

UNITED KINGDOM

Country Report

2011

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ReferNet – Country Report – UK 2011

Introduction

This UK Country Report captures the wide variety of vocational educational and training initiatives that are planned and underway across the United Kingdom. It has been produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency Refernet team for the European Agency, CEDEFOP¹ and is one of thirty-three such European Country Reports. It has been produced through the assistance of the UK Refernet National Consortium Steering Group consisting of representatives from the Department for Education; Department for Business Innovation and Skills; Ofqual; Northern Ireland's Department for Education and Department for Education and Learning; Scottish Government/*Riaghaltas na h-Alba* and the Scottish Qualifications Agency; Wales Department for Education and Skills/*Yr Adran Addysg a Sgiliau*; the British Council; Trade Union Congress; United Kingdom Commission for Education and Skills; National Academic Recognition Information Centre; Chartered Institute of Personnel Development; National Foundation for Economic Research and the University of Warwick.

Theme 1. General 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 the constitution of the UK, although it does have an "unwritten" or uncodified 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 comprising 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 the late 1990s it has devolved a range of issues and powers to the three devolved Governments (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 Administrations (DAs).

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the UK is the 6th highest in the world resulting in the ability to invest in education and training for its students and workforce and draws in considerable expertise from abroad with a relatively high rate of immigration for study and work purposes. UK GDP only grew by 0.5% in 2008 and fell by 4.9% in 2009. By the first quarter of 2011 GDP was showing a very modest growth of 0.5%.

¹ European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training - www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/about-cedefop/networks/refernet/index.aspx

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. Scotland in particular has an education system with a long history of independence from other parts of the UK.

1.2. Population and demographics

The UK is approximately 242 514 square kilometres (England 130 281, Scotland 77 925, Wales 20 732 and Northern Ireland 13 756). England has the highest population density of the Union (383 inhabitants per square kilometre), Scotland has the lowest density (65 per square kilometre)

GEO\TIME	2003	2006	2009	2010
EU 27	486647831	493226936	499723520(p)	501105661(p)
UK	59437723	60425786	61634599(p)	62008048(p)

Table 1: Total population (on 1st of January), 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010

Description: The inhabitants of a given area on 1 January of the year in question (or, in some cases, on 31 December of the previous year). The population is based on data from the most recent census adjusted by the components of population change produced since the last census, or based on population registers

Source of Data: Eurostat (Demographic Statistics); Date of extraction: 19 May 2011

(p) - provisional

The population of the UK has grown over the last 50 years with inward migration contributing to a vast ethnic diversity across society which accounts for approximately half of the population growth. As of 2010 the UK population is 62 million and a labour force of 31 million which makes it the third largest country in the European Union (EU). Current projections estimate the UK population to reach 71 million by 2031.²

Since the late 1990s net international migration into the UK has been an important factor in continuing population growth, although it is slower than in some EU member states. In Scotland the population is now expected to increase until at least 2048.³

GEO\TIME	2010	2015	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
EU 27	25.9	28.26	31.05	38.04	45.36	50.42	53.47
UK	24.72	27.11	28.58	33.23	36.92	37.96	42.14

Table 2: Projected old-age dependency ratio, 2010-2060

Description: Population aged 65+ divided by population aged 15-64 (projections)

Source of Data: Eurostat (EUROPOP2008 - Convergence scenario, national level (proj_08c))

Date of extraction: 19 May 2011; Last update: 16.05.2011

Apart from Scotland, the long term trend in the make up of the population in the UK has been a decline in the under 16 age group and an increase in those aged 16-64 and 65 and over, a process that is now intensifying. In 2008, the proportion of the

² Further information on population trends www.statistics.gov.uk, see 2010 report ref.

³ General Register Office for Scotland <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/>

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% per annum. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates that within 24 years almost a quarter of people will be over 65 with only 18% under 16. The employed workforce in Wales is ageing with nearly 40% aged 45 or over, and the numbers of those over 60 in employment has grown by 40% in six years, although the age composition of different sectors varies.

The ageing population and workforce will impact on both the demand for, and supply of, skills. Increasing life expectancy and the increasing length of working lives will be important, as will the decline in the numbers of young adults. The high 'replacement rates' required for many jobs as the workforce retires are important, as is the potentially substantial increase in the volume of care and leisure needs required/demanded by the elderly.⁴

1.3. Economy and Labour Market Indicators

The current economic recession has led to a curbing of spending, investment collapse and a fall in both imports and exports. Consequently, the slowdown that emerged in the financial and business services sector, which accounts for a substantial proportion of the UK economy, has developed into recession across all industry sectors.

Indicators of economic inequality show that income distribution in the UK is less equal than the OECD average with recent data from Eurostat (Statistical Office Of The European Communities) indicates that the level of income inequality in the UK fell slightly between 2005 and 2009 and during the recession; but it remains high compared to some of its EU neighbours, most notably the Scandinavian countries.

In England, the economy and jobs are strongly regionally concentrated, with London and the South East accounting for nearly 40% of England's GDP. There are also substantial variations in regional employment and productivity levels as well as in economic structure – both sectoral and occupational.

The UK's overall employment rate is considerably higher than both the OECD and the EU average but fell to 70.5% in 2009 and to 69% in 2010, a sharper fall than for the rest of the EU as a whole. England and Scotland have a higher employment rate than the UK average (70.7%), whereas Wales (68.2% Labour Force Survey⁵ latest figs) and Northern Ireland's rates are below the UK average.

⁴ UKCES 2010 National Strategic Skills Audit – Key Findings <http://www.ukces.org.uk/ourwork/nssa>

⁵ Wales Annual Labour Force Survey-
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/economy2011/110615/?lang=en>

Sectoral trends

Business services (e.g. accountancy, law, and consultancy) are expected to account for more than one third of total jobs growth in the UK to 2017 with health and social work, retail and hotels/catering also expected to grow significantly. Together, these sectors already account for more than 40% of jobs in England. It is likely that any existing skill shortages and gaps may be exacerbated by such future growth requirements. These forecasts of jobs growth were made prior to the recession and it may well be the case that the volumes of job growth may turn out to be lower than envisaged. It is important, however, not to confuse structural and cyclical trends and to recognise that recoveries from previous recessions have seen employment and the structure of the economy resume previous paths relatively quickly.

Table 3. Employed persons aged 15+ by economic sector of activity (in thousands and as % of total employment), 2010

The table below gives a high level overview of the make up of the economy across the UK. Compared with other EU economies the UK economy appears to have significantly less manufacturing and primary sector activity than the EU average.

GEO	PRIMARY SECTOR AND UTILITIES		MANUFACTURING		CONSTRUCTION		DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSPORT		BUSINESS AND OTHER SERVICES		NON MARKETED SERVICES	
	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%
EU 27	15175.8	7.0	33992.7	15.7	16573.2	7.7	57099.0	26.4	38733.1	17.9	53694.1	24.8
UK	822.0	2.8	2850.9	9.9	2213.7	7.6	7867.6	27.2	6203.8	21.4	8773.6	30.3

Table 3: Employed persons aged 15+ by economic sector of activity (in thousands and as % of total employment), 2010

Description: Employment persons aged 15+ by economic sector of activity (NACE rev2) in thousands and as % of total employment

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 12-05-2011

Occupational trends

The occupations which employ the largest number of people are the three higher skilled groups of managers/senior officials; professionals and associate professional/technical jobs. Together, they account for 44% of all jobs but whereas Wales reflects this occupational structure with the rest of the UK it has fewer managers and senior officials/associate professionals and higher numbers of skilled trade and elementary occupations. This may partly reflect the greater contribution of manufacturing to the Welsh economy and the greater percentage of public sector employment, approximately 24% of total employment. It is important to note too that most occupations and sectors remain gendered across the UK.

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) forecasts (Working Futures 2007-2017) suggest that, in broad terms, actual expansion in the number of jobs is most likely in the higher skilled occupations of managers, professionals and associate professional/technical occupations. These groups account for 43% of jobs today, and may well account for 47% by 2017 – a growth of nearly 2.2 million new jobs. The other major growth area looks likely to be personal service occupations, where more than 400,000 additional jobs may arise.

Alternatively a contraction of jobs is anticipated in administrative/secretarial, skilled manual trades and operative occupational groups. Nonetheless, it is expected that, by 2017, eight million jobs will still exist in the 'bottom' three occupational groups of sales/customer service, machine/transport operatives, and elementary occupations – a quarter of all jobs in the economy. Evidence from the detailed sector studies, conducted by the UK-wide Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), corroborates and supports much of the above.

Relative to the UK there is a higher proportion of employment in primary activities in Wales, including agriculture, and a lower proportion in service activities; although Wales has strong representation in some specific services. Wales has a persistently higher economic inactivity rate for 16-64 year olds of 25.3% compared with UK average of 23.2% which makes this a key priority to reduce.

In terms of the skills of the workforce in England, just over one in ten have no qualifications, while nearly a third are qualified to Level 4 or above. In Wales the qualification profile of adults is broadly similar to that of the UK, although a higher proportion hold no formal qualifications and a slightly lower proportion are qualified at Level 4 and above (12% with no qualifications and 31% qualified to Level 4 and above).

Table 4. Employment rates by age groups and highest level of education attained (%), 2003, 2006 and 2010

The table below shows that young people with the lowest levels of qualifications have traditionally experienced higher levels of employment than their European counterparts. The employment rate for 15 – 24 year olds with the lowest qualifications has dropped by almost 8% over the last four years. This trend is even more marked for older workers in the 50 – 64 age group, and may be associated with both the economic downturn and the UK's need for an increasingly skilled workforce. Unemployment rates for young people with the lowest levels of qualifications are rising faster than for any other section of the working population.⁶

⁶ see table A1 in Annex 1

(The data in Tables 4 and 5 refer only to those officially employed or unemployed, which in the UK accounts for around three quarters of the adult population of working age).

TABLE 4: EMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2003, 2006 AND 2010										
	TIME	2003			2006			2010		
GEO	ISCED / AGE	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU 27	0-2	25.1(i)	66.1(i)	41.9 (i)	24.8	66.9	43.5	21.5	62.8	43.1
	3-4	47.2 (i)	79.1 (i)	54.9 (i)	48.1	80.5	57.9	45.0	79.7	59.6
	5-6	62.0 (i)	88.0 (i)	72.4 (i)	60.5	88.5	74.2	57.1	87.4	74.5
	No A.	14.9 (i)	72.6 (i)	39.1 (i)	5.1	76.0	5.6	5.2	72.8	62.2
	TOTAL	36.0 (i)	77.4 (i)	51.5 (i)	36.6	79.1	54.4	34.1	78.1	56.7
UK	0-2	46.3	67.9	61.3	43.9	66.8	60.4	35.8	61.7	48.5
	3-4	65.2	85.7	75.1	63.9	83.1	76.0	54.7	80.7	69.3
	5-6	80.3	90.6	80.3	78.8	90.6	81.1	72.6	89.2	74.9
	No A.	14.4	73.9	36.7	3.5	81.3	3.7	4.1	79.5	69.2
	TOTAL	54.2	81.1	63.7	53.8	81.5	64.9	47.6	80.0	64.8

Table 4 Employment rates by age groups and highest level of education attained (%), 2003, 2006 and 2010. Description: Employment rates represent the number of employed persons as percentage of the total population. Specific rates are calculated by age groups and educational level. Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey); Extracted on 19-05-2011; Last update: 12-05-2011⁷ No A. = No answer (i).

Table 5 below gives some context to the level of spend in England on education for 16 – 19 year olds across two consecutive years.

Table 5: Young Persons Learning Agency (YPLA) 16-19 funding statement

£millions	2009-10 Actual Spend	2010-11 Planned Spend
Total teaching and learning	7,055	7,503
Of which:	3,794	4,001
Further Education (FE)		
School Sixth Forms (incl. Academies & Special Educational Needs (SEN/ Special	2,289	2,414

⁷ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/demo_pop_esms.htm#meta_update

Schools post 16)		
Apprenticeships	688	780
Specialist provision for learners with LDD 16-24	234	255
FE provision for learners with LDD 19-24	50	53

1.4. Educational attainment of population

In reporting the educational achievement of the UK the criteria for applying International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) Levels 2 and 3 remain problematic owing to the UK measurement of achievement at 16/17 as well as 18/19. A compromise solution has been recommended which sets the boundary between ISCED97 Levels 2 and 3 at age 14. This means a split in attainment data where 5 GCSE grades A*-C is considered to equate to upper secondary qualification; less than this is a lower secondary qualification. A spreadsheet mapping UK levels of achievement against ISCED Levels is included in Annex 1, Table A3.

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 5%, compared with 77.3% in 2006, for example in Northern Ireland:

- in 2009/10, the percentage of school leavers achieving 2+ A Levels A*-E grade was 53.0% (an increase from 2005/06 of 8.3%)
- In 2009/10, the percentage of school leavers achieving at least 5 GCSEs A*-C was 71.9% (an increase from 2005/06 of 7.7%)
- school leavers with no formal qualifications reduced from 3.2% in 2005/06 to 1.7% in 2009/10.

Table 6 shows the percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education (ISCED Level 2) and not in FE or training.

Although the number of early school leavers decreased during 2002-2006, during the economic downturn it rose to 17% by 2008, higher than the EU average of 14.9%. Early indications from the most recent data suggest that the situation is now improving again. (Eurostat, 2010).

GEO/ TIME	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
EU 27	17.0	16.6 (b)	16.1	15.8	15.5	15.1	14.9	14.4
UK	17.6	12.1 (b)	12.1 (i)	11.6	11.3	16.6 (b)	17.0	15.7

Table 6 : Early school leavers (%), 2002-2009

Description: Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training

Source of data Eurostat (LFS); Extracted: 19-05-2011; Last update 01-04-2011

(i) - see explanatory notes (b) - break in series

Compared to other industrialised countries, attainment by the age of 16 is good, but staying-on rates after the age of 16-17 has been poor. Consequently, the proportion of the population with Level 3 (Scotland SCQF⁸ Level 6) 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 compulsory age for participation in some form of education or training will rise in England to 17 in 2013 and to 18 by 2015.

Statistics released by the Department for Education, having jurisdiction for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, (31st March 2011)⁹ highlight the following levels of performance for young people by age 19:

- In 2010, 81.5% of people aged 19 were qualified to at least UK Level 2 (ISCED Level 3c long), an increase of 2.4% since 2009.
- In 2010, 54.2% of people aged 19 were qualified to UK Level 3 (ISCED 3a/b), an increase of 2.5% since 2009
- The proportion of 16-19 year olds achieving the above levels via vocationally related qualifications, whilst below EU Levels, has continued to rise.

The following data extracted from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) statistical first release (DS/SFR10)¹⁰ sets the Eurostat data within a broader context for levels of achievement for adults in England:

Table 7 below shows the level of the highest qualification held by adults in England aged 19-64 (males) and 19-59 (females)

Table 7

Year	Level 2+	Level 3+	Level 4+
2006	71.7%	52.3%	32.2%
2007	73.0%	52.9%	33.3%
2008	73.9%	54.4%	33.6%
2009	75.6%	55.9%	35.3%

The UK does not routinely collect data comparing the balance of programmes followed by secondary learners between general, pre-vocational and vocational programmes. However, for England, unpublished research by the Young People's Learning Agency presented as part of the Wolf review of vocational education (2011) indicates the following:

⁸ The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework – see Section 1.5 Definitions

⁹ Statistical First Release from the Data Service - SFR 31st March 2011

<http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/statistics/statisticalfirstrelease/>

¹⁰ http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/3AEFF9BC-8E53-41A1-8BCA-385DF0DB12D3/0/SFR_March11_Published.pdf

The steady increase in attainment by age 19 tracks closely an increase in the number of vocationally related qualifications completed post-16:

- 2004 66.7% achieved UK Level 2 /SCQF Level 5 compared with 78.7% in 2009
- 2004 42.1% achieved UK Level 3 /SCQF Level 6 compared with 51.4% in 2009

Table 8 below gives a snapshot of the type of qualification being studied at 17¹¹.

Table 8

	Vocational only %	Academic only %	Both vocational and academic %	Not studying %
All	12	44	9	36
Male	12	40	9	40
Female	12	48	9	31

Table 9 below shows the split of graduates from FE and HE at ISCED Level 5 and Level 6.

TABLE 9 GRADUATES AT ISCED LEVEL 5 AND LEVEL 6 BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, PROGRAMME DESTINATION, 1 ST /2 ND STAGE AND SEX (NUMBERS), 2007, 2009													
YEAR		2007						2009					
GEO	S	5 A1	5 A2	5 B1	5 B2	6	5 - 6	5 A1	5 A2	5 B1	5 B2	6	5 - 6
UK	T	319260	184682	129572	:	17545	651059	333721	186907	136132	:	17651	674411
	M	138172	80557	44234	:	9800	272763	144797	83972	49207	:	9735	287711
	F	181088	104125	85338	:	7745	378296	188924	102935	86925	:	7916	386700

Table 9 Graduates at ISCED Level 5 and Level 6 by level of education, programme destination, 1st / 2nd stage and sex (numbers), 2007, 2009

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection); Extracted: 19-05-2011; Last update: 29-04-2011

The UK adult participation rate in lifelong learning is more than twice the EU average, (EC Progress Report towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training, 2009), reaching 20.1% compared with 9.3% EU average in 2009. However, as the table below shows, there has been a drop of over 7% in the total participation between 2005 and 2009. This may be linked to the economic downturn and changes in funding priorities of successive Governments.

TABLE 10 LIFELONG LEARNING – ADULT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY SEX (%) 2002, 2005, 2009									
TIME	2002			2005			2009		
GEO	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU 27	7.2	7.8	6.6	9.8	10.5	9.0	9.3 (p)	10.2 (p)	8.5 (p)
UK	21.3	24.9	17.9	27.6	32.0	23.1	20.1	23.3	16.8

¹¹ unpublished research YPLA, source data LSYPE Wave 4 and YCS cohort 13 Sweep1

Table 10 Lifelong learning – adult participation in education and training by sex (%) 2002, 2005, 2009

Description: Life-long learning (adult participation in education and training) - Percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey

Source: Eurostat (LFS); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 01-04-2011

(p) - provisional value (u) - unreliable/uncertain data

1.5. Definitions

There are no 'official' or nationally agreed Vocational Educational and Training (VET) related definitions used across the UK. The terms are usually specifically defined by the Devolved Administrations (DAs), 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)¹².

Wales leans more towards academically prescribed qualifications when referring to general education, as opposed to vocational.¹³ In *Skills for Scotland*¹⁴, 2010, the Scottish Government's vision is for a successful, globally competitive economy based on high skilled and better paid jobs, high productivity, fairness, and high quality public services. To achieve this vision, skills policy will focus on four priority themes – empowering people; supporting employers; simplifying the skills system and strengthening partnerships.

Vocational Education – the term VET is not widely used in the UK where the preference is for the term 'vocational qualification'. It may be defined as a course of training usually in a school or a learning institution that is oriented towards a specific job or element of work. VET can involve training in specific technical skills for certain types of job/occupation to training in general skills and aptitudes relating to an industry, as well as developing specific and general soft and core skills.

There are certain occupations where a specific qualification at a certain level is required¹⁵ to practice. A qualification may be described as vocational but not immediately qualify the learner for work in a particular occupation. Traditional academic subjects (GCSEs, A-Levels and most university qualifications) are not referred to as vocational.

¹² This will be the responsibility of the Department for Education in the near future as the QCDA ceases to exist 1st April 2012

¹³ Skills That Work for Wales - wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/.../skillsthatforwales/?lang=en -

¹⁴ www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/skills-strategy

¹⁵ The coalition Government has announced its intention to create 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 (Strategy “Skills That Works for Wales” 2008¹⁶).

Alternance Training – this term is not used across the UK.

Apprenticeship – is a structured programme framework developed by the SSCs based upon the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) template of training which gives young people the opportunity for both classroom and work based learning in order 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). In Scotland, individuals undertaking Modern Apprenticeships must be involved in paid employment related to and supportive of their training.

Technical Education – the term is not generally used in the 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. (See comments on Scotland below under ‘Further Education.’)

Higher Education (HE) - learning that generally takes place after the age of 18 and is more to do with level 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 Higher National Certificates (HNCs)/Higher National Diplomas (HNDs). It is of a higher academic standard than A-Level or National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3. HE includes degree courses, postgraduate courses, and Higher National Certificates and Diplomas (HNC/D). This type of provision is usually delivered in universities, higher education colleges, and for Scottish HNDs, all further education colleges¹⁷.

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. It is also called post-16 education or post-16 learning in England¹⁸. In Scotland, **tertiary** education is used as a descriptive term, as provision in Scottish colleges is a mixture of non-advanced and HE qualifications, over a quarter of Scottish full-time HE and much part-time HE is undertaken in Scotland’s colleges.

Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education – this term is not used in the UK.

