

**Westminster Education Forum policy conference:
Next steps for Level 3 qualification reform - V Levels, student progression and implementation**

Timing: Morning, Wednesday, 15th July 2026

*****Taking place online*****



Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Assessing the future of post-16 qualifications - reform, implementation and learner progression**
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.25 **Key considerations for V Level design, development and delivery**
preparation for implementation and workforce training | grading and assessment | entry requirements | careers guidance provision and improving awareness among learners, parents and schools | Skills England's approach to occupational standards and technical qualification design | provider capacity, quality assurance and curriculum planning | expanding placement capacity, including digital and virtual models, and improving access in rural areas | alignment with Level 2 pathways, T Levels and A levels | learning from T Level rollout | SME participation and sustainable employer partnerships
Donna Ford-Clarke, Vice President, Vocational Qualifications and Portfolio, Pearson
Adam Fahey, Group Deputy CEO, South Essex Colleges Group
Adam Steels, Curriculum Director, Meridian Trust
Sam Nicholas, Policy Advisor, Education and Skills, Royal Academy of Engineering
Michelle Wayt, Assistant Director, NHS Employers
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.15 **Regulation and quality assurance for reformed Level 3 pathways**
Senior representative, regulation
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.40 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.45 Break
- 10.55 **Chair's opening remarks**
Baroness Ramsey of Wall Heath
- 11.00 **Supporting accessibility and student choice**
Noni Csogor, Senior Research and Policy Manager, Sixth Form Colleges Association
- 11.10 **Managing phased defunding and reform of existing Level 3 qualifications**
co-ordination between Level 3 options | maintaining learner choice, flexibility and continuity of provision | supporting transitions for learners, providers and awarding organisations | supporting disadvantaged learners, students with SEND and learners in rural or coastal areas | options for learners below standard entry thresholds | timing and sequencing of defunding | minimising disruption while sustaining confidence across the post-16 system
Dr Catherine Richards, Principal, East Norfolk Sixth Form College
Neil Hatton MBE, Chief Executive, UK Screen Alliance
Senior representative, awarding body
Senior commentator
- 11.30 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.50 **Developing learner awareness of reformed post-16 pathways and supporting access to careers guidance**
James Moon, Associate Director, Careers Hubs, The Careers and Enterprise Company
- 12.00 **Supporting student progression and recognition - pathways into further study, higher education and employment**
parity of esteem between academic and technical qualifications | progression across V Levels, T Levels, apprenticeships, higher technical education and employment | HEI admissions and employer recognition of reformed qualifications | access criteria and admissions processes | balance between technical focus and academic breadth | supporting adult learners and mid-career reskilling | accessibility and inclusivity in assessment and delivery | alignment with Skills England, Local Skills Improvement Plans and labour market priorities
Professor Graeme Atherton, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Regional Engagement; Vice Principal, Ruskin College; and Head, Ruskin Institute for Social Equity, University of West London
Lucy Whitwood, Principal, City College Norwich
Kim Newman, Technical Education Programme Manager, Career Development Institute
Senior representative, employer
- 12.20 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.45 **Policy priorities for Level 3 reform and preparing the sector for implementation**
Sevim Ekmekci, Head, Level 3 System Design - V Levels, Department for Education
Questions and comments from the floor
- 13.10 **Chair's and Westminster Education Forum closing remarks**
Baroness Ramsey of Wall Heath
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Education Forum