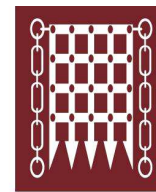


Westminster Education Forum Keynote Seminar: Reforms to vocational qualifications in England

Timing: Morning, Thursday, 14th January 2016

Venue: Glaziers Hall, 9 Montague Close, London SE1 9DD



WESTMINSTER
EDUCATION
FORUM

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chair's opening remarks**
Chloe Smith MP, Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Employment
- 9.05 - 9.15 **Vocational qualifications in England - the current state of play**
David Harbourne, Acting Chief Executive, Edge Foundation
- 9.15 - 10.05 **Delivering 14-19 vocational qualifications: new qualifications, funding and accountability measures**
What can be learnt from the uptake so far of the new Tech levels and Applied General Qualifications introduced last year? Will the new Technical Awards fulfil Government's aim of improving young people's practical skills? In what ways can staff be supported to deliver these new qualifications, particularly occupationally specific qualifications such as the new Technical Certificates which require industry knowledge? How can employers and universities become more involved in the design of new qualifications, and delivery of existing ones, to ensure that they meet their needs and adequately prepare young people? What could be done to make sure parents, students and employers understand the differences between the increased variety of vocational qualifications on offer, and differences in their rigour and purposes? How can Government address criticisms that changes to 16-19 funding - providing a standard funding rate of 600 guided learning hours per learner - has resulted in colleges not being able to offer pupils a range of qualifications requiring a large number of guided learning hours? What impact has the new progress 8 accountability measure and the more rigorous league tables had on the choice of qualifications on offer and how they are taught in schools?
Brenda Yearsley, UK School & Education Development Manager, Siemens
Dr Steven McIntosh, Reader, Department of Economics, University of Sheffield
Jill Stokoe, Education Policy Adviser, ATL
Yvonne Kelly, Chief Operating Officer, Barking and Dagenham College
Questions and comments from the floor with **David Harbourne**, Acting Chief Executive, Edge Foundation
- 10.05 - 10.30 **Reforms to vocational education - progress so far and future of qualifications**
Warwick Sharp, Deputy Director, Vocational Education and 16-19 Strategy, Department for Education
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.30 - 10.35 **Chair's closing remarks**
Chloe Smith MP, Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Employment
- 10.35 - 11.00 Coffee
- 11.00 - 11.05 **Chair's opening remarks**
Steve McCabe MP, former Shadow Education Minister
- 11.05 - 11.30 **After the QCF: introducing a new regulation framework for vocational qualifications**
Jeremy Benson, Executive Director for Vocational Qualifications, Ofqual
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 - 12.00 **Addressing skills shortages and increasing employer engagement**

Identifying skills shortages - a national picture
Moira McKerracher, Deputy Director, UK Commission for Employment and Skills

Tackling barriers and encouraging employer engagement in vocational education
Kate Shoosmith, Head of Policy & Public Affairs, Recruitment & Employment Confederation
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.00 - 12.55 **Raising the profile of vocational education and preparing young people for work and Higher Education**
What impact has the Technical Baccalaureate had so far in increasing the uptake and raising the profile of vocational qualifications? Are the range of vocational qualifications currently on offer sufficient to address the growing skills gaps, particularly in STEM subjects? What steps could be taken to further encourage students to take up higher education in vocational subject areas; should Government consider establishing vocational A-levels as suggested by the industry? What further steps can be taken to ensure vocational qualifications have parity of esteem alongside other qualifications? How can small and medium sized employers be supported to overcome cost, staff and resource issues, to become more involved in vocational education? What role should apprenticeships and traineeships play in vocational education? Will devolving skills policy to local authorities and local enterprise partnerships help create more vocational education and training opportunities for young people in their localities? What steps can be taken to ensure there are vocational qualifications to cater for pupils of all abilities, despite raising their rigour?
Gemma Gathercole, Head of Policy, Further Education and Funding, OCR
Geoff Hurst, Managing Director, Altain Education
Dr Ann Limb, Chair, South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership
Rachel Kellett, Head of Product Development, AAT (The Association of Accounting Technicians)
Senior representative, FE college
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Westminster Education Forum closing remarks**
Steve McCabe MP, former Shadow Education Minister
Dieuni Welihinda, Forum Lead, Westminster Education Forum