Training – there is no official definition with the notion of learning more widely used. *Future Skills Scotland*¹⁹ 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.

¹⁶ wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/.../skillsthatforwales/?lang=en

¹⁷ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary/glossary.htm>

¹⁸ <http://www.niace.org.uk>

¹⁹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/30154331/6>

Initial Vocational Education And Training – this term is not widely used in the UK context however this relates to those on Apprenticeships or studying for National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) involving full or part time study in both a workplace and classroom environment.

Continuing Vocational Education And Training – the usual definition of 'continuing' in the UK context refers to learners over 19 years of age. Classifications vary.

Curriculum - QCDA definition: 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 statutory curriculum is defined by QCDA as 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.

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. The *Curriculum for Excellence*²⁰ covers the 3-18 age range.

Qualification – an award made to a learner for the achievement of a specified combination of units or credits required for that award. In the labour market context, it represents an endorsement or achievement 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 as they relate to cognitive or "thinking" skills, such as analysis, evaluation and interpretation.

²⁰ <http://www.curriculum-for-excellence.co.uk/>

In the UK Government's Standards Occupational Classification (SOS)²¹, 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 *Future Skills Scotland*, 2004, 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. The Scottish Government's *Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth*²², 2010, focuses on several overlapping clusters of skills namely:

- **Personal and learning skills** that enable individuals to become more effective lifelong learners;
- **Literacy and numeracy**;
- The five **Core Skills** of communication, numeracy, problem solving; information technology and working with others;
- **Employability and career managements skills** that prepare individuals for employment and future career development rather than focus on a specific occupation;
- **Vocational skills** these are specific to a particular occupation or sector.

School-Based Programmes – the term is not used in the UK VET context.

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 a measure of learning achievement. In a context of competence based qualifications, competence is linked to the ability to perform activities within an occupational 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 situations within, and even external to, an occupational area. Source: Cultural Heritage National Training Organisation²³ (CHNTO), 2004. Competence is often closely linked to the development of National Occupational Standards (NOS), which exist for most sectors and job occupations. The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service²⁴ (UCAS), an HE admission service, defines a competency as fundamental knowledge, ability or expertise in a specific subject area or skill set.

Pre-Vocational Education – focuses on basic skills, such as numeracy and literacy and is below Level 2 (SCQF Level 4). Vocational training may still contain general skills but would also include more vocation-specific training. In Scotland, usual terms are adult literacy and numeracy, adult literacies and are below SCQF Level 4.

²¹ www.bls.gov/soc

²² www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/10/04125111/0

²³ www.chnto.co.uk

²⁴ www.ucas.com

Theme 2. Modernizing VET to support Lifelong Learning, internationalization, and mobility

2.1. VET policy developments and priorities in supporting lifelong learning

Skills development and lifelong learning are a responsibility of the Devolved Governments of the U K, all four countries prioritise increasing skill levels of the current and future workforce and have identified priorities in lifelong and adult learning.

VET policy in England and Wales will be influenced by the *Wolf Review* of pre-19 vocational education discussed later in Theme 5. The Welsh Government's 'Economic Renewal: a new direction' programme (July 2010)²⁵ and its more recent 'Standing up for Wales' programme²⁶ - places skills development at the heart of Wales' economic recovery and growth, as well as social justice. In Wales the term 'skills' has gained currency over lifelong learning, reflecting a growing focus on the importance of skills for economic growth. In England the strategic development of lifelong learning falls within the broad remit of two Government departments:

- The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) for adult learners post-19
- The Department for Education (DfE) for students up to 19.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) also influences the development of lifelong learning through its funding for a range of work programmes and BIS published its strategy for radical reform of the skills system in "*Skills for Sustainable Growth*".²⁷ "*The Plan for Growth*"²⁸ states "the creation of a more educated workforce that is the most flexible in Europe" is one of the key skills actions and measures to be achieved as "The UK working age population has lower skills than the workforce in France, Germany, and the USA."²⁹

UK Government policy has set five measurable benchmarks to address these concerns through interpretations of individual jurisdictions.³⁰

- Supporting more Apprenticeships;
- Housing more top universities than any other country except the USA;
- Increasing participation of 16 – 24 year olds in employment or learning;
- Narrowing the educational attainment gap, allowing everyone to meet their potential;
- Establishing the lowest burdens from employment regulation in the EU.

²⁵

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/businessandconomy/help/economicrenewal/programmepapers/anedirection/?lang=en>

²⁶ <http://welshlabour.org.uk/welsh-labours-manifesto>

²⁷ BIS November 2010 - Skills for Sustainable Growth <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/s/10-1274-skills-for-sustainable-growth-strategy.pdf>

²⁸ BIS and HM Treasury March 2011 – The Plan for Growth http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/2011budget_growth.pdf

²⁹ BIS November 2010 - Skills for Sustainable Growth <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/s/10-1274-skills-for-sustainable-growth-strategy.pdf>

³⁰ BIS and HM Treasury March 2011 – The Plan for Growth http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/2011budget_growth.pdf

UKCES gives leadership to business on skills development and published the first national strategic skills audit in 2010 to supply the analysis required to develop the nation's skills base so that it meets the immediate and longer-term needs of a fast changing economy.³¹

The Scottish Government's *Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth*³² sets out a flexible package of skills support that individuals need and employers want. In addition a new Scottish programme of Post-16 Reform has been introduced with the aim of developing a more efficient and flexible learner progression by incentivising learning provision and creating structural change across the post-16 education landscape to achieve efficiency in public funding.

The Welsh Government's plan to support young people back into education, training and employment is the Youth Engagement and Employment Action Plan³³ includes:

- a Welsh Jobs Fund (pilot 2011) to help 16-26 year olds into paid employment for 6 months;
- *GoWales* scheme – offers graduates work placements with employers to make them more employable;
- Steps-to-Employment – August 2011 non-employed adults work-focused training and vocational learning, basic skills etc; or bespoke training for a specific job/employer in the Local area;
- Traineeships – August 2011 non-employed 16-18 year olds basic skills and vocational learning at entry Level 1 and 2; work placements; community projects and voluntary work;
- Young Recruits Initiative –subsidy to employers to recruit 16-24 year olds on to a Level 2 or 3 Apprenticeship;
- Pathways to Apprenticeship programme³⁴ 16-24 year olds to receive intensive training to help them secure an apprenticeship;
- An Apprenticeship Matching Service to link individuals, employers and training providers;
- The new *Potensial* initiative in North Wales to reduce school drop-out numbers of 11-16 year olds through vocational training and specialist support for young people with disabilities or in care.

The key UK VET initiatives for young people and adults are set out under Theme 3.

2.2. Implementation of European tools and principles

Introduction

European VET matters are progressed cooperatively across the four nations and experiences are shared through a UK VET coordination group which includes Government representatives, qualifications regulators, higher education and employer representatives, among others.

³¹ UKCES Skills for Jobs Today and Tomorrow 2010 - <http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/national-strategic-skills-audit-for-england-2010-volume-1-key-findings.pdf>

³² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/10/04125111/0>

³³ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/yeeap/?lang=en>

³⁴ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/Apprenticeships/pathway/?lang=en>

The UK already has systems and structures that form part of EU VET Recommendations including the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (EQAVET) and the European Credit Transfer for VET (ECVET). Each nation is implementing these initiatives and coordinating activity across the UK where necessary.

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

The EQF Recommendation has focussed on referencing existing frameworks to the EQF. The five qualifications frameworks used in the four UK nations are:

- the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF);
- the National Qualifications Framework (NQF);
- the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) including the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS);
- the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW); and
- the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ).

Together, these frameworks accommodate the majority of qualifications in use in the various sectors of education, training and lifelong learning in the UK.

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)

The QCF focuses on vocational and related qualifications, however, it has been developed to include all qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland other than HE qualifications (which are covered by the FHEQ). The framework comprises Levels 1-8 and an Entry Level (Levels 1-3). It is based on learning outcomes, as well as a system of credit and therefore has wider application as a unit-based credit framework.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The NQF was the framework for general and vocational qualifications in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. All vocational qualifications accredited to the QCF will replace the NQF. General educational qualifications – principally the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and the General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level (A Levels) – will continue to be located in the NQF until a decision is made whether or not to move them into the QCF. The NQF and QCF use the same system of Levels (Entry 1-3 and Levels 1-8).

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

The SCQF contains twelve levels, the first three of which are broadly comparable with the Entry Levels in the QCF and CQFW. It makes full use of learning outcomes, units and credits across all types of qualifications and learning programmes. Higher education qualifications are integrated into SCQF in the FQHEIS, which has been verified as compatible with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (the 'Bologna Framework').

The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)

The CQFW in Wales incorporates the QCF/NQF and FHEQ and is composed of three “pillars”, two (the QCF and the FHEQ) are shared with England and Northern Ireland and the third (Quality Assured Lifelong Learning (QALL)) is distinctive to CQFW. QALL is designed to bring all learning in Wales, which is not already included in the other two pillars, into the Framework. The CQFW has Levels 1-8 and an Entry Level (1-3).

The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)

The FHEQ is a five-level framework for higher education qualifications based on learning outcomes. The five levels are designated 4-8. It is verified as compatible with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (the ‘Bologna Framework’).

It was not possible to have one National Co-ordination Point (NCP) on the EQF Advisory Group for the UK because of the number of differing NQFs. Three NCPs were therefore established to take forward the referencing for each of the Frameworks, establishing working relationships and co-operation. The UK NCPs are:

Table 11

England (joint with Northern Ireland)	Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF)	Ofqual www.ofqual.gov.uk
Northern Ireland (joint with England)	Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF)	CCEA www.ccea.org.uk
Scotland	Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework	SCQF Partnership www.scqf.org.uk
Wales	Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales	CQFW www.cqfw.net

A UK report referencing the three UK frameworks to the EQF³⁵ and a UK event were held in 2010 to launch these developments formally³⁶. Whilst the principles for using the national frameworks to reference qualification level and size with the EQF are common across all frameworks in the UK, there are some important differences between them.

The two key issues for the QCF are:

Quality Assurance:

NCPs develop their own methodology for referencing qualifications to the EQF, from basic criteria provided. As the EQF depends on mutual trust it is essential that arrangements are in place to ensure consistency and reliability of findings. In the UK vocational qualifications are developed through awarding bodies which are entirely independent of Government but subject to regulation through each of the devolved Governments to assure quality.³⁷

³⁵ Referencing the qualifications frameworks of the United Kingdom to the European Qualifications framework (2009)

³⁶ Report of the UK EQF launch conference

³⁷ link to OFQUAL, DCELLS, CCEA and SQA regulators

Ofqual - <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/>

DCELLS -

<http://wales.gov.uk/?jsessionid=FpByTl7MI2PcK8lpgV1VjCLsy6nnQTnvl1cT4G5pBhsK1gfThJz!-776089306?lang=en>

CCEA - <http://www.rewardinglearning.org.uk/>

The existence of "Entry Levels" or levels below Level 1 of the QCF:

Frameworks that do not make provision for the recognition of achievements below Level 1 could be deemed to be creating an equal opportunities issue.

Geographical mobility

There is no clear Government strategy for maximising inward and outward geographical mobility of learners and Apprentices in the UK. ECCTIS³⁸ (the European Centre for Transnational Integration Studies) is the designated UK NARIC³⁹ and is responsible for the promotion of the Europass documents which have different strengths and weaknesses for the UK audience:

Certificate Supplement (CS)

City & Guilds (C&G) is the only awarding body which currently issues the Certificate Supplement, the UK NEC is working with the Vocational Training Charitable Trust⁴⁰, the specialist awarding body for the hairdressing and beauty sector, and EAL⁴¹, the specialist, employer-recognised awarding organisation for the engineering, manufacturing, building services and related sectors, to initiate them into issuing the Certificate Supplement.⁴²

Diploma Supplement (DS)

According to the most recent National Bologna Stocktaking Report for England, Wales and Northern Ireland⁴³ (1st November 2008), the 2007 Europe Unit Survey indicated that 60% of respondents, from 60% of HE institutions were issuing the DS at that time, with 90% of the remainder intending to do so in the near future. A further Europe Unit Survey is expected later this year, results available early in 2012.

The British Council Erasmus National Agency⁴⁴ (responsible for processing DS label applications) states there are three DS label holders in the UK whilst the remainder of HEIs issue something similar but not compliant with it.

The Higher Education Achievement Report⁴⁵ (HEAR) is a cumulative document which contains non-academic achievements in addition to the standard DS content with HEAR DS issued as the exit document

Europass Mobility (EM)

Uptake Statistics for EM (as provided by the UK NEC EM registration tool) by year are:

2008	68
2009	1309
2010	2321

SQA - http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/CCC_FirstPage.jsp

³⁸ [www.acronymfinder.com/ ...Centre-for-Transnational-Integration-Studies-\(UK\)-\(ECTIS\).html](http://www.acronymfinder.com/...Centre-for-Transnational-Integration-Studies-(UK)-(ECTIS).html)

³⁹ <http://naric.com/>

⁴⁰ <http://www.vtct.org.uk/>

⁴¹ www.eal.org.uk

⁴² www.cityandguilds.com/Europass.

⁴³ ond.vlaanderen.be/.../bologna/.../National-reports.../National_Report_UK-England-Wales-N-Ireland%202005.pdf

⁴⁴ <http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus.htm>

⁴⁵ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/diversity/achieve/>

The vast majority were Leonardo Participants, with ECORYS statistics indicating that:

In 2008, 51% of Leonardo Participants used EM. In 2009, 57% of Leonardo participants used EM.

Europass Curriculum Vitae (CV) and Language Passport

The statistics available on CEDEFOP's home page for the Europass service indicate that the number of Europass CVs and Europass Language Passports being completed online in English has increased greatly since the start of the year: 138,340 CVs completed in January 2011 compared with 84,982 in 2010 and 6,319 Europass Language Passports completed in January 2011 compared with 3,059 in 2010.

Numbers completed online in English in 2011.

Table 12

2010	ECV	ELP	Month total
January	84,982	3,059	88,041
February	85,090	2,180	87,270
March	91,341	2,321	93,662
April	80,377	2,960	83,337
May	86,879	2,123	89,002
June	71,148	1,534	72,682
July	65,012	1,209	66,221
August	64,941	1,356	66,297
September	93,427	2,404	95,831
October	98,133	3,072	101,205
November	104,452	2,786	107,238
December	77,205	2,499	79,704
Total	1,002,987	27,503	1,030,490

From 2011 the UK National Europass Centre forged a new working partnership with Jobcentre Plus and EURES⁴⁶, the European job portal, representatives to promote the CV and Language Passport through Jobcentre Plus by engaging with Centre staff and Job Seekers. Informal one-to-one advice sessions on European careers showcased the benefits of applying for work in the UK and abroad using the Europass CV format. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) agreed for 2011 build upon the partnerships to ensure that the benefits of the Europass CV and Language Passport are promoted to all stakeholders and interested parties. Tools for such promotion include the latest technology such as the Apple i-Pad demonstrating the Europass Language Passport i-Phone/i-Pad application.

ECVET

ECVET projects⁴⁷ involving the UK have taken place with EU partner countries including Spain, Italy, Germany, the Czech Republic, and France.

Europass mobility can be used to recognise learning periods spent abroad; if a complete qualification is gained it can be recognised in the UK through the UK NARIC comparability statement. If it is a professional qualification it may be recognised by an individual professional association or regulator through the provisions of Directive 2005/36/EC.

⁴⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/eures/>

⁴⁷ <http://www.ecvet-projects.eu/Projects/Default.aspx>

To ensure readiness to implement ECVET by 2012 three NCPs (Table 11) were set up to engage with stakeholders. Given the favourable structure of the UK VET system (with units of learning outcomes the building blocks of a modularised qualifications system) the UK is well positioned to move into the practical stage of assigning points and developing partnerships.

Eqavet and Quality Assurance Systems

UK VET quality assurance systems are in place and compatible with the EQAVET⁴⁸ Recommendation. The UK is implementing this through the EQAVET network and working groups. For further additional reading please refer to the National Bologna Stocktaking Report for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2.3. Internationalization and transnational mobility for learning purposes in VET

2.3.1 Policy framework for internationalization and transnational mobility in VET

The key objectives for the UK Government in supporting the education sectors greater international engagement are:

- to build trust in the UK, as well as its influence and standing;
- to maintain and grow the reputation of the UK as a centre for quality and excellence in education, research and innovation;
- to bring economic benefit and contribute to the growth agenda for the UK.

Policy and geographical priorities are identified in the emerging UK Government's international education strategy (The British Council) which aims to impact on the following areas:

- recognition of the UK as a source of expertise;
- quality contribution to international co-operation in education and research;
- increased economic value and benefits to the UK;
- greater educational and employment opportunities for individuals in the UK including intercultural understanding and access to education.

From a geographical perspective, the priorities for the UK for international co-operation in VET include:

- countries and regions where there are already well-established links and engagement at a Government and institutional level;
- countries where the focus on rapid development of strong knowledge economies provides opportunities for UK to strengthen links;
- countries with a focus on re-building education systems / frameworks.

Strategic level agreements are in place between the UK and a number of countries including China and India: there have been limited programmes specifically targeted at promoting or providing transnational mobility in VET. Regarding internationalisation of VET through the European Lifelong Learning Programme, Leonardo supports the development of skills and training. It funds work placements for trainees, workers and staff, and supports European projects to discuss common

⁴⁸ <http://www.eqavet.eu/gns/about-eqavet/welcome.aspx>

issues or develop training materials, courses and frameworks. Currently 33 countries participate in the Leonardo programme.

The most popular destination countries for Leonardo Mobility UK participants are: Germany (12%); Spain (11%); Italy and France (11% each); Sweden (6%); the Netherlands and Malta (5%); Turkey (4%) and Portugal (3%), consistent with last year.

Ecorys⁴⁹, as the UK National Agency for Leonardo, Grundtvig and the Transversal programmes, administers the Leonardo Mobility programme on behalf of the European Commission (DG EAC), DfE and the Devolved Administrations. They provide advice to: potential applicants on the delivery of the programme; project promoters on the preparation of students, mentoring and follow-up of the Mobility period. Currently funding goes to best-quality Mobility projects, and not to target groups, assessment of which follows the EC's guidelines and EU Priorities.

Within the FE sector in England the Association of Colleges (AoC) has developed an International Charter⁵⁰ which actively encourages colleges to develop internationalisation strategies rather than the more common international recruitment strategies. The Charter asks colleges to sign up to meeting four key commitments, one of which includes the need for UK learners to have access to international or EU mobility in preparing them for work in a global environment

2.3.2 Transnational mobility programmes and schemes in VET

There are increasing opportunities offered through trans-national education, with 15-16,000 non-EU international students and 25,000 EEA students studying in publicly-funded UK FE colleges, mostly at Level 3 (Data from AoC survey 2009-10). Many of these programmes provide pathways to UK HE provision. The UK hosts higher numbers of international VET students in the UK than there are UK VET students studying overseas or undertaking work placements.

In order to explore further opportunities for expansion within the UK VET sector, and to encourage an increase in overseas business, recent innovations include: institutional twinning and learning-based partnerships; joint education projects; offshore delivery; franchising and distance learning services; consultancy and advisory services to assist with education reform and EU education programmes.

Regarding HE marketing and student mobility, the British Council:

- manages and promotes the Education UK brand on behalf of BIS;
- manages the Education UK web-site (10m potential international students)
- trains and develops networks of education agents in key markets
- plays a leading role in outward mobility of students from the UK, through UKIERI Study India programme, the EC-funded ERASMUS programme and other initiatives.

⁴⁹ <http://www.uk.ecorys.com/>

⁵⁰ . Association of Colleges - the International Charter - http://www.aoc.co.uk/en/policy-and-advice/international/international-charter/about_charter.cfm

Other non-VET mobility programmes include:

- Youth in Action⁵¹ - an inclusive Programme funded by the EC for young people promoting mobility within and beyond the EU's borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue;
- Global Xchange⁵² - Youth is part of the Government's new International Citizen Service (ICS) Programme. British Council is now running two programmes, Youth Xchange and Youth Action, for 18-22 year olds.

Periods of study abroad for UK IVET students are unusual and will in most cases be set up on an institutional basis. For apprentices there are some schemes which provide workplace experience abroad, such as *CollegeWales'* coordinated EU Mobility programme, but these are usually organised and run by the employer.

There has been an increase from 21% (2009) to 33% (2010) in the number of People on the Labour Market participants (PLM). Initial VET projects slightly decreased to 54% whilst VET professionals decreased to 18% in 2010.

