills Funding Agencies (SFAs) via the Strategic Area Review (StARs) process. Liaison with Regional Development Agencies (RDAs).	Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) regional offices via Regional Statements of Needs and Priorities and in consultation with Community Consortia for Education and Training		Scottish Enterprise (SEn) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) working with Local Enterprise Companies (LECs); Skills Development Scotland.
INSPECTION OF PROVISION IN COLLEGES AND WORK-BASED TRAINING	<u>Ofsted</u> (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills)	Estyn (HM Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales)	DENI (Department of Education, Northern Ireland) on behalf of DELNI	HMle (Her Majesty's Inspectors, Scotland, as for Scottish schools and colleges, social care)
RESEARCH AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT	Learning and Skills Network (LSN)	Dysg (Division of DCELLS)	Learning and Skills Network, Northern Ireland (NI arm of LSN)	Scotland's Colleges; Skills Development Scotland

⁴² Until May 2010, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

⁴³ In June 2009, the Labour Government created a new department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) by merging the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.

⁴⁴ Until May 2010, National Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

	ENGLAND	WALES	N. IRELAND	SCOTLAND
APPROVAL OF QUALIFICATIONS WHICH MAY BE SUPPORTED BY PUBLIC FUNDING	Ofqual ^{45 46}	DCELLS - but NVQs are responsibility of Ofqual	CCEA - but NVQs are responsibility of Ofqual	SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority)
EMPLOYMENT POLICY AND THE NEW DEAL (FLEXIBLE PROGRAMME OF ADVICE AND TRAINING FOR THE UNEMPLOYED)	DWP	DWP in conjunction with Wales Employment Advisory Panel	DELNI	DWP in conjunction with Scottish government

OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS AND THE LICENSING OF SECTOR SKILLS BODIES	UKCES In the occupational standards programme, UKCES approves National Occupational Standards (NOS) and works in conjunction with Ofqual, SQA, DCELLS and CCEA
DEVELOPMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS FOR SPECIFIC ECONOMIC SECTORS, TOGETHER WITH WORK TO IDENTIFY AND REDUCE SECTORAL SKILLS GAPS AND INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	SSCs (23), with special arrangements for some more specialised areas
IMPROVEMENTS IN PRODUCTIVITY AND SKILLS	BIS (England) ⁴⁷ Skills Development Scotland (SDS) (Scotland)
REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION, IMPROVEMENTS IN COMPETITIVENESS, BUSINESS EFFICIENCY AND INVESTMENT	RDAs ⁴⁸ (England) - responsible to the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Devolved Governments

Notes: Local authorities (LAs) in England and Wales, Education Authorities (EAs) in Scotland and Education and Library Boards (ELBs) in Northern Ireland now play little part in post-compulsory education, although they continue to have a role in school education (IVET).

4.4 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR CVET

Please see subchapter 4.2.

4.5 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: CVET

Please see subchapter 4.3.

⁴⁵ In 2008, a new body for regulation and accreditation of qualifications (Ofqual) was formed, taken these functions over from QCA. QCA was transformed in the Qualification and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) in July 2009.

⁴⁷ In June 2009, the government created a new department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) by merging the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR).

⁴⁸ RDAs are to be abolished later in 2010 and will be replaced by Local Enterprise Partnerships

5. INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5.1 BACKGROUND TO THE IVET SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

Schooling is compulsory from age 5 to 16 (4 to 16 in Northern Ireland)⁴⁹. All publicly funded schools must provide the National Curriculum. Depending on the Key Stage of compulsory education⁵⁰, the National Curriculum comprises different compulsory subjects, with core subjects like English, mathematics, science, ICT, etc., included throughout the studies. At age 16 most pupils take public examinations, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), level 2 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. GCSEs are normally taken in a range of single subjects, and a certificate is issued listing the grade achieved in each subject. After completion of compulsory education in secondary schools, young people may choose to continue in school, move to a sixth-form college⁵¹ or a FE college⁵², enter employment with training such as an apprenticeship, or enter employment without apprenticeship.

The vast majority of Scottish pupils take Scottish Qualifications Certificate qualifications provided by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). Generally, most pupils take Standard Grades (but some schools offer Intermediates instead) in S3-S4, and Highers in S5. For those who wish to remain at school for the final year (S6), more Highers and Advanced Highers (formerly CSYS) in S6 can be taken. Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2 qualifications - were intended to be roughly equivalent to General and Credit Level Standard Grades respectively, but in practice, Intermediate 1 is easier than General, and Intermediate 2 harder than Credit - can also be taken in lieu of any of the aforementioned qualifications. Standard Grades are Scotland's educational qualifications for students aged around 14 to 16 years. Standard Grade courses are taken over the 3rd and 4th years of a student's secondary schooling.

The Scottish Government's lifelong learning strategy aims to ensure that everyone develops the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need for learning, life and work. The curriculum is all the experiences that are planned for learners to support the development of these attributes, knowledge and skills. The Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18. It has been introduced to raise standards in learning and teaching and improve our children's life chances.

The curriculum in Scotland is non statutory and so is not dictated by the Government. It is the responsibility of Government to provide the framework for learning and teaching rather than micromanage what goes on in individual schools. Responsibility for what is

⁴⁹ The leaving age will be raised to 18 by 2012-13.

⁵⁰ Key Stage 1 of compulsory education: ages 5 to 7; Key Stage 2: 7 to 11; Key Stage 3: 11 to 14; Key Stage 4: 14 to 16.

⁵¹ Six-form college/school sixth form: post compulsory educational establishment where students prepare for their GCE A-level examination during the final two years of secondary schooling (when students are about 16 to 18 years of age).

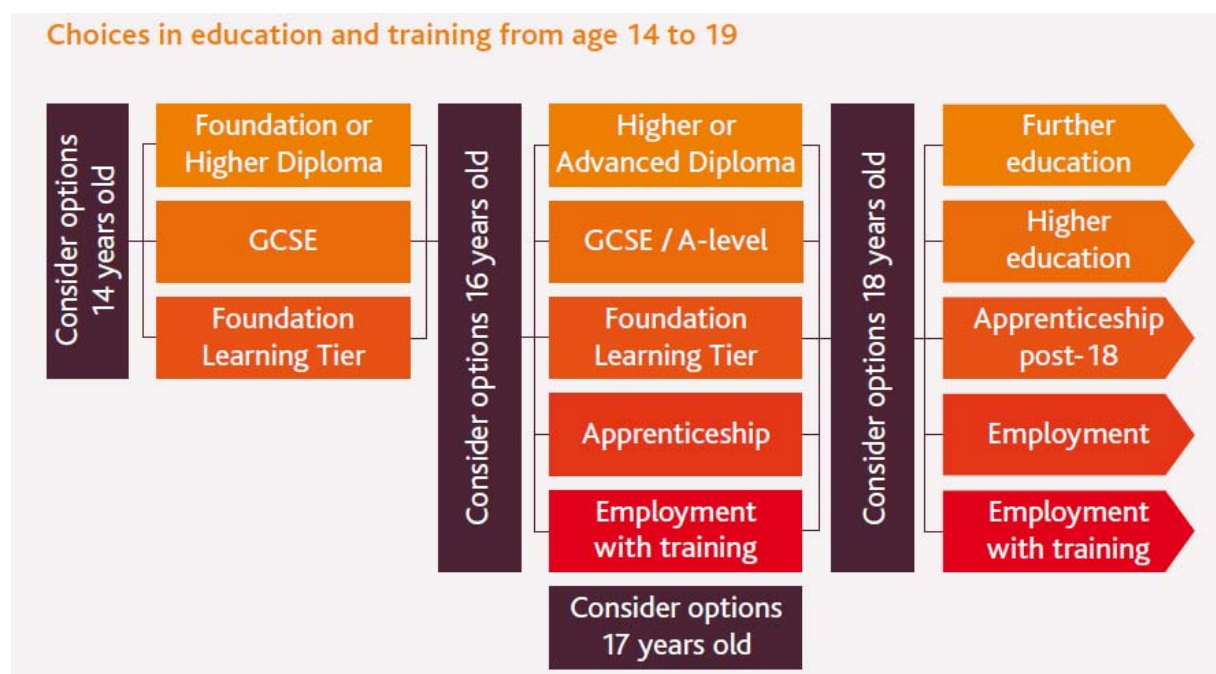
⁵² Further education (FE) college - full time or part time educational establishment for persons over compulsory school age of 16. Further education courses are generally up to the standard of GCE A-level or NVQ level 3. FE often provides an entry to university or/and full employment.

taught rests with local authorities and schools taking into account national guidelines and advice.

Students remaining in education at a school or a college may choose between general ('academic') and vocational subjects or take a mixture of the two. Normally, the upper secondary phase lasts two years, from age 16 to 18 or 19. The dominant qualification is General Certificate of Education (GCE) A-levels (level 3). A-levels are 'elective' single subject qualifications, which students choose on the basis of GCSE qualifications, interest and intended destination. Students are encouraged to study up to five subjects in the first year of post-secondary education and upon completion; they are awarded the GCE Advanced Subsidiary (AS) qualification. Those who continue in the second year, study more demanding units in three of these five subjects in order to obtain the full GCE A-level on successful completion (graded A to E, A* being the highest).

School- and college-based vocational qualifications and pathways are developing. Vocational GCSEs and vocational A-levels have been introduced since 2000.

The learning options for 14 to 19 year olds, are summarised in the table below.



Last Updated: 11/06/2010

Source: <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Be-An-Apprentice/Levels-of-Apprenticeships.aspx>

In Scotland, the education system is unique compared to any other administration in the UK. Students in Scottish schools typically take Standard Grades, Intermediate 1 or 2, or Access qualifications. There are complementary or alternative qualifications available in many Scottish schools or through school-college partnerships, such as National Certificates, National Progression Awards and Skills for Work National Courses. The late senior phase of secondary education involves students taking predominantly Highers in fifth year (S5)

around age 15-16, with those progressing into sixth year (S6, age 16-17⁵³) taking either further Highers, Advanced Highers or the Scottish Baccalaureate. Others will take up more practically or vocationally focused qualifications in addition to or as an alternative to Highers and Advanced Highers.

The Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) has broad-based political and stakeholder support and covers learning from 3-18. Pre-school and primary schools had already been warmly embracing CfE and secondary schools will all engage with CfE from August 2010. Many and probably all colleges will engage with CfE with large elements of their portfolios, in order to ensure smooth progression from schools or in collaboration with schools with whom they are in partnership.

Scottish higher education institutions (HEIs) have also begun engaging with CfE, directly and through Universities Scotland (the representative organisation of university Vice-Chancellors and Principals). The flexibility of provision in the senior phase of secondary schooling (ISCED level 3) will increasingly mean that Scottish HEIs can expect applicants from secondary schools and colleges to apply for their HE programmes with a range of qualifications.

STRATEGIES TO BRIDGE DIFFERENT TYPES AND LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Governments in England have sought to bridge the gap between general education and vocational training by achieving parity of esteem between different types of qualifications. Achieving this remain elusive, and is a major policy drive for the current review of 14 to 19 curriculum (introduction of new Diplomas, in particular) and qualifications and for the review of the national qualifications framework. The existing national qualifications framework defines three pathways in which a clear relationship was traced between three separate types of provision - traditional general education provision, school and college-based vocationally related education, and work-based vocational provision. The new framework contains a number of lines based on areas of knowledge, skills and competences, blurring the line between general and occupational, and encouraging transfer and mixed learning programmes.

In Scotland, reforms such as the credit-based qualification framework were designed to achieve a more unified approach to different types of education and training. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is a meta-framework which incorporates general, vocational and higher education qualifications. This highlights routes for vertical progression, as well as horizontal and 'downward' movement, which better facilitates the *enskill*ing, *upskill*ing and *reskill*ing needs of Scotland's learners and its economy. The framework is designed to widen educational opportunities and encourage 'parity of esteem' for academic and vocational qualifications. It makes the qualifications available more understandable and shows their relative value.

The number of young people, who drop out of education and training at 16, or before completing an upper secondary qualification, is an issue that government reforms are seeking to address. Alongside the statutory right to time off to study to certain 16 to 17 year olds who are in employment (part or full-time, permanent or temporary) to paid time

⁵³ In Scotland, 6th year of secondary school consists of one year of study, as opposed to two years of sixth form in the rest of the UK.

off work for study or training towards an approved qualification and Education Maintenance Allowance (EMAs) £37; €42 a week - which target young people from less well-off backgrounds and are linked to course attendance and progression requirements, aiming to improve levels of participation and retention, particularly in deprived areas and those from low-income families to stay on in learning, the government has introduced the new qualification, Diploma.

The new qualification, 14-19 Specialised Diploma (not Scotland) combines elements of academic subjects and practical skills. It is available at levels 1, 2 and 3 (Foundation, Higher and Advanced, respectively) in 14 sector areas. All Diploma learners must complete: 1. Principal Learning related to the sector area; 2. An extended project; 3. Functional skills in Maths, English and ICT; 4. Personal, thinking and learning skills; 5. Minimum of 10 days work experience, and 6. Additional and specialist learning (ASL).

New diplomas are built on key elements of its VET system's four features:

- the notion of competence, the criteria of assessment being the learning outcomes;
- the use of units of assessment - almost all UK qualifications are modular in delivery and assessment - which creates flexibility for learners, trainers and funding partners;
- the diversity of learning provision - learning need to be adaptable to local circumstances (economic and social) and particularly to the individual; and
- the definition of occupational standards systematically using state-of-the-art needs analysis methods and involving stakeholders as much as possible.

The new Diploma curriculum and assessment criteria has been developed jointly by the government department, UKCES and QCDA in consultation with Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs) that include employers, awarding bodies, schools, colleges and universities. Employers (some 8 000) are further involved in helping schools and colleges to teach Diplomas. In 2009, almost 34 500 young people were on a Diploma course. The Ministers of the new government announced in summer 2010 that they intend to review design and administration of the Diploma.

ENTRY TO EMPLOYMENT

Pre-employment IVET may be undertaken at secondary school, or at a FE college, or with other training providers. There are two forms of IVET:

1. General vocational education is undertaken either at school (for those aged up to 18) or at a FE college (for those aged 16+). Successful completion could lead to direct employment or to further training, within a FE college or with another training provider.
2. Programmes of specific training are undertaken at a FE college and allow entry to a particular trade or profession (such as hairdressing, construction trades, etc). This form of VET is a blend of both of initial training (IVET: meeting pre-entry requirements) and continuing training (CVET: providing the recognised vocational qualification for practice within a particular trade or profession).

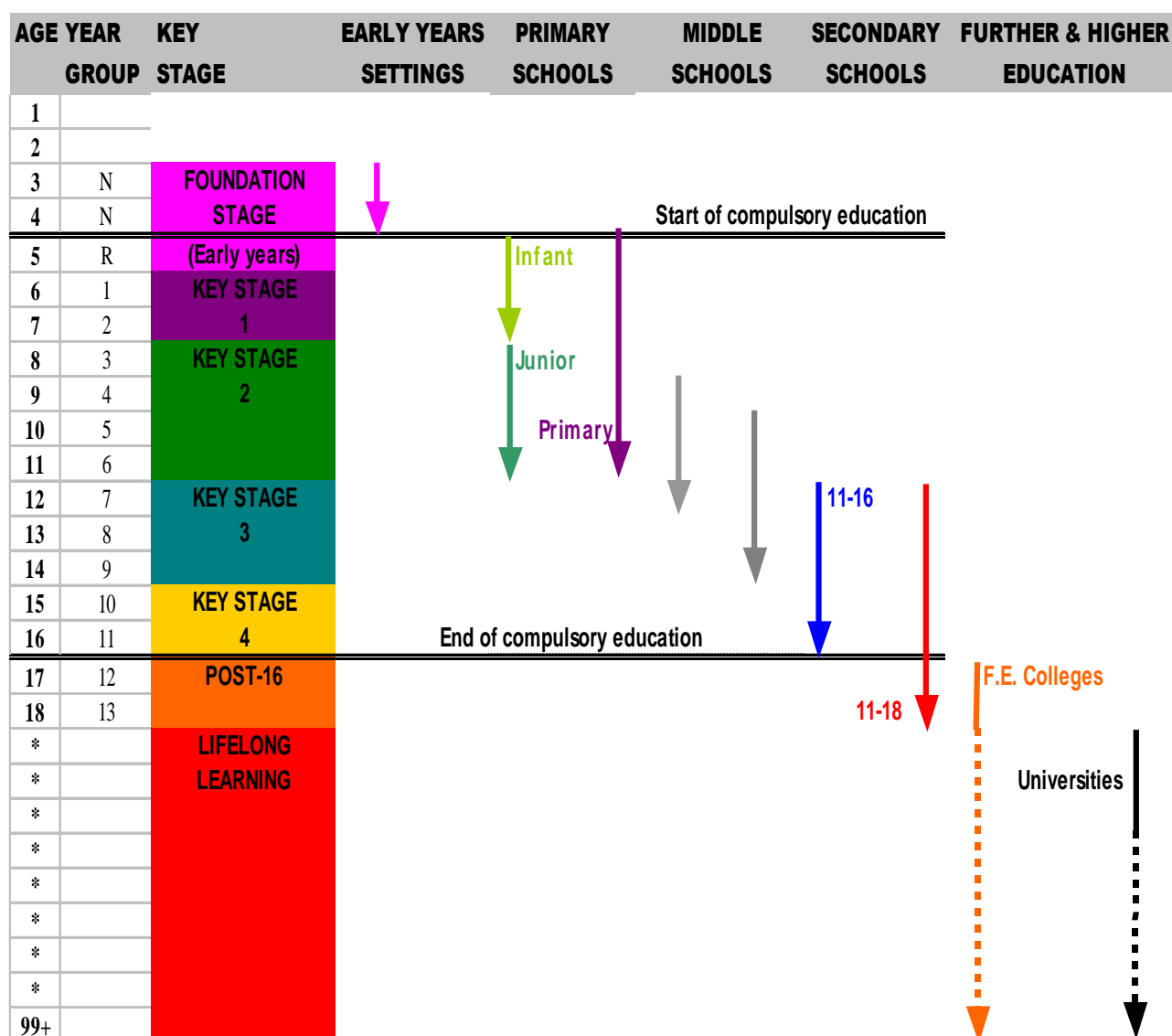
Within the UK, there is no unified VET structure and provision is profuse. Historically, VET has developed in an ad hoc way, rather than through central planning. Nonetheless, VET provision can be summarised according to the various contexts within which it takes place.

In Scotland, VET has developed in a more coherent manner; with SQA as the primary curriculum development and awarding organisation; working in partnership with stakeholders from colleges - Scotland's Colleges (the Scotland equivalent of the AoC in the rest of the United Kingdom); employers and Sector Skills Councils.

Further education institutions include sixth-form colleges, tertiary colleges and further education colleges (both general and specialist). Colleges of further education provide both IVET and CVET, catering for young people and adults. Most offer academic and general courses (such as A-levels), as well as vocational ones and some also offer degree courses. In Scotland, besides general education such as Highers and Advanced Highers, non-advanced vocational programmes, such as National Certificates (NCs), National Progression Awards (NPAs), and advanced vocational programmes, such as Professional Development Awards (PDAs), exist alongside short-cycle HE (HNCs and HNDs) and degrees franchised from Scottish universities. The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) Millennium Institute has degree awarding powers, which cover a 'federal' partnership of 13 colleges offering a range of qualifications from introductory non-advanced education, through VET to PhDs.

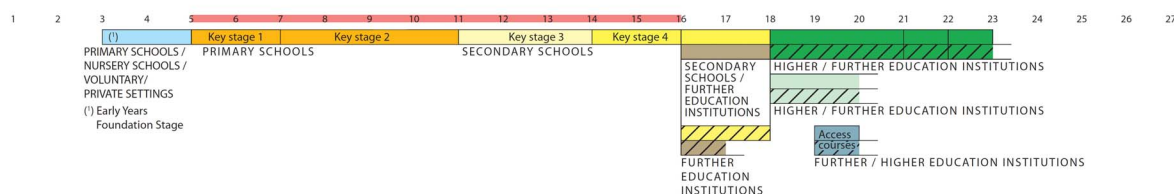
In higher education, universities and other institutions provide initial vocational education. In addition to three- or four-year first degrees, masters and doctorates universities offer a wide range of shorter courses including two-year Higher National Certificates and Diplomas (HNCs and HNDs) and Foundation degrees.

