

Technical and Professional Education reform

Industry roundtables

There are some serious challenges we need to address in the current Technical and Professional Education system

- We have a complex 16+ skills system lacking in clear routes to skilled employment, which is potentially confusing for many learners and employers and fails to address some of our major skills gaps.

Productivity Plan (July, 2015):

- The UK has a long-term productivity problem.
- We have a productivity gap of around 30 per cent with countries such as France, Germany and the USA.
- Throughout the globe nations are investing in high quality technical and professional skills, and reaping the reward through higher productivity and living standards.

We have plans for ground-breaking reforms to set England's system on a par with the best in the world

- We will simplify the current over-complex system by **introducing a small number of focused routes from compulsory schooling to skilled employment.**
- These will be genuinely owned by employers who will specify the technical knowledge, practical skills and behaviours they require, in line with reformed apprenticeships.
- The new TPE routes will ensure that the system is not driven by qualifications but develops and certifies occupational competence in the round.

The approach in the Danish system

Students start on one of 12 broad basic foundation programmes.

Basic courses	Number of programmes
1. Motor vehicle, aircraft and other means of transportation	8
2. Building and construction	15
3. Construction and user service	3
4. Animals, plants and nature	9
5. Body and style	3
6. Human food	10
7. Media production	7
8. Business	7
9. Production and development	31
10. Electricity, management and IT	7
11. Health, care and pedagogy	4
12. Transport and logistics	7

We are working closely with an independent panel and would welcome your views/input

- The Government has asked an **independent panel**, headed by Lord Sainsbury (former Minister of Science and Innovation) to advise on the reforms to the TPE system.
- Members of the panel include:
 - Professor Alison Wolf, author of the Wolf Review of Vocational Education
 - Simon Blagden, Non-Executive Chairman of Fujitsu
 - Steve West, Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West of England
 - Bev Robinson, a leading FE College Principal.
- The Panel will report in the spring and we'll look to implement their recommendations from the summer onwards once Ministers have been able to consider in full and respond.
- *We want to engage directly with employers about these reforms. If you are interested in having a conversation with officials supporting the Panel please let me know.*

In particular, we would welcome thoughts about several key issues relating to Technical and Professional Education

- Can we group occupations together where there is similar demand for knowledge, skills and behaviours to form coherent “routes”?
- How can we put employers in the lead to shape technical and professional content for each route?
- Should technical and professional education start with a broad curriculum before specialising towards higher level occupations?
- What signals effectively to employers that an individual has secured the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours through a route? How can we translate this achievement into labour market currency (i.e. potentially through qualifications, licences to practice, certificates)?
- How important is experience of work or practical skills in a particular work environment? How can we deliver enough placements?