The UK is supporting the development of European Skills and Competences (ESCO)⁵³ through the Heads of Public Employment Services Network (HoPES) because it acknowledges the potential beneficial impact on the labour market and economic activities. The taxonomy will be developed in a way that builds upon existing taxonomies, including the UK's National Office of Statistics (NOS) recognising ESCO as a key enabler in creating an open, flexible and adaptable labour market for the EU. The work will be developed in close partnership with Jobcentre Plus, an agency of the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

⁵¹ Youth in Action webpages: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/youthinaction.htm>

⁵² Global Xchange - <http://www.globalxchange.org.uk/pages/default.aspx>

⁵³ ESCO the European Taxonomy of skills, competences and occupations
http://ec.europa.eu/eures/docs/ESCO_overview_note.pdf

Table 13. - Overview of VET transnational mobility programme and schemes

Title of program/scheme and geographical coverage	Managing authority	Sources of funding ⁵⁴ and corresponding level of funding for the programming period	Start – end date (programming period)	Target groups ⁵⁵	Average duration of mobility per target group (in months)	Number of participants ⁵⁶	Implementation mechanisms ⁵⁷	Practices to recognize the KSC acquired abroad	Sources of information (including evaluation reports)
EU program									
1. Leonardo Programme	DfE, UK National Agency for Leonardo, Grundtvig and the Transversal programmes	European Commission, DG Education and Culture	January 2007- December 2013	Apprentices, students initial VET, VET professionals, any UK institution (whether public, private or semi-private involved in VET)	IVET Students 2 weeks Apprentices*..... VET Professionals 1 week Others (please specify) PLM 10 to 13 weeks	IVET Students 2567 Apprentices*.....we send approx 1000 apprentices out of the IVET students.. VET Professionals 617 Others (please specify) PLM 917	Standard COM procedure	Certificate of participation completed by the host organization ; award ceremony by sending organization Europass Mobility documents	LLP Call See latest evaluation reports on the interim phase of the LLP (including on Leonardo)

IVET students in Apprenticeship *

⁵⁴ EU programmes, EU Structural Funds (eg. ESF), National budget, Employer contribution, Individuals' funds/savings, etc

⁵⁵ Eg. Students, Apprentices, VET professionals, etc.

⁵⁶ The number of students who have spent a period abroad in one single year (please specify year). In case statistics are collected differently, please specify.

⁵⁷ Please briefly present the application procedure & the eligibility requirements for the applicants. In case of EU programs, please indicate if standard procedure is applied. In case of exceptions, please briefly describe

2.3.3 Arrangements to secure work placements for transnational mobility in VET

There are no financial incentives for companies to participate in transnational mobility in VET. For training providers, benefits include increased internationalisation and networking; for beneficiaries, enhanced soft and vocational skills (viewed as increasing their employability in the future). Target groups for Mobility projects are:

People in Initial Vocational Training (IVET)

Enrolled on a full or part-time course of IVET, for example N/SVQ Level 3/Level 6, or those undertaking an Apprenticeship and enrolled on a vocational training scheme based on alternate learning in where the training takes place at the workplace as well as in college. These participants undertake a placement abroad to acquire new skills, training and work experience relevant to their vocational training⁵⁸.

People in the Labour Market (PLM)

Those in employment, the self-employed and those available for work (including graduates and those currently unemployed) who are able to undertake a placement abroad to acquire new skills, training and work experience relevant to their chosen professions.

Vocational Education and Training Professionals (VETPRO)

Those employed in a business or training environment whose day-to-day role includes the design or delivery of training, professional development or careers guidance.

The UK Partner Search Database⁵⁹ is for promoters and potential applicants looking into applying for Lifelong Learning Partnership funding and is open to any organisation (including companies) from the 33 countries participating in the programme. Alternatively the national Agency publishes a list of successful Mobility projects every year.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ N/SVQ Levels don't necessarily correspond with the national framework Levels

⁵⁹ The UK Directories or Map:

<http://www.leonardo.org.uk/casestudy.asp?section=000100010038§ionTitle=Projects+Around+the+UK>

⁶⁰ The UK Partner Search Database www.leonardo.org.uk/partnersearch

Theme 3. VET to support recovery from the crisis

3.1. Overview

Figures from the National Strategic Skills Audit, produced by UKCES,⁶¹ suggest a lower level of job losses in "white collar" occupations, e.g. managers and professionals, than among lower skilled elementary and intermediate occupations. The biggest losses are in a wide range of operative, manual and elementary occupations, particularly in manufacturing, down over 8% since the start of the crisis, and in construction.

The overall unemployment rate for the UK's 16 – 64 year olds was 7.9%, with 2.49 million unemployed people in the fourth quarter of 2010.⁶² The youth unemployment rate for 16 – 24 year olds was 20.5%, which is the highest figure since comparable records began, making more than 1 in 5 young people unemployed. The contraction in employment brought on by the crisis has been more pronounced in Wales than at UK level, leading to a slightly higher rate of unemployment currently (source: National Strategic Skills Audit for Wales 2010).

3.2. Effects of the crisis on VET and corresponding measures

3.2.1 Trends in learner's behaviour

Given the rise in youth unemployment accompanying the crisis, it is perhaps surprising that the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) for England reports that there has not been a substantial rise in the numbers of young people entering FE at 16, nor a significant increase in entry post-19, although Wales saw a 2% increase in 2010 (39% compared with 37% in 2009). Post-16 numbers in schools have continued to grow slightly. Wales has seen a 2% increase (to 80%) in 2010 in the proportion of 16 to 18 year olds in education or training compared with 2009. This may be linked to changes in funding, particularly the move to co-financing of some training for adults with contributions from either the employer or the individual.

3.2.2 Trends in enterprises' behaviour

The CIPD Learning and Talent Development Report 2011⁶³, based on replies from 601 organisations, found that organisations are switching to more cost-effective learning and development opportunities in the face of reduced training budgets. Organisations were most likely to reduce their external training in favour of in-house development programmes, e-learning and coaching by line managers. Public sector organisations were twice as likely as their private sector counterparts to report changes of this nature.

Within the sample of 601 organisations just fewer than half the respondents with bases and staff located in England have employed Apprentices in the past three years and a third reported that they were intending to recruit them this year. Over the past three years the use of Apprentices has been most popular in manufacturing and production organisations, although over a third such organisations report they will not be using Apprentices this year compared to just over a quarter in previous years. Recruitment freezes and site closures were the most common reasons cited by organisations who have used Apprenticeships in the past three years but are not recruiting this year.

⁶¹ UKCES Skills for Jobs Today and Tomorrow 2010 - <http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/national-strategic-skills-audit-for-england-2010-volume-1-key-findings.pdf>

⁶² Office for National Statistics (ONS) Feb 2011 data <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/default.asp>

⁶³ CIPD Learning and Talent Development report 2011 <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/survey-reports/learning-talent-development-2011.aspx>

Nearly 60% of respondents however were aware of the England-only National Apprenticeship Service, which matches candidates to employer vacancies, and nearly half the respondents report that more generous public funding of Apprenticeships would encourage their organisation to create new or additional places.⁶⁴

3.2.3 Measures taken to address the negative effects or as a result of the crisis (by public authorities at national, regional and local level and by social partners)

The Government intends to raise the education participation age in England to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015. From September 2011, young people needing support to participate in education or training will be eligible for payments from the 16-19 Bursary Fund. Further details on funding in Theme 10.

The provision of a new type of school, the University Technical College, will be extended to establish at least 24 new colleges by 2014. Formed through partnerships between universities, colleges and businesses, they are intended to provide leading-edge technical training opportunities for 11 – 19 year-olds. Sponsors will help set curricula to match the needs of the Local economy which include high quality work placements.

The outcomes of the recent Wolf Review renewed emphasis on a broad general core curriculum pre-16 and a recommended reduction in the amount of time that pre-16 learners spend on vocational qualifications, could contrast sharply with a shift away from the funding of whole qualifications for adult learners. Providers are being asked to provide shorter, more competence-based units of training for adults, with a focus on the "portability" of the qualifications offered as part of the national QCF.

The recent crisis has had a significant effect on young people's labour market prospects.⁶⁵ Those with qualifications below UK Level 2 (ISCED 3C) account for roughly 75% of young people unemployed for six months. Current reforms to the education system, increases in Apprenticeship places and reforms to the benefit system are focussed on addressing this issue.

The provision of adult VET will be set in the context of greater supply-side reform with a focus on the removal of top-down targets and centralised regulation.⁶⁶ This will also be accompanied by increasing competition between providers and continuing decisive action to tackle underperformance as measured by national benchmarks. Partnership working between the SSCs, educators and employers will be supported to ensure that the skills system is responding to both current and future sector needs.

Current Government policy for promoting economic growth is set out in the *Plan for Growth* and subsequent reviews.⁶⁷ At policy level, the Government has encouraged, and invested in, different partnerships of stakeholder representatives. The creation of SSCs and their umbrella organisation, UKCES is seen as the formation of a strategic partnership of major stakeholders to strengthen the employers' voice and ensure vocational qualifications are fit for purpose.

⁶⁴ CIPD Learning and Talent Development report 2011, *ibid.*

⁶⁵ Supporting Youth unemployment www.number10.gov.uk

⁶⁶ For further information on the priorities for VET policy see BIS website <http://www.bis.gov.uk/>

⁶⁷ BIS and HM Treasury March 2011 – The Plan for Growth http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/2011budget_growth.pdf

At the same time, there was progress in recognising the positive role of trade unions in helping to deliver Government's Skills Strategy. The Trade Union Congress (TUC). *Unionlearn* provides a coherent framework to support workplace-related learning activities.

The Vocational Qualifications Partnership Project⁶⁸ (VQPP) (under BIS) has been in place since April 2010 to develop communications, capacity building and employer engagement for post-19 qualifications. Partnerships at regional level are being transformed with the current Regional Development Agencies and Regional Skills Partnerships replaced by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). They will bring together Government agencies, local authorities, 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 offer work experience, mentoring, workplace visits, and most importantly enterprise activity and professional development 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), who work collaboratively with the Scottish University for Industry.

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 Link, public sector bodies and charities. Their aims are to address sectoral and regional issues in six priority areas that have been agreed with the TUC and Confederation of British Industry (CBI), using innovative approaches to learning and skills.

The Scottish Government's approach is set out in *Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth*. The refreshed Strategy recognises a new flexible, responsive, partnership approach to meeting Scotland's skills needs for economic recovery.

The Strategy is structured around four key priority themes:

- *empowering* people to acquire the skills and attributes to both contribute to and benefit from future economic success;
- *supporting* employers and ensuring that the supply of skills, training and qualifications can be responsive;
- *simplifying* the skills system to ensure that it is more coherent and easy to understand for individuals and employers;
- *strengthening* partnerships to improve skills and the contribution they make towards achieving Scotland's social and economic aspirations.

In Northern Ireland, the Department of Education (DE) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) are already joint working on the delivery of the new skills strategy '*Success through Skills – Transforming Futures*' looking at future growth; an increase in demand for higher level skills; STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) skills and NEETs (young people Not in Education, Employment or Training).

⁶⁸ <http://nvqweb.com/node/6751>

They are also working on collaboration between schools and FE Colleges, initially through the Vocational Enhancement Programme (VEP). and a 14-19 Statement to ensure the effective delivery of their respective policies and provision for 14-19 year olds.

Plans to avoid unnecessary provision duplication are through a revised curriculum, the Entitlement Framework (EF). From 2013 the EF will mean that at least one third of the curriculum offered in post-primary schools will be professional and technical, i.e., vocational, (although individual pupils can decide not to take up this offer and follow an exclusively academic route instead), one third general (academic) and the remaining third allows for an individual learning element. This economically relevant curriculum with clear progression has a target of 24 courses at Key Stage 4 and 27 post-16.

The Welsh Government has also introduced, enhanced or extended a number of training initiatives for adults, such as:

- Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF) – has received enhanced funding to encourage more employers to support their workers to up-skill and thereby reduce their risk of redundancy and increase their adaptability;
- Basic Skills Employer Pledge (BSEP) –specifically supports employers to improve basic skills in the workplace;
- ReACT II - has been extended and now offers enhanced vocational training grants and wage subsidies to help people made redundant or at risk of redundancy to update or gain new skills and retain or find new employment⁶⁹

⁷⁰

⁶⁹ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/reactemployers/?lang=en>

⁷⁰ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/10/04125111/0>

Theme 4. Historical background, Legislative and Institutional framework

4.1. Historical Background

The development of Vocational Education and Training in the UK countries is both diverse and complex. Across the UK the history of VET is closely associated with the development of the relationship between technical education and industrial growth.

During the 18th and 19th century vocational and technical education was initially left to voluntary groups and employers however 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 county councils and boroughs with many existing FE colleges and universities coming into existence in this way. Technical Colleges provided for supervisory and technical staff rather than ordinary manual workers, the first opening in London in 1907.

The 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 the early 20th century. The British preoccupations with the relative value of academic learning over practical learning were critical factors that slowed down the development of an effective national technical education system for both young people and adults. These issues of academic/vocational divide and the parity of esteem between work-based and other qualifications still dominate in political and educational debates even today.⁷¹

When the demand for skilled labour grew, the Education Act 1944 made provision for the introduction of 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 two-thirds of the cohorts were in technical education.⁷²

The Tomlinson Report⁷³ (2004) marked a key point in proposing a curriculum framework in which it was possible to integrate different types of learning programmes into an overarching qualification at 16 or 18. The findings were initially rejected but some of the principles were still evident in subsequent curriculum developments, including the Diploma qualification, launched in 2007.

The UK Government commissioned the Wolf Review (2010) to consider how to improve vocational education for 14 – 19 year olds and thereby promote successful progression into the labour market, HE and training routes⁷⁴. The findings of the review are examined in more detail in Theme 5.

Apprenticeships in the UK stretch back to the 'Guilds' of the Middle Ages, with regulations setting out terms and conditions for training going back to 1563.

⁷¹ Adapted from Dick Evans The History of Technical Education
http://www.tmag.co.uk/extras/history_of_Technical_Education_v2.pdf

⁷² Wolf, A. (Penguin Books, 2002) Does Education Matter? Myths about Education and Economic Growth

⁷³ http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/ps/documents/briefing_papers/ps0007_the_tomlinson_report_14_19_curriculum_and_qualifications_reform_feb_2005.pdf

⁷⁴ Department for Education, Review of Vocational Education, The Wolf report
<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00031-2011>

Apprenticeships expanded in the following two centuries and by the late 19th Century had spread from artisan trades such as building and printing through to the newer industries of engineering and shipbuilding – and later to plumbing and electrical work.⁷⁵

There were 240,000 apprentices by the mid 1960's but by 1990, numbers decreased to 53,000, a decline perhaps exacerbated by rising post-16 participation in full time education and a lack of public funding for apprenticeships. Since the mid-1990's, Governments have been rebuilding the programme with current developments around apprenticeships considered in more detail in Theme 6.

School and college-based vocational qualifications and pathways developed vocational GCSEs and Vocational A-Levels were introduced in 2000. The accreditation system for vocational education in the UK developed through bodies such as the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and City & Guilds (C&G) that set examinations for technical subjects, followed by universities/colleges. There are now over 150 awarding organisations recognised by Ofqual. Most recently, employers and FE Colleges have been granted the powers to award their own vocational qualifications.

The late 1990's gave rise to mounting concern about the UK's competitiveness and position within the global economy. In December 2006, the final report of the Leitch Review⁷⁶ stated that the UK must urgently raise its skill levels and strengthen employers' engagement and investment in skills. The UK Government commissioned UKCES to advise UK Ministers on the effectiveness of the employment and skills system and BIS later published a new skills strategy in England, *Skills for Sustainable Growth* (2010).

4.2. Legislative framework for IVET

No single piece of legislation provides an education and training legal framework 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 (Initial VET) and CVET (Continuing VET).

Devolution of powers to the DAs required legislation to define the boundaries of each responsibility. Detailed regulations (e.g., 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 social partners, thus there is little legal obligation for employers to train staff, except where licensing of organisations or individuals is a requirement.

Unions now have statutory status for Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) and established their Learning Fund to assist in workers' training. However, 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.

⁷⁵ History of Apprenticeships www.Apprenticeships.org.uk

⁷⁶ <http://skills.homesandcommunities.co.uk/policy/leitch-review>

4.3. Legislative framework for IVET

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.

Government and institutional frameworks differ between England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales, all of which have extensive autonomy. The institutional framework is complex. The tables below show allocation of responsibilities in broad terms for IVET within the secondary school system, the FE sector and for CVET but details may differ across the four nations of the UK.

In England and Wales, pre-employment IVET may be undertaken at secondary school, FE College or other training providers. There are two forms:

1. General vocational education is undertaken either at school (for those aged up to 18) or FE College (for those aged 16+). Successful completion could lead to direct employment or to further training within a FE college or other training provider.
2. Programmes of specific training are undertaken at a FE college and allow entry to a particular trade or profession, e.g., hairdressing, construction trades. This form of VET is a blend 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).

Table 14 shows the legislative and institutional framework for the development of VET within the secondary school system, including school sixth forms.

Institutional Framework for IVET within the secondary school system

Table 14

	England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Scotland
Overall Policy				
Government Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DfE Determines National Curriculum and type of vocational education offered in schools.	DfES	The Department of Education determines curriculum and type of vocational education offered in schools.	Scottish Government
Government Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Agency • QCDA Currently being established to replace the Training and Development Agency.	UKCES GTCW LSIS	The NI Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment advise DE on the content of the curriculum.	Education Scotland (recently formed from the merger of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Learning and Teaching)

	To be closed by March 2012 and some functions transferred to the DfE. • National College Currently being restructured to become part of the new Teaching Agency			Scotland Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
Sector led organisations and partners		SSCs Association of Headteachers		School/College Partnerships School and university collaborations regarding Scottish Baccalaureates School and college and/or industry partnerships for Skills for Work
Qualifications				
Regulator	• Ofqual	DfES	Ofqual (vocational qualifications), CCEA (non-vocational qualifications)	SQA, answerable directly to Scottish Government Ministers
Qualifications development	• Awarding Bodies	Awarding bodies	Awarding bodies, including CCEA.	
Regional Planning and Supp	• Local Authorities	Local Authorities 14-19 Partnerships		
Local Institutional Framework	• Maintained Schools • Academies • University Technical Colleges • Free Schools	Schools LA Exclusion Units		
Funding	• Local Authorities • Secretary of State •	DfES	Education and Library Boards	• Local Authorities

The majority of IVET provision is delivered through the learning and skills sector where it comprises FE colleges (both general and specialist), Sixth Form Colleges, Government-funded work-based learning for young people (including Apprenticeships) and adult and community learning. In addition to publicly-funded further education the sector also includes a large number of privately-funded training providers (fewer in Wales as it is a closed market) and employer-based training arms making up the "mixed economy" market model which characterises UK learning and skills provision.

FE colleges provide both IVET and CVET, catering for young people and adults. Many also offer academic and general courses (such as A-Levels and, in Scotland, Highers) in addition to vocational provision; some also offer other HE courses, such as HNCs, HNDs, Foundation degrees, Bachelor's degrees, professional qualifications and CPD courses.

Institutional Framework for IVET within the Further Education sector

Table 15

	England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Scotland
Overall Policy				
Government Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BIS 	DfES	The Department for Employment and Learning (DEL)	Scottish Government
Government Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SFA/YPLA NAS 	N/A	CCEA provide advice to DEL on FE curriculum matters	
Sector led organisations and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning and Skills Improvement Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSCs Professional Bodies Colegau Cymru 		Scotland's Colleges' Education Scotland
Qualifications				
Regulator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ofqual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DfES 	Ofqual (vocational qualifications), CCEA (non-vocational qualifications)	SQA, answerable directly to Scottish Government Ministers
Qualifications development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awarding Bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awarding Bodies 	Awarding bodies	SQA, in partnership with key stakeholders
Regional Planning and Supp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SFA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DfES 		
Institutional Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General FE Colleges Specialist Colleges Sixth Form Colleges Private providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FE Institutions Sixth Form Colleges Private Preferred Providers HEIs 		Tertiary colleges Private providers
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SFA BIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DfES 	DEL	Scottish Funding Council

In Scotland the SQA is the primary curriculum development and awarding organisation, working in partnership with stakeholders from colleges – Scotland's Colleges (Scottish equivalent of the AoC in the rest of the United Kingdom); employers and SSCs.

Besides general education, such as Higher and Advanced Higher, non-advanced vocational programmes and advanced vocational programmes exist alongside short-cycle HE (HNCs and HNDs) and degrees franchised from Scottish universities. Refer to Section 5.3 for more detail. The University of the Highlands and Islands⁷⁷ (UHI) has full university status and covers a 'federal' partnership of 13 colleges offering a range of qualifications from introductory non-advanced education, through VET to PhDs.

4.4. Legislative framework for CVET

The provision of CVET in England is spread across the learning and skills sector, as with IVET, but with employer and private training provider provision accounting for a more substantial part of the market than with IVET.

UKCES works with all DAs and the UK Government to ensure closer working relations between employment and skills systems to meet employers' and individuals' needs. In 2010, it advised the Government to introduce a statutory entitlement to training and to simplify the skills institutional landscape by reducing publicly-funded agencies, followed by the abolition of Lifelong Learning UK in March 2011. Ministers in each of the four nations have the right to appoint a National Commissioner who works with UKCES to represent national interests, reporting to Ministers in their own nation and, in some cases, overseeing employment and skills issues locally and chairing their national employment and skills boards.