FIGURE 1: EDUCATION LEVELS IN ENGLAND

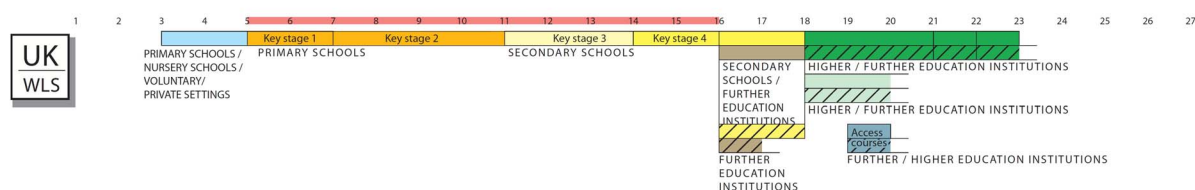


Source: QCDA

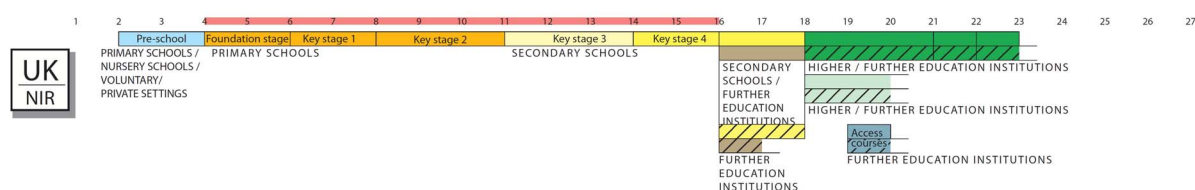
Organisation of the education system in the United Kingdom (England), 2009/10



Organisation of the education system in the United Kingdom (Wales), 2009/10



Organisation of the education system in the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland), 2009/10



Pre-primary – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is not responsible)	Pre-primary – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is responsible)
Primary – ISCED 1	Single structure (no institutional distinction between ISCED 1 and 2)
Lower secondary general – ISCED 2 (including pre-vocational)	Lower secondary vocational – ISCED 2
Upper secondary general – ISCED 3	Upper secondary vocational – ISCED 3
Post-secondary non-tertiary – ISCED 4	
Tertiary education – ISCED 5A	Tertiary education – ISCED 5B
Allocation to the ISCED levels: ISCED 0 ISCED 1 ISCED 2	
Compulsory full-time education	Compulsory part-time education
Part-time or combined school and workplace courses	Additional year
Compulsory work experience + its duration	Study abroad

Source: EURYDICE - Organisation of the education system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 2009/10

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/eurybase/eurybase_full_reports/UN_EN.pdf

SCOTLAND

The qualifications framework and programmes of study in Scotland differ from the rest of the UK (<http://www.scqf.org.uk/AbouttheFramework/Levels.aspx>). National Qualifications (NQs) were introduced in Scotland in 1999. National Qualifications are unit-based courses with a combination of internal assessment for the units and an external assessment to achieve the overall course. Each of the units counts as a qualification in its own right, which allows students who do not pass the whole course to achieve credit for each successfully completed unit. Pass grades are at A, B and C. Achievement of the course is also given at grade D. Since 2004, all NQs have been credit-rated and levelled in the SCQF.

One of the main aims of NQs was to bring together academic and vocational qualifications in a single coherent system that encouraged a greater parity of esteem and increased employability. There are five types of NQs (Access, Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher and Advanced Higher). Students usually study NQs in fourth, fifth and sixth year of secondary education though a few schools may offer the qualifications at an earlier stage. Schools may not offer the whole range of NQs at every level, but will match provision to the allocation of resources and the needs of students. Schools often work in partnership with other learning centres, such as colleges, where there are well-established provision partnerships. Additionally, many schools will collaborate over curriculum provision, particularly where resources dictate or geography provides the opportunity.

Higher and Advanced Higher courses are typically used for entrance into higher education or the workplace. Whilst Highers are the typical standard entry requirement into Scottish HEIs, Advanced Highers are courses which sit at the starting point of HE in the SCQF, so enable students to undertake enhanced specialisation of curriculum areas whilst improving their research skills and experiences of independent learning. Students with good advanced Advanced Highers can sometimes gain entry into year 2 of a degree programme at a Scottish HEI.

In Scotland, a number of local authorities are using flexibility within the curriculum to deliver work-based vocational learning programmes through the strategy for Enterprise in Education, which was promoted through *Determined to Succeed* (2002)⁵⁴.

In 2004, the then Scottish Executive published proposals for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), a more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18, which aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland through much greater curricula coherence and to enable young people to develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need in learning, life and work. The curriculum includes the totality of 'experiences and outcomes' which are planned for children and young people throughout their education, wherever they are being educated. The 'experiences and outcomes' in CfE are a set of statements describing what is expected in the learning and progression for each of eight curriculum areas. They are intended to recognise how important the quality and nature of the learning experience is in developing attributes and capabilities, and in achieving active engagement, motivation and depth of learning. The experiences and outcomes for each curriculum area build in the attributes and capabilities which support the development of the 'four capacities'. Students are therefore expected to develop into:

- successful learners
- confident individuals
- responsible citizens
- effective contributors

⁵⁴ Scottish Executive (2002) *Determined to Succeed: a Review of Enterprise in Education*.

5.2 IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL

Strictly speaking, England has a nil return for IVET at lower secondary level according to the official government position. Lower secondary is ISCED level 2, which in England is classified as ending with year 9, i.e. academic age 13 at the start of the academic year. Scotland considers academic ages 14 and 15 to be lower secondary. For a UK-wide definition, academic age 13 is treated as the final year of ISCED 2.

Traditional academic qualifications, such as GCSEs, A-levels, and most university qualifications, tend not to be referred to as vocational in the UK. Some secondary schools provide pre-employment vocational education for 16-18 year-olds. At age 14, students may choose to follow a two-year programme which includes vocational courses alongside compulsory academic subjects leading to a General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) for each course successfully completed.

Vocational GCSEs are available in 8 subjects: applied science, applied IT, applied business, applied art and design, engineering, manufacturing, health and social care, leisure and tourism, with other subjects under development. They offer young people the opportunity to explore a particular vocational area as part of a balanced learning programme. Through the introduction of GCSEs in vocational subjects, the government promotes the parity of esteem between vocational and more traditional academic subjects. A vocational GCSE is equivalent to two academic (general) GCSEs and enable progression to further education, training or employment. GCSEs do not contain a work-based component.

Since September 2004 there has been a statutory requirement for schools in England to make provision for work-related learning for all pupils, including opportunities for:

- learning through work (for example, through short periods of work experience);
- learning about work and careers education; and
- learning for work, by developing enterprise and employability skills (for example, through working on key skills and schemes such as the UK charity Young Enterprise)⁵⁵.

The National Curriculum governs 14-16 year olds' learning programmes, which is a broad and balanced programme for most students, although greater specialisation towards vocational options was introduced for some students in 2002.

From 2007, the Welsh Assembly government has run five Work-based Learning Pathways pilots in automotive, construction manufacturing, sport coaching (for 14-16 year olds) and care (16-18 year olds for legal restrictions) sectors. The pilots combine core GCSEs in schools with more practical experience. The learner must achieve an industry recognised VQ, normally at level 2. Some of the Pathways are directly linked to the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification (see 5.3 for more details) and is partly financed by the ESF.

Young Apprenticeships (introduced in England in 2004) offer an opportunity for motivated 14-16 year olds to combine practical application of skills and knowledge with studying for

⁵⁵ *Young Enterprise is run through direct and in-kind funding support from local and national businesses and organisations. It aims at young people aged 4-25 in full or part-time education, teachers/tutors of enterprise education and volunteers who can also develop business skills while delivering learning.* HU <http://www.young-enterprise.org.uk/>UH.

vocational qualifications. This allows the learner a flexible programme involving a college, training provider or employer, and is intended to lead on to an apprenticeship at the age of 16. Pupils are based in school and follow the core National Curriculum subjects, but for two days a week (or equivalent) they also work towards nationally recognised level 2 vocational qualifications. The learning experience includes up to 50 days' experience of work over the two years of the programme.

The Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme for 14-16 year olds programme in England provides enhanced work-related learning (one to two days per week in vocational learning) through partnerships of local providers and businesses⁵⁶. The programme is aimed at vulnerable youngsters at risk of disaffection and becoming NEETs and has a strong emphasis on functional and employability skills.

The Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme forms part of the Foundation Learning (FL)⁵⁷. It covers education provision at entry level and level 1 on the [QCF](#) in England and is a credit-based framework where a personalised programme of learning is built for learners, which includes:

[Functional Skills](#) (English, Maths and ICT)

[Subject or vocational skills and understanding](#)

[Personal and social development learning](#) (PSD)

As a central part of the government's reforms for education and training; all local authorities are expected to provide Foundation Learning through units and qualifications on the QCF from September 2010, and in 2009/10 it is expected to account for 30% of entry level and level 1 funding.

In Scotland, SQA has developed Skills for Work (SfW) courses since 2005, following the government's call for 'more skills-for-work options for young people' to be available for pupils in third (S3) and fourth year (S4) of secondary school (14-16). Skills for Work courses focus on generic employability skills needed for success in the workplace within the context of specific vocational areas, such as construction or health and care. A key feature of SfW is experiential learning linked to particular vocational areas. The courses are intended to provide progression pathways to further education, training and employment. Additionally, vocational group awards, such as National Certificates and National Progression Awards are available across SCQF levels 2-6 in a number of schools, which can also access them through colleges.

All the above programmes offer a flexible progression route to student who can progress at their own pace to further training or education.

The curriculum in each country sets out the requirements for young people up to the end of compulsory schooling at age 16. It is primarily academic in orientation and sets out core and optional subjects. A separate certificate is awarded for each subject passed in the National Curriculum subjects. This is mainly by examination and school assessed coursework. More practically or vocationally oriented subjects have a higher work indicating that he or she is likely to succeed in the vocationally related area of study.

⁵⁶ HU <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/qualifications/>U

⁵⁷ Until August 2009, FL was known as Foundation Learning Tier (FLT).

Entry requirements for level 2 vocationally related qualifications and NVQs are lower and may emphasise interest and commitment rather than specific qualifications. Entry to a level 3 NVQ may require the corresponding level 2 NVQ or a vocationally related qualification in a similar area. For all NVQs access to workplace employment of experience is essential.

5.3 IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)

Note that traditional academic subject qualifications (GCSEs, A-levels, most university qualifications) are not being referred to as vocational.

In terms of participation rates at this level, the UK has traditionally had higher rates of participation in academic rather than purely vocational routes. Eurostat (2010) data show that in 2007, the enrolment at general courses in the UK was higher than the EU average, i.e. 58.6% and 48.5%, respectively. For the vocational-orientation courses, the enrolment was lower, at 41.4%, compared with the EU average of 46.3%, and Germany's 57.4% for the same period.

Moreover, most of the NVQ standards do not specify the type of the training programme or the time framework. Please note; the following table does not reflect provision in Scotland.

TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	MAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS	CORRESPONDING ISCED LEVEL/ ORIENTATION	BALANCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	BALANCE BETWEEN SCHOOL-BASED AND WORK-BASED TRAINING	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS
STAND ALONE QUALIFICATIONS, SUCH AS BTEC FIRST OR GENERAL CERTIFICATE, CITY AND GUILDS OPERATIVE AWARD AND SIMILAR	Wide range of economic sectors	3	Vary	Vary	From 6-12 months	Higher vocational and academic qualifications, LM
NVQ/SVQ LEVEL 1	Wide range of economic sectors	3c short	Vary	Vary	Less than 24 months	Higher vocational and academic qualifications, LM
NVQ/SVQ LEVEL 2	Wide range of sectors	3a, 3b	Vary	Vary	More than 24 months	Higher vocational and academic qualifications, LM

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland upper secondary education begins at age 16. Students may transfer from secondary school to 6th form or FE college choosing from a mix

of academic and vocational studies. Again, vocational GCSEs and A-levels qualifications are available as well as a mix of professionally accredited certificates and diplomas. Students at FE colleges may attend full- or part-time. Many of the latter would be in employment and released by their employers to attend their college-based training in varying patterns from one day per week to block periods of several continuous weeks. Students aged 16-18 may also be pursuing an apprenticeship scheme, which formally combines employment-based training with training provided either by a college or other training provider.

Programmes are normally two years in duration, but a number of students take three years and the phase is generally considered to be ages 16 to 19. Upon completion of the compulsory secondary education, the main routes for young people at this stage are to:

- continue in full-time general or vocationally related education in a school or college;
- move on to a work-based training programme, usually an apprenticeship; and
- start work by becoming employed full-time or part-time or doing voluntary work.

The main providers of upper secondary education are:

- School sixth forms (not available in all areas of the country). Traditionally these have a strong focus on general education. Recent local and national initiatives have encouraged partnerships and collaborative agreements with local colleges of further education; elsewhere school sixth forms offer only a narrow range of vocational courses, focusing on those which do not require expensive specialist facilities.
- Sixth form colleges. These provide mainly full time courses to students aged 16-19; much of their offer is academic, but they also offer a small range of vocational courses, especially AVCEs.
- Colleges of further education. This category includes tertiary colleges, specialist colleges (mainly in land-based provision and art and design) and colleges which cater for people who have learning difficulties or disabilities, or both. All of these offer a wide range of courses, for adults as well as young people. Most offer academic courses (such as A Levels), but their focus is much more strongly vocational.

Collectively, FE colleges make up the largest sector of VET providers within state provision for both pre-employment and in-employment training for all, including adults, from the age of 16 upwards. Colleges differ in size and emphasis and the range of trades, crafts, and professions catered for, but all essentially offer a common curriculum of nationally-recognised qualifications. The further education sector in the UK (2010) consists of 424 colleges⁵⁸, and 95 Sixth Form Colleges (England) - the latter providing mainly full time academic courses to students aged 16-19. Over 3 million learners annually attend FE colleges.

Some colleges are designated by their specialism, as is the case of colleges for agriculture and/or horticulture, art, design and performing arts. The remainder of the sector comprises general further education colleges, tertiary colleges, and colleges that cater for

⁵⁸ http://www.aoc.co.uk/en/about_colleges/index.cfm

people who have learning difficulties and disabilities, or both. All of these provide both initial and continuing vocational education and training, catering for both young people and adults and normally with a range of both short and long courses.

Each nation has an Inspectorate responsible for inspecting and reporting periodically on the quality of teaching, learning and management of individual schools, colleges and other learning providers, and for area reviews of post-compulsory provision of all kinds. The reports of the Inspectorate are used to monitor the quality of provision, to provide 'benchmarks' against which providers can judge their own performance (by enabling comparisons with other providers of similar size and student characteristics), to ensure that action is taken where providers are failing and to provide examples of good practice.

Nationally, excellent Colleges and private training providers have been awarded 'Beacon' status for outstanding learning and teaching. The department of some colleges, including 'Beacon' colleges, can be designated as Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) for the quality of their vocational education in a given occupational area. CoVEs excel in a particular area of vocational learning which meets the skills needs of employers either locally or in within a region. CoVEs offer basic skills, and (NVQ equivalent) levels 1 - 4. The number of CoVEs is increasing all the time. In 2007, 403 CoVEs were approved in England. Alongside this quality mark, a national standard of employer responsiveness for Colleges of Further Education has been developed.

There is an important distinction between the regulation of qualifications, which is the responsibility of the national bodies in each of the nations, and the programmes of studies that a particular college or school will offer its students. In planning both general and vocationally related courses, providers have considerable autonomy, in deciding which qualifications and options to offer and in planning the timetable. For all qualification developments the awarding organisation develops the specifications for the qualification as it is to be examined, defines the mode of assessment (external examination, internally set project, practical work, etc.) establishes the system of assessment, including marking and grading students' work; provides sufficient numbers of trained markers, assessors, moderators, as appropriate and establishes sustainable system of quality control.

The content and assessment arrangements for each qualification are subject to the accreditation requirements of the regulatory body and the requirements of National Occupational Standards, as appropriate.

The schools and colleges decide what programmes to offer and by what mode (e.g. full or part time), take major responsibility for the decisions on the delivery of the curriculum, programmes of study and pedagogy to be used and undertake much of the assessment.

The great majority of students in school-based and college-based IVET are studying for publicly recognised qualifications. Depending upon their level and subject matter, these normally allow entry to further learning, in either further or higher education, and may also be used for entry to the labour market. Historically, the terms 'certificate' and 'diploma' are used almost interchangeably in the UK, although the trend is for 'diploma' to indicate a more substantial qualification (with more hours of learning) than a 'certificate'. A diploma is not necessarily at a higher level than a certificate. The QCF has developed a common architecture for the naming of qualifications that intend to standardize the terms so that the size and level of the qualification is clearly identifiable by its title.

Almost all vocational qualifications allow progression to similar, higher level qualifications, which may be studied part-time or through evening courses. Depending upon their nature, they may also lead to higher education and/or into employment. 'Broader' vocationally related qualifications are designed to lead either to the labour market or to general or

(more often) vocational higher education, whilst ‘narrower’, more occupationally specific, vocationally related qualifications are intended to lead to employment in a specific occupation or group of occupations.

As a means of quality control, most IVET courses supported by public funding must lead to recognised qualifications. It is therefore convenient to describe provision in terms of the qualification(s), to which it leads.

The principal requirement for achievement of a qualification is usually satisfactory completion of the assessment, often including both a formal written examination and an assessment of practical and project work. It is not usually necessary to have attended a course for a fixed length of time, although in practice most young people do attend such courses. Progression after completion of initial VET at Upper Secondary level depends upon the qualification route taken.

The modular design of many qualifications is intended to allow certification in individual modules and to facilitate transfer to a related course or subsequent re-entry for a student who drops out. In practice these opportunities are probably under-utilised.

Access to A Level and AVCE courses requires five ‘good’ (grade A*-C) passes in GCSE or equivalent. Pupils who have not reached this level at age 16 may spend an extra year trying to improve their results or may choose a less demanding alternative. Advanced level (A-level) General Certificates in Education are also available in vocational subjects with examinations taken at 18 or older. Neither GCSEs nor A-levels contain a work-based component.

Progression from A levels and AVCEs may be to employment, but is more often to general or vocational higher education. Options for progression may be limited by the subjects taken, with mathematics and science required for progression in scientific and technical subjects. AVCEs are accepted for entry to some general degree courses, but progression options are likely to be more limited than from A levels.

The 16-19 year olds’ learning programme is governed primarily by the student’s main qualification aim. Learners following work-based training such as an apprenticeship or a FE course for entry to an occupation, combine training for specific occupations with work. Training providers can be training or HR departments in firms, further education colleges or private training organisations.

The Welsh Assembly Government introduced the Welsh Baccalaureate to transform learning for 14-19 year olds in Wales. It gives broader experiences than traditional learning programmes, to suit the diverse needs of young people. It can be studied in English or Welsh, or a combination of the two languages. It has a common core curriculum on Wales, Europe and world studies (including a language module), work-related education, personal and social education and key skills. It combines personal development skills with existing qualifications like A levels, NVQs and GCSEs to make one wider award that is valued by employers and universities.

Although government policy focuses on those qualifications which have been developed through its initiatives or which it regulates most closely, there are a large number of other approved qualifications whose influence is also significant.

Within school- and college-based pathways, a range of qualifications is available. The main strands are as follows.

In Scotland, SQA offers a range of vocational qualifications for learners from 14-19 years including:

- Scottish Progression Awards
- Skills for Work
- National Certificates
- Scottish Vocational Qualifications (mainly 16+)
- Higher National Certificates and Diplomas

Provision is designed to address general employability skills as well as specific vocational skills. Qualifications involve practical experiences that require a variety of learning environments and are usually delivered via partnerships: schools with colleges/employers/training providers. These are mainly for pupils in third and fourth year of secondary school focus on the world of work. A common rationale requires experiential learning; learning through practical experience; learning through review and reflection; the development of employability skills; the development of generic skills and attitudes; and specific vocational skills/knowledge•

VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATES OF EDUCATION (VCEs)

The Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE) is an A-level award designed for those wanting to study a broad area of work and the application of a subject. These are known as GCEs in 10 applied subjects: applied art and design, applied business, applied ICT, applied science, engineering, health and social care, media, travel and tourism, leisure, performing arts. Students study a number of units, some of which are mandatory. The total number of units required varies between levels. About two thirds of the units are externally assessed, one third internally. Progression - which is dependent on attainment in AS- and/or A-level - is to higher education including Foundation degrees (see Subsection 5.7), or to apprenticeship, or to training and/or professional qualifications.

NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (NVQs)

NVQs / SVQs are based on National Occupational Standards for each occupation, drawn up by the relevant Sector Skills Council in close co-operation with employers in the sector. Awarding bodies use these standards to develop qualifications (including arrangements for assessment and quality assurance), which are then submitted for accreditation to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland or to the SQA Accreditation for use in Scotland.

A young person obtaining an NVQ /SVQ would normally already be employed or in training in the occupation and would be expected to remain in their job or move from an apprenticeship or traineeship to a job in the same field, but could also study for a more advanced qualification.

NVQs are designed for people to gain recognised qualifications for specific occupations. They are offered mainly at levels 1, 2 and 3. They offer progression routes to further education and training or into the labour market. NVQs were designed as qualifications recognising work-based competences, but are often achieved through study in FE colleges.

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS (FS)

Functional skills place a greater emphasis on applying knowledge in real life situation that allow individuals to work confidently, effectively and independently in life. Functional skills qualifications in English, ICT and mathematics are free standing qualifications and are available at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 to cater for full range of learners at any age. After three year pilot, they are currently available in Apprenticeship as an alternative to Key Skills (see below), which they are expected to replace. Functional skills are also constituent qualifications of new Foundation, Higher and Advanced Diplomas.

Each qualification is assessed independently. The assessment approach is primarily task-based scenario questions with a limited duration, delivered in a controlled environment. The assessments support problem solving, skills-based approaches. QCDA has developed, with a range of partners, a set of standards for the functional skills qualifications. The standards determine the knowledge and skills proficiency required at each level. Ofqual, the regulator, has published the criteria for functional skills assessments that enable awarding organisations to develop quality specifications and assessment materials.

Adult Functional skills pilots are developing different approaches to assessment to ensure that the qualifications are appropriate to meet the needs of adult learners. These include e-assessment, on-demand assessment and providing feedback to learners promptly following the assessment and being tested in a range of learning environments, i.e. mainstream colleges, prisons and adult community learning setting and alike. The FS are intended to replace the Skills for Life literacy and numeracy qualifications in 2012, subject to pilot results.

THE WELSH BACCALAUREATE QUALIFICATION (WBQ)

The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification⁵⁹ is nationally approved and currently offered at Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced levels. Following a successful pilot, beginning in September 2003, the qualification is now being studied by students in schools, colleges and training providers across the principality.

The three levels of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

Level	Options level
Foundation Diploma	D - G grade at GCSE, NVQ level 1. or equivalent
Intermediate Diploma	A* - C grade at GCSE, or NVQ level 2, or equivalent
Advanced Diploma	GCE A Level standard, or NVQ level 3, or equivalent

Note: The A* grade was introduced in September 2008 for higher education entry in 2010, and is awarded to candidates who achieve an A in their overall A-level, with a score of at least 90% at A2.