SSCs all have representatives of TUs 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 respective Sector Qualification Strategies. This provides input to vocational qualification reform and development and revision of National Occupational Standards (NOSs), on which qualifications and training programmes are based. (N.B., this role for SSCs is currently under review and may be subject to change for 2012/13 and beyond.)

Some universities and all FE colleges offer CVET education. In addition to three or four-year first degrees, Masters and Doctorates, universities offer a wide range of shorter courses including two-year HNC/Ds and Foundation degrees. Vocational Higher Education, whether undertaken in universities, other HE or FE institutions, is the responsibility of the HE funding and quality agencies. However, in Scotland, the UK Quality Assurance Agency⁷⁸ (QAA) only has a remit for HNC/HND provision delivered in UHI and not in other Scottish colleges. The quality assurance role in the latter is conducted by SQA through external verification and through institutional reviews undertaken by Education Scotland (formerly known as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education).

⁷⁷ <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en>

⁷⁸ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

Legislative and Institutional Framework for CVET

Table 16

	England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Scotland (nothing)
Overall Policy				
Government Department	BIS	DfES	DEL	
Government Agencies	UKCES NAS SFA	UKCES HEFCW	UKCES CCEA	UKCES
Sector led organisations and partners	Sector Skills Councils	Sector Skills Councils QAA	SSCs	
Qualifications				
Regulator		DfES	Ofqual	
Qualifications development	Awarding bodies	Awarding Organisations Professional Bodies HEIs	Awarding bodies	
Regional Planning and Supp		HEFCW DfES		
Institutional Framework		FE, HEIs, Private Providers Professional Bodies		
Funding		DfES HEFCW	DEL is one funder through its contracted programmes. Employers & individuals also fund CVET.	

FE colleges, the largest providers in the sector, are general-purpose institutions covering general and vocational education and are all-age institutions, with large numbers of adults enrolled, offering a range of both short and long courses.⁷⁹ The FE sector consists of 424 colleges including general FE colleges, tertiary colleges, specialist colleges (mainly in land-based provision and art and design), colleges that cater for people who have learning difficulties or disabilities, and Sixth Form Colleges. According to UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Services) data, in 2009 FE institutions in the UK supplied 18.4% of students for higher education.⁸⁰ In Scotland, 22.5% of HE students came from colleges.⁸¹

4.5. Institutional framework for CVET and organigram

Please see section 4.4

⁷⁹ This creates a problem in supplying VET statistics as IVET and CVET cannot be readily split.

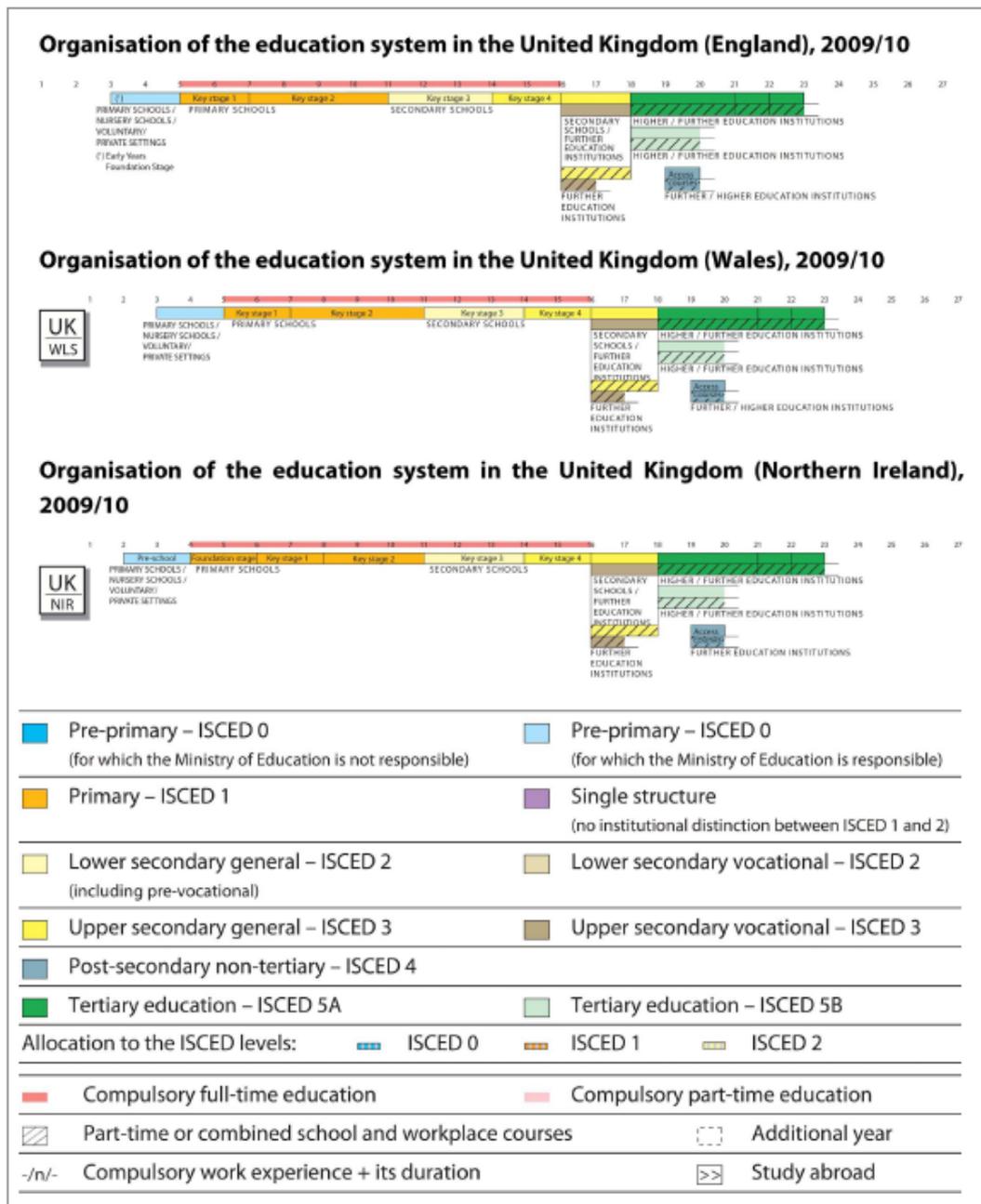
⁸⁰ http://www.ucas.ac.uk/about_us/stat_services/stats_online/data_tables/edbackground

⁸¹ <http://search1.ucas.co.uk/fandf00/index9.html>

Theme 5. Initial vocational education and training

5.1. Institutional framework for CVET and organigram

The chart below gives a high level view of the UK's education system, mapped to ISCED levels, but is subject to the caveats surrounding the difficulties of mapping the two systems accurately referred to Theme 1. A further diagram indicating the relationship between the two systems can be found in Annex 1, Table A3.



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

Schooling is compulsory in the UK from age 5 to 16 (4 to 16 in Northern Ireland),⁸² but with an entitlement to pre-school education in most areas of England. The curriculum for state funded pre-school provision is set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework⁸³.

From age 5-16 there is a National Curriculum⁸⁴ but the extent to which it applies depends on the form of governance of the school. All pupils follow a core curriculum of English, Maths, Science and IT and a range of foundation subjects according to their key stage.

Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence*⁸⁵ (CfE) is a flexible curriculum from 3 to 18 which has broad-based political and stakeholder support with Pre-school, primary and secondary schools, and colleges. Scottish HEIs have also begun engaging with CfE, both directly and through Universities Scotland. The flexibility of provision in S5/S6 (ISCED Level 3) will mean the HEIs can expect applicants with a range of qualifications.

The Welsh Government is 'creating a national *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* to develop effective provision from nursery through to FE and HE, backed up by an implementation programme⁸⁶, *Learning Pathways 14-19*.

Since 2000 a number of different types of school have been created which are wholly state-funded but outside of Local Authority (LA) control receiving their funding directly from the UK Government. Whilst all schools are expected to provide the core curriculum, those outside LA control may exercise "the freedom to depart" from the National Curriculum where appropriate, provided the curriculum is broad and balanced. Academies were the first of this type of school and, under the UK Government, Free Schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools have come into existence in England.⁸⁷ The latter two aim to provide the Core Curriculum alongside high-quality vocational education.

At age 16 most pupils take public examinations - the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE, Level 2), (ISCED Level 3C) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. International GCSEs (IGCSE) are common in the private sector, and some are now approved for use in maintained schools. Increasingly, schools have been offering 16-year olds the opportunity to take vocationally-related qualifications or units of vocational qualifications.

The English Baccalaureate⁸⁸ (EBACC) recognises students' achievements in rigorous GCSEs but the only permitted accreditation is GCSE or IGCSE and AS levels. This has renewed debate around which vocational qualifications may count towards an English Baccalaureate after the Wolf Review recommended a limit of

⁸² The leaving age will be raised to 18 by 2012-13.

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+www.direct.gov.uk/en/NI1/Newsroom/DG_173002

⁸³ www.ofsted.gov.uk/early-years-and-childcare

⁸⁴ 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.

⁸⁵ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/ACE>

⁸⁶ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/welshmededstrat/?lang=en>

⁸⁷ Department for Education – technical academies, university technical colleges and studio schools
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a0076307/technical-academies-university-technical-colleges-and-studio-schools>

Department for Education – free schools

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/freeschools>

⁸⁸

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/englishbac/a0075975/theenglishbaccalaureate>

20% of study time for vocational qualifications up to the age of 16 for most learners. The Welsh Baccalaureate has been in operation in Wales since 2006⁸⁹ and provides a broad, balanced curriculum for 14-19 year olds. See Section 5.3 for more information.

After completion of compulsory education in UK secondary schools, young people may choose to continue in school, move to a Sixth Form College⁹⁰ or a FE college⁹¹, enter employment with training such as an Apprenticeship, or enter employment without an Apprenticeship.

In England, students remaining in education post-16 at a school or a college may choose between 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 general qualification is the General Certificate of Education (GCE) A-Levels (Level 3). Students study up to five subjects in the first year and upon completion they are awarded the GCE Advanced Subsidiary (AS) qualification. Those who continue in the second year study more demanding units in usually 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).

Strategies to bridge different types and levels of education and training

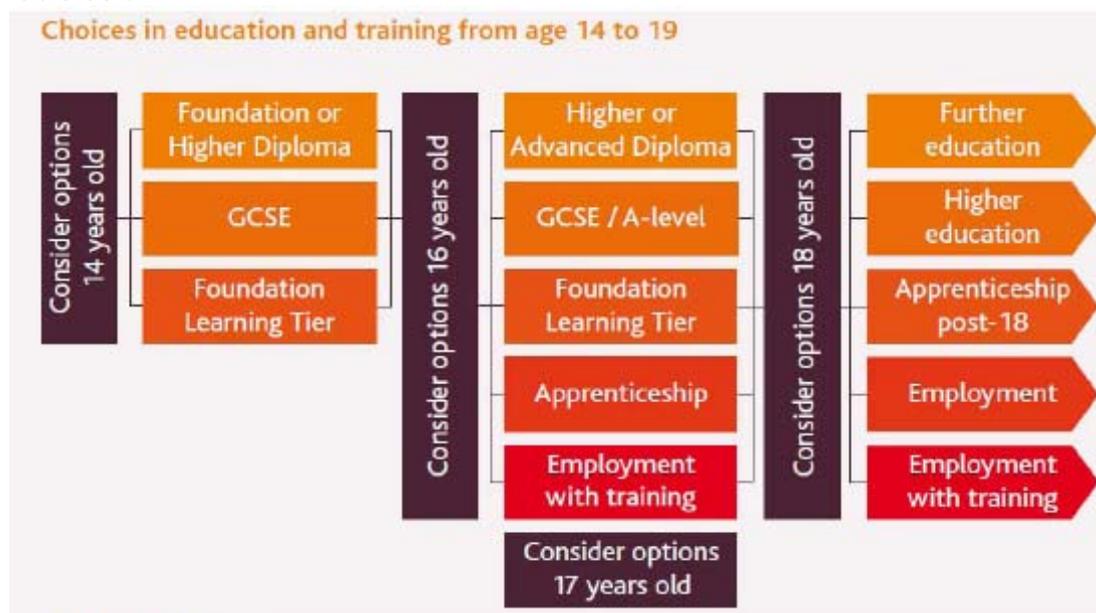
In England to achieve parity of esteem between general and vocational qualifications the Diploma qualification was introduced jointly by the DfE, UKCES and the Qualification and Curriculum Agency (QCA) in consultation with Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs). DDPs included employers, awarding bodies, schools, colleges and universities. In 2009, almost 34 500 young people were on a Diploma course with over 8000 employers involved in helping schools and colleges to teach them.

⁸⁹ <http://www.wjec.co.uk/?level=112>

⁹⁰ Sixth 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).

⁹¹ Further education (FE) college – full time or part time educational establishment for persons above 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.

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



Last Updated: 11/06/2010

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

The Wolf review concluded that "an audit of current provision identified a number of ways in which current arrangements create perverse incentives that serve young people ill, are unnecessarily bureaucratic and fail to recognise the needs of 14-19 year olds compared to adults"⁹²

The term "perverse incentive" in the context of schools in England is used in relation to the fact that schools are compared to each other on the basis of the performance of their pupils in public tests and examinations at age 11 and 16. These 'points' are awarded differently to different qualifications and then publicly viewed by parents via the ranked Achievement and Attainment Tables. Some suggest schools offered pupils alternative qualifications with higher points to GCSE's (generally vocational) to generate an "equivalence value" for perceived less-rigorous qualifications, to achieve higher scores, the "perverse incentive". The "equivalence culture" meant that young people were perhaps wrongly guided onto these courses to protect the schools published results to the detriment of general qualifications.

The UK Government has accepted the Wolf Review recommendation to replace the concept of equivalences with a reduced number of "approved" qualification types from 2013. The conclusion of the Review was that less effort should be spent on designing qualifications and programmes that meet centrally prescribed requirements and more on providing for the needs of young people and the labour market.⁹³

⁹² Review of Vocational Education - The Wolf Report, Department for Education, March 2011
<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00031-2011>

⁹³ Policywatch, The Pearson Centre for Policy and Learning, 13 May 2011
<http://www.pearsoncpl.com/2011/05/policy-watch-%e2%80%93-the-Government-responds-to-the-wolf-review/>

The Government has singled out three key themes from the review:

- Ensuring that all young people achieve English and maths, ideally to GCSE A*-C (Level 2) by the age of 19;
- Recognising only the "best" vocational qualifications, in terms of content, assessment and progression opportunities, for inclusion in the performance tables;
- Continuing to support apprenticeships by simplifying them and at the same time strengthening the core components.

The curriculum in Scotland is non-statutory and so is not dictated by the Government making the education system unique. It is the responsibility of Government to provide the framework for learning and teaching rather than micromanage individual schools. Responsibility for what is taught rests with LAs and schools, taking into account national guidelines and advice, which allows delivery of work-based vocational learning programmes through the Strategy for Enterprise in Education, which was promoted through *Determined to Succeed* (2002).⁹⁴

Scottish students take predominantly Highers in fifth year (S5, age 15-16), progressing into sixth year (S6, age 16-17⁹⁵) taking either Further Highers, Advanced Highers or the Scottish Baccalaureate. Others will take up more practical or vocationally focused qualifications in addition to or as an alternative to Highers and Advanced Highers.

The qualifications framework and programmes of study in Scotland differ from the rest of the UK⁹⁶. National Qualifications (NQs) were to bring together academic and vocational qualifications in a single coherent system that encouraged a greater parity of esteem and increased employability. The NQs are currently being revised and new qualifications will be introduced from 2013/14.

In Northern Ireland DEL and DE have been working closely on the Entitlement Framework (EF). The programme was developed to progress the recommendations contained in the *Further Education Strategy Review*⁹⁷ and the *Post-primary Review* to enhance the profile of 'vocational education' and promote the need for collaboration among schools and FE colleges in the interest of pupils and students alike. The EF will mean that one third of the curriculum offer in post primary schools will be professional and technical (vocational) in nature. DE has also set up an area based planning process to explore the best means of delivering to post primary school pupils.

In line with *FE Means Business*⁹⁸, there is widespread acceptance that NI Colleges should be delivering NQF and QCF provision that supports economic development. These regulated qualifications are quality benchmarked through their SSCs as employers have been involved in the design and approval of QCF qualifications.

⁹⁴ Scottish Executive (2002) *Determined to Succeed: a Review of Enterprise in Education*.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2002/12/15978/15406>

⁹⁵ 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.

⁹⁶ <http://www.scqf.org.uk/The%20Framework/>

⁹⁷ www.bis.gov.uk/fe

⁹⁸ www.delni.gov.uk/fe-means-business-implementation_plan

5.2. IVET at lower secondary level

England has a nil return for IVET at lower secondary level, according to the official Government position, as lower secondary is ISCED Level 2 (in England 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. 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.

Summary of accredited programmes

Vocational GCSEs - available in eight subjects offering young people the opportunity to explore a particular vocational area as part of a balanced learning programme and equivalent to two or more academic (general) GCSEs. They are being reviewed as part of a move to a more general focus for lower secondary education in England.

Diploma programme in England – it combines elements of academic subjects and practical skills into what has been termed "applied learning," leading to a composite qualification in one of 14 areas of learning, linked to broad sectors of the economy. Diplomas are available at ISCED 2 and 3, UK Levels 1, 2 and 3, described as Foundation, Higher and Advanced Diplomas. At each level Diplomas bring together a core of sector-related learning, functional skills, additional specialist learning and a project for the Higher and Advanced levels. The qualifications require effective partnership-working to enable links to be made between the different elements and are being reviewed together with a reduction in per learner funding.

BTEC awards and certificates - provide a practical, real-world approach to learning without sacrificing any essential subject theory. They are taken alongside, or in place of, GCSEs and A Levels and alongside Diplomas in schools and colleges. They can form part of the 14-19 Diploma and Apprenticeships.

Young Apprenticeships - involve colleges and training providers or employers. Pupils are based in school following the core National Curriculum, 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.⁹⁹

Following the Wolf Review, the statutory duty on schools to provide work experience pre-16 will be withdrawn, with the focus shifting to provision post-16, aligning with the policy to maintain a broader, more general core for all learners pre-16.

The Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme for 14-16 year-olds in England provides enhanced work-related learning (one to two days per week in vocational learning) through partnerships of Local providers and businesses.¹⁰⁰ The programme has a strong emphasis on functional and employability skills and forms part of the Foundation Learning (FL).¹⁰¹ It covers education provision at Entry Level and Level 1 on the QCF in England.

⁹⁹ NB full competency based National Vocational Qualifications are not available to pre 16 learners, although in some circumstances they may study for individual units

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/qualifications/>

¹⁰¹ Until August 2009, FL was known as Foundation Learning Tier (FLT).

The **Skills for Work** (SfW) courses (Scotland, SQA) is available for pupils in third (S3) and fourth year (S4) of secondary school (14-16). A key feature of SfW is experiential learning linked to particular vocational areas. The courses are intended to provide progression pathways to FE, training and employment.

National Certificates and **National Progression Awards** are vocational group awards available across SCQF Levels 2-6 which offer a flexible progression route to student who can progress at their own pace to further training or education.

Work-based Learning Pathways in Wales combine core GCSEs in schools with more practical experience. The learner must achieve an industry recognised VQ, normally at Level 2. Some of the five WBL Pathways are directly linked to the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification and is partly financed by the ESF.

5.3. IVET at upper secondary level (mainly school-based)

GCSEs, A Levels and IGCSEs are most often referred to as general qualifications without a vocational content. The UK has 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 vocationally-orientated 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.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland upper secondary education begins at age 16. Vocational GCSEs and A Level qualifications are available to upper secondary students, as well as a mix of vocationally-related certificates and diplomas, and competency-based National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). Students at FE colleges may attend full or part-time with many who attend part-time 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, from ages 16 to 19. Upon completion of 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; or
- 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
- Sixth Form Colleges
- FE Colleges.

Collectively, FE colleges make up the largest sector of VET providers for 3 million learners within state provision for both pre-employment and in-employment training for all, including adults, from the age of 16 upwards. They offer a common curriculum of nationally recognised qualifications.

The content and assessment arrangements for VET qualifications are subject to the accreditation requirements of the regulatory body and the requirements of NOS, as appropriate, with Wales and Scotland regulated by their respective Governments. There were over 15,000 regulated qualifications on the Ofqual Register¹⁰² during 2009-10. The number of recognised awarding organisations continues to grow with 161 by the end of September 2010.¹⁰³ The existence of a qualifications market, driven by a combination of Government policy and private investment, is a distinguishing feature of the UK education system.

As a means of quality control most IVET courses supported by public funding must lead to recognised qualifications, therefore provision is described in terms of the qualification(s) to which it leads. Access to A Level and AVCE courses normally requires five GCSE grade A*-C passes or equivalent. Options for progression may be limited by the subjects taken, with mathematics and science required for progression in scientific and technical subjects. Vocational qualifications are accepted for entry to some degree courses, but progression options are more limited than from A Levels.

Summary of accredited vocational programmes

Vocationally related qualifications

- These are developed by awarding bodies as part of an approved qualifications offer.
- They relate to a specific vocational sector and involve more practical or applied learning than general qualifications.
- As with all qualifications, institutions may choose which awarding body to work with.

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)

NVQs are competence-based vocational qualifications where learners carry out practical, work-related tasks designed to help develop the skills and knowledge to do a job effectively and are assessed on practical assignments and a portfolio of evidence. They are based on NOS for each occupation, drawn up by the relevant SSC in close co-operation with employers in the sector and offered mainly at Levels 1, 2 and 3 with progression routes to FE, training or work.

In Scotland, SQA offers a range of VQs for 14-19 learners including:

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

Core Skills (Scotland)

Core Skills are: Communication; Numeracy; Problem Solving; Using Information and Communication Technology and Working with Others. They, and recognised NQs, contribute to various Group Awards such as National Certificates, National Progression Awards or Modern Apprenticeships.

¹⁰² Ofqual – the Register <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/>

¹⁰³ Ofqual – Annual Qualifications Market Report <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-03-19-Annual-Market-Report.pdf>

Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE)

The VCE is an A Level award designed for those wanting to study a broad area of work and the application of a subject. They are known as GCEs in 10 applied subjects and students study a number of units, some of which are mandatory. About two-thirds of the units are externally assessed. Progression is to HE including Foundation degrees, to Apprenticeships, or to training and/or professional qualifications.

Functional skills (FS)

FS are applied skills in English, mathematics and information and communications technology (ICT). FS were introduced September 2010 to replace Key Skills (KS) and are available at Entry, Level 1 and 2 to cater for a range of learners at any age. FS qualifications in English and maths will replace KS as a mandatory component of all Apprenticeship Frameworks from the end of September 2012.

Ofqual published the assessment criteria that enable awarding organisations to develop quality specifications and assessment materials for FS qualifications. The NI regulator CCEA has co-developed a set of standards for the FS qualifications which determines the knowledge and skills proficiency required at each level. FS pilots developed assessment flexibilities including e-assessment, on-demand assessment and being tested in a range of learning environments, e.g. prisons.

Essential Skills (ES)

In NI, the ES suite of programmes is similar to FS offer in England. ES qualifications in English and mathematics are free standing qualifications and are available at Entry, Level 1 and 2. The ICT ES qualifications are available at Levels 1 and 2. All ES qualifications are delivered free of charge to any learner regardless of age and have replaced the KS within the Apprenticeship frameworks in Northern Ireland. CCEA published the assessment criteria that enable awarding organisations to develop quality specifications and assessment materials.

Key Skills (England, Wales AND Northern Ireland) will be replaced by Functional Skills (See above)

Public funding for KS ceased in September 2010 and is only now available to continuing learners who enrolled before this.

Pre-U Course

Approved for state funding in 2007, there are 30 institutions, 24 of which are private schools offering pre-U's. Students are assessed at the end of a two-year course (similar to traditional A Levels). Students complete three main subjects (as in A Levels) and a global perspective and research component leading to an independent research report on a topic chosen by the student.

The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ)

The WBQ¹⁰⁴ is approved for delivery in Wales and recognised throughout the UK. It is currently offered by secondary schools, colleges and training providers with two elements – the Options and the Core. Both must be successfully completed for the award of the WBQ. It gives parity to academic and vocational routes and aligns with Learning Pathways 14-19 in Wales. It can be studied in English or Welsh, or a combination of the two languages, sits alongside and incorporates existing qualifications and is designed to prepare students for HE and employment.

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.wbq.org.uk/about-us>

5.4. Alternance training (inc. Apprenticeships)

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

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

Following the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act¹⁰⁵ 2009, the Specification for Apprenticeship Standards for England¹⁰⁶ (SASE) was published by BIS and the National Apprenticeship Service¹⁰⁷ (NAS) in 2011. It sets out the minimum requirements to be included in a recognised English Apprenticeship framework to which compliance will be a statutory requirement. There will be a gradual process of transition from current 'blueprint compliant' frameworks to the new 'SASE compliant' frameworks.¹⁰⁸

Apprentices in England are employed people who are receiving official, structured training, normally delivered one day per week at a vocational provider (FE College or commercial company). The programme is flexible and the employer decides how it is delivered and the content of the course.

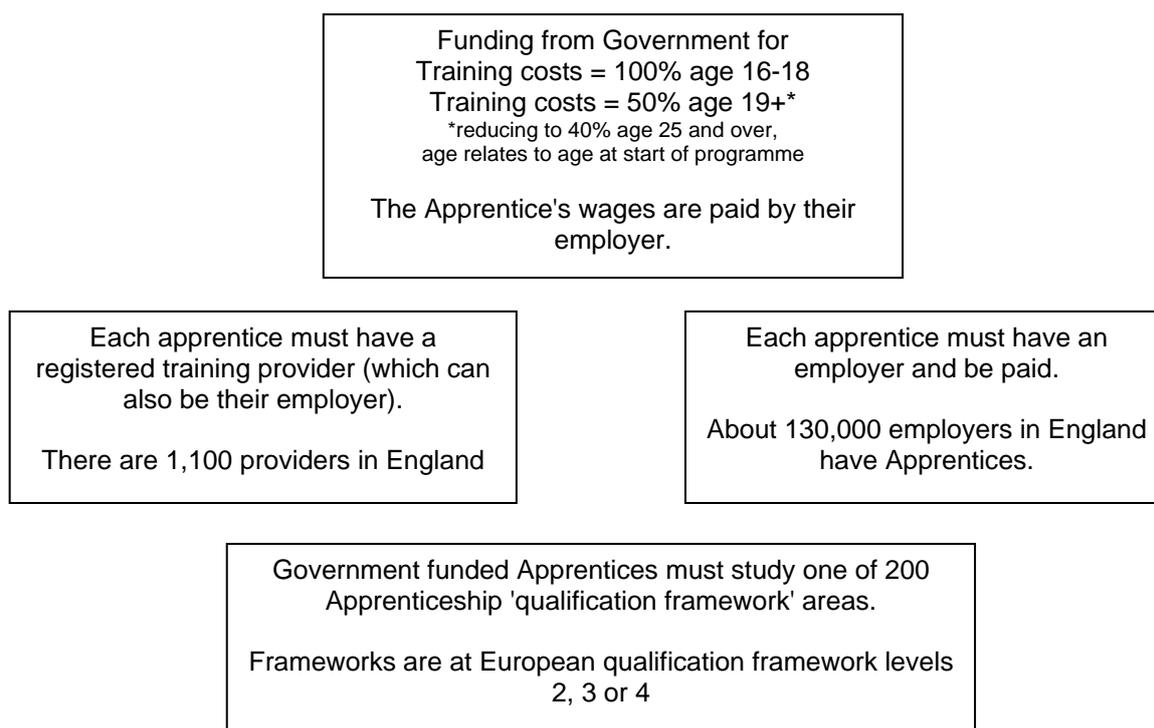
¹⁰⁵ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/22/contents

¹⁰⁶ www.apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us/~media/Documents/Publications/SASE-Specification.ashx

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.Apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us/National-Apprenticeship-Service.aspx>

¹⁰⁸ More information on the implementation of the new framework can be found at <http://www.Apprenticeships.org.uk/Partners/Frameworks/SASE.aspx>

Figure 1 - Apprenticeships in England



From National Apprenticeship Service, "Apprenticeships in England" Richard Marsh, May 2011

The Young Apprenticeship Programme¹⁰⁹ provides a route for students age 14-16 to study VQs alongside GCSEs provided in school. In order to achieve a Young Apprenticeship a learner must also complete 50 days work experience. These programmes are currently under review.

Figure 2 - Most popular Apprenticeships

Framework and starts	2008/09	2009/10
Customer Service	22,100	29,400
Business Administration	20,500	26,500
Hospitality and Catering	16,100	20,900
Children's Care Learning and Development	16,900	19,600
Health and Social Care	12,000	17,400
Retail	10,700	16,800
Hairdressing	15,900	15,800
Engineering	14,700	14,500
Construction	15,700	13,400
Active Leisure and Learning	7,800	10,800

From National Apprenticeship Service, "Apprenticeships in England" Richard Marsh, May 2011

¹⁰⁹ www.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=131102

The success rates for Apprenticeships have risen from an average of 48.6% in 2005-6 to 72.2% in 2009-2010. In 2009 England reported an average of 11 Apprentices per 1,000 employees, ranking 5th behind Switzerland (43 per 1,000) Germany (40 per 1,000), Australia (39 per 1,000) and Austria (33 per 1,000). The figure for England is set to rise to 15 per 1000 by 2011.

In Wales the Modern Skills Diploma for Adults¹¹⁰ aims to raise skills levels in business by extending it to those aged over 25 and provides structured training at Level 4 for people in or out of employment. Modern Apprenticeships¹¹¹ were introduced in NI in 1996; arrangements are broadly similar to those in England.

In Scotland training includes on and off the job training, study for a SVQ Level 3 (circa SCQF Level 6¹¹²) or above and Core Skills at a minimum level of Intermediate 1 (SCQF Level 4). Training providers must achieve the Modern Apprenticeship standards defined in the Scottish Quality Management System¹¹³ (SQMS), the quality assurance mechanism used by the Local Enterprise Companies¹¹⁴ (LECs). Training providers make a contract with LECs on agreed training provision and related funding. Funding is provided by Government as a contribution towards training costs. The enterprise network¹¹⁵ sets funding Levels that reflect the age of the individual and importance of occupational sector to Local economy. Like Wales there is no upper age limit for taking part in the Apprenticeship programmes.

Apprentices on these 16+ Modern Apprenticeships are employed and receive a wage from their employer. They are available in a number of sectors, with the training format decided by the SSC for that sector. 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.¹¹⁶ 70% of all those leaving the Modern Apprenticeship programme in Scotland had successfully completed their apprenticeship.

*Skillseekers*¹¹⁷ 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).

¹¹⁰ www.ccskills.org.uk/Research/WalesCymru/tabid/92/Default.aspx

¹¹¹ www.delni.gov.uk/index/successthroughskills/Apprenticeshipsni.htm

¹¹² Not all SVQs have been credit rated and levelled to the SCQF, though there is a rolling process.

¹¹³

[http://search1.scotland.gov.uk/Scotland?n=All&\\$rcexpanded=false&action=search&q=Scottish+Quality+Management+System+](http://search1.scotland.gov.uk/Scotland?n=All&$rcexpanded=false&action=search&q=Scottish+Quality+Management+System+)

¹¹⁴ www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/support/15419/3479

¹¹⁵ 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.

¹¹⁶ <http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/141308/ma%20breakdown%20-%20all%20scotland.pdf>

¹¹⁷ careers-scotland.org.uk/Education/Training/Skillseekers.asp

5.5. Programmes and alternative pathways for young people

Entry Level

Entry Level qualifications are designed for learners not yet ready to take Level 1 qualifications. They focus on a particular subject or area of learning and develop basic knowledge; skills and understanding to build confidence and prepare for further learning and progression and work.

Section 5.6. Vocational Education and Training at post-secondary (non tertiary) level (mainly school-based)

The UK does not have a clearly defined sector of IVET, 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 NQF are considered to be part of HE, 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 FE 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).

Section 5.7. Vocational education and training at tertiary level (mainly school-based)

Traditional academic subjects, including most university qualifications, are not referred to as vocational. Traditionally, the UK has high participation rates in HE. The latest available Eurostat data (2006) shows that for ISCED 5A Level (2009), the participation rates were lower than EU average (74.8% and 83.9%, respectively), but higher for ISCED Level 5b (2009) (21.8% and 13.4 %, respectively).

GEO	TOTAL ISCED5	ISCED5A (NUM)	ISCED 5A (%)	ISCED5B (NUM)	ISCED 5B (%)	TOTAL ISCED 6
EU 27	19505749	16370782	83.9	2617882	13.4	517085
UK	2415222	1806862	74.8	526667	21.8	81693

Table 17: students at ISCED Level 5 by programme destination (values and share of the total) and at ISCED Level 6 (values) 2009

Description: Students at ISCED Level 5 by programme destination (values and share of the total) and at ISCED Level 6

Source: Eurostat (UOE); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 13-05-2011

Additional note: Totals and percentage are Cedefop's calculation

Many adults take HE courses because of flexible learning arrangements, including part-time degrees and open learning. In NI students can study for a Higher National qualification, a Foundation Degree or even a Diploma of HE. These intermediate level HE qualifications are delivered in the six Northern Ireland FE Regional Colleges. 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.

In NI HE is open to all those who have the ability to benefit from it. To this end NI Colleges and Universities produced *APEL Good Practice Guidelines for Foundation Degrees*¹¹⁸ to encourage consistent good practice. In academic year 2009/10 total enrolments for HE courses delivered in the FE sector in NI were 11,402 (4,474 full-time students and 6,928 part-time students) representing some 18% of the total HE enrolments.

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 University¹¹⁹ (OU) however operates on a different basis and has offered degrees and other qualifications through distance learning since the 1970s.

The UK HE sector has a number of sub-degrees that reflect structures contained in the Bologna process.

Sub- Degree Qualifications

- HNDs - full-time, two-year courses or longer part-time route
- HNCs - 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 HE (one year) and Diplomas in HE (two years) are also offered and may serve as qualifications in their own right or as stepping-stones to a first degree.

Foundation Degrees (Fd)

The Fd is a vocationally-oriented qualification below first (BA/BSc) degree level, which allows for progression to a full degree. They are meant for learners with non-traditional academic backgrounds and designed in conjunction with employers. Fds do not feature as a part of Scottish provision due to the continuing success of their HNC/HND provision.

Bachelor Degrees (BA)

Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Education (BEd) and Bachelor of Science (BSc) courses usually last three years (full-time). Some last four years, involving placements in industry or periods abroad; these have the same academic standing as three-year courses. In Scotland, students may choose to achieve an Ordinary Degree¹²⁰ 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 BA¹²¹.

¹¹⁸ www.delni.gov.uk/.../he-background-to-he-sector/he-policy/he-foundation-degrees.htm

¹¹⁹ www.open.ac.uk

¹²⁰ Most students go on to complete their Honours year, but the Ordinary degree in Scotland has had a longstanding tradition.

¹²¹ This MA is not a postgraduate qualification, but sits at SCQF Level 10, the same SCQF Level as a BA or BSc. Postgraduate MAs sit at SCQF Level 11.

Post-Graduate Certificates (PGC)

Some post-graduate courses are below Masters Level and are intended to provide preparation for a specific occupation, following completion of a general degree.

Masters Degree (MA and MSC, etc.)

Post-graduate courses that last one-year full-time or two years part-time. Usually self-funded entry is dependent on results at Bachelor Level.

Doctorate (PHD)

Acceptance to undertake a PhD is dependent on results at either Masters or Bachelor Level.

Progression to Employment

The professions offer alternatives to degrees such as registration and assessment via professional institutions, Engineering, for example, is overseen by the Engineering Council¹²², 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.

Section 5.8. Language learning in IVET

Compulsory modern foreign language (MFL) study to age 16 in England was removed in 2004 resulting in a decline in its study. The Dearing Review of Languages¹²³ concluded that more flexibility in teaching processes would arrest the decline rather than reinstating MFL as mandatory. Just over one third of learners aged 14-16 in state-maintained schools study MFL.¹²⁴ In the private sector language study is compulsory up to age 16 in nine out of ten schools.

NOS for Languages have been developed with standards aligned to the Common European Languages Framework: all qualifications for adult language learners whether in IVET or CVET are aligned to these standards.

In the latest CILT (the National Centre for Languages) Language Trends Survey, 45% of maintained schools offer alternative accreditation to GCSE, including foundation certificates, Asset Languages qualifications and NVQ Levels 1 and 2.¹²⁵ In the under-19 sector debate continues over whether GCSE qualifications are fit for purpose for the development of speaking skills. In their recent report Ready to Grow¹²⁶ employers are increasingly demanding basic conversational competence of their staff.

¹²² www.engc.org.uk

¹²³ www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&...

¹²⁴ CILT Language Trends 2010

http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research_and_statistics/language_trends_surveys/secondary/2010.aspx

¹²⁵ <http://www.cilt.org.uk/home.aspx>

¹²⁶ CBI Ready to Grow <http://www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/2010-cbi-edi-ready-to-grow-business-priorities-for%20education-and-skills.pdf>

Theme 6. Continuing Vocational Education and Training

6.1. General Background

For the last decade, UK Government policy has aimed at strengthening economic competitiveness through raising the adult population's skill levels and qualifications. Attention is now focused on the quality of training that leads to vocational qualifications.¹²⁷

In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland skills are the responsibility of the DAs¹²⁸. Flexibility exists at many points in the UK education systems to help people who lack formal qualifications or training earlier in life to achieve qualifications later on, but barriers to learning are particularly strong for those socially excluded or at risk.

The Government's priority has been on public funding 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 has highlighted the need for major changes. Approximately 7.1% of English learners of school age cohort still leave school unqualified and without progressing to FE, training or a job (England, LSC, 2008). With seven to eight million adults identified as lacking in basic skills, finding ways to involve large numbers of people in learning remains a key policy issue.

A range of approaches to workplace learning

The UK Government, the CBI and the trade unions are encouraging a range of approaches to workplace learning. The Trade Union Learning Fund¹²⁹ has been set up with Government funding through the TUC to encourage an innovative approach whereby unions extend the training they give (e.g., tackling basic skills weaknesses among their members), often at a workplace. The Union Learning Representatives (ULR), who have statutory rights, support employees to take up learning and training in the workplace. In Scotland, the Scottish Government funds the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF) as part of the strategy to tackle skills issues.

The NI Government investment in through the Skills Strategy: *Success through Skills – Transforming Futures*¹³⁰ outlines the future skills profile needed to support growth; produce an innovative economy and the investment needed. The DEL *Further Education Means Business*¹³¹ has set out what the sector can provide to the learner, to employers, to Local communities and to NI. It sets the strategic aim that FE should be “at the heart of lifelong learning, in order to strengthen economic development, enhance social cohesion and advance the individual’s skills and learning.” In line with DEL's curriculum policy clear progression routes have been developed to ensure FE Colleges achieve an appropriate balanced provision.

Intermediate Level HE provision is viewed as essential. Evidence suggests that the skills gap is most acute at HE level with qualifications below Degree Level, particularly two-year, work-focused provision.

¹²⁷ BIS Skills for Sustainable Growth <http://www.bis.gov.uk/skillsforgrowth>

¹²⁸ SDS - <http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

Welsh Government at: <http://wales.gov.uk>

NI Government at: www.nidirect.gov.uk

¹²⁹ www.unionlearn.org.uk

¹³⁰ www.delni.gov.uk/.../success-through-skills-transforming-futures.htm

¹³¹ www.delni.gov.uk/femeansbusinesspolicyproposals

The expansion of Fd is integral to effective implementation of both NI Strategies with DEL committed to the development of part-time, employer demand led, Fds targeted at existing employees.

Widening participation from groups currently under-represented, in particular learners from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is through DEL's *Northern Ireland Widening Participation Strategy*¹³² supported by key stakeholders including the HEI, the FE Regional Colleges and other relevant Government Departments.

HE delivered in the FE sector such as *HE Access Courses*, provide an entry qualification to adult students and the Northern Ireland Colleges and Universities APEL scheme provides opportunities for students with few or no traditional qualifications to gain entry to Fds. FE Colleges in NI currently deliver curriculum through their main campuses and a network of some 425 Outreach Centres, important in meeting the learning needs of adults in Local communities.

6.2. Formal learning* in CVET ⁸

The majority of CVET in England up to ISCED Level 4 takes place within the FE and Skills system (the HE sector focuses increasingly but not exclusively on ISCED Levels 5a and 6) with training programmes in the following categories:

- Learner Responsive Learning¹³³, which covers vocational education and training delivered mainly in a classroom, workshop or through distance learning;
- Other employer-based training covering a broad range of training from basic skills to UK Skill Levels 2 and 3 and other higher level skills such as leadership and management;
- Skills for Life qualifications;
- The University for Industry (Ufi¹³⁴) delivers FE courses through the provider Learndirect. Learners study at a Local centre or via the internet;
- Adult Safeguarded Learning covers the delivery of a wide range of courses from personal development to older people's learning, digital inclusion, employability skills, family learning and community development. The distinctions between formal and informal learning may be less clear cut in this type of learning;
- Adult Apprenticeships (Theme 5);
- Offender Learning

In general, there is a significant crossover between IVET and CVET qualification systems and they are not designed as separate systems. For full NVQs, City and Guilds (C&G) 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.