⁵⁹ <http://www.wbq.org.uk/about-us>

It is awarded to students who complete a programme consisting of the Welsh Baccalaureate Core Certificate and optional studies drawn from existing qualifications. The optional studies element is assessed in line with the existing requirements of examining and awarding bodies. The Core involves students in the preparation of a portfolio of evidence for assessment including Key Skills and an Individual Investigation. The WBQ comprises two components:

- Core - consisting of five components i.e. Key Skills, Wales, Europe and the World, Work-related Education and Personal and Social Education and Individual Investigation.
- Options - courses/programmes currently offered e.g. GCSE, VGCSE, AS/A levels, NVQ, BTEC, Principal Learning and Project Qualification.

A key feature of the WBQ is that of the personal mentor who meets regularly with the student and offers advice and encouragement.

KEY SKILLS (ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND) TO BE REPLACED BY FUNCTIONAL SKILLS (SEE ABOVE)

A common complaint of employers is that young people entering employment do not have the basic skills of literacy/communication and number or the attitudes needed for employment. This was the starting point for the Key Skills initiative. Key skills qualifications are available to students across all post-16 routes. Key Skills qualifications (levels 1-3) comprise communication, application of number and information technology (IT). Also available at levels 1-3 are the wider key skills units: working with others, improving own learning and performance, problem solving. Assessment comprises a portfolio and (except for wider Key Skills) external tests. They are available and designed to be taken in tandem with the other qualifications described here.

Work experience: Most students on vocational courses and many on general courses undertake a short period of unpaid work experience, as enrichment and to learn about a particular working environment. This is often facilitated through local education/business partnerships.

PRE-U COURSE

In 2007, the government approved the pre-U courses for state funding. The course has been devised by Cambridge International Examinations. Thirty institutions, 24 of which are private schools including some of the top schools like Eton, Winchester and Dulwich are to offer pre-U.

This is a two-year course in which students complete three main subjects as in A-levels - they could even opt to choose A-level syllabuses. They also complete a global perspectives and research component which leads to an independent research report on a topic chosen by the student. Above all, students will be assessed at the end of the two-year course, making it more like A-levels.

SCOTLAND

CORE SKILLS (SCOTLAND)

In Scotland, Core Skills help people achieve success in many situations in life and work. They provide a basis for learning throughout life, for working effectively, and for handling problems and dealing with issues. Employers, colleges and universities value, use and develop Core Skills. All learners can gain recognised National Qualifications for their Core Skills and these qualifications may contribute to various Group Awards in Scotland, such as National Certificates, National Progression Awards, etc., or Modern Apprenticeships. The Core Skills are: Communication; Numeracy; Problem Solving; Using Information and Communication Technology and Working with Others.

ALTERNANCE

By the late 1970s, the traditional pattern amongst young people not aiming for higher education was to combine employment with 'day release' at a college of further education. With the increase in full time attendance in post-compulsory education, numbers of part time students have dwindled, but they remain a significant minority. Many of the qualifications taken in full time courses are equally available to part time students, although the latter would normally need to spread their study over a longer period of time.

5.4 APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING (ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND)

TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	MAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS	CORRESPONDING ISCED LEVEL /ORIENTATION	BALANCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	BALANCE BETWEEN SCHOOL-BASED AND WORK-BASED TRAINING	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS
YOUNG APPRENTICESHIP	Dependant on local offer	2	9:1	2 days a week up to 50 days work experience	2 years	Further academic and/or vocational studies
APPRENTICESHIP	Varied sectors, up to 80 occupational areas	3c	Vary	Vary	From 12 months	Higher level vocational courses, FE, LM
ADVANCED APPRENTICESHIP	As above	3a, 3b	Vary	Vary	From 24 months	As above

ENGLAND

Apprenticeships provide work-based training in a broad range of sectors to people who are learning new skills and gaining recognised qualifications while they are working. They normally last between one and three years. Apprentices can enter higher education or employment depending on the successful completion of the corresponding apprenticeship training.

There are 190 types of Apprenticeships (at level 2 or five good GCSEs passes) and Advanced Apprenticeships (equal to two good A-levels or level 3 qualification) are available in over 80 different industries (retailing, engineering, car manufacturing, construction, banking, to name a few), hotel and catering and business administration being the main sectors where starters for apprenticeships are. There are also Higher Apprenticeships that work towards work-based learning qualifications such as NVQ Level 4 and, in some cases, a knowledge-based qualification such as a Foundation degree.

Since the 1994 modern apprenticeship system has been reformed with a different rate of success in terms of uptake and retention. Since 1994, one million apprentices have joined the programme and by 2008, almost 50% of British Gas engineer recruits were apprentices. Relevant Sector Skills Council (SSC) produces a framework for each apprenticeship qualification. The content of each Apprenticeship is designed by SSCs, sector bodies and their employers in accordance with the design principles of the Apprenticeship Blueprint (England and Wales). The Blueprint provides the specification for Apprenticeship and is used by SSCs to design and revise Apprenticeship frameworks. The emphasis in apprenticeships is on preparation for employment and each Apprenticeship is specific to an occupational area. Although regulations are flexible, a common pattern in Apprenticeships is for practical training and experience to take place in the workplace on four days per week and study of the underpinning knowledge for the Technical Certificate to take place in college one day a week.

In 2009, the National Apprenticeship Service replaced the LSC in England to manage, finance and quality assure national programme through its network of training providers.

For entry to Apprenticeships, interest in the occupation and willingness to work are generally more important than formal educational qualifications, but young people are expected to have practical aptitude, interpersonal skills and/or key skills appropriate to their chosen pathway. For direct entry to an Advanced (level 3) Apprenticeship the young person would normally be expected to have some GCSE passes at Grades A* to C. Success in a (level 2) Apprenticeship normally provides access to an Advanced (level 3) Apprenticeship, providing that a training place is available.

Access depends upon the availability of suitable places, which in turn depends upon the willingness of employers to participate in the scheme.

The present apprenticeship is a mixture of work-based training and education, which includes the following basic elements:

- a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), an occupationally specific qualification delivered and assessed mainly in the workplace;

- Key Skills, e.g. communication, application of number⁶⁰ and ICT at an appropriate level; or Functional Skills; and
- a Technical Certificate, providing the underpinning knowledge of the technical or business areas associated with the job and delivered at a FE college.

There is no single set time to complete Apprenticeships and they vary widely in content and size. Apprenticeships at level 2 take a minimum of 12 months while Advanced Apprenticeships take a minimum of 24 months. Apprenticeships were originally intended for young people, but in May 2004 the upper age limit of 25 for Apprenticeships was removed in England.

Apprentices receive pay and most have the status of employees of the organisation where they work. They typically spend one day per week at college studying the technical certificate and the remainder of their time in training or work with their employer. Apprentices have a contract and also an individual learning plan, which employers develop with the help of local learning providers, who also handle assessment and quality control and help businesses recruit a suitable apprentice. Selection takes account of school qualifications (especially for more technical occupations) and motivation.

The NVQ is at the centre of the Apprenticeship and is the method used to assess the occupational competence of the candidate. The broad assessment arrangements for each NVQ are determined by the relevant SSC in the form of an 'assessment strategy'. The majority of assessment takes place in the workplace and involves practical competence on the job, often with oral questioning and with 'evidence' such as completed pieces of work (where the task is a practical one) or records of work undertaken.

The Technical Certificate provides the underpinning knowledge and understanding for the NVQ and is normally delivered outside the workplace, for example by a Further Education college or training provider. The assessment arrangements for Technical Certificates differ, according to the nature of the occupation, but must include provision for 'external quality control'. This normally takes the form of an external written test or assignment, which is combined with external monitoring (through visiting verifiers) of practical and other assessments undertaken by the centre.

In relation to key skills candidates are required to complete both externally set tests, which are the same for all sectors (and may be taken electronically) and a portfolio of relevant work, assessed by the centre and monitored by the awarding body.

The Inspectorate (in each of the four nations) is responsible for inspecting and reporting periodically on the quality of teaching, learning and management of individual colleges, private training providers and other learning providers. The reports of the Inspectorate are used to monitor the quality of provision, to provide 'benchmarks' against which providers can judge their own performance (by enabling comparisons with other providers of similar size and student characteristics), to ensure that action is taken where providers are failing and to provide examples of good practice. LSC also ensures the quality of learning provision through its FE sector financial stream arrangements.

⁶⁰ *How to use numbers to solve problems.*

The apprentice who successfully completes the apprenticeship receives an apprenticeship certificate, together with individual certificates for:

- National Vocational Qualification.
- Technical Certificate.
- Key Skills certificate(s).

The progression opportunities after an apprenticeship vary from industry to industry. In the motor industry, for example, there are relatively few opportunities to progress beyond level 3. On the other hand, in industries such as the chemical industry and engineering an apprenticeship at level 3 opens up a variety of progression routes, in terms of technical and managerial posts, and in terms of workplace and higher education qualifications.

The UK labour market has few regulated occupations at levels 2 and 3 and completion of an Apprenticeship or an NVQ is rarely required as a licence to practise. An exception is the Care Sector, where a Level 3 NVQ has become a requirement for some supervisory and managerial jobs.

Apprenticeships declined in the second half of the 20th century, as traditional industries due to structural change in the economy Modern Apprenticeships were introduced by Government in the mid-1990s as a replacement, which would offer a high quality work-based alternative to full time educational routes.

The number of people taking an Apprenticeship has trebled since 1999. In the year to 2008, a record 234,000 people started an Apprenticeship, representing a four per cent increase on 2007. There were 239,900 Apprenticeship starts in the 2008-09 academic year and 143,400 Apprenticeship framework achievements. This represents the highest number of Apprenticeship starts and achievements ever in an academic year. The overall Apprenticeship success rate was 70.9% in 2008-09, compared with 53% in 2005-6.

Overall, with the economic downturn persisting, the number of Apprenticeship places have declined: the number of 16 to 18 year-olds start-up Apprentices fell by 7.5 per cent in 2009, whilst the number of 19 to 24 year olds starting Apprenticeship dropped by 5.9 per cent over the same period, although the completion rates overall have improved. Figures released by the Department for Business, Innovations and Skills in October 2009, showed that there were 33,900 new Apprenticeship starts in the fourth quarter of the academic year 2008/9. This is 29% lower than in the previous three months and 36% lower than in the same period in 2007/8. The reason for the decreasing number of Apprentices is partly the unwillingness of the firms to recruit Apprentices who have initial training needs and their wish to reduce discretionary spending⁶¹.

The Young Apprenticeship Programme provides a route for motivated students of average or above average ability to study for vocational qualifications by spending up to two weeks in the workplace, in parallel with their schools studies, in the last two years of compulsory schooling (up to 50 days).

In Wales, the age limit on Apprenticeships was removed in 2002. The Modern Skills Diploma for Adults aims to raise skills levels in business, extending the apprenticeship model to those aged over 25. The diploma programme provides structured training at level 4 for people in or out of employment. Modern Apprenticeships were introduced in Northern Ireland in 1996; arrangements are broadly similar to those in England.

⁶¹ *Ambition 2020, UKCES, 2009, page 100*

SCOTLAND

Although similar, arrangements in Scotland differ somewhat. Training includes on and off-the-job training, study for a SVQ level 3 (circa SCQF level 6⁶²) or above and Core Skills in numeracy, communications, IT, problem solving and working with others at a minimum level of Intermediate 1 (SCQF level 4). Training providers must achieve the Modern Apprenticeship standards defined in the Scottish Quality Management System (SQMS), the quality assurance mechanism used by the Local Enterprise Companies (LECs). Training providers make a contract with LECs on agreed training provision and related funding. There is no upper age limit for taking part in the apprenticeship programmes.

In Scotland Modern Apprenticeships are aimed at those over 16 and capable of achieving a Scottish Vocational Qualification at Level 3 or above. Apprentices are employed from the very start of their training and receive a wage from their employer. Apprenticeships are available in a number of sectors, with the format of training decided by the appropriate Sector Skills Council for that sector. Trainees are generally encouraged to progress through the various levels of qualification available, although this isn't the only focus of the vocational training. Modern Apprenticeships also instil in trainees a range of 'soft skills' around communication, teamwork and problem solving, as well as improved numerical and IT skills.

In the 2009/10 financial year, there were 20,216 Modern Apprenticeship starts in Scotland, with 9,232 people successfully completing their apprenticeship in that period.⁶³ 70% of all those leaving the Modern Apprenticeship programme in Scotland had successfully completed their apprenticeship.

Skillseekers training in Scotland includes on and off-the-job training and study up to SVQ level 3 (SCQF level 6), for 16-24 year olds in employment or on a training placement (train for a job through work experience). Funding is provided by government and is paid to training providers as a contribution towards training costs, on the young person's achievement of specific milestones of the training plan. Training usually lasts two years. The enterprise network⁶⁴ sets funding levels that reflect the age of the individual and importance of occupational sector to local economy.

5.5 OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS

ENGLAND, WALES, NORTHERN IRELAND

ENTRY LEVEL

Entry level qualifications are designed for learners working below GCSE level because they lack skills to operate at higher levels. They provide access to NVQ, GCSE and other level 1 qualifications. They are occupationally specific. There are vocational 'taster- courses' that are designed for transition from compulsory schooling to the post-16 phase. Basic

⁶² Not all SVQs have been credit rated and levelled to the SCQF, though there is a rolling process.

⁶³ <http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/141308/ma%20breakdown%20-%20all%20scotland.pdf>

⁶⁴ *Scottish Enterprise is a government-funded network of a government development agency Scottish Enterprise National and 12 Local Enterprise Companies (LECs), which was set up in 1991 to provide a more fully integrated economic development agency.*

qualifications are available in areas such as life or independent living skills, literacy and numeracy.

ENTRY TO EMPLOYMENT (E2E)

Entry to Employment (E2E) is an entry to level 1 work-based learning programme for young people (aged 16-18) who are not yet ready to enter an Apprenticeship, employment or structured learning at level 2. Each programme is flexible but students must undertake learning in three core strands of the curriculum: basic and/or key skills, vocational skills and personal and social development (in formal and informal environments). Although not qualification driven, E2E must provide learners with an entitlement to work towards external qualifications (or units of it) and awards, appropriate to their ability and potential across all three strands. The E2E students are not restricted by time limit to complete the programme. Learners are recruited through referral from a guidance service, or directly from the provider or support agencies (Social Services, Youth Offending Teams, etc.). As of 2010, the Young People's Learning Agency, which replaced LSC works in partnership with the SSCs, local providers including voluntary organisations and awarding bodies on this programme in the context of local needs. The programme has been inspected several times, with its strengths (50,000 young people in first year, over a third had progressed to FE or employment) and weaknesses (mixed quality provision).

UK NEW DEAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

New Deal is a government's programme to help people move into and remain in work. The New Deal for Young People is for those aged 18 to 24 and claiming Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA). It aims to give young people the skills, confidence and motivation to help them find work. Participants enter a Gateway of intensive job search and specialist help, and those still claiming JSA at the end of this, have a choice of options: full time education and training leading to a qualification; training/work placement in the voluntary sector; or training/work placement through the Environment Task Force.

Participants can access one or a combination of options. In addition, an employment subsidy is available at any stage of the programme, providing an incentive for employers to employ a New Deal participant. An initiative, StepUp, builds on the New Deal for Young People and New Deal 25 Plus by providing transitional jobs for those who have not secured sustained employment through New Deal.

5.6 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL

The UK does not have a clearly defined sector of initial vocational and training, which can be termed 'post-secondary (non tertiary)' - there is virtually no provision at all against this ISCED level (1997). Courses and qualifications at level 4 and above of the National Qualifications Framework are considered to be part of Higher Education (described in 5.7), even where they do not lead to a traditional degree. IVET courses and qualifications at level 3 of the NQF form part of the offer of further education colleges or other parts of the 'learning and skills sector' and are described in 5.3 (IVET at upper secondary level) or 5.4 (Apprenticeship training).

5.7 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

Note that traditional academic subjects, including most university qualifications are not being referred to as vocational. Traditionally, the UK has had high participation rates in higher education. The latest available Eurostat data (2006) shows that for ISCED 5A level

(1997), the participation rates were lower than EU average (77% and 86.6%, respectively), but higher for ISCED level 5b (1997)(22.8% and 13.4%, respectively).

TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	MAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS	CORRESPONDING ISCED LEVEL AND ORIENTATION	BALANCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	BALANCE BETWEEN SCHOOL-BASED AND WORK-BASED TRAINING	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS
HNC/D*	Various	5b	Vary	Vary	Certificate - 12 month, diploma 24 months	Progress to a full degree course or LM
NVQ LEVELS 4-5 BTEC/RSA AND ALIKE	Various, almost all occupational areas (11)	5b	Vary	Vary	Vary, as do not specify timeframe	LM or higher degrees

**HND, when taken as part of initial education, can be considered as IVET at tertiary level. There are continuing debates about what is 'vocational' and what should map to 5B ISCED level, e.g. doctor of medicine is clearly vocational but is not counted as ISCED 5B. The other criterion - that of length, i.e. 5B courses are shorter than 5A courses - generally becomes the 'tie-breaker'.*

In the UK there is no separate identification of 'vocational' higher education. Most institutions offer both vocational and general courses, although in differing proportions. There is a wide choice, with some 50 000 degree and non-degree courses available through the common application body (UCAS).

Increasing numbers of adults take higher education courses at both sub-degree and higher levels. Flexible learning arrangements, including part-time degrees and open learning make it easier to combine study with work. Credit may be given for other qualifications (e.g. professional qualifications or HNDs), reducing the study time required for the degree. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) awards credit for demonstrated learning that has occurred outside formal qualifications and can apply to university entry, as well as to other forms of learning.

The sector includes universities, colleges of HE, and specialist institutions, e.g. for art and agriculture. Higher education courses are also increasingly offered in further education colleges. All universities in the UK have independent governance as chartered institutions, benefit from state funding through national funding councils and are subject to quality control for both teaching and research activity.

The Open University (OU) operates on a different basis compared to other universities. It has been offering degrees and other qualifications through distance learning since the 1970s. The OU is a major national institution that has also developed non-traditional pathways to HE qualifications.

The UK higher education sector has a number of sub-degrees HE qualifications (such as HNC, HND, Certificates in HE, Diplomas in HE and Foundation Degrees) and a three-level

system of graduate qualifications: Bachelors, Masters and Doctorate. These reflect closely the structures contained in the Bologna process.

SUB- DEGREE QUALIFICATIONS

Until the introduction of Foundation degrees in 2001, the most usual sub-degree HE qualifications were the Higher National Certificates and Diploma (HNCs and HNDs), which are vocational qualifications in their own right. HNDs are normally offered as full-time, two-year courses or through a longer part-time route, with HNCs normally offered as either one year full time or two years part time. Well-developed articulation arrangements are in place for HNC/D students to progress to degree courses. A wide range of HND courses are on offer, particularly in Scotland, with some involving a combination of college and workplace learning.

Certificates in Higher Education (one year) and Diplomas in Higher Education (two years) are also offered and may serve as qualifications in their own right or as stepping-stones to a first degree. Diplomas in Higher Education are widely taken as part of the education and training of nurses, though in Scotland the primary route to nursing qualification is through the Bachelor in Nursing.

FOUNDATION DEGREES

Since their introduction in 2000 in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, Foundation degrees seen some success. The 2010 Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) report confirms that the growth in the number of students studying on foundation degree programmes is on track to exceed the government target of 100,000 by 2010. The report says that there are 99,475 students enrolled on Foundation degree programmes in 2009-10. This includes 53,750 entrants to Foundation degree programmes: around 5,000 more than were reported in 2008-09.

Foundation Degrees integrate academic and work-based learning through close collaboration between employers and programme providers. They build upon a long history of design and delivery of vocational qualifications in higher education, and are intended to equip learners with the skills and knowledge relevant to their employment, so satisfying the needs of employees and employers and widen participation. They are shorter than Bachelors degrees, mainly in applied and vocational subjects, and designed to be taught in HE and FE colleges. Features of the programme include:

- employer involvement;
- accessibility and flexibility;
- skills/knowledge application in the workplace;
- credit accumulation and transfer; and
- articulation and progression within work and/or to an honours degree.

Foundation degrees provide self-standing qualifications of specific value, but are also expected to provide for opportunities for further (life long) study which could take a number of different forms (e.g. professional body qualifications, higher level NVQs, etc.). In addition, Foundation degrees will normally link to at least one programme leading to a bachelors degree with honours. The qualification benchmark is developed in cooperation with certain SSCs and is designed to be used as a 'reference point' to inform and clarify matters concerning purposes, expectations and achievements, and quality assurance. This

qualification benchmark describes the distinctive features of a Foundation degree in terms of its purpose, general characteristics and generic outcomes.

In doing so it provides a reference point to:

- assist those directly involved in designing or validating Foundation Degree programmes
- provide general guidance for describing the generic learning outcomes for the Foundation Degree;
- provide general guidance for strategies on teaching, learning and assessment;
- support internal and external quality assurance;
- help interested parties to understand the purpose, generic content and outcomes of Foundation Degree programmes.

The assessment of each element of study within Foundation degree programmes, including the assessment of work-based learning, is governed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education⁶⁵ and should be specified at the time of validation. Assessment may include a variety of formal and informal, and formative and summative techniques, provided that they are all capable of rigorous testing and independent verification. Through the combination of assessment of work-based learning and other more traditional means of assessment, Foundation degree can integrate a variety of delivery modes and assessments undertaken by institutions and employers.

Employers are expected to be involved in the assessment of work-based learning. Arrangements between institutions and employers should be specified fully at the outset of any partnership, and should include any training for employers that may be required in, for example, assessment procedures. Such arrangements should be reviewed regularly as part of the ongoing monitoring and review of the programme. In cases where employers are involved in the support of the learner and in their assessment it may be necessary to provide support in the form of mentoring or other types of professional development

The awarding institution and the provider are responsible for ensuring that all assessment, including that of work based learning, is applied consistently and is appropriate to the expected learning outcomes relevant to a qualification that is located within the Intermediate level of the FHEQ. As from 2009, further education institutions in England are now able to apply to the Privy Council⁶⁶ for powers to award their own Foundation degrees.