¹³² www.delni.gov.uk/wideningparticipation

¹³³ <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk>

¹³⁴ www.ufi.com

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 and 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 the unemployed (14.7% compared to the EU average of 6.3%).

Delivery mechanisms and providers

While much IVET is Government-funded, employer funding plays an increasingly important role in workplace CVET 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. Publicly-funded FE and HE establishments are major training providers too. Private training organisations are also involved.

Patterns in employer participation in learning and training show that the proportion of employers providing training continues to increase over time: in England, for 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 training¹³⁵.

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: a considerable proportion relates to induction rather than medium- or high-term skills development.

Many workplaces offer employees the opportunity to achieve formal recognition of their level of competence through the N/SVQ work-based route designed to assess job-specific skills. Within reason, N/SVQs do not have to be completed in a specified amount of time or in a specific learning institution. 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 SSC for that occupational area of employment.

The UK Government has introduced a number of initiatives, including the *Growth and Innovation Fund* to support and enable the development of employer-based training. In November 2009 the right to request time to train became statutory for all employees (from 2011).

National Occupational Standards (NOS) for training (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 qualification 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) which identifies priority qualifications for the job roles across the sector as well as identifying gaps, for which awarding organisations might develop new qualifications.

¹³⁵ Ambition 2020, UKCES, 2010 <http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/ambition2020>

University for Industry (Ufi) / Learndirect, and Scottish University for Industry/Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

Learndirect¹³⁶ and SDS provide easily accessible Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) to potential learners. SDS provides learners with advice on learning opportunities available throughout Scotland, including information on childcare facilities. Its network of over 460 SDS branded learning centres takes learning into the community, in libraries; shopping centres and other locally based facilities. SDS is also working closely with businesses, providing advice on training needs and to identify appropriate courses.

A diverse range of provision exists within the post-compulsory education and training sector. This includes VET within enterprises, voluntary organisations, uniformed services (police and emergency services), and health and care services. Independent colleges and private language training schools are not subject to Government regulation, but can register with the British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education¹³⁷.

Social Partners - Unionlearn

Unionlearn is the TUCs learning and skills organisation providing a strategic framework and support for unions' learning and skills work. Part-funded by the Government, it is union-led with a Board comprising 15 senior TUC General Council members. Its aim is to increase workers' learning opportunities, particularly those disadvantaged in the labour market. Trained and accredited Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) help 250,000 employees per year into training.

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 Agency¹³⁸ for HE (QAA) and regulated. The QAA assures standards through its Recognition Scheme for Access to Higher Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (not in Scotland).

The Scottish Wider Access Programme¹³⁹ (SWAP) initiative works in partnership with Scotland's colleges and HE institutions within Scotland, to co-ordinate their access initiatives and develops progression pathways. Students who successfully complete SWAP programmes are guaranteed a place on an appropriate HE course (HNC/D or degree) either in a FE College or HE.

Articulation arrangements also exist for learners progressing from HNC/Ds to degrees whereby learners enrol onto the second or third year of a specified degree programme. The amount of credit offered and the level of entry to the degree programme depends on the specific demands of each course.¹⁴⁰ Five Government policies to put the learner at the centre of learning are below:

- 'Work-Life Balance' policies;
- The expansion of HE;
- 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).

¹³⁶ www.learndirectscotland.com

¹³⁷ www.the-bac.org

¹³⁸ www.qaa.ac.uk/

¹³⁹ www.scottishwideraccess.org

¹⁴⁰ A comprehensive outline of the existing HN-degree articulation routes is available at <http://www.napier.ac.uk/mapping/college.aspx>

Renewal of Curricula

In the UK N/SVQs are largely based upon NOS or statements of the outcomes to be achieved to meet the requirements for certification these are mainly developed by SSCs. Because curricula are not usually nationally prescribed (the assessment requirements for qualifications normally being independent of delivery), they tend to be developed mainly by organisations providing the education and training, e.g., by colleges, training organisations and employers at a decentralised level.

Integration of new methods and technologies in curricula

N/SVQ criteria 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 outdated too quickly. NOS for VQs are generally reviewed at three to five yearly intervals.

Curricula must be based upon NOS. VET providers must ensure that curricula are kept up-to-date and in line with industry requirements. 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.

There is a growing use of ICT and e-learning in VET and the UK scores quite highly in most European and international comparisons. The National Grid for Learning, and National Grid for Learning Scotland and National Grid for Learning Cymru (Wales), 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.

Investors in People¹⁴¹ (IiP) is a nationally recognised business standard that encourages employers to invest in training. IiP UK is an executive non-departmental public body set up in 1993. The IiP award indicates that a company or workplace has a high commitment to develop all employees, reviews training for all employees regularly, takes action to training and developing employees. Almost 8 million employees are currently benefiting from IiP equating to 32% of the UK workforce¹⁴².

A demand-led programme, Workforce Development Programme is run in Wales with 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) noted that the Welsh programme is more flexible and less qualification-driven than its English counterpart.

¹⁴¹ www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

¹⁴² <http://www.ukces.org.uk/press-release/uk-commission-for-employment-and-skills-to-champion-investorsin-people>

Foundation degree (Not Scotland)

The Foundation degree¹⁴³ (Fd) was launched in 2000 with the aims of widening participation in HE and increasing participation for economic competitiveness. The 2010 Higher Education Funding Council for England¹⁴⁴ (HEFCE) Report showed that there were 99, 475 Fd enrolments in 2009-10 (including more than 53,000 entrants).

Fds are two-year first cycle qualifications below the Level of a Bachelor's degree, but with the possibility of progression. They are predominantly delivered through partnerships of employers, FE and HE institutions, and are intended to address the shortage of intermediate level skills and stimulate lifelong learning. Traditional entry qualifications are not always required, making Fds attractive to a range of people who would not normally consider taking up HE courses.

In NI Fds these are developed and delivered by consortia involving one of the Northern Ireland Universities or the Open University, a Further Education Regional College and employers / employer bodies (such as the SSC). The university is the body with degree-awarding powers and has responsibility for ensuring standards. The employers / employer bodies ensure the curriculum will give students the skills employers need, while FE Colleges are well-equipped to bring close-to-home delivery to a diverse student group.

A particular focus in NI has been the development of 'employer demand-led' Fds. They are two year part-time courses delivered primarily through on-line learning and through a consortia arrangement involving the University of Ulster, all the FE Regional Colleges and major employers. The aim is to develop and support Foundation Degrees to meet the specific higher level skills needs of a sector or group of employers by bringing together and supporting consortia partnerships between the colleges, SSC, Universities and employers in the Fd development process. The qualification is targeted at existing employees and is intended to raise the level of skills in the workplace.

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'¹⁴⁵ 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 Connections¹⁴⁶, 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.

In NI the majority of CVET at intermediate level takes place in the Further Education Regional Colleges with the HE sector focusing primarily on honours Degree Level programmes. The quality of this provision is assured by the QAA through their Integrated Quality Enhancement Review (IQER) methodology. IQER is a peer review process and is divided into two complementary stages: Developmental engagement and Summative review. The purpose of IQER NI is to safeguard the public interest in the academic standards and quality of HE delivered in colleges. It provides objective and independent information about the way in which colleges operate focusing on three core themes: academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information.

¹⁴³ www.direct.gov.uk/en/.../DG_10039022

¹⁴⁴ www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2010/10_21/

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2001/07/9471/File-1>

¹⁴⁶ www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/.../lccs_005970.hcsp

Delivery Mechanisms and Providers

In NI employers are being encouraged to participate in higher level learning and training in a number of ways. These include: Employer Based Training & Accreditation¹⁴⁷ is a means by which employers can have their in-company training recognised for HE credits and / or awards. EBTA identifies the level, credit value and form of accreditation that best fits the training and works to find employers a suitable university partner who will undertake the accreditation. Delivery of the employer demand led qualifications is on a part-time basis using a blended learning methodology i.e. a combination of, learning in the workplace, “virtual” learning and classroom based face to face learning.

Section 6.3. Non-formal learning* in CVET

General background (Administrative structure and financing)

Institutional and funding mechanisms for non-formal learning are similar to those of formal CVET.

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

Learner Access and Engagement in Northern Ireland

As the main providers of adult education throughout Northern Ireland, Colleges continue to encourage access to FE by delivering a wide and varied curriculum through their main campuses and network of community outreach centres.

In recognition of the valuable role the Voluntary and Community Sector can play, NIs DEL developed the Learner Access and Engagement (LAE) Pilot Programme¹⁴⁸ which allows FE Colleges to contract with third party organisations for the provision of learner support. LAE is intended to contribute to increasing the number of marginalised and disadvantaged learners progressing to Level 2 provision or employment, by facilitating learning in the community for the “hardest-to-reach” groups and providing a framework for the delivery of additional support. Currently 984 learners have enrolled through the programme in 08/09 and 2045 in 09/10; 45% of the total participants (in 08/09) were from the most deprived 20% regions, highlighting that the programme is effective at recruiting the hardest to reach. This three year pilot is due to conclude in November 2011.

Encouragement of community learning 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 allow the DAs to introduce their distinct strategy.

¹⁴⁷ www.nwua.ac.uk/HLSP/Info/Docs/EBTA.pdf

¹⁴⁸ www.delni.gov.uk/.../learner-access-and-engagement-pilot-programme.htm

In NI the DE encourages Colleges to deliver a high proportion of their provision from the regulated qualifications frameworks, while ensuring that the needs of learners can be met where it is genuinely not appropriate. Thereby 5% of non-accredited provision is a target for achievement by 2011; there are no restrictions on the type of courses Colleges can deliver under this element of their provision.

Prior Learning (PL) recognition is incorporated into the QCF for England, Wales and Northern Ireland whilst Scotland has adopted '*Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Informal Learning*'¹⁴⁹ as a part of the arrangements for the SQCF and QCF.

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Partnership have had a national RPL Network set up for several years. The partnership also led a Government funded project on recognising prior qualifications and learning for migrant workers and refugee workers. The SCQF Partnership also published a RPL Toolkit in 2010.¹⁵⁰ Most 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 PL 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 PL.

There is less opportunity for learners to have their existing skills recognised outside the framework of a formal qualification partly because public policy and the desire for accountability, supported by the funding regime, have put pressure on colleges to align courses to nationally accredited qualifications. Open College Networks¹⁵¹ have experience in identifying and recognising learners' existing skills the English RARPA¹⁵² scheme offers a means of accrediting skills outside the qualification framework (see below).

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

RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement in Non-Accredited learning) in England

The RARPA project addresses two issues in relation to non-accredited learning in the learning and skills sector: how learner achievement can be recognised in the absence of a target qualification, and the need to improve quality, especially in recognising and recording learner progress and achievement.

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;
- recognition and recording of progress and achievement during programme; and

¹⁴⁹ www.sssc.uk.com/component/option,com_docman/.../task,doc_download/

¹⁵⁰ http://www.tru.ca/_shared/assets/plirc-pp-8-116834.ppt#273,20 ,Links to EU & International development

¹⁵¹ www.nocn.org.uk/

¹⁵² www.niacedc.org.uk

- end of programme learner self-assessment; tutor summative assessment; review of overall progress and achievement in relation to objectives.

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 Learning¹⁵³ (PCDL - formerly known as ACL) and Entry to Employment¹⁵⁴ (E2E).

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, compared to the EU average of 31.3%. Although the data shown was not specifically disaggregated, employees were more likely to receive job-related training than the self-employed, the unemployed or the economically inactive. For both the EU and UK average the rates of training for the employed are almost twice as high as for the unemployed.

TABLE 18 A: PARTICIPATION RATE IN NON FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2007				
ISCED97/ GEO	0-2	3-4	5-6	TOTAL
EU 27	15.6	31.4	51.5	31.3
UK	28.1	42.5	50.7	40.3

Table 18A: Participation rate in non formal education and training by highest level of education attained (%), 2007

Description: The indicator represents the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in non formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by highest level of education attained

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 24-05-2011; Last update: 30-03-2011

Eurostat original label: trng_aes_102-Participation rate in education and training by highest level of education attained

TABLE 18B: PARTICIPATION RATE IN NON FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY LABOUR STATUS (%), 2007				
WSTATUS / GEO	EMPLOYMENT	INACTIVE POPULATION	TOTAL	UNEMPLOYMENT
EU 27	38.8	12.4	31.3	19.5
UK	47.4	21.2	40.3	23.8

Table 18B : Participation rate in non formal education and training by labour status (%), 2007

Description: The indicator represents the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by labour status. Specific rates are calculated by labour status.

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 24-05-2011; Last update: 13-04-2011

Eurostat original label: trng_aes_103-Participation rate in education and training by labour status

¹⁵³ archive.niace.org.uk/Research/PCDL/default.htm

¹⁵⁴ www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/.../DG_066260

6.4. Language learning in CVET

There are some common themes and similarities between language learning in IVET and CVET. All accredited language qualifications for adults are linked to the UK Occupational Language Standards referred to in Theme 5.

In its 2006 Language Trends survey¹⁵⁵ CILT noted a decline in language provision in FE linked to low funding for language programmes. "Students currently training to be hotel managers, transport workers, beauty therapists or mechanics are unlikely to have the opportunity to develop the kind of language skills that would be useful to them in these professions."¹⁵⁶

European mobility programmes (e.g., Leonardo in Theme 2) demonstrate good practice in embedding language learning within vocational learning in the FE sector. Little work appears to be done on developing languages (other than English) through vocational education, and CILT¹⁵⁷ is seeking to develop a partnership with Germany, Poland and Spain to address this need by developing on-line resources supporting acquisition of vocational language skills and intercultural understanding.

6.5. Training programmes to help job-seekers and people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market

There is no UK national definition for 'vulnerable groups'. Broadly speaking, vulnerable groups are defined as those who are likely to have additional needs and who experience poorer outcomes if these needs are not met. These include children in care and care leavers; children with learning difficulties and disabilities, 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.

The training programmes are usually provided through partnerships of training providers from across the public, private and third sectors. All programmes are based on the principle that current technical and employability skills are a pre-requisite to finding employment and are therefore open to applicants from day one of their eligibility.

In Northern Ireland *Steps to Work*¹⁵⁸ is the main adult return to work programme. Qualifications provided within the 26 week, element and the Essential Skills Training 26 week element which provides those with essential skills needs the opportunity to achieve a qualification in literacy and/or numeracy at Entry Level 1, 2 or 3, Level 1 or Level 2, aim to deliver Level 2 or 3 Vocationally Related Qualifications or for those with part NVQ to complete their qualification.

¹⁵⁵ Ambition 2020, UKCES, 2010 <http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/ambition2020>

¹⁵⁶ Language Trends in FE 2006 <http://data.cilt.org.uk/research/languagetrends/2006/fe.htm>

¹⁵⁷ More detail is available at <http://data.cilt.org.uk/index.htm>

¹⁵⁸ www.delni.gov.uk/stepstowork

Theme 7. Training VET teachers and trainers

7.1. Priorities in training VET teachers and trainers

As discussed in Themes 5 and 6, much VET is undertaken in the FE sector in the UK although it is also available in schools and some HE institutions. Since 2007 the FE sector has included colleges, work-based learning (WBL) and adult and community learning (ACL) providers. Those teaching in FE colleges are commonly referred to as lecturers whilst those teaching in WBL are commonly known as trainers. Both are now required by the Government to register with the Institute for Learning (IfL) within three years of beginning teachings and following the Wolf review, suitably qualified FE lecturers will in future be allowed to teach in schools.

The teaching and lecturing qualifications¹⁵⁹ introduced in 2007 for FE, CETOLs, DETOLs and PETOLs, have been reviewed and updated qualifications, more flexible and offering more choice, will be introduced from 2011. They will include a smaller proportion of mandatory and a larger proportion of optional elements. They will recognise teacher-related roles, including engaging employers, providing career information and internally assuring the quality of assessment. The teaching qualifications will focus on the use of technology for teaching and learning and on developing learners' wider skills (e.g., for employability and enterprise).

The Scottish Further Education Unit¹⁶⁰ supports key developments and innovations in teaching and learning in the college sector in Scotland. In England the Quality Improvement Agency¹⁶¹ (QIA) provides a base for developing and disseminating best practice and innovation to the LSCs, or equivalents, and to the FE sector creating a research culture that meets practitioners' needs.

Following a rigorous and demanding regime of quality assurance and regulation in the last decade, high-performing FE and HE institutions now have a 'lighter touch' inspection regime. Ofsted¹⁶², the school and college inspection body for England, now concentrates on external monitoring and support of institutions with performance problems.

In England, three National Skills Academies¹⁶³ (NSAs) were launched in 2006. Led by employers, but with government support, they aim to encourage excellence in vocational education at national level, operating as world class centres of training excellence for their sectors. By the end of March 2011 there were 629 NSAs across England¹⁶⁴.

Following findings from the 2006 Leitch Report on Skills¹⁶⁵ which recommended "an integrated employment and skills service to help people meet the challenges of the modern labour market", a review was commissioned from UKCES in 2009 to assess progress towards this recommendation. Since then, there has been a move away from nationally- driven approaches to local solutions.

¹⁵⁹ www.prospects.ac.uk/further_education_lecturer_entry_requirements.htm

¹⁶⁰ 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.

¹⁶¹ www.niace.org.uk/.../quality-improvement-agency-qia-skills-for-life-improvement-p

¹⁶² www.ofsted.gov.uk

¹⁶³ www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2011/apr/07/academy-schools-treble>

¹⁶⁵ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/leitch>

With greater freedom and flexibility for providers, and an emphasis on empowering customers and devolving accountability, providers and agencies are focused on delivering results, particularly in terms of productivity and job creation.

The final report published in 2011¹⁶⁶ identifies four areas for improvement:

- the coherence of information and the awareness of both individuals and employers on improving outcomes and participation rates in provision
- collaboration through fair and inclusive partnership arrangements that align the goals and resources of Local employment and skills systems
- the involvement of individuals and employers directly in the design and delivery of provision to allow services to be tailored more effectively
- a greater focus on progression and advancement pathways

New teaching qualifications for teaching disabled learners were developed in 2010 and FE teaching qualifications now develop understanding and skills in this area. All of these allow for some specialism in working with learners with a particular disability. Schools and colleges decide what programmes to offer and by what mode (e.g., full or part-time), take responsibility for the decisions on delivery of the curriculum, programmes of study and pedagogy and undertake much of the assessment.

7.2. Teachers and trainers in IVET

In common with many aspects of IVET and CVET, there is considerable overlap in training arrangements for teachers and lecturers in both systems. The IfL is the independent professional body for teachers and trainers in FE and the skills sector, and there will be a new Government executive agency in place from 1 November 2011, the Teaching Agency, overseeing teacher development and supply in schools in England.

Roles in VET teaching are as follows:

- Full teacher/trainer;
- Associate teacher/trainer.

The following bodies regulate teacher and trainer training arrangements, including setting the curricula, assessing quality and monitoring training relevance:

- The Learning and Skills Improvement Service¹⁶⁷ (LSIS) has taken over from Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) as the sector-led body responsible for professional standards and teaching qualifications for the FE sector;
- Ofsted inspects the quality of teacher education;
- IfL is responsible for:
 - registering teachers and trainers in FE and skills
 - keeping an overview of teachers' continuing professional development (CPD)
 - conferring the professional status of Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) and Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) through the Professional Formation process.

¹⁶⁶ Review of Employment and Skills 2011, UKCES

¹⁶⁷ www.lsis.org.uk/

Teaching qualifications are offered by

- awarding organisations accredited by Ofqual
- HE institutions validating their own qualifications

Training also takes place in-house, in colleges for FE provision, but also in universities and colleges for HE provision. Generally, programmes are generic for both teaching roles and all FE contexts, but there is a separate qualification for the Associate teaching role. Some programmes may be targeted at teachers and trainers in a particular context but this is locally determined by the provider.

Requirements for trainers are different in the maintained sector and FE or HE sector. Current requirements for FE are given in more detail on the IfL website¹⁶⁸. For teachers in maintained education, requirements will be on the new Teaching Agency website from 1 November 2011.

In order to teach in the FE Sector in Northern Ireland DEL stipulate that all new entrant Lecturers must have at least a Level 5 qualification in their chosen subject area and a teaching qualification, which can be obtained by undertaking in-service training. In November 2009, DEL introduced a revised postgraduate teacher education qualification for the FE Sector, to meet the needs of the new 14-19 agenda. The new, enhanced qualification, known as the Post Graduate Certificate in Education¹⁶⁹ (PGCEFE), is a mandatory requirement for all new-entrant, permanent, full-time and associate FE lecturers who are not qualified teachers. The qualification is mapped to the professional standards for teachers and replaces the Postgraduate Certificate of Further and HE (PGCFHE).

7.3. Types of teachers and trainers in CVET

There are also numerous private training providers contracted by employers and LAs to deliver specified training programmes (e.g., 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.

See previous section for more information.

¹⁶⁸ <http://www.ifl.ac.uk/>

¹⁶⁹ www.tda.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/teacher.../pgce.aspx

Theme 8. Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)

8.1. Systems and mechanisms for the anticipation of skill needs in sectors, occupations and at education level

The UK aims at being in the top eight countries in the world for skills, jobs and productivity by 2020. Since 2002, with the introduction of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) and creation of UKCES in 2008, the UK government has aimed to enhance employers' understanding of their future labour market and skills requirements leading to improved employability and skills demand and supply. 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 SSCs and awarding bodies respectively review the labour market 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 Survey¹⁷⁰ (LFS) the Annual Employment Survey¹⁷¹ (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 23¹⁷² SSCs are led by UKCES and are required by the Government to develop Sector Qualifications Strategies¹⁷³ (SQS) and a Sector Skills Agreement¹⁷⁴ (SSA) between employers and providers of learning and training in their sector. The SSA is now recognised as the mechanism through which employer skills needs in the UK are identified and met.

Target groups include those likely to be represented among the low skilled, including NEETs, immigrants, members of some ethnic minorities and 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;
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.

¹⁷⁰ data.gov.uk/.../labour_force_survey_statistics_quarterly_supplement

¹⁷¹ www.forfas.ie/publication/search.jsp?ft=/publications

¹⁷² 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.

¹⁷³ [www.ukces.org.uk/.../qualifications/sector-qualifications-strategies-\(sqs\)/](http://www.ukces.org.uk/.../qualifications/sector-qualifications-strategies-(sqs)/)

¹⁷⁴ www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforce_strategy/S_S_A/SSA.aspx

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

The UK government has abolished Regional Development Agencies and is introducing the concept of Local Enterprise Partnerships¹⁷⁵ to ensure that national policy can be harnessed effectively at local level.

The National Strategic Skills Audit 2010¹⁷⁶, summarises the global and national context against which the UK is anticipating future skills needs:

"It is ultimately the collective behaviour of millions of people in England and throughout the world that determine the volume and composition of the goods and services that become available, and the skills required to make/deliver them. As consumers become more sophisticated and as their disposable incomes rise, they are moving towards more high value added, higher quality, and more personalised goods/services. The income elasticity of demand, changing tastes and preferences, the shaping of consumer wants by large global players, all are likely to generate more 'differentiated' patterns of consumption with low income communities and consumers 'relegated' to more standard, low value added goods/services. Fragmentation, segmentation and diversity may well become increasing features of markets, as individualisation of lifestyle demands increases choice and the development of 'niche' products/services. Moreover, an increasing number of services have a strong 'relational' content where customer care, personal attention and face-to-face interaction are important to success. As the global economy grows, integrates and specialises, opportunities will develop in other parts of the world. The demand for environmentally benign goods may well continue to grow (by virtue of regulation as well as customer demand). It is also important to recognise Government(s) in England and overseas, as important customers in their own right."

The UK Employment and Skills Almanac¹⁷⁷ uses a framework to organise and collate a detailed and comprehensive labour market intelligence (LMI) evidence base. Data in the Almanac¹⁷⁸ are structured around four organising themes: productivity, employment, skills and reduced inequality.

In Scotland, the Employability, Skills and Lifelong Learning Analytical Services Unit of the Scottish Government manage a programme of research in support of policy development in FE and HE, vocational education, training and lifelong learning. This currently includes a regular survey to provide evidence about skill shortages, skill gaps and training, based on information from Scottish workplaces. For the corresponding agencies in Wales and Northern Ireland, see Section 3.1.

In Northern Ireland the development of each FE Colleges curriculum through an ongoing process of improvement is particularly important for the education of 16-19 year olds who enrol with FE.

The educational offer now includes the Essential Skills. The curriculum is moving towards higher proportions of courses that are accredited and are in NI's priority skills areas.

¹⁷⁵ www.regen.net/go/leps

¹⁷⁶ www.ukces.org.uk/ourwork/nssa

¹⁷⁷ www.ukces.org.uk/assets/.../employment-and-skills-almanac-q-and-a.pdf

¹⁷⁸ For more information please see <https://almanca.ukces.org.uk>

Through the Annual College Development Planning¹⁷⁹ process NI have incorporated DELs Public Service Agreement¹⁸⁰ (PSA) targets to enable Colleges to achieve an economically focussed curriculum in line with Departmental priorities.

High level strategic NI Executive PSA and other performance targets continue to focus on:

- increasing the number of people who achieve an ES qualification;
- increasing the number of people qualified to Level 2 and above; and
- increasing the college provision in priority skills and STEM subject areas, taking account of the recent review of priority skills.

PSA also ensure that 95% of all funded provision leads to qualifications that are on the regulated qualifications frameworks. The enrolment and FLU targets which have been set through the College Development Planning (CDP) process will constitute the FE sector's contribution to meeting DEL's PSA targets.

Many PSA targets, particularly those focused on FE enrolments, came to an end in March 2011 and it is likely future PSA targets will be higher level in nature and will not include specific FE targets, although FE colleges, together with other education and training providers, will continue to contribute to the delivery of these higher level PSA targets. The Department will continue to set, and monitor the delivery of FE curriculum targets with colleges through the annual CDP and budget setting processes. As before, and to ensure that colleges deliver against the Department's strategic priorities for the FE sector, mainstream FE targets will continue to focus on the proportion of provision:

At Levels 2 and 3

- in priority skills areas
- on the regulated qualifications frameworks
- that are vocational in nature (from the coming academic year, primarily the QCF for vocational qualifications)

The following key sectors were identified as of current/ potential strategic importance for NI in a recent report:

- Business services (including ICT)
- Financial services
- Retail
- Food and drink/ agri food
- Advanced engineering
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Advanced materials

¹⁷⁹ www.etini.gov.uk/report-of-a-survey-of-college-development-planning-processes-and-provision-for-basic-skills-in-colleges-of-further-and-higher

¹⁸⁰ www.delni.gov.uk/statistical-factsheet-es-psa-target-march-2011.pdf

The report also identified three emerging sectors: namely –

- Renewable
- Health and Life Sciences
- Creative and Digital Media

8.2. Practices to match VET provision (skills) with skill 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 or similar qualifications are offered in both IVET and CVET 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 has resulted in refining qualifications frameworks, reflecting concerns that existing frameworks were incoherent, with a large number of qualifications and awarding bodies¹⁸¹ and limited opportunities to accumulate credit or to develop flexible progression routes. It aims to make the qualifications landscape more understandable to employers and learners while meeting the needs of both and to provide clear and accessible routes to employability and learning progression. Development with the QCF and ECVET are covered in Theme 2. The roles of OFQUAL and the market of qualifications providers are described in Theme 4.

SSCs have a major role in defining learning outcomes in terms of employability.

The Confederation of British Industry¹⁸² (CBI) conducted a survey in February 2011, amongst over 500 businesses of all sizes and sectors across the UK, offering evidence of the employer perspective on skills and training needs. *Building for Growth*¹⁸³ found that in order to build a responsive skills system, two-thirds of employers believed that Apprenticeships should be the priority for government funding. There is still a disconnect in the employers' approach to accrediting skills development through recognised qualifications; only one-third of employer training reported on in the survey led to Government-recognised qualifications, and almost 90% of employers felt that externally-provided training must become more responsive to business needs.

¹⁸¹ In England there are over 130 awarding bodies, both commercial and charitable in status.

¹⁸² www.cbi.org.uk

¹⁸³ CBI, Building for Growth : business priorities for education and skills, education and skills survey 2011 CBI / EDI <http://www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/20110509-building-for-growth.pdf>

Theme 9. Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment

9.1. Strategy and provision

The overall aim of Government policy is to ensure that young people and adults have access to high quality, professional information, advice and guidance (IAG) that is backed up by appropriate Labour Market Intelligence. ICT is considered to be an effective medium for this, provided that ways can be found to provide equal access to disadvantaged and excluded groups.

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

As with other areas of education and training in England, guidance for lifelong learning and careers is developed within two distinct Government departments: the DfE for young people up to the age of 19 and the BIS for adults of 19 plus. UK Government funding to support provision across both age groups is predicated on a model of partnership with a wide range of public, private and third sector providers.

Funding is used to lead a market-driven approach, where different types of organisations can bid to run parts of the service. Coherence is attempted through the contracting process, with each region having a prime contractor, who may in turn sub-contract parts of the provision to smaller organisations. Evaluation of effectiveness is increasingly focused on outcomes, particularly securing sustainable employment. Practitioners within the sector are also keen to emphasise the need to consider the value of impartial IAG in helping users make informed choices. Service users also need support to develop the skills to become intelligent users of the service and ensure that the decisions they make lead not only to immediate, but also to progressive and sustainable career choices.

The pattern of provision across both age groups retains some of the features of previous provision, but is underpinned by some distinctive principles of the new Government. The Education Bill 2010/11¹⁸⁴ places a requirement on individual schools to provide access to impartial IAG from 2012, a duty which previously resided with LAs and was most often provided through the Connexions Service. The replacement of the universal service offered by Connexions reflects the current Government policy¹⁸⁵ of offering more autonomy to schools to decide how to provide services to young people. The Connexions services, although credited with some success in reducing the number of those NEET, were deemed not sufficiently responsive to the needs of mainstream young people.

This move is prompting debate around the need to ensure that advice purchased through individuals or groups of schools accurately reflects all the opportunities open to learners. The current funding regime incentivises individual schools to keep as many of their learners as possible within their own provision.

¹⁸⁴ www.education.gov.uk/a0073748/education-bill

¹⁸⁵ www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/index.htm

In contrast to the direct funding of IAG for schools, funding for adult IAG is based on a co-investment model, ultimately with contributions from an individual, a potential employer and the state. The function here of IAG is an intervention to help maintain or regain economic independence.

In 2008 the Skills Commission conducted an inquiry into the provision of IAG (*Inspiration and Aspiration: Realising our Potential in the 21st Century*¹⁸⁶), and identified a number of areas of concern. Opportunities for improvement included:

- To make more of the wealth of information accessible through the internet;
- To make more use of social media to foster the growth of online communities that support personal development, and change attitudes toward IAG, careers and learning;
- To reduce the cost of delivering IAG via intermediaries;
- To move away from the outmoded 'matching model' of careers advice, and to adopt an approach more appropriate to the 21st Century labour market and career patterns.
- To increase the number of individuals who, on reaching the age of transition between services for young people and for adults, actually approach the service for adults and continue receiving the IAG support that they need.

The same report also recorded a view that careers advisers across the country were too commonly under-qualified, or held qualifications that were inadequate in different ways, or lacked current knowledge of significant sectors of the job market.

In addition, the Leitch *Review of Skills*¹⁸⁷ found that although the skills base of the UK was improving, significant challenges needed to be met in order to ensure that the UK has world class skills by 2020.

Partially in response to these two reports, BIS introduced the Next Step service in 2010 to unify existing careers advice services and to ensure that all adults had access to high-quality careers IAG to support their progression. Next Step is an integrated careers service for adults, delivering advice face to face in the community, over the telephone and online and is underpinned by rigorous quality standards and a professional ethic.

Guidance and counselling can also be provided in the workplace by TUs via a new IAG model for ULRs, or through *LearnDirect* and SDS who act as brokers between learners and learning providers. SDS was created in 2008 from a merger of Careers Scotland with the Scottish University for Industry (*learnDirect Scotland*) and the skills and learning functions of Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise¹⁸⁸.

¹⁸⁶ www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv11451

¹⁸⁷ www.ukces.org.uk/leitch-review-prosperity-for-all-in-the-global-economy-world-class-skills

¹⁸⁸ www.hie.co.uk/

In Wales an all-age service has been in existence since April 2001, delivering careers IAG in schools and colleges, in High Street careers centres, over a freephone advice service and, since 2004, over the Web. A review of the Service *'Future Ambitions: developing careers services in Wales'*¹⁸⁹, published in September 2010 forms the basis of a medium term strategy to modernise careers IAG services through a more overtly differentiated service offer and through closer liaison between the publicly funded agencies delivering careers services in all its forms.

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

9.2. Target groups and modes of delivery

The overall aim of UK Government policy is to ensure that all groups of young people and adults have access to high quality, professional IAG that is backed up by appropriate Labour Market Intelligence.

In England, schools currently have statutory obligations to provide a planned programme of career education within the national curriculum in Years 7 to 11 (age 11 to 16), co-operate with careers services and provide up-to-date reference materials.

Through the Education Bill 2010, steps are being taken to rationalise the statutory framework for careers legislation, reduce bureaucracy for schools and focus them on the most fundamental aspect of careers IAG which is securing access for pupils to information on the fullest range of academic and vocational options. Schools will still be expected to provide the range of activities encompassed within the term 'careers education' but it is not considered necessary to legislate for this.

The Education Bill will place schools under a duty from September 2012 to secure independent careers IAG for their pupils from age 13. They will be free to engage as appropriate in partnership with external, expert providers, based on the needs of their pupils. This provision will be part of a National Careers Service¹⁹⁰, which will also take in the current "Next Steps" service for adults and may be extended to cover all up to the age of 18, in schools and colleges.

The evidence of success will be demonstrated both through pupil achievement and, the data on progression provided by the destinations measures the Government plans to publish. If the evidence shows pupils are achieving and progressing, it will be assumed that whatever the school is doing to support choice is working.

The Next Step¹⁹¹ service aims to help adults get the advice they need for future skills, careers, work and life choices and provides services for all adults (19+ & 18 year-olds on active benefits). However, it provides more intensive face-to-face support for those within its priority groups, such as the long-term unemployed and those with disabilities. In creating the Next Step service, BIS enhanced and brought together the three existing channels of careers advice (online, face-to-face and phone) into a single, integrated service, which allows people to move between the three and get

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<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/researchandevaluation/evaluation/futureambitions/?lang=en>

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2010/101116dcs/?lang=en>

¹⁹⁰ www.bis.gov.uk/.../john-hayes-national-careers-service-for-england

¹⁹¹ nextstep.direct.gov.uk

the best advice through the optimal channel. The Channels are linked by a shared quality standard as well as a shared customer relationship management system.

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, *Learning for Life and Work*¹⁹² is a statutory part of the revised curriculum and 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 Deal¹⁹³, 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.

IAG for different target groups is 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); Jobcentre Plus;
- Skills Development 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 FE colleges and universities have advice centres and careers programmes available for their students.

In Scotland SDS provides an all-age, universal Career Information, Advice and Guidance service (CIAG). SDS' services are available to young people still at school, college and young unemployed people; adults seeking work; those under threat of redundancy and those in work seeking to advance their careers. A key element of SDS's service is targeted support for:

- School pupils at risk of not making a successful transition from school to the next stage in their learning or work journey;
 - 16-19 year olds who have not yet secured or sustained post school work, learning or training opportunities i.e. the More Choices, More Chances group;
 - Adults seeking work and those under threat of redundancy.

SDS's service is delivered through partners such as schools, colleges and Jobcentre Plus who play an important role in the delivery of SDS's CIAG services. The Jobcentre Plus web service, *My World of Work*, (August 2011) will provide a range of Career IAG resources that enable users to plan and build their own careers using

¹⁹² www.nicurriculum.org.uk/...learning/learning_for_life_and_work/

¹⁹³ www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Jobseekers/.../index.htm

interactive technology, so that individuals can access on-line CIAG tools and resources at a time and place convenient to them.

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

This ranges from teachers in schools, most of who will specialise and undergo in-service training; trained careers advisers at school, college or HE, Jobcentre Plus personnel and 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 are available which can be taken as part of CPD¹⁹⁴. 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, advisers providing careers guidance and more targeted support to young people 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. Advisers who deliver in-depth careers guidance are required to hold a relevant careers guidance qualification.

The main professional bodies for careers are working together for the first time to create a unified force for professionalism, known as the Careers Profession Alliance¹⁹⁵ (CPA). The CPA is committed to developing a clear framework for the professional development for careers advisors as well as creating a register of careers professionals of a suitable professional standard, and wishes to achieve chartered status for careers professionals over the next three years. The work being done by the CPA, informed by the recommendations of the Careers Profession Taskforce¹⁹⁶, is to deliver an independent and impartial profession. Following a recent review, current qualifications developed from the NOS for careers professionals at UK Level 4 (ISCED Level 5) will be further developed to include qualifications at post graduate level.

The CPA is working with the professional bodies to establish common professional standards, so that everyone signs up to the same code of ethics as well as to the same standards of practice. Those common standards need to be supported by continuing professional development, and organisations in the National Careers Service will be required to support their staff in meeting these standards. The CPA

¹⁹⁴ 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?Pageld=1172&sm=1172>

¹⁹⁵ www.education.gov.uk/publications/.../CPTF%20-%20External%20Report.pdf

¹⁹⁶ education.gov.uk/.../careers-profession-task-force-report-towards-a-strong-careers-profession

will support this process by putting a range of new resources including resources online, for careers advisers to use as an integral part of their CPD.

The current qualification requirement for careers advisers in Scotland is the Postgraduate Diploma Qualification in Career Guidance and Development (QCGD). Careers Advisers recruited to SDS since 2008 have been sponsored to undertake a taught MSc in Career Guidance and Development, which consists of two 'top-up' modules in Advanced Professional Practice and Communities, Networks and Partnerships as well as completing an SDS Training Plan.

Traditionally all Careers Advisers recruited to SDS have achieved both an initial guidance qualification at post-graduate diploma or certificate level, plus a 'part 2' work based qualification

Career advisers in the Careers Service Northern Ireland¹⁹⁷ 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.

¹⁹⁷ www.delni.gov.uk/2222p_del_careers_service.pdf

Theme 10. Financing - investment in human resources

10.1. VET financing policy

During much of the 2000s the UK continued to enjoy robust economic growth bolstered by strong household expenditure and a surge in Government spending, both on public services and capital investment. At the same time, the UK economy benefited from an increase in trade which supported an increase in the standards of living relative to other OECD countries.

In 2010 BIS produced *Plan for Growth and Skills for Sustainable Growth* setting out the UK Government's plan to tie the educational and skills sectors in England into closer alignment with the needs of employers and society. In conjunction with this the Secretary of State (SoS) for BIS and the SoS for Education sent working 'Remit' letters to the Skills Funding Agency¹⁹⁸ (SFA) and the Young People's Learning Agency¹⁹⁹ (YPLA) respectfully. The Remit letters set clear objectives:

For the YPLA to:

- Fund education and training opportunities for all young people aged 16-19 (or up to 25 for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are subject to a learning difficulty assessment); and
- Funding and supporting the expanding Academies and Free Schools with robust financial systems, monitoring and accountability arrangements
- Simplify the 16-19 funding formula
- Deliver efficiency savings
- Transit the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to new funding systems

There is also the joint requirement to work with the SFA in streamlining funding arrangements with the FE sector, a single point of contact for ease of auditing.

For the SFA it was to:

- Support progression and strengthen the supply of technician level skills, particularly through Level 3 Apprenticeships; prioritising the vocational qualifications that are understood and valued by employers and working with UKCES and SSCs on greater employer engagement.
- Reduce the number of 18-24 year olds who are NEETS by funding wider routes into FE and HE.
- Secure training opportunities for the unemployed
- Provide funding for independent careers IAG
- Develop a programme of Lifelong Learning Accounts
- Implement sector-based joint investment proposals for a new growth and innovation fund

These are the key driving forces in VET funding in England and show the major thrust for governance and funding arrangements to "shift profoundly the balance of responsibility for skills development between the state, businesses and individuals".²⁰⁰ Support for learners in low income households has been reformed and the EMA is now closed in England (although it will continue in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) in favour of a more restricted allowance for learners from the poorest families.

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.lsis.org.uk/Services/Policy/.../LSISPolicyUpdate2011No20.pdf>

¹⁹⁹ www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/hc1012/hc14/1409/1409.pdf

²⁰⁰ BIS November 2010 - Skills for Sustainable Growth <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/s/10-1274-skills-for-sustainable-growth-strategy.pdf>

Under EMA around 45% of 16-19 year olds received weekly cash payments, but the new Bursary Fund²⁰¹ will be much more sharply targeted ensuring that the most vulnerable young people (those in care, care leavers, young people on income support and disabled young people) will receive bursaries of £1,200 a year. Schools, colleges and training providers can distribute the rest of the money to support any student who faces genuine financial barriers to participation, such as costs of transport, food or equipment – costs that may otherwise have deterred them from staying on in education or training. The emphasis in Wales is on raising awareness and transparency of the value of various courses and qualifications and encouraging individuals and employers to take ownership for upskilling.

The Scottish Spending Review²⁰² 2011 has set out some key measures for Scotlands economy over the next three years, in terms of VET these include:

- Accelerate economic recovery to create jobs by switching more than £0.75 billion from resource spending to support capital projects up to 2014/15;
- Spend £500 million over three years to encourage joint working across the public sector in adult social care, early years and tackling re-offending; and
- Deliver 125,000 Modern Apprenticeships and use public procurement projects to ensure major public contracts deliver new training and apprentice opportunities.