In Scotland; Higher National Certificates and Higher National Diplomas represent about 25% of full-time HE provision and recently underwent a 5 year £8-10 million modernisation programme. An increase in participation in Scotland's higher education system is only partially fuelled by those taking degrees. The bulk of expansion has in fact been in people taking courses at SCQF levels 7 and 8 - usually HNC/Ds, mainly at further education colleges - which have increased more than threefold since 1986/87. (Higher Education Review 2004)

⁶⁵ QAA is an agency for academic standards and quality in Higher Education
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/foundationdegree/benchmark/fdqb.asp>

⁶⁶ <http://www.privacy-council.org.uk/output/Page27.asp>

BACHELORS DEGREE

Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Education (BEd) and Bachelor of Science (BSc) courses usually last three years (full-time). Some courses last four years, involving placements in industry or periods abroad; these have the same academic standing as three-year courses. Most courses are modular in structure, with a compulsory common core. Courses usually include a project or dissertation based on independent research.

In Scotland, students may choose to achieve an Ordinary Degree⁶⁷ after three years or stay on to complete their Honours Degree after four years. Several of the older universities award the MA as a first degree instead of the BA⁶⁸.

MASTERS DEGREES (MA AND MSc, ETC.)

These are post-graduate courses and may take one-year full time or two years part time. They are usually self-funded; entry is dependent on results at bachelor level. There is a greater component of independent working, including a dissertation or thesis based on independent research. Some Masters degrees, such as MEng, are first degrees available for more able students. They are at a level between honours degree and Masters degree.

POST-GRADUATE CERTIFICATES (EG PGCE)

Some post-graduate courses are below Masters level and are intended to provide preparation for a specific occupation, following completion of a general degree. One of the best-known examples is the Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), which prepares graduates for a career in teaching and is a pre-requisite for Qualified Teacher Status for those who do not have B Ed as their first degree.

DOCTORATE (PHD)

Entry onto a PhD is dependent on results at either Masters or Bachelor level. PhDs are funded but it is up to the student to gain that funding. They take at least three years to complete, the first year (or first two years) of which may consist of an MPhil (Masters of Philosophy) qualification. Part-time PhDs may take the candidate considerably longer to complete.

PROGRESSION TO EMPLOYMENT

Possession of a relevant first degree is essential for entry to further training and employment in many professions; this is true for doctors, dentists and veterinary surgeons.

For other professions such as engineering there are alternatives such as registration and assessment via professional institutions. These are the independent bodies that set and maintain the standards for a specific profession. In engineering, they are overseen by the Engineering Council, which sets the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence (UK-SPEC). The Engineering Council licenses the professional engineering institutions to assess candidates for inclusion on its Register of Professional Engineers and Technicians.

⁶⁷ Most students go on to complete their Honours year, but the Ordinary degree in Scotland has had a long-standing tradition.

⁶⁸ This MA is not a postgraduate qualifications, but sits at SCQF level 10, the same SCQF level as a BA or BSc. Postgraduate MAs sit at SCQF level 11.

There are 36 licensed members and a number of affiliates so candidates need to choose the most relevant institution(s) for their specialism.

For accountants and lawyers, postgraduate courses following an unrelated first degree are not uncommon. For example; although to become an accountant candidates generally need a reasonable degree it is not essential. A degree will get gain the learner exemptions from some elements of vocational training or examination.

There are three main accounting bodies - The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) and Chartered Association of Certified Accountants (ACCA).

6. CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS

6.1 FORMAL EDUCATION

6.1.1. GENERAL BACKGROUND (ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND FINANCING)

For the last decade, the government policy has aimed to strengthen economic competitiveness through raising levels of skills and qualifications of the adult population, which led to an increased attention on the quality of training that lead to specific vocational qualifications. The strategy of government relies on encouraging individuals to take up learning and training opportunities, with a strong focus on the learner's needs rather than on the institutional interest of the providers⁶⁹.

Flexibility exists at many points in the UK education systems, helping people who lack formal qualifications or training earlier in life to achieve qualifications later on. Nevertheless, barriers to learning are particularly strong for those who are socially excluded or at risk.

The implementation of the Leitch recommendations⁷⁰ in England signalled the continued strengthening of a sectoral approach to skills policy in the UK. A voluntary approach to training of the workforce on the part of the employers is supported by the government, with state intervention focused on the supply side. The aim is to stimulate employer and individual demand by improving quality and the responsiveness of learning providers, while making training attractive to employers - the initiatives include greater involvement of employer led Sector Skills Councils, reforming qualifications frameworks and others.

The report also emphasises the necessity of shared responsibility: employers and individuals, as well as the government, should increase their investment in training and education. Employers and individuals should contribute most to training which gives them

⁶⁹ HU http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/prebud_05_leitch.htmUH

⁷⁰ [*Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills - Final Report*, HM Treasury, December 2006](#)

‘private’. A significant change recommended by Leitch is that the provision of vocational education and training should be demand-led, adaptable and responsive.

The government priority has been on providing public funds for those with low skills to bring them into the mainstream economy and improve their social standing. Considerable research into the individual, social and economic barriers to continuing participation have highlighted the need for a major change. Approximately 7.1% (England's average, LSC, 2008) of each age cohort still leaves school unqualified and without progressing to further education, training or a job with training. Moreover some seven to eight million adults are identified as lacking in basic skills. As such, finding ways that encourage large numbers of people to be involved in learning remains a key policy issue.

In response to this, numerous policy measures have been introduced, such as an entitlement to free learning to anyone without a good foundation of employability skills⁷¹, to get the training needed to achieve a level 2 qualifications⁷². There is also an increased government support (in terms of funding and access) for higher level skills at technician, higher craft or associated professional level (level 3 qualification)⁷³, in areas of sectoral or regional priority. The further strategy documents put employers' needs at the centre of the design and delivery of training⁷⁴ and set a new entitlement to free training for young people up to the age of 25 to achieve a level 3 (ISCED 3) qualification, while announcing a new programme to support in-company basic training⁷⁵, respectively.

The main bodies responsible for developing and implementing national policy for training are being reformed (for more details, see subchapter 4.5), in line with government's move towards a demand-led approach in post-compulsory education and training system, where the shape and volume of activities is more driven by employer and learner demand than by central planning. The funding of post-compulsory education is devolved to funding councils.

Research by NIACE suggests that expenditure on adult skills development accounted for some £55 (£60.5) billion in 2007-08, of which the public sector accounted for 47%, private sector employers 30%, individuals 17% and the remaining 7% being contributed by the voluntary and community sectors⁷⁶.

The government concern with the skills levels of the UK workforce and its competitiveness agenda, led to its increasing strategic involvement in the national skills formation agenda. The government established the UK-wide employer-led Sector Skills Councils (SSC) (2002) that coordinate enterprise training and their umbrella organisation UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) in 2008. Representing over 90% of the UK's workforce, they are tasked with securing increased levels of investment in skills and training by raising

⁷¹ DfES. 21st century skills: realising our potential. London: DfES, 2003. [HU\[http://www.dius.gov.uk/skills/skills_strategy/-/media/publications/2/21st%20Century%20SkillsU\]\(http://www.dius.gov.uk/skills/skills_strategy/-/media/publications/2/21st%20Century%20SkillsU\)](http://www.dius.gov.uk/skills/skills_strategy/-/media/publications/2/21st%20Century%20SkillsU)

⁷² A full level 2 refers to any qualification equivalent in standard and breadth to 5 GCSEs at A*-C or National Vocational Qualification at level 2.

⁷³ A full level 3 refers to a standard equivalent to two A-levels or a National Vocational Qualification at level 3.

⁷⁴ White Paper, Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work, DfES, 2005, [HU<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/SkillsPart2.pdf>](http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/SkillsPart2.pdf)

⁷⁵ White Paper, Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances, DfES, 2006, [HU<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/6514-FE%20White%20Paper.pdf>](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/6514-FE%20White%20Paper.pdf)

⁷⁶ Ambition 2020, UKCES, World Class Skills and Jobs for the UK, 2010

employer ambition in their sectors. They take a lead role in collating and communicating sectoral labour market data and intelligence, developing occupational standards, approving vocational qualifications and considering collective action to address specific sector skills needs.

UKCES works with devolved governments to ensure closer working relations between the employment and skills systems to meet employers' and individuals' needs. The Commission has a strategic leadership and advisory role: it provides evidence-based advice to the government. In 2010 it advised the government to introduce a statutory entitlement to training and to simplify the skills institutional landscape by reducing the number of publicly funding agencies by 30 in three years' time.

In England, the UK Commission also advises Government on skills and employment strategy and targets, assesses progress towards the targets and oversee the performance and reform of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) as part of its executive function.

The Employment and Skills Commissioners of the UK's devolved governments have a place on the UK Commission representing their national interests and report to their corresponding Ministers, while overseeing their employment and skills issues locally and chairing their national employment and skills boards.

The SSCs all have representatives of trade unions and professional bodies on their boards. Their role includes collecting and communicating labour market data on their respective sectors, drawing up Sector Skills Agreements and their respective Sector Qualification Strategy, which provides their inputs into the vocational qualification reform and development and revision of national occupational standards, on which qualifications and training programmes are based.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY LEARNING

The UK's devolved administrations sponsor initiatives and schemes to encourage learning in the community. Research suggests that many such schemes may overcome the barriers that more formal learning raises.

The learning can take place in a variety of settings and modes of delivery. The UK has got a long-standing tradition of distance learning and an increasing number of courses offered could be delivered online.

UNIVERSITY FOR INDUSTRY/LEARNDIRECT, AND SCOTTISH UNIVERSITY FOR INDUSTRY/SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND

Learndirect and Skills Development Scotland stimulate demand for learning by providing easily accessible information and advice to potential learners about all kinds of opportunities. Skills Development Scotland provides learners with advice on learning opportunities available throughout Scotland, including information on childcare facilities. Its network of over 460 Skills Development Scotland branded learning centres takes learning into the community, making access to learning easier and more flexible. These learning centres are located in libraries; shopping centres, leisure centres and other locally based facilities. Skills Development Scotland is also working closely with businesses, providing advice on training needs and to identify appropriate courses.

A RANGE OF APPROACHES TO WORKPLACE LEARNING

Government, the CBI and the trade unions are encouraging a range of approaches to workplace learning. To raise the profile of workplace learning and to involve the trade

unions in a more focused way, legislation now enables the election or appointment of learning representatives by trade union branches. The Union Learning Fund (ULF) has been set up with government funding through the TUC, to encourage an innovative approach whereby unions extend the training they give, for example to tackling basic skills weaknesses among their members, often at a workplace. Unionlearn, the TUC's learning and skills organisation provides a strategic framework and support for unions' work on learning and skills and the training of union representatives and officers. Unionlearn covers the whole of the UK. Most of its activities are delivered at a regional level, where the majority of staff work, supporting union learning and skills projects and managing trade union education programmes. In Scotland, the Scottish government funds the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF) as part of the strategy to tackle skills issues. The Union Learning Representatives (ULR), who have statutory rights, support employees to take up learning and training in the workplace.

6.1.2 MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF FORMAL CVET

In general, there is a significant crossover between IVET and CVET qualification systems and they are not designed as separate systems in principle. For example, NVQ2 and NVQ3 could equally serve for IVET and CVET. For full NVQs, City and Guilds Qualifications and similar qualifications offered by other Awarding Organisations, shorter courses or modules that do not lead to a full qualification at a level of the UK NQF could be described as at an ISCED level but not as completion of an ISCED level.

A qualifications drift has taken place, as employers expect higher levels of qualifications from entrants to the labour market and jobs become more complex. Unless specific qualifications are required - e.g. for a career such as nursing, the law, teaching or engineering - general qualifications are often taken as a sign of 'trainability'. Licences to practice requirements are not common in the UK, so vocational qualifications are often not seen as a necessary requirement for labour market entry.

PARTICIPATION RATES

Traditionally, the UK has high participation rates in training. The latest Eurostat data (2007) put the UK at the highest place in overall participation of the workforce in education training in the last 12 months prior to the survey (i.e. 15% compared with the EU average of 6.3%), particularly, at ISCED levels 5-6 (20.6% and 12.2%, respectively). It equally applies to the participation in training of unemployed (only Belgium has a higher participation rate, i.e. 16.3% as compared with the UK's 14.7% and EU's average of 6.3%).

DELIVERY MECHANISMS AND PROVIDERS

While much initial training is government-funded, the employer funds most workplace continuing training. Much continuing training is provided in-company or through specialist consultants or agencies. Most community and leisure learning provision, while it may be part-funded by a body such as the local authority, carries a financial cost to the individual. At the same time the public further and higher education establishments are major training providers. A wide range of private training organisations is involved.

Further education colleges, the largest players in the sector, are general purpose institutions covering both general and vocational education, and are also all-age institutions with large numbers of adults enrolled and normally with a range of both short

and long courses⁷⁷. The further education sector in the UK (2010) consists of 424 colleges, of which 95 are Sixth Form Colleges providing mainly full time academic courses to students aged 16-19, and 70 independent specialist colleges. Among those are general further education colleges, tertiary colleges, specialist colleges (mainly in land-based provision and art and design) and colleges that cater for people who have learning difficulties or disabilities, or both. According to UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Services) data, in 2009, FE institutions in the UK supplied 18.4% of students for higher education⁷⁸ In Scotland, 22.5% of HE students came from colleges.⁷⁹

There is a diverse range of provision within the post-compulsory education and training sector in addition to 6th form and FE colleges. This includes VET within enterprises, voluntary organisations, the prison service, uniformed services (police, armed services, emergency services), health and care services. There are, for example, many independent colleges (e.g. secretarial colleges for secretarial and administrative training). There are also many private language training schools. None of these private or independent colleges require government approval, but about 100 of them are registered with the British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education.

There are also numerous private training providers contracted by employers and local authorities to deliver specified training programmes (e.g. courses in human resource development and qualifications in particular occupational areas). Nationally, there is significant in-house training provided by employers. In-house trainers may work for an employer organisation and may be dedicated full-time to provide training; or they may be employed to undertake such training duties alongside other work. Other trainers may be contracted by the organisation to provide training or to assess employees' levels of competence.

There is a long tradition of people who lacked formal qualifications or training earlier in life achieving qualifications flexibly later on. Access courses to HE are recognised by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) through their inclusion in a national scheme. A student who successfully completes an Access course is awarded a certificate bearing the QAA Access logo.

QAA regulates the national recognition of Access courses. It is responsible for assuring the quality of recognised Access courses, and the adequacy of standards of student achievement on these courses. QAA has established a scheme, through which it can meet these responsibilities, the QAA Recognition Scheme for Access to Higher Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (the recognition Scheme).

The QAA Recognition Scheme is not applicable in Scotland. The Scottish Wider Access Programme (SWAP) initiative works in partnership with Scotland's colleges and higher education institutions within Scotland, to co-ordinate their access initiatives and develops progression pathways. Students who successfully complete SWAP programmes - and gain a positive tutor reference - are guaranteed a place on an appropriate higher education course (HNC/D or degree) either in a Further Education College or Higher Education Institution.

⁷⁷ *This creates a problem in supplying VET statistics as IVET and CVET cannot be readily split.*

⁷⁸ http://www.ucas.ac.uk/about_us/stat_services/stats_online/data_tables/edbackground

⁷⁹ <http://search1.ucas.co.uk/fandf00/index9.html>

Articulation arrangements also exist for learners progressing from HNC/Ds to degrees. Under these arrangements learners undertake an HNC or HND and articulated onto the second or third year of a specified degree programme. The amount of credit offered, for learning at HN level, and level of entry to the degree programme by higher education institutions depends on the specific demands of the course, which the learner wishes to join. A comprehensive outline of the existing HN-degree articulation routes is available at <http://www.napier.ac.uk/mapping/college.aspx>

This overview indicates elsewhere many of the initiatives that government and other stakeholders have taken. Five such policies are cited below:

- ‘Work-Life Balance’ policies;
- The expansion of higher education;
- Emphasis on developing Foundation degrees (NB not in Scotland);
- The reform of management and administrative frameworks for VET;
- An emphasis on e-learning, community and workplace learning. The intention is to put the learner at the centre.

RENEWAL OF CURRICULA

In the UK, NVQs and SVQs are largely based upon National Occupational Standards (NOS), or statements of the outcomes to be achieved to meet the requirements for certification. These are mainly developed by Sector Skill Councils (SSCs), which are employer-led bodies and normally include trade unions representatives on a minority basis together with representatives of relevant professional bodies and training organisations from the sector.

Because curricula are not usually nationally prescribed (the assessment requirements for qualifications normally being independent of delivery), curricula tend to be developed mainly by the organisations providing the education and training, for example by colleges, training organisations and employers at a decentralised level. However, for programmes such as modern apprenticeship, SSCs are increasingly involved in developing and disseminating curriculum models.

THE PLACE OF BASIC SKILLS AND KEY COMPETENCES IN THE LEARNING CULTURE

Key or core skills (to become functional skills) units are available at all levels of the NQF and SCQF in communication, number, information technology, problem solving, working with others, and developing own learning/skills. Key skills units in communication, number, information technology, problem solving, working with others and developing own learning skills are available at all levels of the NQF. They may be certificated as freestanding key skill qualifications. Key and core skills were widely seen as a potential bridge between different types of qualification provision and are a compulsory element of all modern apprenticeship programmes. Implementation of key skills programmes and assessment remains problematic.

Where students learn in a school-or college environment, securing sufficient direct experience of workplace learning and the professional competences and identities that are learnt this way is often a difficulty. A new framework of specialised diplomas is being

developed in England, and workbase learning is to be a clear feature of these new qualifications.

In Scotland, key or core skills units are only available at levels 1-6 of the SCQF.; as well as included in qualifications and higher national qualifications contained within the SCQF. Numeracy, communication, information and communications technology, problem solving and working with others can be gained at different levels up to and including SCQF level 6.

INTEGRATION OF NEW METHODS AND TECHNOLOGIES INTO CURRICULA

NVQ and SVQ criteria required national occupational standards to reflect the ability to respond to new technologies and innovations in working methods and forms of work organisation. This reflects the high degree of emphasis placed on facilitating flexibility and mobility in employment and ensuring that qualifications do not become out-dated too quickly. Standards for vocational qualifications are generally reviewed at 3 to 5 yearly intervals.

Curricula must be based upon the standards, and it is a matter for VET providers to ensure that curricula are kept up-to-date in line with industry requirements. In practice the close relationship between providers and employers is often assumed to ensure that training delivery keeps pace with industry requirements, although there is some evidence that training tends to follow, rather than lead, innovative practices in industry.

In Scotland, the SCQF assists in making clear the relationships between Scottish qualifications and those in the rest of the UK (QCF in England, in particular), Europe and beyond, thereby clarifying opportunities for international progression routes and credit transfer.

The Scottish Further Education Unit⁸⁰ supports key developments and innovations in teaching and learning in the college sector in Scotland. In England the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) provides a base for developing and disseminating best practice and innovation to the Learning and Skills Councils and to the further education sector. Both place strong emphasis on engaging professionals with the outcomes of research, and creating a research culture that meets practitioners' needs.

The National Grid for Learning, and National Grid for Learning Scotland, seek to use ICT to the maximum to raise standards and achievement, extend opportunity, create a highly ICT literate workforce and to ensure that ICT learning opportunities are of a high standard.

There is a growing use of ICT and e-learning in VET. UK scores quite highly in most of the European and international comparisons in this regard.

Following a rigorous and demanding regime of quality assurance and regulation in the last decade, well performing FE and HE institutions have now 'lighter touch' inspection regime. Ofsted, the inspection body, now concentrates on external monitoring and support of the institutions that have evident performance problems.

Investors in People (IiP) are currently a nationally recognised business standard that encourages employers to invest in training. IiP UK is an executive non-departmental public

⁸⁰ The SFEU has merged with the Association of Scotland's Colleges and the Colleges' Open Learning Exchange Group (COLEG) to form Scotland's Colleges, an umbrella organisation representing the interests of the college sector.

body set up in 1993. The award maintains a national standard. The liP award indicates that a company or workplace has a high commitment to develop all employees, reviews training for all employees regularly, takes action to train and develop employees effectively, and evaluates the outcome of training and HR development. Almost 8 million employees are currently benefiting from Investors in People, equating to 32% of the UK workforce⁸¹.

IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS TO LEARN IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

The following is an illustrative list of government's initiatives and priorities that are intended to improve access to continuing training, but is not intended to be exhaustive:

TRAIN TO GAIN (T2G)

The nationwide programme is a previous government initiative encouraging employers to train low-skilled employees by reimbursing employers the cost of granting low-skilled employees paid time off work to pursue education and training courses. During recession, the rather strict rules for financing participating SMEs were relaxed (see subsection 3.2 for more details).

Similar demand-led programme, Workforce Development Programme is run in Wales. Advisers work with employers to determine their priorities and identify skills needs and help them access local training opportunities. The programme focuses on priority sectors and businesses and supports employers who already engage in training. The OECD (*Learning for Jobs*, 2009) notes that the Welsh programme is more flexible and less qualification-driven than its English counterpart.

FOUNDATION DEGREES (NOT SCOTLAND)

The Foundation Degree is a vocationally oriented qualification below the level of a BA degree level, which allows for progression to a full degree. They are meant for learners with non-traditional academic background and are designed in conjunction with employers (for more details, see subchapter 5.6). Foundation degrees do not feature as a part of Scotland provision due to the continuing success of their HNC/HND provision as detailed earlier.

UNIVERSITY FOR INDUSTRY/SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND, AND SCOTTISH UNIVERSITY FOR INDUSTRY/SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND

Learndirect and Skills Development Scotland provide easily accessible information and advice to potential learners about all kinds of learning opportunities. Skills Development Scotland provides learners with advice on learning opportunities available throughout Scotland, including information on childcare facilities. 460 Scottish learning centres are located in libraries; shopping centres, leisure centres and other locally based facilities. Skills Development Scotland works with businesses, providing advice on training needs and to identify appropriate courses.