Individual Learning Accounts²⁰³ (ILAs) in Scotland have reviewed funded courses in 2010/11 in order to remove all un-certificated, ineligible courses (many leisure and sports) from being used by learning providers and focus on vocational and credited courses.

Research by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education²⁰⁴ (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 sectors²⁰⁵. In Scotland HNC and HND study represent about 25% of full-time HE provision and recently underwent a 5 year £8-10 million modernisation programme. An increase in participation in Scotlands HE system is only partially fuelled by those taking degrees. The bulk of expansion has been in people taking courses at SCQF Levels 7 and 8 - usually HNC/Ds, mainly at FE colleges - which have increased more than threefold since 1986/87 (Higher Education Review 2004²⁰⁶).

Total public expenditure on education as a % of GDP is difficult to compare across the UK as the figures quoted in Table A2 (Annex 1) may not include employer-funded training and other levels of private funding which relate specifically to vocational education. A review and reform of post-16 funding and planning in Wales is also underway to encourage shared responsibility amongst Government, individuals and employers, and to make the provision more responsive to the needs of the economy.

²⁰¹ www.ypla.gov.uk/learnersupport/16-19-bursary/

²⁰² www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/10/04153155

²⁰³ www.ilascotland.org.uk

²⁰⁴ www.niace.org.uk

²⁰⁵ Ambition 2020, UKCES, World Class Skills and Jobs for the UK, 2010

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/ambition2020>

²⁰⁶ www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/generalpublications/.../pub_ar2004.aspx

The Private Finance Initiative²⁰⁷ (PFI) is an initiative to attract financial contributions from the private sector such as Skills Academies. Many Local authorities have partnering arrangements with the private sector to invest in school building projects with the Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) a powerful tool for attracting resources from employers and individuals and have been successful in establishing new types of school.

The UK also has transnational vocational education partnerships all over the world. Some of these are funded (wholly or partly) by a variety of funders including UK Government Departments and the British Council. Others are fully commercial partnerships. UK VET institutions place a great deal of emphasis on international partnerships, given importance of partnerships in building international experience and capacity for the sector. The British Council also places major emphasis on this, given that it is a proven way of achieving sustained engagement and economic benefit. Through its *Skills for Employability*²⁰⁸ programme, the British Council has strengthened the partnerships by bringing together broader consortia, having a clear thematic or industry sector focus and linking with policy dialogue activity. The British Council remains committed to enriching education, building international understanding and trust and promoting global citizenship amongst young people. Current targeting of funding is focused in the main on the Government's priority countries, rather than specific groups within the UK population.

In the current challenging fiscal climate, funding for the VET sector is reduced, and this includes funding for international activities. Most funding will be linked to particular initiatives and high priority countries, such as UKIERI 2 (India) the emerging UK China Partners in Education (UKCPIE) programme. A number of FE colleges in Wales, for example, have recently formed a formal consortium to work with counterparts in China, and make best use of UKCPIE support.

10.2. Funding for initial vocational education and training

IVET and CVET certainly cross paths in terms of vocational provision, however IVET funding is generally through the LA or, following the development of new 'liberated' schools, directly to the school itself.

In terms of IAG Government funding to support the purchase of careers, IAG in schools will be allocated, at the school's discretion, as part of the entire individual school budget and not ring-fenced. Local Authorities (LA) will no longer be expected to provide a universal careers IAG service but will retain a statutory duty to encourage, enable and assist participation in young people's education or training and focus support on those NEETS.

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 organisations²⁰⁹.

²⁰⁷ www.bis.gov.uk/files/file26071.pdf

²⁰⁸ www.britishcouncil.org/learning-skills-for-employability.htm

²⁰⁹ 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:

In Scotland 'Targeted Pathways'²¹⁰ was introduced in order to focus on school leavers who want to enter employment and link with sectors where sustainable job opportunities exist.

10.3. Funding for continuing vocational education and training, and adult learning

In England, current priorities for skills are set out in detail in *Skills for Sustainable Growth*.²¹¹ Up to 2014/15 the FE resource budget will be reduced by 25% leading to changes in the previous statutory entitlements, e.g., to free training for anyone who has not yet achieved a first full UK Level 2 qualification. Overall, there will be a re-balancing of investment from public spending towards greater contributions from individuals and employers.

In Scotland Flexible Training Opportunities²¹² (FTO) support Scottish businesses with 150 employees or less by providing 50% of their training cost up to a maximum of £500 per employee, paid retrospectively to the employer upon receipt of evidence of the training occurring. They are delivered by SDS on a 'first come first served' basis rather than sectoral quotas to maintain a flexible and responsive approach. In 2010/11 over 5,700 FTOs were delivered with an expectation that in 2011/12 this will increase to 7,000.

In 2009, the National Apprenticeship Service²¹³ replaced the role of the LSC in England to manage; finance and quality assure the national programme through its network of training providers. Apprenticeships in England are managed through a national programme, currently with a £1billion (GB Pounds) Government investment. In 2010 there were over 400,000 apprentices on 200 programmes.

In Scotland ILAs are a demand-led source of Government funding which provides up to £200 towards the cost of learning and is available to all Scottish residents with an annual income of £22,000 or less, or who are on benefits, which means that almost half of the adult Scottish workforce is now eligible for ILA support. The operational delivery of this programme is by SDS who currently provides around 22,000 eligible learning courses provided by over 400 providers. Learner uptake has increased over the last five years from 32,000 (2008/9) to 60,512 (2010/11) learners.

VET in HE in England will also be impacted by plans to allow Universities to set fees between £3,000 and £9,000 per annum, backed by Government loans which become repayable after graduation once a certain level of earnings has been reached.

HU <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00780-2007&U>.

²¹⁰ www.providercentral.org.uk/.../Targeted_Pathways_to_Apprenticeships.aspx

²¹¹ BIS, *ibid*.

²¹² www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/flexible-training

²¹³ www.apprenticeships.org.uk/

10.4. Funding for training for the unemployed

State-funded training for those with basic skills needs and adults on active benefits and looking for work will be protected. Government-backed loans will be introduced from 2013/14 to help people finance intermediate and higher level qualifications in England.

In England there will be a renewed focus on entrepreneurship through the development of an Enterprise Champions²¹⁴ programme and the creation of enterprise societies in both FE and HE. The Government is committed to funding up to 360,000 Apprentices of all ages this year. This includes 75,000 new Adult Apprenticeships, with a further 40,000 Apprentice places and up to 10,000 Advanced and Higher level Apprenticeships over the next four years. The challenge remains in convincing employers, particularly small to medium enterprises (SMEs), to invest their share of the time and money in training, particularly with the requirements of the new framework for apprenticeships introduced in April 2011. Details of Apprenticeship provision are covered more fully in Theme 5.

Almost £200 million from the European Social Fund (ESF) went into 411 projects in disadvantaged areas across Scotland to aid individuals with moving towards employment and sustainable jobs. This money has been match funded by Scottish Government, colleges and third sector partners. A new Priority 5 will be added to the Lowlands and Uplands Scotland (LUPS) ESF Programme to equip individuals with the core, transferable and vocational competencies for the labour market. This will be demand led and sensitive to differing opportunities and needs within each Local authority in the LUPS programme area.

Both pre-Work and Work Programmes²¹⁵ offer the possibility of unitised courses, in contrast to the former policy of limiting funding to whole qualifications. Some programmes also offer the possibility of much closer involvement of employers in determining the content, as well as the opportunity to tailor programmes to the needs of the local labour market. Restrictions around the amount of training permitted before the loss of state benefit are also being relaxed, in an attempt to promote participation in training. Specific information on the range of programmes available, eligibility, duration etc are available from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or Jobcentre Plus websites.

In England, the UK Government has developed a number of programmes through the DWP, and its delivery agency Jobcentre Plus, to support both unemployed young people and adults to enter the job market. The programmes aim to offer tailored support and training to meet the needs of individuals and are available to those in receipt of state support through the Jobseekers Allowance or the Employment Support Allowance ("active benefits").

In Scotland the SDS delivers National Training Programmes for *Training for Work* which is the Scottish Government's key vocational skills programme for unemployed adults to re-train and gain employment. It is available to those over 18 who have been unemployed for over 3 months, with early entry available for those disadvantaged in the labour market (lone parents; redundant workers; those with disabilities). It provides a short vocational course linked to the labour market to ensure the opportunity for employment exists.

²¹⁴ www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Mar/start-up-britain

²¹⁵ www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/work-programme-prospectus.pdf

Section 11. Authors, sources, bibliography, acronyms and abbreviations

11.1. Authors

Lynne Upton

John Ablett

11.2. Sources, references and websites

Organisations contacted as part of the consultation:

The Scottish Government (Scotland) <http://home.scotland.gov.uk/home>

Department for Employment and Learning (Northern Ireland) <http://www.delni.gov.uk/>

Welsh Government (Wales) <http://wales.gov.uk/?lang=en>

UKCES (UK Commission for Employment and Skills) (UK) <http://www.ukces.org.uk>

BIS (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) <http://www.bis.gov.uk/>

CIPD (The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) <http://www.cipd.co.uk/>

YPLA (Young People's Learning Agency) (England) <http://www.ypla.gov.uk/>

SFA (Skills Funding Agency) (England) <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/>

NIACE (The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education)
<http://www.niace.org.uk/>

Ecorys <http://www.ecorys.com/>

Ofqual (Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) (England)
<http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/>

UK NARIC <http://www.naric.org.uk/>

The British Council <http://www.britishcouncil.org/new/>

NAS (National Apprenticeship Service) <http://www.Apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us/National-Apprenticeship-Service.aspx>

Eurydice (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) <http://www.nfer.ac.uk/eurydice/>

DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/>

DfE (Department for Education) (England) <http://www.education.gov.uk/>

TDA (The Training and Development Agency for Schools) <http://www.tda.gov.uk/>

LSIS (The Learning and Skills Improvement Service)
<http://www.lsis.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) (Scotland)
http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/CCC_FirstPage.jsp

Unionlearn <http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/>

Other useful organisations

Government bodies

Skills Development Scotland (Scotland)
<http://www.providercentral.org.uk/home/home.aspx>

Estyn – Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Wales)
<http://www.estyn.gov.uk/>

Department of Education (Northern Ireland) <http://www.deni.gov.uk/index.htm>

Alliance (The Alliance of Sector Skills Councils) <http://www.sscalliance.org/Home-Public/Homepage.aspx>

Foundations, Trusts

NICIE (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education)
<http://www.nicie.org/default.asp>

NTfW (National Training Federation Wales) <http://www.ntfw.org/news/>

RSA (Royal Society of Arts) <http://www.thersa.org/>

The Edge Foundation <http://www.edge.co.uk/>

Esmee Fairbairn Trust <http://www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk/>

Sutton Trust <http://www.suttontrust.com/home/>

Demos <http://www.demos.co.uk/>

Young Foundation <http://www.youngfoundation.org/>

Professional Associations, Unions

ATL (Association of Teachers and Lecturers) <http://www.atl.org.uk/>

NUT (National Union of Teachers) <http://www.teachers.org.uk/>

TUC (Trades Union Congress) <http://www.tuc.org.uk/>

Awarding Bodies

AQA <http://www.aqa.org.uk/>

CEA (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment)
<http://www.rewardinglearning.org.uk/>

Edexcel <http://www.edexcel.com/Pages/Home.aspx>

OCR <http://www.ocr.org.uk/>

SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/1.html>

WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Committee) <http://www.wjec.co.uk/>

Other Education organisations

Erasmus (enables higher education students, teachers and institutions in 31 European countries to study for part of their degree in another country)
<http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus.htm>

Leonardo (Leonardo funds opportunities for UK vocational education & training organisations, staff and learners) <http://www.leonardo.org.uk/>

Grundtvig (funds training opportunities for UK adult education organisations, staff & learners) <http://www.grundtvig.org.uk/>

11.3. List of acronyms and abbreviations

A Levels	Advanced Levels (also known as GCE A Levels – General Certificate of Education Advanced Levels)
AACS	Adult Advancement and Careers Service
AES	Annual Employment Survey
AGN	Adult Guidance Network
AoC	Association of Colleges
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
AVCE	Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council – vocational qualification
CBI	The Confederation of British Industry
CCEA	Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (Northern Ireland)
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CQFW	Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales
CV	Curriculum Vitae
CVET	Continuing Vocational Education and Training
DAs	Devolved Administrations
ECVET	European Credit System for VET
EDI	Education Development International plc
EQAVET	European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESCO	European Skills and Competences
ESF	European Social Fund
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
E2E	Entry to Employment
EEA	European Economic Area
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESCO	European Skills and Competences
EU	European Union
Eurostat	Statistical Office Of The European Communities
EU27	27 countries of the European Union
Fd	Foundation degree
FE	Further Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HE	Higher Education

HEAR	Higher Education Achievement Report
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HM Treasury	Her Majesty's Treasury
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
HoPES	Heads of Public Employment Services
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IfL	The Institute for Learning
IiP	Investors in People
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
IVET	Initial Vocational Education and Training
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LLP	Lifelong Learning Programme
LLUK	Lifelong Learning UK
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MST	Maths, Science and Technology
NCP	National Coordination Point
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NQ	National Qualification
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Ofqual	Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PLM	People in the Labour Market
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QCDA	Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency
QCF	Qualification and Credit Framework
RARPA	Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement in non-accredited learning
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework
SfW	Skills for Work
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SoS	Secretary of State
SPASE	Specification of Apprenticeships Standards for England
SQS	Sector Qualifications Strategies
SSC	Sector Skills Council
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UKCES	UK Commission for Employment and Skills
UKIERI	UK-India Education Research Initiative
ULR	Union Learning Representative
USA	United States of America
UTC	University Technical College
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VETPRO	Vocational Education and Training Professionals
VQ	Vocational Qualification
WBL	Work Based Learning
YPLA	Young People's Learning Agency

Tables: the following codes apply:

- (s) - eurostat estimate
- (:u) - extremely unreliable data
- (i) - see explanatory notes
- (u) - unreliable/uncertain data
- (-) - not applicable or real zero or zero by default
- (0) - less than half of the unit used
- (:) - not available
- (b) - break in series
- (p) - provisional value
- (:c) - confidential
- (e) - estimated value
- (r) - revised value
- (:n) - not significant
- (f) - forecast

For the code “(i)- see *explanatory notes*”, please refer to the metadata web pages http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/demo_pop_esms.htm#meta_update

Annex 1

Table A1. Unemployment rates by age groups and highest level of education attained (%), 2003, 2006 and 2010

TABLE 5. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2003, 2006 AND 2010										
	TIME	2003			2006			2010		
GEO	ISCED / AGE	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU 27	0-2	20.2 (i)	11.6 (i)	7.2 (i)	21.2	11.2	7.5	27.4	16.3	10.2
	3-4	17.7 (i)	8.4 (i)	7.7 (i)	15.4	7.3	6.9	18.1	8.2	6.7
	5-6	12.0 (i)	4.8 (i)	3.7 (i)	13.4	4.3	3.6	16.2	5.3	3.6
	No A.	13.9 (i)	7.8 (i)	7.4 (i)	20.1	:	:	:	8.2	:
	TOTAL	18.0 (i)	8.3 (i)	6.6 (i)	17.2	7.3	6.3	20.8	8.9	6.9
UK	0-2	21.5	6.0	3.5	25.2	7.1	3.9	34.1	12.3	6.6
	3-4	8.2	3.3	3.0	10.9	4.2	2.9	16.8	6.6	5.1
	5-6	5.3	2.3	2.5	9.1	2.3	1.9	12.1	3.5	3.2
	No A.	12.7	6.7	4.7	:	:	22.7	24.1	:	:
	TOTAL	11.4	3.9	3.2	14.1	4.1	3.1	19.6	6.3	4.8

Description: unemployment rates represent the number of unemployed persons as percentage of the active population (employed + unemployed)

Source: Eurostat (LFS); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 12-05-2011

(NB the data in tables 4 and 5 refers only to those officially employed or unemployed, which in the UK accounts for around three quarters of the adult population of working age)

Table A2: Total public expenditure on education as % of GDP, at secondary level of education (ISCED 2-4), 2002-2008

TABLE A2: TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS % OF GDP, AT SECONDARY LEVEL OF EDUCATION (ISCED 2-4), 2002-2008							
GEO	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EU27	2.32 (s)	2.35 (s)	2.29 (s)	2.25 (s)	2.23 (s)	2.20 (s)	:
UK	2.41 (i)	2.53 (i)	2.47 (i)	2.44	2.37 (i)	2.45 (i)	:

Description: Total public expenditure on education, at ISCED Level 2-3-4, by programme orientation (million PPS, % of GDP, % of public expenditure)

Source: Eurostat (UOE); extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 12-04-2011

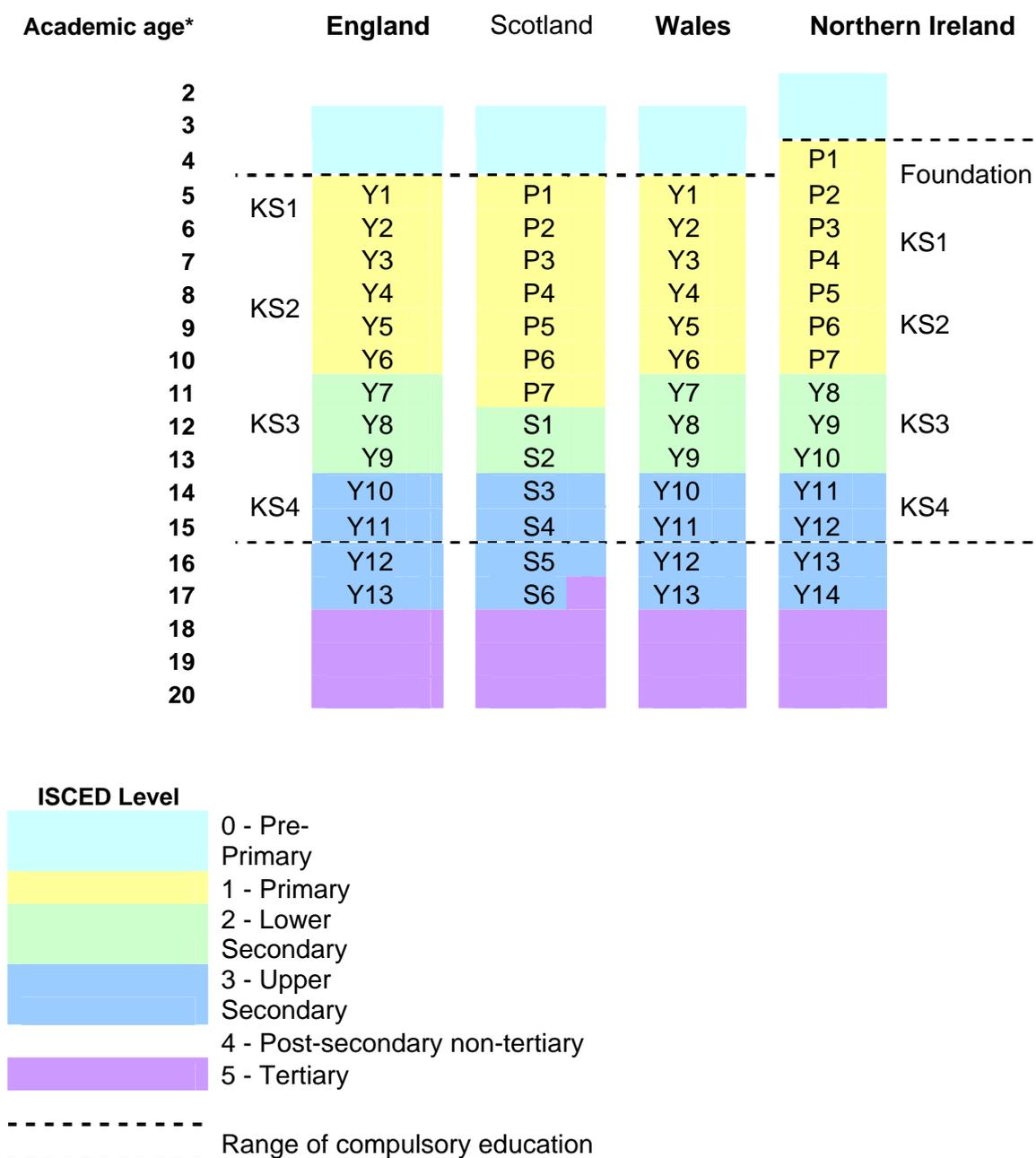
s – Eurostat estimate

i – see explanatory notes

b - break in series

Table A3

Assignment to ISCED Level by age/year group for UOE



* Where possible, enrolment data are converted to age as at 31 Aug. However, 1 July is used for Northern Ireland and 31 December for non-maintained primary and secondary school pupils in Scotland.