ADULT LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN SCOTLAND

While research suggests that in Scotland 800,000 adults may have low levels of literacy and numeracy, the report 'Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland'

⁸¹ <http://www.ukces.org.uk/press-release/uk-commission-for-employment-and-skills-to-champion-investors-in-people>

(<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2001/07/9471/File-1>) contains recommendations for transforming Scotland's literacy service. Since 2001, GBP51 million (EUR61 million) of new funding has been invested and 71,000 new learners have been helped. Learning Connections, the national research and development unit created within Communities Scotland, offering consolidated national advice.

Similar schemes to improve literacy and numeracy levels of adult skills, including Skills for Life, exist across the UK.

6.2 NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

6.2.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND (ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND FINANCING)

The institutional and funding arrangements for non-formal learning are similar to those of the formal CVET. For government priority groups, those who have low skills, public funding is available (for more details, see subchapter 6.1.1).

The UK's system allows for flexible access and progression, although the evidence is that many experience barriers to learning. In terms of workplace learning for example, there is still little emphasis in several sectors on progression beyond qualifications at level 2 or 3.

The UK has considerable experience and expertise in the recognition of informal and non-formal learning. There is no overarching UK policy approach, as the devolution of responsibilities for education and training to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, allows the devolved governments to introduce their distinct strategy.

The possibility of recognising prior learning is being incorporated into the developing Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and Scotland has adopted 'Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Informal Learning' as a part of the arrangements for the SQCF.

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Partnership has had a national RPL Network set up for several years. In addition the partnership has led a government funded project on recognising prior qualifications and learning for migrant workers and refugee workers since 2008 with a final report being published in the summer of 2010. The SCQF Partnership also published a RPL Toolkit in 2010.⁸²

6.2.2 MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-FORMAL CVET

In 2005, 17% of employers provided training towards an NVQ for a least one of their employees, and 48% had training that did not lead to qualification. At the same time 35% of employers did not provide any training to their staff (LSC, 2008). At the European level, although the UK has higher levels of participation in informal learning, almost double at all ISCED levels of the EU-25 average, it still lacks behind Scandinavian countries (Eurostat, 2005).

Examining patterns in employer participation in learning and training shows that the proportion of employers providing training continues to increase over time: in England, for

⁸² http://www.tru.ca/_shared/assets/plirc-pp-8-116834.ppt#273,20,Links to EU & International development

example, from 64% in 2004 to 67% in 2007 and, despite the recession, 68% in 2009. In Scotland 65% of employers provide some form of training to their staff, as do 78% in Northern Ireland. The data from Wales is not quite comparable, where 58% of employers provide off-the-job training⁸³.

Much of this training concerns induction, health and safety - and four out of five employers provide job specific training. The most common form of training is by training companies, followed by further education colleges, then equipment providers. Most on the job training is provided by a line manager, supervisor or an experienced colleague, followed by specialist training staff. Increasingly, IT based packages are used for training.

Considerable differences exist between employers in the same industry or sector. The type and quality of training also varies. Overall, about 40% of employer-funded training leads to qualification or part qualification, and a considerable proportion related to induction rather than medium- or high-term skills development.

In November 2009, the right to request time to train became a statutory right. The new coalition government has confirmed the introduction of the right in phases, starting with organisations with 250 or more employees from 2010 before being extended to all employees from 2011. This will give smaller organisations and businesses more time to prepare the introduction of the new right. Employers will need to be ready to handle any requests they receive under the new statutory right to request time to train.

Many workplaces offer employees the opportunity to achieve formal recognition of their level of competence through the work-based route of National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications (N/SVQs), which are designed to assess job-specific skills. Within reason, NVQs do not have to be completed in a specified amount of time or in a specific learning institution. It follows that the qualification can be gained either wholly or partly through the assessment of previously acquired knowledge and skills. Performance is assessed on-the-job at five different levels of standards as set by the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for that occupational area of employment.

Most other qualifications offered in the learning and skills sector give providers' considerable discretion over who may be admitted to the course and over course length, allowing prior learning to be taken into consideration. In practice, however, it is often simpler to follow the complete the course than to combine attendance at some sessions with APL.

There is less opportunity for learners to have their existing skills recognised outside the framework of a formal qualification. This is partly because public policy and the desire for accountability, supported by the funding regime, have put pressure on colleges to align their courses to nationally accredited qualifications. Open College Networks have considerable experience in identifying and recognising learners' existing skills, usually in the context of a college-devised, externally validated certificate. The English RARPA scheme offers a means of accrediting skills outside the qualification framework (see below).

To address these issues, the devolved governments have been refining their qualification frameworks to promote progression and transfer, while providing clear and accessible routes to employability. All UK countries have outcomes-based education systems, and the development of the outcome-based methodology has been central to the VET reform, including qualification frameworks.

⁸³ *Ambition 2020, UKCES, 2010*

As previously stated; the recognition of prior learning is incorporated into the new Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Both England and Scotland have adopted 'Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Informal Learning' as a part of the arrangements for their corresponding frameworks.

Recognising prior learning considers whether a learner can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills which they already possess and do not need to develop through further learning. Learners will be awarded credit when they have successfully shown that they have met the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a QCF unit.

Employers in the UK acknowledge the value of prior learning within the work context and learning within the organisation, but this is rarely recognised by any form of certification.

RARPA (RECOGNISING AND RECORDING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT IN NON-ACCREDITED LEARNING) IN ENGLAND

The RARPA project was initiated to address two issues in relation to non-accredited learning (i.e. learning which does not lead to a qualification) in the learning and skills sector. The first was how learner achievement could be recognised in the absence of a target qualification and the second was the need to improve quality, especially in recognising and recording learner progress and achievement, which inspection reports had noted as an area of weakness.

A theoretical model, the 'Staged Process' was developed as a way of recognising and recording progress and achievement on non-accredited provision. The staged process comprises five elements, linked explicitly to key parts of the Common Inspection Framework:

- aims appropriate to an individual learner or group of learners;
- initial assessment to establish the learner's starting point;
- identification of appropriately challenging learning objectives: initial, renegotiated, and revised;
- recognition and recording of progress and achievement during programme (formative assessment): tutor feedback to learners, learner reflection, progress reviews; and
- end of programme learner self-assessment; tutor summative assessment; review of overall progress and achievement in relation to objectives identified at the beginning or during the programme, potentially including recognition of learning outcomes not specified during the programme.

RARPA was accepted as a valid method of recognising and recording learner achievement in learning where more usual measures (e.g. qualifications) are not appropriate - for example, in Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL - formerly known as ACL) and Entry to Employment (E2E).

During the lifetime of the RARPA project significant changes were introduced or signaled in the funding of non-accredited provision. These led to sharp falls in adult learners and hence reduced the impact of the RARPA approach.

In 2007 (Eurostat), 40.3% of people of working age (25-64 years of age) in the UK participated in non-formal job-related training in the last 12 months prior to the survey, which compares favourably to the EU average of 32.7%. Employees were more likely to receive job-related training than self-employed, the unemployed or the economically inactive. For both, the EU average and the UK, the rates of training of employed are almost twice as high as unemployed.

SOCIAL PARTNERS - UNIONLEARN

Unionlearn, is the Trade Union Council's (TUC) learning and skills organisation, which was established in 2006 to provide a strategic framework and support for unions' work on learning and skills. Mostly funded by the government, it is a union-led organisation, with a Board comprising 15 senior TUC General Council members. The mission of Unionlearn is to increase workers' life chances through opening more learning opportunities to their members, particularly those disadvantaged in the labour market. There are two targets set: that by 2010 there should be 22,000 trained and accredited ULRs and that these will help a quarter of a million employees per year into training.

6.3 MEASURES TO HELP JOB-SEEKERS AND PEOPLE VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

There is no national definition for 'vulnerable groups' across the UK. Broadly speaking, vulnerable groups are defined as those who are likely to have additional needs and experience poorer outcomes if these needs are not met. These include children in care and care leavers; children with learning difficulties and disabilities and emotional or behavioural difficulties; some black and minority ethnic groups; pregnant teenagers and teenage parents; young offenders; young carers; refugees and asylum seekers; gypsies and travellers and other emerging communities; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people; children and young people in substance misusing families; children and young people experiencing domestic violence; homeless children and young people. Long-term unemployed are also included in this group.

In the last decade, the previous government made an effort to encourage more people back into work, more employers to invest in training and more learning to achieve higher levels of qualifications after leaving school. This included initiatives to change the welfare system, particularly in the current economic climate, with some specific actions to address additional barriers the downturn creates. The new coalition government has launched a review of the welfare reform that is intended to reduce the number of people on benefits and encourage them into work.

In 2007 (Eurostat), the rates of participation of unemployed in formal and non-formal learning was higher than in most EU countries at 33.5%, but still lower than in Austria (41.4%), Norway (45.8%) and Sweden (58.6%).

Training for the unemployed (TfU) is training for persons aged 18 and over who are actively seeking work and are registered as unemployed. Those persons aged 16-17 who are unemployed are classified as IVET as they are not entitled to claim Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). The UK government welfare to work policy has been delivered through a number of training programmes targeted at specific groups of unemployed and vulnerable (New Deal, Ambition Programme, etc).

Since April 2002, in England and Wales, state provided work-based learning for long-term unemployed adults has been delivered through the Jobcentre Plus, under the responsibility of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). In the economic downturn, a package of

additional support was put in place for those who are still unemployed at six months to help them back into work, become self-employed or gain new skills through work-focused training. The enhanced support is offered through Jobcentre Plus personal advisers to help unemployed people review their job search, work skills and effective job application process. Scotland delivers its adult training through Training for Work (for more details, please see subchapter 3.2.3).

The Integrated Employment and Skills Service, which has been piloted to be rolled out across England in 2010-11, focuses on better identification of skills needs among the Jobcentre Plus customers, help them progress to higher skilled and sustainable employment. Special measures are envisaged for disabled people, offenders and other vulnerable groups.

There continue to be some active labour government training initiatives for the unemployed, the New Deal Programme and Work-based learning for Adults (WBLA), in particular. After more than a 10-year run of the programme, in October 2009, the government introduced the Flexible New Deal that has a more flexible personalised approach with a strong focus on helping the most disadvantaged jobseekers get and sustain work. In January 2008, the government was spending £5 (€5.5) billion less on unemployment than in 1997 and claimant unemployment was at a 30 year low. According to the programme evaluation, the New Deal has contributed to this success.

THE FLEXIBLE NEW DEAL

New Deal, an active labour market policy measure, has been a key part of the previous government's Welfare to Work strategy since 1998. In ten years, 1.8 million people were helped move into work quickly and improve their employability. At the end of 2007 the government published Ready for Work⁸⁴, which set out its plans for a more flexible personalised New Deal with a strong focus on helping the most disadvantaged jobseekers get and sustain work.

As a result, in October 2009 the new Flexible New Deal (FND) was introduced. The new single New Deal Programme is replacing the New Deal for Young People (NDYP) and New Deal 25+. It aims at long-term unemployed and is based on five core principles:

- from passive benefit recipients to active jobseekers;
- tailored employment and skills support to meet the need of an individual and local employers based on personalised and responsive approach;
- public, private and third sector organisations working in partnership based to maximise innovation;
- sustainable employment in the centre of local regeneration by empowering communities; and
- an emphasis on sustaining and progressing in work to ensure all customers develop their skills and have access to the relevant pre-employment and in-work training.

⁸⁴ Ready for Work is available on the DWP website at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/legislation-and-key-documents/ready-for-work/>UH

The programme's approach is based on the job entry performance of FND providers, a small group of large prime contractors who act as brokers and are expected to sub-contract programme delivery. They will be paid by the results and will have greater autonomy in the programmes' design and implementation. They are expected to provide an individualised support package of services for long-term unemployed.

The New Deal for Young People and the New Deal 25plus are mandatory programmes for those who are unemployed for six to eighteen months out of the previous twenty-one months respectively. The New Deal for Partners, New Deal 50 plus and New Deal for Disabled People and New Deal for Lone Parents are voluntary programmes. To boost skills of those actively searching work, New Deal for Skills aims to develop vocational or sector specific skills in unemployed and help them progress from lower to higher skilled work. It also provides coaching services and has introduced a validated record of skills achieved and other relevant measures.

New Deal is delivered by a network of local partners - including employers, local authorities, training providers, career services and other agencies that can offer practical help. They plan New Deal locally, on the basis of their knowledge of the local job markets.

The New Deal consists of:

- activation through incentives, e.g. working tax credit and child tax credit (*);
- activation through benefit sanctions, e.g. young people must meet criteria for seeking and applying for jobs and taking training opportunities;
- help through training and improving vocational skills;
- help through job search support/counselling and improved job matching;
- help through subsidies, including subsidised placements.

Northern Ireland has a different welfare-to-work system, called Steps to Work.

Retraining is more accurately understood as part of the national skills agenda, than as a specific response to decline in particular areas or industries. Large-scale retraining programmes tend not to be the approach taken by government, nor in the regions or localities. Very large numbers of people have retrained to participate in tertiary occupations rather than manufacturing, as the latter has continued to decline. The labour market tends not to be highly regulated, thus people can move from occupation to occupation in a more fluid way than in countries where labour market entry is regulated for most occupations.

7. TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

7.1 TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINER OCCUPATIONS IN VET

7.1.1 TEACHING AND TRAINING OCCUPATIONS IN VET

For VET in the UK, teachers (known as lecturers within the further education sector - FE) are regarded as those working in schools and colleges, whereas trainers are employed mainly in a work-based setting.

Teachers in state secondary schools will deliver initial vocational education only, through the study of vocational subjects. Lecturers within FE colleges may also teach those same subjects. College lecturers may also be involved in work-based training to both pre-employment students and in-employment trainees. This training may be counted either as IVET or CVET (or with elements of both). The range of VET programmes is offered to full-time attending and part-time attending students/trainees at varying levels of qualifications from initial to advanced.

Within the diverse sector of non-government VET provision (private colleges and training providers, in-house training in employer organisation, voluntary organisation, etc.) there is no formal requirement for trainers to hold a recognised teaching qualification. There is increasing pressure across the sector for employers of trainers to request, as a minimum, that they have completed PTLLS (Preparation to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector). This is critical for any organisation (private or independent) who is intending to claim public funding or bid for public funding. Each year, over four million people of all ages attend government-funded courses in the lifelong learning sector and the aim is to improve the quality of teacher training and learning delivery.

Broadly, arrangements are similar for England, Wales and Northern Ireland; there are some differences in Scotland (see section 7.3.2).

7.1.2 RESPONSIBLE BODIES

For secondary school teachers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) promotes and helps with recruitment into a teaching profession, under the DfE. An objective of the [Training and Development Agency for Schools \(TDA\)](#) is to recruit more people from black and ethnic minorities, and more people with disabilities, into teaching.

The Institute for Learning (IfL) in Post Compulsory Education and Training acquired its role as a professional body for teachers in the Learning and skills sector in 2007 as the requirement for FE teachers to hold a recognised teaching qualification was introduced. Under the new regulations, all teachers must be members of IfL, must follow its code of Practice (and are subject to disciplinary proceedings, if they do not) and must continue to develop their skills as teachers through CPD.

Teachers who joined the sector after 2007 must have, or obtain within five years, a recognised teaching qualification, which gives them the designation of either QTLS (Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills) at level 5 or ATLS (Associate Teacher Learning and Skills) at level 4. There is no such time limit for those who were already teaching in the sector in 2007. Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), the Sector Skills Council for the education and

training sector, develops, quality assures and promotes national standards for the training of trainers and teachers in the public FE colleges and private training sectors.

In 2007 the LLUK established a VET teacher qualifications and standards framework:

- The framework includes qualifications for various kinds of teaching and non-teaching staff (in learning support, e-learning, assessment, leadership and management).
- Since then all VET teachers must register with their new professional body, the Institute for Learning (IFL), which confers full Qualified Teacher in the Learning and Skills Sector (QTLS) or 'Licensed Practitioner' on all those registered with it. The IFL publishes a code of professional practice.
- There is also a compulsory requirement that for a VET teacher/trainer to stay registered with IFL, they must evidence a minimum of 30 hours CPD over a year.
- From 2007 all VET Principals and aspiring FE Principals must successfully complete a standardised (by the LLUK) leadership programme managed by the Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL).

LLUK is charged by government to implement the new FE Workforce strategy, and professional qualifications form a key part of the strategy.

7.1.3 RECENT REFORMS TO VET TEACHER/TRAINER TRAINING

Prior to 1999, there were few if any requirements in the UK for trainers and VET teachers to have formal training or hold qualifications to teach, unless they worked in the state-funded sector. The aim now is that all those who perform a teaching or training role in the UK's publicly financed institutions should hold, or be working towards, a full teaching qualification. Teachers within the FE sector 'need two sets of skills - to be expert in their subject and to be trained to teach it'⁸⁵.

Since 2002, the government has reformed the VET teaching profession through a series of policy documents aiming at introduction of statutory requirements and professionalization of VET teachers and principles, together with continuous professional development (CPD), in conjunction with the establishment of a VET professional body.

The government has also introduced a range of policy measures to incentivise the recruitment and retention teaching staff in profession. For FE teachers these are:

- a scheme to attract new recruits to train for pre-service entry to tertiary teaching has operated for several years. Funded by the government each student during the year of Post-Graduate Certificate in Education or Certificate in Education training currently receives a bursary of £6,000 (€ 6,600). From 2005, intending teachers of Mathematics receive a bursary of £7,000 (€ 7,700).

The priority ITT incentives (which will be £9,000 (€9,900) for new eligible trainees from 2010-11) will be specifically focussed on recruitment to secondary postgraduate courses in

⁸⁵ Department for Education and Skills - DfES, *The future of initial teacher education for the learning and skills sector*. London: DfES, 2003. Available from Internet:

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/ACF4240.pdf> [cited 13.5.2005].

mathematics; chemistry; physics; information and communications technology (ICT); and design and technology. This will support a prioritisation on recruitment to specific STEM (science, technologies, engineering and mathematics) subjects.

- following successful completion of the award and appointment to a college, new entrants teaching in shortage subjects can also apply for a "Golden Hello". This is a one-off payment (of up to £ 4,000 (€4,400) for teachers of: Mathematics, Science, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Engineering, English (including Drama), Modern Languages, Construction, Design and Technology. This scheme also is administered by the DCSF⁸⁶; and
- there are two types of reward available to teachers who stay in the profession. For those who prove excellence in teaching they may be recognised for Advanced Practitioner status. Apart from this recognition, there is the standard progression route through promotion from the main lecturer grade.

The professionalisation agenda and accompanying reforms were introduced to raise the general standards of teaching in the VET sector, and in an attempt to bring greater parity of esteem with teachers in general schools, who already have a professional status. It is too early to evaluate the impact of the introduced reforms on the sector.

7.2 TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET

7.2.1 TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN IVET

IVET operates in a range of settings. Vocational subjects (at pre-employment levels) are offered in secondary schools (14-18), 6th form colleges (16-19), Further Education (FE) colleges (16+). VET for specific vocational areas is provided by FE colleges and other training providers, including trainers employed within their own commercial/industrial/service organisations. IVET and CVET trainers are appointed on the basis of their craft/academic/professional qualifications and experience. Only if a provider receives public funding, it is expected that trainers will work towards obtaining a full teaching award, following an in-service route. The independent training providers set their own standards. When bidding for public money, they are required to ensure that they are trainers are working toward minimum quality standards.

In addition to mainstream teachers, schools employ classroom assistants and FE colleges employ learning support workers who undertake a variety of tasks. Categories of employment for teacher/trainers in each sector are:

- secondary schools: vocational subject teachers with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS); classroom assistants;
- further Education colleges: vocational teachers, with part or full teaching qualification; learning support workers (with varying roles and qualifications); and
- other training providers: vocational trainers, with or without part or full teaching qualification, but with an Assessor Award for those working in publicly-funded training enterprises.

⁸⁶ DfE as of May 2010

7.2.2 PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF IVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

In England and Wales, all teachers in state-maintained secondary schools, including those teaching vocational subjects, must hold the recognised teaching qualification of a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Apart from undergraduate route leading to PGCE, entry requirements for the graduates include the holding of a degree in the subject to be taught. The PGCE is obtained via a one-year period of training, based at a Higher Education Institution (HEI) or college, which includes practical teaching experience supported by education studies.

In England, one can also take a school-based initial teacher training (ITT) course run by schools consortia that are accredited to offer school-centred ITT (SCITT). Some schools in England may use schools in Wales to deliver training. Most SCITT consortia run courses that have been validated by a university or college for the award of their PGCE. Attendance of some lectures at the university or college and a minimum of 24 weeks training in school are required within this route.

Following certification, and a satisfactory year of probation on first appointment, the successful trainee is awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

In Scotland, graduates obtain a Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) courses to get the Teaching Qualification (TQ) or a Bachelor of Education degree. Some Higher Education Institutions such as Stirling University; allow students on secondary education teacher training degrees to study for another degree subject alongside their teacher training over 3 or 4 years.

All PGCE courses in Wales are based in universities or colleges of higher education. PGDE courses in Scotland are based in universities only, as all of the previous autonomous initial teacher training institutions have been incorporated into universities, usually as a faculty of education.

Another employment-based route for secondary teachers, which is offered by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), gives trainee teachers the opportunity to follow a personal training programme to bring them to QTS standard. Trainees work and train at a school that devises their training plan. Trainees can earn from £14,040 (£15,000) for the year, which is paid for by the school. Candidates secure employment themselves, but guidance is available from LEAs and HEIs.

In Scotland, Learning and Teaching Scotland provides a wide range of support for teachers. *Determined to Succeed* (2002), the Scottish government's strategy for enterprise in education, is providing increased Continuing Professional Development opportunities for teachers to enable them to better contextualise their lessons and link them to the world of work.

In Wales, the recommendations of a WAG-commissioned review of initial teacher education, are currently being disseminated and debated. A professional development framework is being developed for teachers to help identify individual development needs, and Welsh Language Sabbatical schemes are being promoted for teachers at all levels. In Wales, a strategic plan is in development to engage all education practitioners in all

sectors in effective learning, teaching and professional development, including an International Professional Development programme for FE lecturers.

In Northern Ireland, a major review of teacher education is in progress, to ensure that the profession is best placed to cope with the changes facing the education sector in the coming years.

Within the UK there is no formal system for in-service, continuing professional development of VET teacher/trainer either working at school or college or work-based trainers.

7.3 TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET

7.3.1 TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN CVET

CVET provision is offered by Further Education (FE) colleges and by a range of other providers. This range, of other providers, includes CVET within enterprises, voluntary organisations, the prison service, uniformed services (police, armed services, emergency services), health and care services. It includes also independent colleges (e.g. secretarial colleges for secretarial and administrative training) as well as many private language training schools. None of these private or independent colleges require government approval, but about 100 of them are registered with the British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education.

A major part of the total CVET provision is supplied by numerous private training providers contracted by employers and local authorities to deliver specified training programmes (e.g. courses in human resource development and qualifications in particular occupational areas). Nationally, there is significant in-house training provided by employers. In-house trainers may work for an employer organisation and may be dedicated full-time to provide training; or they may be employed to undertake such training duties alongside other work. Other trainers may be contracted by the organisation to provide training or to assess employees' levels of competence.

CVET TEACHERS IN FE COLLEGES

All CVET teachers in FE colleges will hold appropriate craft or trade or professional qualifications, together with significant work experience. Many will hold a part or full teaching qualification, though some will have been appointed without any training as a teacher. All CVET (and IVET) teachers in FE colleges must now undertake training towards a teaching qualification.

Those teaching CVET in FE colleges are paid on the same salary scale as IVET teachers. Most VET teachers in FE will in fact contribute to both IVET and CVET provision, and data available within the UK makes no distinction between CVET and IVET teachers in this category. It should be noted, however, that it is not possible to determine from the total numbers employed in FE those who are employed as vocational teachers, either CVET or IVET.

LEARNING SUPPORT WORKERS IN FE COLLEGES

Within FE colleges there is a number of learning support workers. They will hold qualifications appropriate to the specific roles for which they have been appointed.

There are no national data available to determine the number, salaries, qualifications, and gender balance of those employed as learning support workers within tertiary education. A research report (NATFHE: The routes and employment of learning support workers in further education colleges, September 2003) established the following information from a sampling of advertised vacancies in 36 colleges. A learning support worker may be appointed as: learning support assistant, instructor, assessor, learning mentor, development officer, tutor facilitator, education support worker, advice and guidance worker, learning facilitator - among other descriptions. They may be appointed to full-time posts, permanent or fixed-term; or part-time, hourly paid. A wide range of qualifications was required for these posts, according to the nature of the duties to be covered. Some qualifications were very specific (such as a 'signing' qualification to support deaf students, or a specialist dyslexia support qualification); other posts required an Assessor Award or qualification in a particular vocational area. Only one post, of those surveyed, required a full initial teaching qualification.

Most Teaching Assistant will now be expected to hold or to be working towards level 2 or 3 NVQ or equivalent.

7.3.2 PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF CVET TEACHER AND TRAINERS

CVET trainers are appointed on the basis of their craft, trade, or professional qualifications. Few, on first appointment, will hold a teaching qualification. Those involved in assessing the work and competences of their trainees will either hold, or be expected to obtain, a recognised Assessor Award if they are employed in publicly funded training enterprises. Although no dates have been attached to the policy, it is the government's stated aim to move to a position where CVET trainers employed in this sector of provision will also obtain a full teaching qualification.

Vocational teachers in FE colleges may be appointed without a teaching qualification. Their vocational/trade qualifications, plus substantial experience in their specialist area has been, and continues to be, the requirements for appointment to a teaching post in further education. In 2001 a new requirement that such teachers, whether newly-appointed or already in post, to obtain a full teaching qualification has been introduced. Training towards a full teaching qualification is provided by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for both pre-service and in-service trainees. Pre-service training consists of a one-year full-time programme, which includes assessment of practical teaching abilities, together with a range of supporting educational studies. The same programmes are available to in-service teachers on a part-time basis, over (usually) two years.

The route to full QTLS status is being "softened" to allow trainers outside the College sector and not in receipt of the LLUK funding (Police/Army etc.) to gain QTLS recognition from IFL.

Initial teacher training course normally include a special needs element. Once qualified, an experienced teacher or training can take further training for special educational needs or in more specialised areas as post-graduate studies or CPD.

SCOTLAND

In Scotland The GTCS is responsible for primary and secondary school teachers, who have to be registered with the body in order to practice. An ITE qualification is not a requirement in Scottish colleges; and college lecturers qualified with a BA in Education or

PGCE or PGDE are not required to register with the GTC to practice. Voluntary membership is a possibility and can be used to demonstrate best practice.

HMIE has a role in identifying skills requirements for college lecturers; and external verifiers of N/SVQs require qualified assessors/verifiers, though this may be through trade qualifications and appropriate CPD, rather than the PGC/DE and/or TQFE.

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) has introduced a new approach to staff development, which focuses on the professional competence of all college staff. In Scotland, college lecturers on full-time permanent contracts are encouraged to obtain a qualification, and the SFC provides funding to cover the cost of training. Arrangements governing the training of college lecturers are set out in National Guidelines⁸⁷. These guidelines make provision for all the competences required from a college lecturer to be included in a National Index of Initial Teacher Training and Continuing Professional Development Units. These units are intended to cater for the induction, initial teacher training and continuing professional development of all college lecturers.

Colleges also employ 'learning support workers'. This term covers a wide range of titles and roles, including student advisory responsibilities. They will hold qualifications appropriate to the specific roles for which they have been appointed. A wide range of qualifications is required for these posts, according to the nature of the duties to be covered. Some qualifications are very specific (such as 'signing' qualification to support deaf students, or a specialist dyslexia support qualification); other posts required an Assessor Award or a qualification in a particular areas.

Once appointed, trainers within all publicly funded enterprises included in this broad range of provision may also undertake programmes to achieve a full teaching qualification (Certificate in Education or Post-Graduate Certificate in Teaching). Such trainers will undertake, through part-time study, the same programme as those working in colleges.

College teachers and work-based trainers responsible for assessing trainees within national vocational qualifications must also possess an Assessor Award⁸⁸. Additionally, there is a range of other training qualifications which workplace, industrial trainers and those working in HRD may hold or attain. Such awards are freestanding and may be taken by the individual as part of a trainer's continuing professional development.

⁸⁷ Scottish Office Education and Industry Department - SOEID, *National guidelines on provision leading to the teaching qualification and related professional development*. Edinburgh: SOEID, 1997.

⁸⁸ Assessor Award: Formal recognition (level 3) through a portfolio of evidence of having undertaken formal assessment procedures against specified competences. It relates to assessment of individual learner's work, internal moderation, and external verification.

8. MATCHING VET PROVISION (SKILLS) WITH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS (JOBS)

8.1 SYSTEMS AND MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS (IN SECTORS, OCCUPATIONS, EDUCATION LEVEL)

The UK has an ambition of being in the top eight countries in the world for skills, jobs and productivity by 2020. Since 2002, with the introduction of the UK-wide Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), followed by creation of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) in 2008, the government has aimed to enhance employer understanding of their future labour market and skills requirements leading to improved employability and skills demand and supply. The UKCES has a strategic advisory role and the SSCs lead on anticipation of training and qualification needs for their sectors. These sectoral arrangements aim to improve their capacity for undertaking labour market analysis in anticipation of emerging sector skill requirements. Traditional labour market forecasting techniques have been refined and more holistic approaches are being adopted.

The developing Sector Skills Councils and awarding bodies respectively review the labour market need and uptake of qualifications with specific priority being given to employers' needs. Relevant labour market data comes from a variety of national sources including the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Employment Survey (AES), and from national, regional or sectoral surveys, and skill audits. Quantitative methods include mechanistic/extrapolative techniques, behavioural/econometric models, surveys of employers' opinions and skills audits. Qualitative approaches include Delphi techniques, case studies, focus groups and holistic modelling approaches, such as scenarios.

Strong emphasis is now placed on identifying and planning skill development programmes to meet regional/local labour market needs.

Each of the 23⁸⁹ Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are led by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) and are required by the government to develop Sector Qualifications Strategies (SQS) and a Sector Skills Agreement (SSA) between employers and providers of learning and training in their sector. SSCs are employer led organisations with the role of representing employers' skills needs to government and raising employer demand for skills, also representing the interests of other stakeholders, particularly the unions.

The Sector Skills Agreement is now recognised as the mechanism through which employer skills needs in the UK are identified and met.

Target groups include the full range of groups that are likely to be represented among the low skills, including NEETs, immigrants, members of some ethnic minorities, those lacking in basic skills.

SSA has five stages:

1. Assessment of current and future skills needs in the sector;
2. Assessment of current provision in the sector;

⁸⁹ As part of the relicensing process, all 25 Sector Skills Councils went through a comprehensive assessment process led by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. As a result, 23 SSCs were relicensed in 2010.

3. Analysis of gaps and weaknesses in demand and supply;
4. Identification of the scope for collaborative action with employers; and
5. Production of costed action plan with supply side partners.

The objective of the SSA include identifying the drivers of productivity and competitiveness in the sector, and what constitutes leading-edge practice around the world supporting measurable improvements in business performance and identifying the skills needed to achieve these targets. SSCs lead the work on reviewing and developing new occupational standards (NOS), followed by the agreements with providers and other national and regional partners on funding issues and support for flexible training patterns.

NOS (on which NVQs and SVQs are based) are developed through a process of functional analysis. Standards are specified in the form of units, aggregated to meet qualifications needs of specific occupations, which are identified by a parallel process of occupational mapping. SSCs are required to take into account future labour market requirements. Each SSC has an agreed Sector Qualifications Strategy (SQS). SQS identifies priority qualifications for the jobs roles across the sector as well as identifies gaps, for which awarding organisations might develop new qualifications. The SQS forms the basis of any recommendations for public funding.

The anticipation of skills needs is taken forward initially on a sectoral basis, followed by the regional and local dimension based on the sectoral needs analysis. In England, the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) take this agenda forward.

The Skillsbase database provides a wide range of labour market information. There is a substantial national investment in statistical infrastructure for the aforementioned data and surveys that is also used for other purposes. Forecasting is primarily publicly-funded, but some more sector-specific surveys are financed by employers' organisations.

The SSCs and awarding bodies respectively review the labour market need and uptake of specific qualifications. Routine monitoring of qualifications and system trends is undertaken by the Ofqual (England, Wales and NI), UKCES and DGs' corresponding bodies. The renewal of qualifications admitted to the national qualifications framework is determined by a 're-accreditation cycle' in which qualifications are subject to review on an agreed cycle - typically 3 years. On average, new qualifications are developed over an 18 months' cycle.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children Services and Skills (Ofsted) is responsible for appraising and reporting to Government on the quality of training provision; this is done through visits to training settings and can include commentary on the performance of specific initiatives and reforms.

In Scotland, Futureskills Scotland (which was managed by Scottish Enterprise in collaboration with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, but has now been merged into the Scottish Government) conducts a regular survey (which was first carried out in 2003) to provide evidence about skill shortages, skill gaps and training, based on information from more than 3,000 Scottish workplaces. The Analytical Services Division of the Scottish Government's Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department manages a programme of research in support of policy development in further and higher education, vocational education and training and lifelong learning. For the corresponding agencies in Wales and Northern Ireland, see Section 3.1.

8.2 PRACTICES TO MATCH VET PROVISION (SKILLS) WITH SKILLS NEEDS (JOBS)

The UK's VET system is largely outcomes-based. Training providers have flexibility to plan learner-centred delivery systems to meet users' needs. The same qualifications are offered in both the initial and the continuing VET and the flexibility offered by the outcomes approach has been greatest in providing adult learners with access to individually targeted learning and assessment. Young people, increasingly since the advent of apprenticeships, tend to follow more standardised learning programmes.

The modular or unitised structure of N/SVQs and most other vocational qualifications provides a high degree of flexibility, opening up possibilities for modular delivery and credit transfer. The number of people gaining individual units, often through job-focused in-company training, is increasing in some sectors. Many providers of education and training use mixed mode delivery, incorporating elements of conventional and open or distance learning.

The VET reform in England have been refining qualifications frameworks, reflecting concerns that existing qualification frameworks were incoherent, with a large number of qualifications and awarding bodies⁹⁰, and with limited opportunities to accumulate credit or to develop flexible progression routes. It aims to make qualifications landscape more understandable to employers and learners while meeting the needs of both and providing clear and accessible routes to employability and learning progression.

Since 2002, the reform of vocational qualifications (VQ) has been implemented across the UK. England includes the proposed merging of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) into the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), which is a credit-based and web-based regulated framework. In England, the QCF is a new way of recognising achievements of learners through the award of credit for units and qualifications that enables qualifications to be achieved gradually by accumulating learning and transferring credit. The work includes both academic and applied knowledge and skills, the linkage of all levels, including school-based, vocational qualifications and higher education and will be completed by the end of 2010.

Every unit and qualification in the framework has a credit value and level. The qualifications are of three sizes (award, certificate, diploma). The framework has nine levels of difficulty. When a learner completes a unit, they are awarded the relevant credits, which are recorded electronically on their learner record. England has an outcomes-based education system, and the development of the outcome-based methodology has been central to the VET reform, including the development of QCF. Most VET qualifications, school qualifications and first degrees are described and assessed in outcomes terms. The Sector Skills Councils (SSCs - 23 sector bodies⁹¹ with a sector-specific skill strategy remit) have a major role in defining learning outcomes in terms of employability.

One credit is awarded for those learning outcomes achieved in ten hours of learning time. Rules of combination specify the credits that need to be achieved, through particular units, for a qualification to be awarded. All qualifications within the framework have rules of combination. They are the mechanisms through which sets of achievements are grouped

⁹⁰ In England there over 130 awarding bodies, both commercial and charitable in status.

⁹¹ Following the re-licensing process, in early 2010 there have been 12 SSCs relicensed by the UKCES. Prior to the start of the process in 2008, there were 25 SSCs.

together into a qualification. The other purpose of rules of combination is the structure through which credits are transferable between qualifications and awarding bodies. This is a new feature of the QCF.

Ofqual⁹², a government regulator, in partnership with planning and funding bodies, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) and the relevant bodies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, is responsible for implementing qualifications reform in England (and for certain vocational qualifications, in Wales and Northern Ireland also), through mechanisms such as the design of the review of national framework and the criteria for inclusion, and the approval of awarding bodies.

Candidates may be awarded qualifications on the basis of accreditation of prior learning (APL) evidence alone. In practice this has proved difficult because of the substantial requirements for verification. However, the availability of direct access to assessment for those able to show that they have sufficient learning to be assessed without having to follow a complete learning programme is another factor contributing to flexibility. In 2008, a new set of guidelines allowing for recognition of prior learning within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland was published by QCDA. Scotland has adopted 'Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Informal Learning' as part of the arrangements for the SQCF.

In Scotland, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) was established by a partnership of national bodies: the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) through its Scottish Office, the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) and Universities Scotland, supported by the Scottish Government and other stakeholders in the HE sector. These bodies are known as the Development Partners. Scotland's Colleges have since joined the SCQF Partnership Board which provides strategic management over the SCQF.

These frameworks' developments will facilitate transfer and accumulation of qualifications and credits across the four nations of the UK. The work to reference the qualification frameworks in the UK with the EQF has been completed.

In England, three National Skills Academies (NSAs) were launched in 2006. Led by employers but with government support these aim to encourage excellence in vocational education at national level, operating as world class centres of excellence in training for their occupational sectors. By the end of 2008 there were 12 academies across England.

At regional level employers, education and training providers and government agencies come together to develop coordinated approaches to skills issues through Regional Skills Partnerships, and at local level Local Aimhigher Partnerships bring together partners to develop and coordinate initiatives to widen participation in higher education, including vocational routes.

⁹² QCDA performed this role prior to formal separation in 2009.

9. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR LEARNING, CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT

9.1 STRATEGY AND PROVISION

The overall aim of government policy is to develop careers services available to all and to provide an easily accessible source of information, impartial advice and guidance (IAG) to both young people and adults. ICT is considered to be an effective medium providing that ways can be found to provide equal access to disadvantaged and excluded groups.

With devolution and other political changes, the UK system of for the delivery of IAG has fragmented. Whilst Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales retain all-age service, England continues to separate services for young people from those for adults, although IAG for adults is currently in transition.

Following the government policy initiatives of 2005⁹³ and the Education and Skills Bill (2007), in England the responsibility for commissioning and funding IAG for young people in the years of transition between schooling and the labour market was transferred in April 2008 from Connexions Service to Local Authorities working under Children's Trust arrangements⁹⁴. The Connexions services although, credited with some success in reducing the number of NEETs, were not sufficiently responsive to the needs of mainstream young people. The latter was partly due to the underfunding and confusion over respective roles and responsibilities of schools and Connexions partnerships.

To support the new arrangements, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)⁹⁵ launched quality standards regarding the commissioning and delivery of young people's IAG services⁹⁶. Since 2001, the DCSF has been responsible for the government's school careers education support programme. It develops information and services to promote, support and improve careers education in schools and colleges (www.cegnet.co.uk).

In October 2009, the government published a new careers education strategy for up to the 18 age group. A radical change in careers information, advice and guidance was proposed, so to

- keep pace with rapidly changing economy;
- provide universal online access to careers advice through facebook, youtube and mentoring scheme; and
- provide access to each individual to mentors through online provision.

⁹³ *An End to End Review of Careers Education and Guidance for young people, DfES, 2005 and Youth Matters (Green Paper), DfES, 2005*

⁹⁴ *Children's Trusts are local area partnership arrangements for bringing together key agencies to deliver better integrated and more outcome focused services for children, young people and their families.*

⁹⁵ *DfE, as from May 2010*

⁹⁶ *Quality Standards for Young People's Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). DCSF 2008. Available at:*

HU http://www.cegnet.co.uk/files/CEGNET0001/ManagingCEG/QualityStandardsforIAG/quality_standards_young_people.pdf
UH

IAG for adults is also in transition in England, following the recommendations of the Leitch review of skills (2006) and the Skills Commission's inquiry into IAG (2008). The Leitch review recommended to establish 'a new universal adult career service, providing labour market focused careers advice for all adults. In April 2010, the new post-19 funding agency took over from LSCs, alongside other organisations, a responsibility for adult IAG, the new Adult Advancement and Careers Service (AACS) in England. The programme has been rolling out in 2010-11 with an intention to 'give every adult easy access to skills and careers advice that will help them find work and progress in their careers'. The Next Step website <http://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/> has been launched. In 2010, the new coalition government confirms its support for the new adult service but also signals its intention to explore the introduction of an all-age careers service in the future.

In England, all providers of IAG services that are publicly-funded through partnerships require accreditation against the National Quality Standards for Learning & Work. This applies to both public and private sector organisations. The Guidance Council (GC) has developed the standards. The GC promotes and advises on the provision of good quality guidance and the Guidance Accreditation Board (GAB) handles the accreditation process. The Common Inspection Framework through inspections by the Ofsted (not Scotland) provides quality assurance for standards and provision of guidance services.

For employees, advice and guidance may be part of the human resource function. This is particularly the case for the growing number of organisations that have a system of professional or performance appraisal, and is likely to be linked to professional development and in-service training. 'Investors in People' is a scheme that has government support - it coaches and badges firms and organisations in both the public and private sector, encouraging best practice in staff development and training.

Guidance and counselling can also be provided in the workplace by Trade Unions that have developed a new IAG model for ULRs or through Learndirect and skills development Scotland who act as brokers between learners and learning providers.

In Scotland, the UK's first all age guidance organisation Careers Scotland (CS) was established in 2002. CS provides a range of information, advice and guidance on education, training and employment opportunities. The service is available to people of all ages and is delivered through a network of local Careers Centres or through the interactive website at <http://www.careers-scotland.org.uk/home/home.asp>

Wales is reviewing its Careers Service. The first phase of the review was completed in May 2009 and is part of the Welsh Assembly Government's "Skills that Work" strategy and action plan. The next phase is to develop the vision of professionally-led integrated system of career education, information guidance, catering for all ages and abilities.

The Careers Service in Northern Ireland provides an all-age information, advice and guidance service to help young people and adults make informed choices about their future career paths. Careers advisors from the Careers Service deliver careers information, advice guidance in secondary schools and in Job Centres, Jobs and Benefits Offices and Careers Officers across Northern Ireland.

9.2 TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

The government's intention is that all adults and young people have easy access to impartial career guidance and counselling in the best interest of people.

In England, schools have a statutory obligation to provide a planned programme of career education within the national curriculum in years 7 to 11 (age 11 to 16). Schools are also required to work with careers services to ensure that pupils have access to materials

providing careers guidance and to a wide range of up-to-date reference materials. Career education is aimed to provide young people with skills so can make informed judgements about learning and career options and enabling them to manage transition points in their future career and learning opportunities.

There is also a statutory requirement for schools to include work-related learning within the curriculum for all students in years 10 and 11 (ages 14 to 16). Work-related learning is linked to careers education but is wider in its scope and aims to develop, amongst others, employability skills.

Schools are supported in developing and delivering their provision for work-related learning by an infrastructure of national, regional and local education business link organisations. These organisations encourage employers in their local areas to work with schools by promoting the business benefits. Government funding to support education business link activity is provided through consortia of education business link organisations working under contract to the local funding authorities. The National Education Business Partnership Network (NEBPN), which operates across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, is an umbrella organisation for these organisations⁹⁷.

In Wales, as in England, careers education and work-related education are statutory requirements, but are outside the Welsh National Curriculum and are not subject to statutory programmes of study or assessment arrangements. Non-statutory guidance and frameworks are in place.

In Northern Ireland, as of 2006, Learning for Life and Work is a statutory part of the revised curriculum being phased in from 2007 to mid-2010. The aim is to ensure that all young people develop the personal qualities, skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes which will give them a strong foundation for life and work. The curriculum consists of statutory minimum content which is supplemented by additional non-statutory guidance. The Careers Service operates a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with schools.

Young people in transition are all expected to receive advice and guidance through facilities made available at the place of learning. (As part of the New Deal, young unemployed are given guidance and must demonstrate a quota of job applications to qualify for benefit. Emphasis is placed on 'one-stop shops' in the local community through partnerships and through Internet access - either through the home or through facilities in local libraries, etc).

While a variety of sources of advice and guidance are available, here is the summary of the main sources of advice and guidance for different target groups as follows:

- Young people in Education - Local authorities/school or college;
- Young people at risk of exclusion - Local authorities/New Deal;
- Young people at work - Local authorities/Human Resources provision;
- Adults at work - Human Resources, etc. / University for Industry;
- Adults not in employment - University for Industry (Ufi);

⁹⁷ For more information on organisations that engage employers see *Building on the Best: Final Report and Implementation Plan of the Review of 14-19 Work-related Learning*. DCSF 2007. Available at:

[HU http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00780-2007&U](http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00780-2007&U)

- Jobcentre Plus;
- Careers Scotland;
- Learndirect; and
- Employment agencies.

The following are the main UK measures:

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

All secondary schools must provide a careers programme for all their pupils as part of the national curriculum, and further education colleges and universities have advice centres and careers programmes available for their students.

THE JOBCENTRE PLUS

The Jobcentre Plus provides jobseekers with access to any vacancy held by Jobcentre Plus, anywhere in Britain (currently around 300,000 at any one time) and to vacancies held by others, including private employment agencies and other European Employment Services. It also provides personalised advice to jobseekers. This service has made progress in delivering a modern e-business service to jobseekers and employers, service delivery partners and Jobcentre Plus staff.

CAREERS SCOTLAND

Careers Scotland's service is available to people of all ages through local Careers Centres or the interactive website at www.careers-scotland.org.uk. Key target groups and related services are set out in the following table:

TABLE1: KEY TARGET GROUPS AND RELATED SERVICES		
TARGET GROUP	JOB-RELATED IAG	FURTHER LEARNING-RELATED IAG
SCHOOL PUPILS (ALL AGES)	Appropriately focused career education that supports the Scottish government's Enterprise in Education strategy.	
16-17 YEAR OLDS	As above. CS is the key point of entry for young people in this group who have additional support needs: their aim is to progress them to mainstream learning, training or employment. All job vacancies for this group are referred to CS by JobCentre+.	
ALL AGES	Develop individuals' career planning skills; provide guidance on employment and training opportunities to enhance future career prospects.	
16-24 YEAR OLDS NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING	Specific projects providing one-to-one support to remove barriers and progress young people into employment or training.	

LEARNDIRECT/SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND

Learndirect (<http://www.learndirect.co.uk/>) is the brand name for services offered by Ufi Ltd. which has developed from the concept of the University for Industry. The Learndirect national advice line uses trained and qualified advisers offering free, impartial advice using a database of over 600,000 UK learning opportunities. Learndirect also offers access to learning at a time, place and pace to suit the individual learner through a range of bite-sized, mostly on-line courses available at a network of around 2 000 learning centres, at home or in the workplace. Skill Development Scotland (the brand name for Scottish University for Industry) provides learners and businesses with advice on learning opportunities available throughout Scotland. It has a database of over 60,000 learning opportunities and has a network of over 460 Skills Development Scotland branded learning centres.

EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

A wide range of employment agencies is to be found on the high street, or through electronic links. Some of these serve a general function as employment agencies, while others operate in particular sectors or labour market niches.

9.3 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL

WIDE RANGES OF PROFESSIONALS ARE INVOLVED IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

There are a wide range of professionals who may be involved in guidance and counselling. This ranges from teachers in schools, most of whom will specialise and undergo in-service training and trained careers advisers at school, college or HE, to Jobcentre Plus personnel, and to advisers in small agencies whose training and credentials may vary.

Some schools have appointed people from other professional backgrounds including those with a qualification in careers guidance and personnel from industrial, business or commercial backgrounds to the role of careers coordinator, while locating the curriculum leadership function with a qualified teacher. There is currently no initial teacher education programme in careers education and guidance, but a number of accredited qualifications for careers education and guidance staff are available which can be taken as part of continuing professional development⁹⁸. The careers coordinator would ideally have an accredited professional qualification in managing careers education and guidance for young people, but this is not yet mandatory.

In England, Connexions personal advisors (PAs) are likely to come from a range of backgrounds such as careers advice and guidance, youth work, health service, social services, youth justice and education. Advisors who deliver in-depth careers guidance are required to hold a relevant careers guidance qualification.

The sectoral body with responsibility for standards and qualifications in this field has developed professional development packages and competence frameworks. These are

⁹⁸ A list of accredited qualifications for careers education and guidance staff in England is available at the CEGNET website at: <http://www.cegnet.co.uk/content/default.asp?PageId=1172&sm=1172>

now operational. All providers of IAG services funded through Connexions partnerships require accreditation against the National Quality Standards for Learning & Work. This applies to both public and private sector organisations. The Guidance Council (GC) has developed the standards.

THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COVER A RANGE OF ISSUES:

- the breadth of content - information at local, national and international level covering as appropriate housing, child care, health including sexual health and substance misuse, benefits and other financial support, discrimination, learning entitlement, job search, job vacancies and the labour market, occupations, education and training, and other career and personal development opportunities and leisure opportunities;
- the range of formats and languages;
- other access issues;
- impartiality; and
- the need for a range of support to be available for those young people needing it in order to gain benefit from the information e.g. translation services.

Full qualification links academic study with vocational, evidenced based practice, through the NVQ level 4 in guidance. The guidance qualifications framework is still developing.

In Scotland, Careers Advisers must have a post graduate qualification (part 1) and successfully complete on the job assessment (part 2) to achieve the Qualification in Careers Guidance.

No specific targets have been set, in Scotland, for the training of other non-teaching educational staff. However, Scottish colleges are required to submit strategic plans, which include information on the action they intend to take to develop staff, to the Funding Council each year.

Career advisers in the Careers Service Northern Ireland are all specialist careers advisers and qualified at postgraduate level. Careers education and guidance is often in the hands of many different staff. In schools, day-to-day management of careers education and guidance is normally in the hands of a careers coordinator who is responsible for leading and supporting the development of careers education and guidance across the school. Traditionally, this role would be taken by a teacher alongside his/her subject teaching responsibilities and would normally attract a teaching and learning responsibilities' payment (management allowance in Northern Ireland).

10. FINANCING: INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES

10.1 FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The state is the major contributor to Initial Vocational Training (IVET). The majority of funding for school-based IVET (whether undertaken at a further education - FE - college or school) originates from the central government departments). There are some slight variations on the funding sources depending on the provider and the age of learner.

The Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) redistributes resources in the light of changing economic and social priorities. This funding is linked to a set of public service agreements (PSAs) and indicators, which HM Treasury uses to measure the impact of the investment. Investment in the devolved governments (DGs) is less directly linked to PSAs than in England, as the DGs control their own budgets within the overall allocations from HM Treasury.

At present, in England, funding flows from the government departments (BIS and DfE) to the two newly established agencies (April 2010) that replaced the Learning and Skills Councils (LSC) and then to training providers. The new Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) looks after the 16-19 provision and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) is responsible for all post-19 funding, including Apprenticeships, informal adult learning and learners with learning disabilities. They both consult with the range of partners regarding the most appropriate mode of delivery for training provision, taking account of quality, access and strategic planning priorities.

Publicly funded secondary schools in England and Wales receive their funding from local authorities (LA) based on the funding formulae (number of students, their age, students with special education needs, etc). LA raises funds through local taxation. Local authorities and education institutions also receive a small proportion of direct funding from the DfE or the Welsh Assembly Government. Schools can also raise some funds through voluntary contributions and renting out premises. The YPLA is also responsible for funding school sixth forms. The YPLA does not fund them directly - it funds the LAs, which include the allocation within their schools' budget shares. Most schools are within the authority of local governments and are funded on the basis of a formula with the majority of the weighting given to a student number.

For FE colleges in England, their sources of budgets are the following:

- 70% from the SFA - subject to funding agreement with their local funding agencies;
- 10% from students' fees;
- 10% from other sources (including the European Union and training provision for companies); and
- 10% from diverse sources such as sales of materials and interest on their investments.

This breakdown cannot distinguish between what the FE college spends on providing school-based IVET or for other VET programmes provided privately (e.g. to enterprises), for adults, etc. (i.e. there is no budget hypothecation). Specifically for IVET, however, an FE college receives funds from the SFA, which in turn receives money from the government departments as a grant. The funding agency gives colleges a three-year indicative budget.

Money goes as a grant to FE corporations, HE institutions offering FE, special designated institutions (which are not FE colleges) or adult education services. Providers get annual allocation from the funding agency, which are paid in scheduled monthly amounts and settled at the year-end following an audit.

The size of the grant to colleges is conditional on a funding agreement specifying various targets. SFA reserves the right to reduce the amount it pays over if the funding agreement is not met. How that college decides to spend the funds is largely at its discretion so long as it delivers the quantity of training to which it has agreed. Colleges have to report on what they spend their money on in terms of student retention, student recruitment, achievement and value for money. Accountability focuses on what they have produced in return for funding. A similar situation broadly pertains in schools.

CHANGES TO THE FUNDING MECHANISM FOR GOVERNMENT-FUNDED TRAINING

The changes 2008-09 academic year related to the mechanisms of funding rather than the types of learning that the government fund. It affected the mechanisms by which the funding is calculated, paid and recovered in line with demand. The impact of these changes will be measured as the funding arrangement imbed.

The government has increased the assumed private contribution towards fees where learners are not undertaking priority courses. By 2010-11, an equal balance between public and private fee contributions is expected to be reached.

The funding reform envisaged that FE colleges would increase their income by providing more courses, consultancy and research work for employers at full cost recovery rates, selling other goods and services, or charging full-cost fees to overseas students, where there is existing and growing demand or where the provision is no longer attracting public funding.

In England, new funding models and methods were introduced during 2008-2009, also as part of the vocational qualification reform and QCF implementation, making funding more demand-led by learners and employers and reflecting the introduction of new programmes. As the QCF is being populated with units during 2009-2010, the funding is being switched from NQF qualifications to QCF qualifications. As the new qualification system is unit-based, a unit-based funding approach is being trialled during this period to test whether unit funding can incentivise the completion of full qualifications. The new system incorporates the employer-responsive and the adult-responsive funding modes. With the outset of the economic downturn, some flexibility, particularly, for SMEs for funding of repeat or partial/incomplete qualifications was introduced.

2009-2010 is the first year of aligning funding to qualifications nominated for public funding by the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)/Sector Skills Bodies (SSBs). Eventually, funding for post-19 qualifications will be prioritised for the SSC-nominated qualifications. The system is still in transition.

FUNDING IN THE DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS

In Wales, the National Assembly has devolved responsibility for the funding of education and lifelong learning. Although the key objectives are broadly consistent with those for England, there are a number of significant differences in structures and the way that programmes are offered and funded. All central government funding for education in Wales is provided by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). The WAG decides the sums

to be spent on its various areas of activities, including education, and distributes resources.

In Wales the National Planning and Funding System (NPFS) supports a credit-based framework. Funding is based on Credit Equivalence Units (CEUs), which were developed as a component of the NPFS funding model pending the wider credit valuation of funded learning.

In Scotland, the Scottish Government provides funding for the 43 Scottish tertiary colleges through the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The SFC funds the 42 incorporated (self-governing) colleges directly, and Orkney and Shetland colleges through their local authorities. All the colleges also receive fees from their students and from organisations and firms for which they supply education and training.

Other action/s underway to support education and skills include:

- The Scottish Funding Council has realigned university funding into a General Fund and a Horizon Fund. The new Horizon Fund will provide new opportunities and incentives for universities on the key areas of: employability and skills intervention; access and progression; world-class research; knowledge transfer and innovation; differentiation, diversity and specialism; sector wide capacity; and collaboration. The Network of Excellence in Creative Media Education is an early example of the projects, which will be supported: £5.8 (€6.3) million is being invested through the Fund in targeted post-graduate training, industry-standard facilities and co-ordination of the Skillset Screen and Media Academies in Scotland. The Skillset Media Academy Network is formed from 23 Academies across the UK, establishing centres of excellence in television and interactive media. The academies offer undergraduate and postgraduate courses, short courses and Continuing Professional Development. The key aim of Skillset Media Academies is to bring academia and the industry together to provide training that innovates to meet the challenge of the constantly evolving media industries. Skillset Scotland is involved in both the approval of organisations and institutions established to meet their key objectives; and accreditation of individual programmes of study designed to industry standards.
- The Scottish Funding Council is reviewing its approach to college and university funding for teaching to ensure an appropriate emphasis on: the sectors which will grow as the economic recovery begins; and groups who are potentially most affected by the economic downturn. It is also considering whether there needs to be any revision to the geographical distribution of learning provision in light of the current economic situation. It is further encouraging colleges to give priority to the rising number of applications for places at college from young people leaving school or who have recently left school.
- There are substantial direct investments (£43 (€47) million overall) in the capacity and capability of the third sector to deliver effective services to vulnerable individuals, and create employment and employability opportunities across Scotland within sustainable business models.
- The Scottish government's strategy for Enterprise in Education includes provisions for work-based vocational learning linked to a relevant qualification for young people aged over 14. There are examples of schools vocational programmes in a number of local authority areas that have been developed and are being funded by authorities through their allocation of this funding.

In Northern Ireland, virtually all schools have delegated budgets under which school governors determine spending priorities.

DELNI is responsible for funding Jobskills, the training scheme for young people. The programme comprises three strands: Access, for young people with essential skills or special skills needs that require additional support; Traineeship (the equivalent of FMA in England); and Modern Apprenticeship, (the equivalent of Advanced Apprenticeship in England).

Training in each of the strands focuses on the delivery and attainment of national vocational qualifications at levels one, two, or three respectively. Training is provided by approved Training Organisations (TOs), which can include further education colleges, local and national employers and community organisations, and is funded by the Department. Trainees receive a training allowance, paid through the Training Organisation.

Since 2007-08, a new funding model has been used for FE provides that is based on planned provisions. It has three elements:

- college Development Plans, setting intended provisions, which colleges negotiate with the DELNI;
- bilateral processes through which DELNI agrees with each college the final amount and the types of provision for funding; and
- the Funded Learning Units (FLU) Distributive Mechanism which converts actual and planned provision into FLU to inform College Development Plans and bilateral processes, and to determine budget allocations.

There are also government's financial allocation aimed at learners, employers and providers that are designed to widen access, increase participation, address skills shortages and align provision with the DELNI strategic objectives.

For recurrent funding for FE colleges, the FE Funding Formula, which is based on the measurement of student activity and achievement called a Student Powered Unit of Resources (SPUR) is being used alongside the new funding model. This formula is mainly used to fund higher education courses provided by the FE colleges.

At tertiary level, the government funding for universities is channelled through the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), the Department of Employment and Learning Northern Ireland and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), to support teaching programmes and a core of research funding. Much research is separately funded across the UK by the Office of Science and Technology and through research Councils.

10.2 FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING

10.2 .1 FUNDING FOR PUBLICLY PROVIDED CVET

There are a number of government programmes, which supply different types of funding, particularly, for those without basic skills or level 2 qualifications. The companies can also qualify for the government-sponsored programmes for low-skilled employees (for example, Train to Gain).

Employed individuals can undertake CVT with their own funding plus some government support or with public funding by enrolling at a further education college (for funding mechanisms, please see subchapter 10.1).

A key principle of publicly funded continuing vocational education and training in the UK is to focus on stimulating demand and creating a framework which best serves the individual. One important organisation is the University for Industry (Ufi), which stimulates demand amongst both adults and businesses. The Ufi acts like a training broker providing access to ICT under its brand name learndirect, with 6,000 online centres and almost 2,000 learning centres across the UK.

Trade unions through their union learning representatives (ULRs) encourage the low skilled employees to engage in training and to support those with higher skills to maintain their continuous professional development. Government sponsors the Union Learning Fund, which trains and accredits union learning representatives, who aim to help 250,000 employees per year annually by 2010. Union Academy has been established with the government financial support to provide course from basic skills to MBAs.

ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING

An identifiable characteristic of adult education opportunities in the UK is the range and flexibility of provision. A wide range of adult part- and full-time courses is available through publicly funded further education and adult education colleges in the community (for priority areas and priority qualifications), as well as distance learning courses, such as through Open University. Increasingly, study programmes and guidance are available on-line. The mode and length of study vary depending on the type of course and the institution. Courses may be full or part-time and may last from a day or two for employer-based courses to several years for a first-degree course.

A number of adults also attend secondary schools for part of the time and take particular classes with the pupils. Adult education units are also active within Her Majesty's Prisons (HMPs). Most of community and leisure learning provision, while it may be part-funded by bodies, such local authority, carries a financial cost to the individuals, apart from some disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

Although traditionally the adult learning participation has been high, it has dropped (49% change in enrolment 2003-2007) due to the funding changes, which took effect in 2005-2006 and were followed by further funding cuts in non-priority areas in 2006-2007. Training providers have been obliged to increase courses fees for adults who do not fall into the government's priority groups (those without basic skill level 2 qualifications, amongst others).

The duty to secure the adult and community-learning sector rests with the SFA in England and the Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills in Wales. These bodies agree adult learning plans with Local Authorities (LAs).

As part of a common funding approach:

- adult learners continue to make a substantial contribution to the costs of their learning where they are able to do so; and
- sufficient public funding is available to encourage providers to offer and increase learning opportunities to disadvantaged learners at no cost or low cost.

In Northern Ireland, it provided by the further education sector, supplemented by the work of a range of non-statutory providers, using established funding streams.

Adult education in Scotland is a statutory duty of education authorities and is generally known as community learning or community education. General responsibility for promotion, development and oversight of community learning and development lies with Communities Scotland.

10.2 .2 FUNDING FOR CVET IN ENTERPRISES

Statutory, employers are not required to provide training to employees. Nevertheless, employers spend a considerable amount on training: the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) claims that employers spend some £32 (€35.2) billion per annum on training, including the costs off the time staff spend training. Enterprises pay, both in real funds and in-kind, the biggest portion of the overall VET bill for Continuing Vocational Training (CVET), while Individuals contribute through fees less than 1% of IVET and CVET. The current reform envisages that a higher contribution will be required from employers and individuals, who have got level 2 qualifications. The training might be in-house, by a private provider or by a further education college.

The CVT survey 3 (Eurostat, 2005) shows that total cost of CVT courses as % of total labour cost in 2005 was 1.3% and slightly lower than the EU average and much lower than a previous CVT survey 2 in 1999, which was 3.6%. This trend equally applies across the board, from SMEs to big companies.

10.3 FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHER GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

The coalition government has announced a comprehensive review of welfare policies and associated programmes, including training, for long-term unemployed and other vulnerable groups (those on incapacity benefits, offenders and others). The system is yet to undergo further changes. The report refers to the system as it was in 2009.

Training for the unemployed (TfU) is training for persons aged 18 and over who are actively seeking work and are registered as unemployed. Those persons aged 16-17 who are unemployed are classified as IVET as they are not entitled to claim Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). The training providers that are engaged in training of unemployed, follow the normal procedure to obtain funding for this group of learners.

THE NEW DEAL INITIATIVE HJOBCENTRE PLUS

The programmes and funding for training for unemployed people are closely related to Jobseeker Allowance (JSA) and other qualifying Working Age Benefits that are covered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). As well as providing payments of JSA or the appropriate New Deal Allowance, the New Deal consists of:

- activation through incentives, e.g. working tax credit and child tax credit (*);
- activation through benefit sanctions, e.g. young people must meet criteria for seeking and applying for jobs and taking training opportunities;
- help through training and improving vocational skills;

- help through job search support/counselling and improved job matching;
- help through subsidies, including subsidised placements.

(*) Tax credits were introduced in 2000 to provide additional incentives to people who enter work. The employer through payroll pays these credits. Working families tax credit tops up the earnings of working families with children, while Disabled person's tax credit gives support to working people with disability. Both can include a tax credit to help working parents with the costs of childcare.

A 16-hour rule has been established which allows unemployment benefit recipients to participate in VET up to a maximum of 16 hours per week. The training component is funded by the funding bodies, FSA in England, for example.

THE WORK-BASED LEARNING FOR ADULTS INITIATIVE

Others facing particular disadvantages in the labour market qualify for work-based learning for adults (WBLA) provided through the funding body as soon as they become unemployed. Such disadvantaged include people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and single parents. Through planning and funding provision, WBLA also supports employed people with training not normally provided by the employer. This will lead to a qualification at NVQ level 2 or equivalent (the employee will initially be an unemployed WBLA participant placed by the Employment Service).

Also available is job-based short-term training to help people gain or improve work-related skills to enable them to find other work. There is longer occupational training for those who need extra skills and/or work experience to find employment. Self-employment support is available for those wanting to set up their own business.

FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE

Further education colleges are involved in training for unemployed people in a variety of ways, but for most colleges TfU is not central to their mission. The potential contradiction between JSA and access to training has already been noted but nevertheless more than 100,000 students (7% of the total) on public-funded courses were unemployed and claiming JSA or Working Age Benefits. The funding of this group would amount to some € 144.5 million per year. Because they are unemployed, it is unlikely that any of the group would pay fees. In addition, some of the New Deal training programmes are placed in further education colleges. The colleges receive funding for provision for specific groups through standard funding model from appropriate funding bodies.

In England, the Skills Fund Agency provides funding for a wide range of courses, from healthcare to computer skills and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Free tuition is available to those, who get a JSA, income support and other benefits. In some cases, it is also available to asylum seekers.

10.4 GENERAL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS AND MECHANISMS

PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES: FROM FUNDING TO INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES

The national priorities for funding training are closely linked to the priorities of the central government's and the devolved administrations' main objectives for education and training. From 2005, the focus of policy for adult learning changed to acquisition of skills, the aim being to meet the needs of employers and boost the country's economic competitiveness. Therefore, the major objective in the financing in education and training has been to alter the balance of resources between the state, employers and individuals.

With limited public resources, state funding is to be channelled to areas of demonstrated market failure and used to support government priorities, notably provision for young people and initiatives for adults without a full level 2 qualification or above, while encouraging employers' further contribution into their staff training as well as individuals'. The recent institutional changes (abolishment of LSCs and channelling funding streams through different structures) and funding mechanisms review are meant to support this shift.

The linking of strategy, funding and the different learning streams is an intentional part of government policy and of the new legislation.

These policies fit within an overall strategy to develop the human capital as a resource and as a means of achieving higher levels of productivity and competitiveness. Access to education and training beyond the statutory requirements of school attendance and entry to jobs that have entry qualification requirements is left in most respects to individuals (an individualistic approach) and, as far as training is concerned, to employers (the voluntarist approach). In recent years, adult learning has become more targeted and government in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have become more involved in identifying priorities.

Nowadays, state-provided funding is geared to contributing to the achievement of the objectives. The funding regime and mechanism is used as a conscious system driver to attempt to achieve system goals. This began more than a decade ago with the move to fund the main public providers of training at ISCED levels 2 and 3 (the further education colleges) through a mechanism that would reward the achievement of objectives such as successful retention and completion rates, rather than simply fund on a per capita basis the number of students or learners enrolled at a particular date. Though simplified and at a transitional phase, the funding mechanisms continue this practice of targeting and rewarding.

A number of issues and problems are to the forefront, notably:

- How to incentivise low-skilled and reluctant adults to re-engage with learning: The policy response to this includes the funding of education maintenance allowances, the review of guidance systems.
- How to raise intermediate or technical skills levels among the workforce: State funding of apprenticeships, new diplomas for young learners, the expansion of non-degree higher education and the current review of vocational qualifications aim to tackle this issue, although major concerns remain.
- How to fund the expansion of higher education: in particular, the extent to which the stock of graduates is an individual good as compared to a social/economic good is a sharp political issue. The administrations of the UK take divergent positions on this issue.

SECTORAL FUNDS

Only three industry training boards (ITBs) (construction, engineering construction and audiovisual industry) collect statutory levy and provide training grants. They have been licenced as SSCs and have some additional public funding for their activities. Following consultation with employers, the industry training boards recommend the rates of training levy to the Secretary of State and to Parliament for approval. A Levy Order is then passed which sets out the rates of training levy to be applied and provides the ITBs with the authority to raise a training levy.

All establishments on the ITB's Register of Leviable Establishments are required by law to complete an annual Statutory Manpower and Payroll Return. The information provided on the Return enables the ITBs to assess the amount of training levy payable (if any), followed by the distribution of funds according to the training needs of the qualifying companies.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS (ILAs)

An individual could open an ILA and access a range of discounts on the costs of learning provided they make some contribution as well. This approach is fully operational in Wales. In England the scheme was suspended in 2004 (apart from the National Health Service (NHS)) and a new one was piloted in two regions in the year 2007-08 academic year, and funds were made available to buy programmes above level 2. A similar scheme of Bursaries is available to teachers in their third and fourth year: they decide how to spend the money on their own personal/professional development.

From July 2009, an additional 250,000 people were eligible to access funding through Individual Learning Accounts (ILA) as the income assessment threshold eligibility was increased from £18,000 (£19,000) to £22,000 (£24,000) and extended the range of training providers and courses for which people can use ILA funding.

The Welsh Assembly government has announced ProAct, a training scheme to help businesses and their employees during the current economic downturn before the need for redundancy arises.

In Scotland, a new scheme is under review, which will initially target low-income learners and will allow the learner up to £200 (£220) support per year. This is a two tier programme and the higher amount available will be targeted at learners who are undertaking higher level programmes.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT LOANS (CDL)

For second chance students and stimulating access to CVET, the government has made new Professional and Career Development Loans available by trebling its number to 45,000 over the next two years and offering more generous terms of repayment. The loans offered are interest free while people study. The government pays the interest during this period and makes them more attractive in two ways:

- Firstly, by reducing the headline interest rates; and
- Secondly, by allowing people to apply for loans of up to £10,000 (£11,000) to study at colleges, universities and private training providers, an increase from the current limit of £8,000 (£8,800).

There are also fast-route provisions made for people who were made redundant from the high industry sectors to be retrained as teachers and trainers.

In Wales, £12.5 (£13.7) million innovative project is aimed to assist around 3,000 women through training and mentoring, to progress their careers and higher skilled employment opportunities. Training allowance scheme is also available to women wishing to improve their range of skills as well as identifying quality part-time work. The scheme provides support for employers and training for employees to enable them to fulfil their potential and promoting the progression of women in the labour market.

BUSINESS LEARNING ACCOUNTS (BLAs)

The Scottish government has piloted 300 Business Learning Accounts (BLAs) to stimulate learning in small businesses. The scheme provides businesses with the tools to link training needs with business growth and funding to support the businesses' own investment.

EDUCATIONAL MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA)

In 1999 the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was introduced in England on a pilot basis and rolled out throughout the UK in 2004. Its objective is to raise post-compulsory educational participation and retention in education of young people (age 16-19) from low income families. EMAs are weekly, term-time only, payments made to students aged 16-19 for staying on in full time education for 2-3 additional years. The amount paid to the student varies and is means tested, with a maximum of £33⁹⁹ per week. Receipt of the allowance is conditional on attendance at school or college and in addition the scheme has financial bonuses for students who progress well in their chosen education course.

SKILLS ACCOUNTS

The Skills Account, a web-based resource provides advice about sources of support to help with learning; course information, to help understand the options available when deciding about skills and careers; a Skills Voucher, which will show what funding may be available for chosen courses. Some applicants are eligible for help with the cost of course fees, childcare and travel, while learning or the cost of course materials.

Apart from creating and updating a Skills Account, the applicants can get help with identifying the skills they have, match the skills to possible job roles and choose the right course.

From August 2009, the government gave all eligible adults aged 19 and over the chance to access a range of courses that are part of the new Adult Entitlement to Learning. Those eligible, could study for a qualification and have no course fees to pay. Courses available as part of the Adult Entitlement to Learning could lead to a qualification in reading or maths or both; a vocational qualification at A level that is broadly similar to the level of GCSE at or above grade C; a qualification equivalent to 2 GCE 'A' levels.

⁹⁹ £30 in February 2010.

11. NATIONAL VET STATISTICS

11.1 CLASSIFICATION OF NATIONAL VET PROGRAMMES

11.1.1 MAIN CRITERIA USED TO ALLOCATE VET PROGRAMMES

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) was designed by UNESCO in the early 1970s to serve ‘as an instrument suitable for assembling, compiling and presenting statistics of education both within individual countries and internationally’. It was approved by the International Conference on Education (Geneva, 1975), and was subsequently endorsed by UNESCO’s General Conference.

The present classification, now known as ISCED 1997, was approved by the UNESCO General Conference at its 29th session in November 1997. However, in 2009, the UIS established an ISCED Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) to make recommendations for the review of the ISCED to be presented for adoption at the UNESCO General Conference in 2011. This review is ongoing; and likely to be published within the next year.

For England, the main points are: 1. NQF levels 2 and 3 are coded to ISCED 3; ISCED 4 is hardly used at all; NQF level 4 is equivalent to ISCED 5B.

Moreover, the UK collects data relating to qualifications of population is yet to adopt a harmonised approach. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is yet to produce a mapping of the UK categories in terms of ISCED level.

11.1.2 VET LEVELS IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

TABLE 1. SCHOOL YEARS FOR CHILDREN WITHIN THE DIFFERENT STATE EDUCATION SYSTEMS

ACADEMIC AGE			ENGLAND			SCOTLAND			WALES			NORTHERN IRELAND		
4												P1		Foundation
5		KS1	Y1			P1			Y1			P2		
6			Y2			P2			Y2			P3		KS1
7		KS2	Y3			P3			Y3			P4		
8			Y4			P4			Y4			P5		KS2
9			Y5			P5			Y5			P6		
10			Y6			P6			Y6			P7		
11		KS3	Y7			P7			Y7			Y8		KS3
12			Y8			S1			Y8			Y9		
13			Y9			S2			Y9			Y10		
14		KS4	Y10			S3			Y10			Y11		KS4
15			Y11			S4			Y11			Y12		
16			Y12			S5			Y12			Y13		
17			Y13			S6			Y13			Y14		

Note: KS = KEY STAGE P1 = PRIMARY 1 Y1 = YEAR 1 S1 = SENIOR 1

TABLE 2: COMPARING QUALIFICATIONS BY LEVEL:ISCED, OECD, AND UK EQUIVALENTS

UK NQF Equivalent	Typical UK Qualifications	UK Skill Level
No qualifications	No or very low qualifications	Low Skills
Level 1	GCSEs, O-Levels or equivalent at grades D-G; National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 1; Business Training and Education Council (BTEC) first or general certificate; General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) foundation level; Royal Society of Arts (RSA); and SCOTVEC modules	
Level 2	Five or more GCSEs, O-Levels or equivalent at grades A*-C; NVQ Level 2; BTEC first or general diploma; GNVQ intermediate level; City and Guilds Craft; RSA diploma; and SCOTVEC first or general	
Level 3	Two or more A-Levels or equivalent; NVQ Level 3; BTEC National; Ordinary National Diploma (OND); Ordinary National Certificate (ONC); City and Guilds Advanced Craft	Intermediate Skills
n/a	n/a	
Level 4-6 (Formerly level 4)	First or other degree; NVQ Level 4; Higher National Diploma (HND); Higher National Certificate (HNC); and higher education diploma; nursing; teaching (including further education, secondary, primary and others)	High Level Skills
Level 7-8 (Formerly level 5)	Higher degree; Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.); and NVQ Level 5	

ISCED Level	ISCED Description	OECD Description	OECD Skill Level
Level 0	Pre-Primary Education	Pre-primary and primary education	Below Upper Secondary
Level 1	Primary Education or First Stage of Basic Education		
Level 2	Lower Secondary or Second Stage of Basic Education	Lower secondary education	
Level 3		ISCED 3C (short programme)	
	(Upper) Secondary Education	ISCED 3C (long programme)	Upper Secondary Education
		ISCED 3A/3B	
Level 4	Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education	Post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary
Level 5	First Stage of Tertiary Education (Not leading directly to an advanced research qualification)	Tertiary Education: Type A	
		Tertiary Education: Type B	
Level 6	Second Stage of Tertiary Education (Leading to an advanced research qualification)	Advanced research programmes	

Source: ***Ambition 2020***, Technical report, 2009, UKCES

TABLE 3: ISCED LEVELS OF SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS BASED ON NATIONAL EDUCATION ATTAINMENT CLASSIFICATION COMPARISON WITH EU LFS CODING (DFES)

ISCED 1-2	ISCED 3	ISCED 4	ISCED 5	ISCED 6
Basic skills	Standard Grade, Highers or equivalent, SVQ 1-3	Access to HE	HNC/D, Undergraduate, Postgraduate or equivalent, SVQ 4 and 5	PhD

TABLE 4: ISCED LEVELS OF SAMPLE ENGLISH QUALIFICATIONS BASED ON NATIONAL EDUCATION ATTAINMENT CLASSIFICATION COMPARISON WITH EU LFS CODING (DFES)

ISCED 1-2	ISCED 3	ISCED 4	ISCED 5	ISCED 6
Key skills, basic skills, entry level qualifications, YTP certificate, no qualifications	NVQ levels 1-3, City and Guilds Pt 1-2, CSE/GCSE below grade C, RSA diploma, BTEC, etc; A levels, Apprenticeship, Advanced Apprenticeship	Access to HE	HNC/D, Undergraduate, Postgraduate or equivalent, NVQ 4 and 5; higher diploma, e.g. RSA/BTEC	PhD/M.Phil.

It is not a single nationally defined system. There is no set duration of training, for the purpose of instruction and assessment, a notion of guided learning hours is used.

11.2 FIELDS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

As it is widely recognised education and training in the UK has some systematic characteristics but it is better understood as an education and training market than as a government controlled system.

Since the establishment of the SSCs, the responsibility for training and skills development comes with their remit.

11.3 LINKS BETWEEN NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OR CLASSIFICATIONS

Taking the UK as a whole, the longer-term strategy is to develop qualifications and learning programmes that engage a wide range of learners, based on the principles of equality and diversity and supported by transparent systems of credit and qualifications frameworks. Scotland has already implemented such a framework, the Scottish credit and qualifications framework; England, Wales and Northern Ireland have developed such frameworks and are in the process of populating credit-based Qualifications and Credit Frameworks.

Each of the established frameworks within the UK is based on learning outcomes. All four countries of the UK have made provision for credit accumulation and transfer and the accreditation of informal and non-formal learning in their qualifications frameworks.

In November 2007 the UK government signed up to a recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union on the establishment of the EQF for lifelong learning. This commitment was underlined by with the principle of referencing national qualifications systems to it by 2010. In 2008/9 three exercises were carried out to

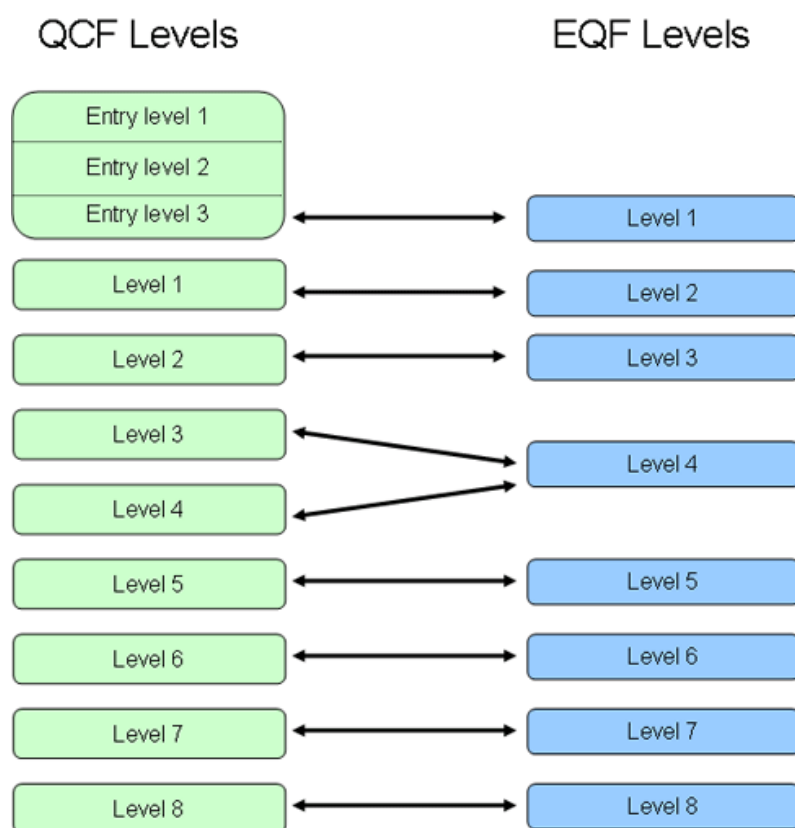
reference the UK qualifications frameworks to the EQF in accordance with the criteria and procedures developed by the EQF Advisory Group. Two clear objectives remain:

- To relate national qualifications systems to the EQF by 2010, in particular by referencing qualification levels to the levels of the EQF in a transparent manner
- To adopt measures so that by 2012 all new qualification certificates, diplomas and “Europass” documents issued by the competent authorities contain a clear reference, by way of national qualifications systems, to the appropriate EQF level.

The referencing of the EQF in the UK is being organised to relate to the various credit and qualifications frameworks in the UK already established or in development, including the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW), the QCF in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ).

England and Northern Ireland have cross-referenced the levels of the QCF to those of the EQF and the final results were published in 2009.

The consultants' report concludes that: while there are legitimate differences in emphasis between the QCF and the EQF, there is a consistent relationship between the levels of the two frameworks which is indicated in the following figure¹⁰⁰:



¹⁰⁰ Lester, S., *Linking the Qualifications and Credit Framework levels to the European Qualifications Framework, Final report to the English and Northern Ireland referencing group, 23 October 2008.*

QCF	E(3)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
EQF	1	2	3	4	5	5/6	6	7	8

The SCQF - EQF cross-referencing project proposes the following equivalence¹⁰¹.

SCQF	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
EQF	---	---	1	2	3	4	5	5	6	6	7	8

In Scotland, the comparative investigation used the principle of "best fit" and the referencing was done in terms of aims, description and contents; and an extensive triangulation of referencing. At some levels, there was a clear correlation, but for others, SCQF level 7, for example, referencing was to EQF level 5 on the basis of the external factors, notably the alignment of both levels with the FQ-EHEA short cycle and the intentions of the SCQF level.

Key challenges for VET across the UK are highly consistent with the Lisbon aims¹⁰².

Successive UK reform programmes aim to develop an effective skills agenda so as to:

- achieve cross-government action to tackle skills gaps and shortages;
- act on the demand side to encourage employers to use skills to develop more ambitious and innovative business strategies;
- motivate learners to continue in and return to learning, and tackle low skills;
- make VET responsive to employers' needs; and
- raise the status and quality of initial VET to achieve: a coherent 14-19 phase of learning; a broader range of courses and programmes; high quality vocational options; higher levels of participation and lower levels of early school drop-out; higher levels of qualification, etc.

¹⁰¹ Hart, J., *Report on the Referencing of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)*, Draft Report, 30 May 2008.

¹⁰² The following is adapted from the UK's response to the DGVT questionnaire for the Maastricht study.

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12.3 LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Awarding body
ACL	Adult and Community Learning
AES	Annual Employment Survey
AES	Adult Education Survey
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate
APL	Accreditation of prior learning
APEL	Accreditation of prior experiential learning
AVCE	Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education
BERR	Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic group
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
CBI	Confederation of British Industries
CEL	Centre of Excellence in Leadership
CEU	Credit Equivalence Unit (Wales)
CIPD	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
CoVE	Centre of Vocational Excellence
CQFW	Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales
CVTS	Continuing Vocational Training Survey
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Family (England)
DCELLS	Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (within Welsh Assembly Government)
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DDP	Diploma Development Partnership
DfE	Department for Education

DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DGs	Devolved Governments
DDP	Diploma Development Partnership
DELNI	Department for Education and Learning Northern Ireland
DIUS	Department for Innovations, Universities and Skills (England)
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
E2E	Entry to employment
ECS	Europass Certificate Supplement
EDS	Europass Diploma Supplement
ECV	Europass CV
ELP	Europass Language Passport
EM	Europass Mobility
ELWa	Education and Learning Wales (now merged with DCELLS)
EMA	Educational maintenance allowance
ESF	European Structural Funds
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
ETP	Employer Training Pilots
FE	Further education
FHEQ	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
FLT	Foundation Learning Tier
FSW	Future Skills Wales
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualifications
HE	Higher Education
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HM	Her Majesty

HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
IAG	Information, advice and guidance (for learning and career opportunities)
IES	Institute for Employment Studies
IFL	Institute for Learning
IFP	Increased Flexibility Programme
ILR	Individualised Learner Record
JSA	Job Seeker Allowance
KSF	Knowledge and Skills Framework (NHS programme)
LA	Local Authority
LEA	Local Educational Authority (now defunct)
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LLN	Language, literacy and numeracy
LLUK	UK Lifelong Learning Sector Skills Council
LLRW	Lifelong Learning Record Wales
LSDA	Learning and Skills Development Agency
LSN	Learning and Skills Network
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LTW	Learning and Training at Work
MA	Modern Apprenticeship
NALS	National Adult Learning Survey
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualifications
NEET	Not in education, employment or training
NES	NHS (National Health Service) Education Scotland
NESS	National Employer Skills Survey (England)
NFER	National Foundation for Education Research
NIACE	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
NICATs	Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System

NIESR	National Institute of Economic and Social Research
NISVQ	National Information System on Vocational Qualifications
NLSS	National Learner Satisfaction Survey
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
N/SVQ	National/Scottish Vocational Qualification
NTO	National Training Organisation
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OCN	Open College Networks
Ofqual	Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education and Learning
PCDL	Personal and Community Development Learning (formerly ACL)
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PMI	Prime Minister's Initiative
PPP	Public-private partnership
PSA	Public Service Agreement
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCDA - Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency as from July 2009)
QCDA	see above
QCF	Qualifications and Credit Framework
QIA	Quality Improvement Agency
QTLS	Qualified Teacher in the Learning and Skills sector
RARPA	Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement of Non-Accredited Learning
RBI	Reducing Burglary Initiative
RDA	Regional Development Authority
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning (Scotland)
SCAA	School Curriculum and Assessment Authority
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SESS	Scottish Employer Skills Survey
SFA	Skills Funding Agency
SNA	Skills Needs Analysis
SQA	Scottish Qualification Authority
SQS	Sector Qualifications Strategy
SSA	Sector Skills Agreement
SSC	Sector Skills Council
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualifications
T2G	Train to Gain
TUC	Trade Union Congress
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admission Service
Ufi	University for Industry (learndirect deliverer)
UKCES	UK Commission for Employment and Skills
ULR	Union Learning Representative
UNISON	Public Service Union
VQ	Vocational qualification
VQRP	Vocational Qualification Reform Programme
YA	Young Apprenticeship
YPLA	Young People's Learning Agency
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WBL	Work-based learning
WULF	Wales Union Learning Fund